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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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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Soviet efforts to gain influence in the Third World are a major threat to U.S. security interests. Moscow has spread its power into South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East in recent years. But the USSR also suffers from major weaknesses in obtaining and maintaining footholds. This study considers Soviet techniques and the causes of specific successes and failures.

The strongest tool in the Soviet arsenal is the ability to quickly and decisively concentrate large amounts of aid and attention on a few countries. During critical power struggles, this is a potent weapon. The Soviets use increasingly improved techniques for keeping Third World client governments in power--through military, security, and intelligence aid. The ideological appeal of Soviet Communism in the Third World is strictly limited.

There are, however, particular weaknesses which counteract these advantages and occasionally undermine seeming Russian successes. Beyond the initial stages of economic growth, Soviet technology, economic resources, and willingness to provide help are inadequate for developing countries. Western material is clearly superior. Soviet military assistance, except for a relatively few countries, is aimed at keeping them dependent and, may produce considerable friction between the two parties. Soviet prospects are often tied to a narrow group of leaders which may be overthrown or may itself change course. Regimes in the Third World tend to suspect that Soviet aid may provide leverage to control or replace them.

Like the United States, Moscow often finds that large amounts of aid buys remarkably little influence. USSR-Egypt relations faltered on account of Cairo's mistrust and resentment of limited Soviet assistance. Libya uses Moscow as a military supplier and provides certain services but the maverick nature of Libyan leadership makes that country hard to manipulate. Generally speaking, African leaders are aware of Moscow's meager record of material support and their low priority in Soviet policy, except for Angola and Ethiopia. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union has gained ground and there has been a tendency in the West to underate its gains.

The most important development is expanded military might and the creation of a chain of military bases for projecting power overseas. Minimal strings and advantageous deals make Soviet arms offers tempting to Third World countries.

Cuban and East German surrogates facilitate the penetration of Third World countries. Even merely normal diplomatic relations, as in the case of Kuwait, allows intelligence gathering and a listening post for the Persian Gulf which can be turned into a basis of operations. Iraq is a case of Soviet failure--mutual suspicions and hostility mounting behind a facade of superficially good bilateral relations--inadequate military assistance, Soviet failure as an ally in a crisis, backward technology, subversion by the local Communist Party, and Soviet advances in Afghanistan all contributed to this process.

In Iran and Turkey there is suspicion of the powerful northern neighbor. Intimidation and encouragement of opposition forces are combined with some carrots. But Moscow's present main objective is to cause dissension between these countries and the West rather than bringing them into the Soviet orbit.

The Russians have their domestic "Third World" in the form of the 16.4% of the Soviet population that is Moslem. It is of some propagandistic use in the Islamic world but also a potential cause of domestic unrest. The Soviet imperial thrust does not proceed according to a detailed masterplan but depends to a great extent on opportunities as they arise.

This study combines an overview of Soviet capabilities and intentions with a detailed consideration of Moscow's problems and prospects in specific Third World states and the instruments used to achieve its aims.

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"When Sekou Toure was young and Nasser and Nkrumah were alive many knowledgeable people lost their heads and cried 'wolf.' There was no solid empirical justification for calling these people or their states Communist. Therefore today many knowledgeable people refuse to cry 'wolf' when the wolf stands in plain undoubted view."

Peter Wiles, 1982

The present study proceeds from the assumption that most of the military and political conflict in the years to come will take place in the so called Third World. It addresses itself to the following questions:

How aggressive a policy is the Soviet leadership likely to follow in the Third World?

How much priority will be given to Third World in Soviet strategic planning?

Above all, what are the Soviet instrumentalities to "make friends and influence people" in the Third World?

What factors are likely to enhance, which may obstruct Soviet progress in these countries?

The term "Third World" is here used, with great hesitation, as a very imperfect abbreviation. The indiscriminate use of the term has caused a great deal of confusion. For there is an almost infinite variety of "Third World" countries as far as economic development, social structure, and political orientation are concerned. In short, the "Third World" is as much fiction as fact and its members have seldom cooperated on major issues. The Soviet Union, with all its efforts to woo Third World countries, has never accepted the concept of a Third World bloc.

The present investigation does not deal with the Far East, the Western hemisphere and South Africa but concentrates on the "non-aligned" countries (another unfortunate abbreviation) between Bangladesh and Morocco, as well as West and East Africa, i.e., the "Third World Heartland".

Since World War Two both Soviet expectations concerning the Third World and Western appraisal of Soviet intentions have been subject to frequent and far reaching changes, summarized however briefly in the following.

1. In the immediate post-war period, from roughly 1946 to 1954, Western capitals generally believed that Soviet interest and activity in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East were strictly limited. Once the Soviet Union had withdrawn from Iran (1946,) not followed up its threats against Turkey, and not pursued its claims for colonial acquisitions in the Mediterranean (Tripolitania) the consensus was that Russia had no intention of playing an active role in these parts.¹

2. Change set in around 1954. Following Stalin's death, Soviet foreign policy became more flexible, less dogmatic, more willing to create opportunities in the Third World and to exploit them. As a leading Soviet writer wrote, "the stormy breakup of the colonial system and the anti-capitalist rhetoric of many leaders of the national liberation movement created the illusion that in a very short period the overwhelming majority of the former colonies would go over, if not to be socialist, then to the non-capitalist road of development." This was the era of Nehru and Sukarno, of Nasser, Ben Bella, Nkrumah, Modibo Keita --

a new breed of "progressive leaders," the heyday of the new nonaligned movement, and the vintage sloganism of Bandung. Third World countries were expected to become gradually more and more hostile to the West, and turn into natural allies of the Soviet Union.

3. Soviet disenchantment set in after a decade of such expectations. The "progressive" leaders disappeared, those who followed them were, on the whole, less desirable from a Soviet point of view. They were less willing to permit Soviet licensed infiltration; in many places Communism and the other "progressive forces" were suppressed altogether. Soviet Communists began to admit they had underrated the power of religion and nationalism, that the ideology of even the progressive Third World regimes was "slipshod," their links with the masses frequently non-existent, that "vanguard parties of socialist orientation" had not been created, that habits of systematic work had not been inculcated in most Asian and African countries, and that fine speeches would not suffice. In short, it was realized in Moscow (firstly) that even the most friendly Third World regimes were not altogether reliable and that (secondly) while the Soviet Union had become heavily involved, it was by no means in full control of the conduct of affairs.

4. Since the mid-1960s, Soviet assessments of prospects in the Third World have been on the whole more realistic. It was accepted that for the time being nationalism (with a strong religious admixture,) would be the prevailing force; that while this force was to a larger or smaller degree anti-Western in

inspiration, it was suspicious of all outsiders, that even the so-called progressive regimes in the Third World would be headed by military men motivated less by patriotism -- let alone socialism -- (to quote a Soviet author,) than by a purely career-inspired desire to seize power." But the disenchantment and the recognition that the optimism of the early 1960's with regard to swift Soviet progress in the Third World had been premature, led by no means to resignation. On the contrary, realization that the Asian and African situations were more "slozhnii" (complicated -- a favorite term in the Soviet political dictionary,) led to a redoubling of efforts.

5. Western assessments of Soviet intentions over the last three decades in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East have been uneven. Relatively few observers have had expertise in both Soviet foreign policy and Third World affairs. Moreover, there has been a tendency to exaggerate both Soviet isolationism and expansionism, to overrate both Soviet advances and setbacks. Thus, to give but one example, an influential school of Western observers argued during the late 1970s that the Soviet record in the Third World was negative, that it had made progress in some countries but suffered defeat in others (some you win, some you lose,) and that since Asian and African nationalism was obviously so passionate that the West had not really much to fear of Soviet advance.

Seen in a short term perspective of five to ten years, it is indeed true that the Soviet Union has not succeeded in all places in which it tried to gain a foothold. The most obvious examples

are post-Nasserist Egypt, Indonesia after Sukarno, and Somalia. Seen in a perspective of thirty years, it is obvious that the Soviet Union has made considerable progress in the Third World. In 1952, China and North Korea were its only allies. In 1982, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Nicaragua, and Grenada in the Western hemisphere, as well as Angola, Benin, the PLO, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Congo-Brazzaville, have to be included in the list as well as the "socialist oriented" (to use the official Soviet term,) Guyana, Algeria, Libya, Syria, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, and some others. While some of these countries may turn away from the Soviet Union, it is likely that elsewhere the Soviet Union will find new clients or allies. A good yardstick for the growth of Soviet influence is the development of the non-aligned movement which, at the time of its foundation, was genuinely uncommitted and made non-adherence to blocs the cornerstone of its policies. Since then, this "traditional non-alignment" has been put into question. Thus the fact that the Soviet Union did gain influence can only be denied on the basis of a short term (and short sighted,) perspective. Furthermore, the idea that nationalism and religion are an a priori "bulwark" against Soviet progress is, at best, a gross overstatement. As Brezhnev stated on the 26th Congress of the CPSU (February 1981,) -- Islamic slogans are, so to speak, neutral, the decisive point is what kind of long term political aims are pursued by those voicing them." The same applies to nationalism: nationalism per se is not an obstacle to Soviet designs. Few observers will doubt the national motivation of the

Soviet leadership, not to mention the Chinese, the Yugoslav, and others. A confluence of nationalism and Communism (or pro-Sovietism,) is the prevailing fashion, and not only in the Third World.

Having overrated Soviet lack of success in the Third World for at least a decade something akin to "a revolution of perceptions" took place in the West following the invasion of Afghanistan. This was seen by many as a sudden turning point initiating a new wave of expansionism. In actual fact, the occupation of Afghanistan was not a turning point, it only came as a shock to Western analysts who had assumed that the Soviet system had become status quo, increasingly moderate. Nor was it at all certain that the Afghanistan precedent was pointing to further military expansionism in the near future, caused either by Soviet revolutionary ideology, or imperialist tradition or the innate imperialist thrust of large organizations to eliminate all outside disturbances.²

Direct military expansion is not in principle excluded but it will be undertaken by the Soviet Union only if its leaders are convinced the balance of power has shifted decisively in its favor. In other words, such military intervention will be initiated only if the Politburo feels certain that no risk of escalation into a general military conflict is involved, and that furthermore it will have no lasting negative consequences on the attitude of Third World countries towards the Soviet Union.

Communist Parties

For several decades after the Bolshevik Revolution, most of the hopes of the Soviet Union rested on the assumption that strong proletarian parties would emerge within a few years all over the globe. Failing this, the revolution in the East was expected to come as the result of agrarian uprisings and revolutionary nationalist anti-imperialist movements. These assumptions were not exactly wrong. Even if there was no working class, there was a strong revolutionary potential in the East as developments in China, and elsewhere, were to show. What Soviet leaders did not anticipate was the unwillingness of many Communist parties, especially those in power, to adopt the Soviet model.

If Soviet leaders could choose today between a non-Communist, and a Communist China as a neighbor, there is little doubt which, in the light of many years' experience, they would prefer. In brief, Communism is no longer a synonym for pro-Sovietism, nor, on the other hand is non-Communism a hindrance for close co-operation between the country in question and the Soviet Union. The existence of Communist parties in the Third World gives the Soviet Union certain advantages, but it also creates major problems. This is true both with regard to Communist parties in power, and those which are not.

But, the Soviet Union cannot wash its hands of world Communism, which, with all the difficulties that have arisen, is still a source of strength to the Soviet Union in many respects. Dissociating itself from Communist parties would

undermine the legitimacy of the Soviet claim to be leader of the Communist bloc.

Not counting the Far East and Latin America, there are today non-ruling Communist parties in India, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Morocco, Sri Lanka, Reunion Iran, Iraq, and Turkey. To these, one should add minor Communist groups in Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Nigeria, Jordan, Senegal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and perhaps a few others. All these parties are pro-Soviet; they are legal (or semi-legal,) with the exception of those in Egypt, Turkey, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Senegal, Nigeria, and Pakistan. However, even the legal or semi-legal parties have to move carefully so as not to arouse suspicion.

The existence of a "Russian" party in so many countries (and the absence of an "American" party,) is not, in most cases, an unmixed blessing from the Soviet point of view. It does create opportunities for infiltration and gaining influence. But it also means that since all Third World countries are intensely nationalist, there is bound to be a great deal of suspicion vis-a-vis parties whose loyalty is, at least in part, towards an outside power (however friendly and progressive). Some of this suspicion will be transferred towards the Soviet Union, even if no internal help is extended by the CPSU to the local Communist party. In other words, the local Communist parties are likely to be a stumbling block in inter-state relations. It means that the Soviet Union may frequently have to chose between support (even if only rhetoric,) for the Communist party and friendship with a regime which wants to combine collaboration with the Soviet Union

with the repression of Communism at home. This dilemma has faced the Soviet leaders almost from the beginning -- Turkey in 1919/20.

To reduce the risk, the Soviet leadership at one stage (1964,) even recommended to Third World Communist parties, particularly in the Middle East, that they dissolve voluntarily and join the "progressive" official state parties. Several parties temporarily obeyed; others (such as Sudan and Syria,) refused to do so.

The existence of Communist parties, given Soviet claims to leadership of the bloc, also means that it may have to take sides in conflicts between Communist parties which have become increasingly frequent during the last two decades. This is usually impossible without offending at least one of the parties. Communist parties, or "front organizations," in Third World countries may still be of interest to the Soviet Union if they are well established and have a chance to come to power in the foreseeable future, or at least to share power. The Iranian Tudeh party may serve as an example, but there are only a few parties in this category. Elsewhere, the Communist party may take over a "national liberation" movement or there may be a merger between the two, which is what happened in Cuba. But this is unlikely to happen in many other places.

The Cuban constellation was in some respects unique. Furthermore, Communist parties are no longer the well disciplined, conspirative, monolithic organizations they used to be in a past age. Frequently, they are rent by internal

divisions. If, however, there should be further Cubas, they are likely to occur in Latin America, partly in view of the sympathetic (or at least tolerant,) attitude of sections of the Catholic Church, partly because of geopolitical reasons -- the relative proximity to the U.S. and the distance from the Soviet Union -- Latin American "progressives" will not feel threatened by Soviet policies. Lastly, there is the possibility, although distant, that a pro-Soviet regime will come to power in a Third World country democratically, as the result of an electoral victory. Thus, a "progressive" party (the MMM,) came to power in Mauritius in 1982, but while it is left wing and neutralist, it is neither Marxist, nor (as yet) a Soviet client.

This leads to the question of how to define, and to differentiate in this age of Communist polycentrism between Communist, pro-Communist, progressive parties. According to current Communist parties, working class (in theory, if not always in practice,) Marxist-Leninist and democratic centralist -- i.e., subject to unquestioning discipline. Lower

down in the scale are the revolutionary-democratic parties -- anti-Western in outlook, but not "class parties," not subscribing to all the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism (for instance, concerning the class struggle and the role of religion,) frequently "dominated by petty bourgeois elements."

Some of these revolutionary democratic parties are "vanguard" parties, which is to say that they have moved closer to the Soviet pattern than others. However, in the final analysis, these are academic distinctions of limited

consequence. What ultimately matters in Soviet eyes is not whether the party in question subscribes to dialectical materialism or whether its leaders are of proletarian, petty bourgeois, or even bourgeois origin but whether it supports the Soviet Union. If it does, so all other sins are forgiven.

As leader of the Communist bloc, the Kremlin has to support local Communist parties to emphasize the central importance of Marxism-Leninism and of a progressive, avant garde party as a condition sine qua non on the road to Socialism. "No other class can replace the working class in that historic function."

(Ulyanovski). This sounds very radical and dogmatic, but it actually leads to "revisionist" conclusions. For since a strong working class does not exist yet, the Soviet authors inevitably reach the conclusion that the revolutionary process in the Third World should not be measured in months and years, but will continue for several decades. And it sometimes appears as if the Soviet leaders are by no means in a hurry, provided only that they can get maximum assistance from their, as yet imperfect, allies.

Dealing with "revolutionary democratic" or "socialist oriented" parties, or simply national liberation movements gravitating towards the Soviet Union has many advantages: the Soviet Union cannot be held responsible for their ideology or their political practice. These groups have no right to expect help from Moscow automatically. At the same time, there is much room for pragmatic co-operation. For this reason, the ideological discussions about the non-capitalist road of

development characteristic of "state of national democracy," or similar such debates are not terribly significant.³

What are the political prospects of the Third World Communist parties in the year to come? By and large, their chances seem dimmer now than ten or fifteen years ago. The growth of Islamic fundamentalism has limited their influence in the Arab world and other Middle East countries, and they have remained small in Africa. It seems unlikely that a Communist party acting on its own will be able to frontally challenge a government such as the Sudanese party did (unsuccessfully,) against Nimeri in 1971, or to take over a national liberation movement from within.

However, it would certainly be premature to write off Third World Communist parties altogether; though most of them are small, the same is true with regard to the political elites in general. The fact that overall conditions are inauspicious does not mean that one party, or even a group of parties, may not succeed. A few dozen determined people may well be able to take over an African country, provided they have well placed allies in the army and/or police. Secondly, instability in the Third World will be the rule rather than the exception. It is perfectly possible that the ruling political groups in some major Third World countries will break up in the years to come, be it because of internal quarrels, or inability to cure social and economic malaise, or because of unlucky foreign entanglements or ruinous civil wars. This may come to happen in India or Pakistan, in Iran and the Arab countries, as well as Africa. In these

circumstances, local Communist parties collaborating with other opposition elements will constitute the political alternative, and in some cases they may even out-manuever their allies, turning from junior to senior partner or even sole holder of power.

It is also true that a Communist victory in one country will almost necessarily stir up fears and provoke opposition from its neighbors. Secondly, even empowered Communist parties cannot be entirely trusted by Moscow unless these Communists depend on Moscow's support for their very survival. If Third World Communist parties should come to power, this will be mainly owing to their own efforts, not as a result of Soviet help. These Communists will remember that the Soviet Union was dealing with their enemies, the former rulers, for years over their hands and frequently against their interests. This will not normally make for great mutual trust. The cases of China, Yugoslavia, and Albania have shown that independent Communism is most likely to occur where victory came without Soviet help. There is reason to assume that this will still be true in the future.

FRONT ORGANIZATIONS AND THE MOVEMENT OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

Front Organizations, public bodies ostensibly non-partisan, but de facto manipulated by the Communists, have been a crucial part of Soviet strategy in the West since the 1930s. These bodies have included organizations such as the "Partisans of Peace" founded soon after the Second World War, international associations of democratic lawyers, students, scientific workers,

etc. Their heyday was in the 1950s; almost all of them still exist, but now their importance is minimal. In the Third World they were never very important in the first place. Various reasons account for this lack of success: The divisions inside the Communist camp had a negative impact on the world movement, the innately fraudulent character of these "fronts", the fact that they were not what they pretended to be impaired their long term chances. The "Partisans of Peace" had a limited appeal in Western Europe and North America due to the deeply ingrained pacifism in these parts. But this is not so in the Third World. Most of these countries are ruled by the military which has little compunction about splurging on defense. Many Third World countries have been involved in wars of one sort or another and these are no pacifist movements to speak of. The aim of the front organization is to influence public opinion in democratic countries, through manifestoes, and publications in a free press, etc. Such opportunities do not exist (or barely exist) in most Third World countries. For these reasons as well as some others, European style "fronts" have been, on the whole, unsuitable in the Third World context. There have been some specific Third World fronts such as AAPSO (Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization) but they are different in character from the typical Western "front" inasmuch as no great effort has ever been made to camouflage its real character.

Communist tactics have changed in recent years in the West as well. Far more attention has been paid to home grown pacifist movements than to the old (and discredited) "Partisans of

Peace." Soviet efforts in the Third World have been primarily concentrated on the Non-Aligned movement. To be sure, what the pacifist movement in the West and the Non-Aligned in the Third World have in common is that neither came into existence as the result of Soviet initiatives. On the contrary, some of their actions are undesirable from the Soviet point of view. Yet the general thrust of their activities fits the aims of Soviet foreign policy beautifully. As seen from Moscow, they deserve all possible support, discreet, and on occasion not-so-discreet.

The non-aligned movement made its debut with a membership of 25 countries; today it has 95, not to mention an additional 20 with observer or guest status. What started as a genuinely neutral (or neutralist) movement, with some of its leaders openly anti-American but cautious of the Soviet Union has witnessed palpable changes over the last decade. Manipulation on the part of pro-Soviet elements inside the non-aligned movement, (above all Cuba, is largely responsible for this reorientation. The very fact that Cuba is unquestioningly accepted as a legitimate non-aligned country, and for a number of years (1978-1982), has served as chairman and main spokesman accurately reflects the transformation of the movement. Needless to say, this reality will appear preposterous to most Western observers. The Soviet attitude towards the non-aligned was initially one of indifference but in the late 1950s this gave way to benevolence and since the early 1970s the attempt has been made to explain to the non-aligned that the real division in the world is not between North and South, or rich and poor nations, but between "imperialism"

and "socialism". It is deeply mistaken and utterly reactionary to equate the two superpowers, it was said. The pro-Soviet elements are pressing the demand to make the foreign policy of the non-aligned countries "more precise" and to develop it further. In practical terms this means, as Castro said at the Algiers Conference (1973) regarding the Soviet Union as the "natural ally of the non-aligned," or as president Samora Machel put it on another recent occasion, "Imperialism is our enemy, our economic, military, political and cultural enemy." Pham Van Dong at the Havana meeting (1979) went even further and stated that the attempt to reduce the movement to its original targets was contrary to the interests of the anti-imperialist struggle.

The political offensive aiming at inducing the non-aligned to give maximum support to Soviet foreign policy has continued ever since and is likely to continue in future. It has not succeeded all across the board; there was considerable opposition. But more often than not these efforts have achieved their aims. The general tenor of the resolutions of non-aligned meetings in recent years is hostile to America on virtually every count. Following Camp David the attempt was even made to exclude Egypt; on the other hand, there is never a word of criticism of the Soviet Union. The pro-Soviet bloc in the non-aligned movement also succeeded in barring the seating of a delegation from Kampuchea following the Vietnamese invasion of that country. Castro successfully prevented any condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, arguing that this was a domestic issue, outsiders had no right to interfere.

But non-aligned solidarity was not sufficiently strong on this occasion: 57 countries voted for a resolution in the United Nations condemning the Soviet invasion. This was interpreted as a severe blow to Castro and the Soviets, but it is also true that the resolution was couched in the mildest and most considerate terms, and that furthermore 35 other non-aligned either voted against the resolution or refrained or absented themselves. While a majority of the non-aligned certainly did not like the Soviet invasion, they did not want to make waves, let alone extend effective help to a fellow non-aligned country. There never was danger of a split in the movement; the issue was shelved and this of course was also a Soviet victory, albeit a limited one. To a certain extent, the importance of the non-aligned movement has declined. For if it could not maintain a common front in the United Nations, there is probably even less hope for effective collaboration on more weighty issues.

The attempt of Soviet surrogates to deflect the non-aligned movement from its original aims shows once again that a determined minority can have disproportionate political influence facing a divided majority. On the other hand, as so often in the past, such attempts at manipulation cause damage to the organization which is the target of the take over. The majority, unable to put up effective resistance, but unwilling to get along with resolutions it does not fully endorse, simply begins to take less interest in the enterprise. This leads to the question of how much importance should be accorded to the non-aligned as a political factor. There has been a tendency in the West to

overrate the cohesion of the bloc. In so far as military and political power is concerned there should be delusions. Most of the Third World governments are unstable, and most of the countries are rent by internal discord. Notwithstanding OPEC, the political power of the Third World is largely mythical. But it is a powerful myth which, despite all the setbacks it has suffered, is far from spent. It is of no great consequence whether Third World countries favor or oppose in the United Nations the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Soviet actions will not be influenced by such votes. But Third Worldism as a mood, a psychological attitude, a feeling that the members of the bloc have something in common, is however, intangible and a factor of some political influence. It is important in an indirect way, influencing liberal and leftwing opinion in Western societies. It has an impact on the smaller Western countries; not only Cyprus and Malta are members, but Sweden, Finland, Portugal, Austria, Spain and even Switzerland have participated as guests or observers in the meetings of the non-aligned movement in recent years. These delegations would not have attended the meetings unless they thought them of some importance.

Thus, in the final analysis it is not the intrinsic strength of the movement which counts but the perception. The non-aligned movement is one of speeches and declarations not of actions. But speeches and declarations help to create a certain political climate, and expectations about rising and declining forces in world politics, the ascendancy of the Soviet Union, and the isolation of the West. For this reason it is of some importance

that Third World language is now considerably closer to the Soviet bloc than to the West, and that, generally speaking, the Soviet Union is on the offensive in these Third World organizations, whereas the West is not putting up a terrifically effective defense.

THE SURROGATES

The use of proxies is the most interesting, innovative and, on the whole, most effective technique in the Soviet instrumentality used in the Third World. Western perceptions in this respect have lagged behind realities: while much attention has been devoted to the ideological attractions of Soviet Communism (which are minute) or the blandishments of economic aid and trade (which are not very significant either), the importance of the activities of Soviet surrogates have until quite recently not been fully appreciated even though the facts were known and never in dispute.

Imperial powers have frequently in history used others to do their work: the Romans made the clientelae fight various enemies, in the 16th century mercenaries (Landsknechte) mainly of German and Swiss origin were assisting the highest bidder all over Europe. The British army had (and still has) its Gurkhas and the French their Spahis and their Foreign Legion. But the role of the Cubans and the East Germans is different in many respects be it only because they act for their patron in peace as well as in war. Their role is as much political as military.

Why Cuba, why East Germany? Their choice, is of course, not accidental. Generally, Cuba in the Third World is dissociated from the industrial North - culturally, politically and even ethnically.⁴ East Germany, on the other hand, is not only one of the most faithful Soviet satellites, it is also the most competent, efficient, and probably the most ambitious. Neither Poles nor Czechs or Hungarians are heirs to a global tradition or have any wishes to serve the cause of Communism (or any other cause) in places far away from their homeland. Germany, of which East Germany is part, does have such a tradition, hence the greater willingness to impart the blessing of the Communist system to countries such as South Yemen and Ethiopia.

Political-military action through proxies has many undoubted advantages, above all on the psychological level. Everywhere in Asia and Africa there is a residue of suspicion against great powers; if Soviet, rather than Cuban soldiers had fought in Africa there would have been an outcry. The use of Cuban forces on the other hand seems innocuous. As a small country, and part of the non-aligned bloc, the Cuban presence has legitimacy, and is free from any imperialist taint. Cubans stick out in Africa much less than Russians or other Slavs. Thus President Sekou Toure of Guinea expelled the Soviets in 1961, but a few years later requested the Cubans to set up a people's militia and even staffed his own presidential guard with Cubans. East Germany, while not exactly non-aligned, is also no superpower except in the field of athletics and swimming. On the other hand, these Communist missionary activities in the Third World have a

beneficial psychological effect on Cuba and East Germany. They enhance their status in the world, making them appear more important than they really are. Having built a nearly perfect society at home they are now called upon to share their experience with others, surely a sign of distinction. They are the model pupils among the satellites. Their motivation is certainly not economic: East Germany and Cuba are the two Communist countries with the lowest percentage of trade with the Third World (6 percent in the case of the GDR, less in the case of Cuba).

The economic interest of the satellites in some Third World countries is bound to increase in the years to come. They have been given to understand by the Soviet Union that they will have to fend for themselves, at least to a certain extent, inasmuch as the purchase of vital raw materials is concerned. This interest relates however above all to the rich, oil-producing countries, whereas the East German and Cuban presence is limited for the time being to poorer African countries which have not much to offer. However, no secret is made of the fact that the Communist foothold in Africa south of the Zambesi will ultimately result in depriving "imperialism" of chrome, manganese and the other strategic minerals found in the Southern part of Africa.

Intervention by proxy on a massive scale is possible, on the whole, only in countries in which the local rulers are basically willing to enter the Soviet orbit. Governments wishing to preserve their independence may still invite a few East German advisers. But they will not employ thousands of them in the most sensitive positions.

East Germany's activity has been limited in the main to Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and South Yemen - in these "neuralgic points" in world affairs they appear (to use their own terminology,) as "representatives of the bloc of socialist states." East German leaders are paying long visits to these countries, and these visits are reciprocated in due course. Thousands of East German experts are active in state administration, education, industry, health, but above all in the security forces and the army. As one of the world's leaders in sports, German trainers are very much in demand; promising young Africans are invited to special institutions in East Germany in which they receive both professional training and political indoctrination. Others are trained in special camps locally. Even the constitution of South Yemen has been copied from the DDR and the secret police, the Tanzim (the main pillar of the regime) is entirely in the hands of the emissaries from East Berlin. Ethiopia and South Yemen are among the world's most murderous dictatorships but they are officially described as the most progressive Marxist-Leninist regimes in Africa and the Middle East; their leaders, such as Mengistu, are acclaimed as men of peace and great humanists even if they happened to kill and perhaps also to torture their political rivals with their own hands. The East Germans have learned that an excess of flattery has never caused a political crisis - hence, the bestowing of honorary doctorates of philosophy and other such compliments on gangsters and torturers. Western democratic leaders are also known to act with cynicism but in this respect they cannot possibly compete successfully with the Communists.

There is an obvious division of labor between Cubans and East Germans: of the 40,000 Cubans operating in Africa, 80 percent are officers and soldiers on active duty, mainly in Ethiopia (13,000) and Angola (19,000) whereas the great majority of East Germans are civilians, admittedly including many police and intelligence experts.

Cuban troops played a decisive role in the victory of the MPLA in Angola, and they took an active (and probably decisive) part in the Ogaden campaign in 1978 against the Somalis. Since then they have been kept in the two countries mainly on guard duty, to train the local military forces and to free them for action against UNITA and the Somalis. At the same time they act as the main pillar or praetorian guard of shaky governments which have no popular support.

Cuban operations, originally concentrated on Latin America, were extended and subsequently switched to Africa in the early 1960s. Under Nkrumah guerrilla training bases were established in Ghana, Cuban security advisers were at various times active in Algeria, Guinea, Congo, Libya, Benin, Somalia, Sierra Leone though not on a massive scale. Local security forces in Uganda (under Amin) and in Equatorial Africa (under Nguema) were trained by Cubans. More recently the concentration has been on Angola and the Horn of Africa and there has been a regular link with SWAPO fighting for the independence of Namibia.

Mention has been made of the fact that massive involvement of Soviet proxies has so far taken place only in countries in which a basic inclination already existed, i.e., on the part of

"radical" movements or military dictatorships. However, some progress has been made also in certain other circumstances by the Communist "vanguard". Zambia originally had no predisposition towards Communism and Soviet influence; the (official) Zambian press wrote about the East Germans in the 1960s that they "cause unrest wherever they appear" and that they "carry out dirty work for their bosses". Ten years later Kenneth Kaunda went on the East Berlin pilgrimage, proclaiming undying friendship to his "only true friends" and expressing the hope that more help would be given. Kaunda has not been converted to Leninism, but he is now facing on his doorsteps two pro-Communist regimes which required certain political adjustments. At the same time the economic situation had rapidly deteriorated (following the 1978 policy of "guns instead of butter"). Help from the West was next to impossible to obtain and Kaunda could no longer be choosy in his selection of friends. The Zambian situation may recur in other parts of Africa.

Cuban and East German activities in Africa have not always been successful and have on occasion provoked conflict. Wherever Communist presence is on a large scale, there is bound to be tension with the local population: Cuban and East German advisers and soldiers enjoy a considerably higher standard of living which is resented by the locals.⁵ East German experts have made themselves unpopular showing lack of tact and incomprehension vis-a-vis local customs and mentality. Expectations of major and rapid economic progress have nowhere been fulfilled. Busts of Marx and Lenin, cassettes of the

Communist Manifesto (in 20 languages) and even equipment for sport clubs pale next to desperately needed economic aid. The Economic hardship has been a constant among countries of "socialist orientation", excepting only some special cases such as the Sahel countries. Massive aid will not come from the Soviet bloc. Africans have not been slow in realizing this. Zambia's Minister of Justice returning from a conference in Moscow on "Peace and Social Progress" recently reported that the participants had called on the Soviet Union to increase its aid to the African countries. Yet there is no such hope and it seems that the Communist-oriented countries of Africa - but also Cuba and Nicaragua - have been encouraged by Moscow to apply for Western economic aid without in any way lessening their political ties with the Soviet bloc and without reducing the Cuban and East German presence. The assumption is that aid can be obtained from the West without any political strings attached.

The Communists have committed political mistakes. On occasion they have supported the wrong candidate in the struggle for power. Their candidate in Zimbabwe was Joshua Nkomo rather than Mugabe's Zanu, however, when they realized that Nkomo would lose out, they quickly switched, and no enduring harm was done to their interests.

The question has repeatedly been raised in recent years whether Cuba and East Germany are in fact mere surrogates of the Soviet Union or whether they pursue objectives and interests of their own within the general parameters of Soviet political and military strategy. In other words, Cuba's role has been compared with that of a "paladin" rather than a "surrogate".

The debate has caused a great deal of unnecessary confusion. It is based on a misunderstanding of the relationship between the Soviet Union and its clients. This relationship is, of course, more complicated than it was in Stalin's days. Perhaps the relationship between patron and client in ancient Rome is a more apt analogy. The patron has the power (potestas), and can expect obedience (obsequium) on the part of the client in all circumstances. Yet, the relationship is not one sided since the patron very much needs the clients to shore up to his political ambitions. He has the duty to protect the clients and if he should break faith (fides) he will have forfeited any claim to their allegiance. East Germany, one of the Soviet Union's most faithful allies has nevertheless shown feelings of superiority vis-a-vis Soviet inefficiency. This is based on the conviction that a mixture of Marxism-Leninism and German thoroughness is preferable to the Russian admixture of traditional slovenliness.

East Germany can hardly be suspected of pursuing its own objectives in Africa and the Middle East. How real are these claims with regard to Cuba? The Cubans certainly think of themselves as "self-motivated international paladins". It is clear furthermore that in certain circumstances those who conduct Soviet policy in the Third World will listen to the Cubans and sometimes take their advice. The fact that Soviet financial support for Cuba has more than quadrupled in recent years shows that Cuba's role is greatly appreciated. Yet the idea that the Cuban tail has been wagging the Soviet dog is altogether

fanciful. The Soviet Union has a global strategy even if not always comprehensive and consistent, and while Cuba will be praised and rewarded for its active role it will not be permitted to lead the Soviet Union into any venture of any importance unless it corresponds with Soviet interests. Thus at the end of the day, despite outward appearances, Cuba has no more a specific African policy than Bulgaria. Or if it has one, it is of no practical consequence. The possibilities of action for a small country, (or even for a medium power) in the contemporary world are exceedingly narrow as de Gaulle and Tito came to realize. Impressive gestures, defiant speeches, the outward trappings of independence, amount to little or nothing unless they are backed by real power which a small country does not have.

Cuba's African policy is of importance in the domestic Cuban context: it certainly adds to Cuba's pride and self esteem. It strengthens the feeling that the nation has a mission to fulfill in the world - and this at a time of economic failure at home and Castro's predictions that nothing much in this respect is likely to improve in the next twenty years. In these circumstances Cuba's foreign operations may well be a political and psychological necessity. Likewise, Cuban national pride makes it imperative that they persuade themselves that they are acting independently, and that their alliance with the Soviet Union is one between (more or less) equals.

It is not impossible that Cuba may one day want to dissociate itself to some degree from the Soviet Union; there may even be a break. In contrast to the East European Warsaw Pact

countries, it has no common border with the Soviet Union, nor are very strong Soviet forces stationed there. Furthermore, as in the case of Bulgaria, a feeling of Panslavic solidarity is lacking. But on the other hand, it is precisely for its geographical situation that Soviet domination is far less palpably felt than in Eastern Europe. There is economic dependence but no danger of Soviet invasion if Cuba should dare to disobey the patron. In view of its proximity to America the natural inclination on Cuba's part may be to distrust the nearer superpower and to look for support from the more distant one, unless Soviet pressure should become offensive to Cuban pride or its demands exorbitant - or if the Moscow patron should not live up to his obligations as a protector.

For the time being the Soviet Union can count on the support of its proxies which, in the interest of friendly relations it may even treat as paladins.⁶

Cuba and East Germany apart, there is the fascinating case of Libya under Khaddafi which, though not a Communist country has been of much help in promoting the aims of Soviet foreign policy (the invasion of Chad, assistance to Idi Amin, to rebels in the Philippines and in Central America not to mention coups, plots and assassination attempts against the leaders of many countries, and, of course, financial help to many "liberation movements"). The drawback as seen from Moscow is primarily Libya's erratic, and unreliable behavior. Its record as a proxy has not, furthermore, been very successful. Libya's services can be used for some purposes but not for others: For destabilization rather

than for securing pro-Soviet regimes. The Libyans have the money and the weapons but not the political know how; they cannot teach Africans how to develop a state party and administration, let alone a secret police force. From the ideological point of view, the Libyans, while not a rival, must be regarded as agents of confusion.

Nor has mention been made of the PDRY (South Yemen) which has not been very active as a proxy in the past but which is potentially of considerable importance as a base in the contest for the Arab peninsula.

To argue that the United States has surrogates one could point to Morocco which has intervened in Equatorial Africa and elsewhere; the Egyptians who have threatened to intervene in the case of Libyan aggression in several African countries. Britain has kept a small presence in Oman, and they intervened (together with the Senegalese) in Gambia against a coup. The French under Giscard kept some 14,000 soldiers in thirty African countries and they have assisted 10 of them against various threats. The best known case was the defense of Zaire's Sheba province.

However, these operations by Western and pro-Western forces cannot possibly be compared in scale, scope or character with the activities of Soviet "proxies" and "paladins". Under Mitterand the French government has shown no enthusiasm for playing "gendarme"; the present French government prefers to act through the United Nations. Morocco has been preoccupied with domestic affairs and so is Egypt. But even previously pro-Western operations in the Third World were purely defensive and reactive,

in contrast to the activities of the Soviet proxies. Furthermore, they were almost entirely limited to military conflict, leaving systematic political action to the Cubans and the East Germans.

Some Western countries may still have the capability to engage in (political) missionary work and in small scale military rescue operations in the Third World. But none has the missionary zeal and this will give the Soviet Union and its allies an inestimable advantage for years to come.

THE ATTRACTIONS OF IDEOLOGY

Ideology, i.e., Marxist-Leninist doctrine as currently interpreted in the Soviet Union, raises questions about Soviet-Third World relations in three different respects:

To what extent are Soviet operations in the Third World motivated by it?

How do Soviet policy makers and experts explain developments in the Third World in the light of Marxist-Leninist doctrine?

Are Third World leaders and movements attracted by Soviet ideology and how decisive is this for Soviet-Third World collaboration?

For the present investigation only the third is of crucial importance; the first will briefly be discussed elsewhere. In the 1950s it was the fashion in the West to overrate the importance of Communist ideology; ever since the tendency has

been to downplay it. The fact that Soviet ideology has no great power of attraction in the industrial societies of the West does not necessarily mean that it lacks such an appeal among the elite of the lesser developed countries. The belittling of ideology on the part of Western observers is a typical case of "mirror imaging"; because ideology, by and large, is no longer of paramount importance in Western politics it is assumed that the same is true in other societies.

At first sight, Marxism-Leninism is an unlikely doctrine for providing spiritual guidance to the Third World. When Marx envisaged "the revolution" he had the most developed countries in mind, not the most backward, in which the preconditions for a socialist society did not exist. The same is true with regard to Lenin, even though in his time the concepts of the "weakest link" and the "revolution in the East" first appeared.

And yet, despite all incongruities there are certain affinities between Marxism-Leninism and Third World thought which help to explain the sympathies for the Soviet Union in some circles of the Third World. This refers, above all, to the Leninist theory of imperialism which, albeit in a vague and bowdlerized form has been accepted even by non-Marxists in Asia and Africa. It is, of course, not true, as Lenin thought, that the sole (or main) reason for Western imperialist rule was economic - the extraction of cheap raw materials and the wish to find markets. Nor is it true, as he predicted, that the imperialist powers would collapse following decolonisation. But domination by foreigners was all the same a deeply humiliating

experience and the decisive issue is not why the British, French and Dutch came, but that they came, and stayed on. America in this context constitutes a difficult but not insoluble problem for the Leninists: it was not an imperialist power, at least not in Asia and Africa. Therefore, the concept of "Neo-Colonialism" exploitation through the multi-nationals etc. -- is brought in.

The idea that Russia (and the Soviet Union) is an imperialist power does not find a responsive audience in Asia and Africa. For Soviet techniques of conquest have been different. They have traditionally affected adjacent countries which were eventually absorbed. That the Soviet Union has taken over the Baltic countries, Eastern Poland, Bessarabia etc. may worry the Europeans. It does not cause sleepless nights to Third World elites. Soviet advances in the Far East may concern the Chinese and Japanese but not the Indians or the Arabs.

The theory of imperialism apart, Soviet ideology has a certain attraction among Third World activists who see in it a prescription for modernization following a non-capitalist approach, how to become rich and powerful (or at any rate richer and more powerful) than they are now. The preconditions for capitalist development do not today exist in most African, and the less developed Asian countries, nor do the prerequisites for democratic rule. The Soviet model, on the other hand, seems to show how to run a more or less effective dictatorship and to plan the economy. There is no room in most Third World countries for a free press or indeed for much freedom of any sort. It is therefore not surprising that most of these countries should side

with the Soviet bloc on these issues rather than the West in United Nations conferences and on other occasions. Communist inspired dictatorships in the Third World give almost unlimited power to a new administrative class - semi-intellectuals, army officers etc., the new state bourgeoisie. It could plausibly be argued that it is in the class interest of Third World elites to establish a state in which their power will be maximized and made more secure. On the other hand, Third Worldism is also "populist" in inspiration and populism is, in some important respects, related to Leninism even though it may turn into a bitter enemy in the struggle for power.

Some Western observers who cannot possibly be suspected of sympathy for Marxism-Leninism have detected certain positive aspects in the countries of the "socialist orientation" such as Mozambique. To begin with a capitalist alternative does not exist. The administrative class does not enrich itself to the same degree as the private capitalist class. Economic policy may be less efficient and the system is bad for human liberty, but it does, on the whole, generate greater equality. (Peter Wiles). To be fair, comparisons should be made not with Switzerland or Denmark, but with North Yemen or Uganda or even Nigeria.

It is too early at this stage to draw a final balance sheet. The economic record of the countries of "socialist orientation" has been ranging from poor to very poor, almost without exception. On the other hand, they have not been free from corruption or nepotism either. Economic progress has been infinitely more pronounced in countries of non-socialist orientation (Taiwan, South Korea, Ivory Coast).

Brief mention should be made of the divisive factors between Marxism-Leninism and "Third Worldism" as an ideology. Even most countries of the "socialist orientation" are not willing to follow the Soviet lead on religion, nationalism, tribalism and there has been a permanent debate about a specific African or Asian "road to socialism" much to the chagrin of the Soviets. The Soviet idea of the class struggle is not applicable in Asia and Africa; the army (i.e., the officer corps) and/or the intelligentsia take the place of the working class as a "revolutionary vanguard" and this causes endless ideological complications. There are other differences, for instance with regard to the existence and the role of a Communist party in the Third World political system. However, all that matters in the final analysis is that there are in the Third World at least some affinities with Communist (Soviet) doctrine, whereas it is difficult to think of much ideological kinship with the West. That ideology is no more than a contributing, never a decisive factor in this rapprochement goes without saying. For if ideology were decisive, the Chinese model would have been at least as attractive as the Soviet. The fact that this has not been the case points to the limitations of the importance of ideology as a link cementing Third World - Soviet cooperation.

Double Strategy -- The Question of Islam

Involvement in the Third World means the necessity of choice. Ideally, the Soviet Union should be on good terms with all countries, social and political forces. Given the many Third

World conflicts, this is frequently impossible. The Soviet Union cannot at one and the same time support India and Pakistan, Ethiopia and Somalia, Libya and Morocco, radical and moderate Arab countries -- let alone the Arabs and Israel. Sometimes the choice may appear easy: the Soviet leadership assumed that the Arabs were many and the Israelis few and that the former would inevitably prove more important. Similar thoughts influenced them in the Indian-Pakistani conflict. In other circumstances, making a choice may be highly undesirable; there is always the danger that the Soviet leaders may be backing the wrong horse. Furthermore, even in the case of victory a price has to be paid. For this reason the Soviet Union has tried to play the role of the disinterested onlooker, and on occasion, even the arbiter ("the spirit of Tashkent,") the friend of both sides, eager to restore peace and to establish a common front against the real enemy -- "Western imperialism." The war between Iran and Iraq was an example; the Soviet Union was under pressure to take both sides, and it refrained from doing so.

At other times, staying aloof may be far more difficult. Mention has been made of the Soviet dilemma vis-a-vis Communist parties in the Third World. It cannot altogether dissociate itself from them, but it has frequently to make deals over their heads and against their best interests. Sometimes it may even have to sacrifice them.

Another example, of even greater political consequence is the Soviet attitude towards Islam. As a leading North African commentator once succinctly put it: "The Soviet Union has the

friendliest of feelings and is the staunchest ally of Islam. On one solitary condition: That the Muslims do not live in the Soviet Union itself..." This comment was made before the rebirth of militant Islam (Khomeinism, the Muslim Brotherhood,) which, from the Soviet point of view has made the problem even more complicated, the opportunities greater, but also the risks higher. It has been Soviet policy for at least two decades to combat and isolate Islam at home and to woo Muslims abroad. On the whole, this policy has met with some success; a confrontation between Moscow and militant Muslim leaders such as Khomeini and Khaddafi has certainly been prevented.

MUSLIMS IN THE SOVIET UNION

The number of Soviet Muslims has been a bone of contention between Western and Soviet experts.⁷ According to the former, there are 50 million Azerbaidjans, Uzbeks, Kazakjs. Tadjiks, etc., according to Soviet sources, only 35-40 million, many of whom do not profess Islam in any case. Fifty million is probably too high a figure, but it is not a matter of dispute that the birthrate is considerably higher in the so-called Muslim republics than elsewhere in the U.S.S.R. (3.1 percent in Tadjikistan, 3.0 percent in Uzbekstan, 2.8 percent in Turkmanistan, etc.). It is true that by no means all of the Muslims are believers. It is also true -- and Soviet experts have admitted this much -- that facts have shown that Islam, which after all is not just a religion, but a way of life -- is

more deeply rooted than any other faith. Anti-religious propaganda which has continued openly and discreetly has not had much effect. The more educated sections of the Muslim population have been influenced, but they too want to preserve their ethnic identity and if 'old fashioned' religion has declined in this milieu, a more modern nationalism has replaced it.

There has been speculation, much of it far-fetched, in recent years about the impact of the Islamic resurgence on Soviet Muslims. Some analysts have even explained the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan with reference to the Islamic renaissance. That there has been such an influence is undeniable, but its political importance should not be overrated. There is no "common front" of minorities in the Soviet Union, nor is such unity likely to arise. The Azerbaidjanis may dislike the Russians, but they traditionally dislike their Armenians and Georgian neighbors even more. The Tadjik (who are Shiite and speak Persian,) have not much in common with Tartars, Kazakhs, etc., who are Sunnite and speak Turkish languages. There is no Muslim "clergy" in the Soviet Union which can spread and organize the new gospel. The political and economic achievements of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, or even the Arab countries hardly constitute a major attraction for Soviet Muslims, nor a threat to Communist rule.

The coming years may well witness a strengthening of a new Muslim identity in the Soviet Union, and this trend as well as the danger of the export of an "Islamic counterrevolution" (Brezhnev's phrase,) will be followed by the Soviet leaders with

a watchful eye. But it is most unlikely that this will in any way influence Soviet domestic and foreign policy.⁸ On the contrary, Soviet propaganda has tried to make use of the strong anti-Western and collectivist element in the Islamic renaissance. Since in Islamic perspective, Marxism is of course also very much a Western secular ideology and therefore reprehensible, but left wing Muslims (and some major non-Soviet Communists,) have been trying to find common ground between the original social ideals of Islam -- with the prophet Mohammed as a precursor of Karl Marx. Seen in historical light, this kind of argumentation is deeply fraudulent, but it had nevertheless some effect, just as some Christians have found their way to Communism by way of the "socialist ideals" of early Christianity.

Of far greater importance is the fact that as far as its social composition is concerned, the Islamic revival is largely a radical protest movement of the lower class -- against the rich, and against foreign influences. It resembles populist movements in other parts of the world, its specifics in the Middle East are its religious character.

Soviet policy in the Middle East has tolerated ideological concessions towards Islam outside the Soviet Union for almost twenty years; perhaps the first to envisage an "Islamic Marxism" was Ali Yata, Secretary General of the Moroccan Communist party. He was followed by some Iranian student leaders. Inside the Soviet Union commentators have argued that Communists in the Arab world are tactically correct in avoiding criticism of Islam altogether. This refers, however, only to countries in which

Communists are not in power; in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Muslim festivals are ignored, including the Prophet's birthday, and children are given an anti-religious education. Reports about persecution of Islam in the Soviet Union are routinely contradicted by official Soviet Muslim spokesmen such as the ubiquitous "Mufti" Babahanov, Chairman of the Spiritual Administration of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. On his frequent visits abroad, he has spread the word that Islam has every possible freedom in the Soviet Union. Other, non-religious Soviet spokesmen, including Brezhnev, have requested time and again that Marxists draw the basic dividing line not between believers and atheists but between exploiters and the exploited, and that they would like to cooperate closely with the many millions of Muslims who actively participate in the struggle against imperialism in Asia and Africa.

That the Soviet dual strategy has worked reasonably well is shown by the Libyan example. Up to Spring 1974, the Soviet Union was for Khaddafi's Libya, an imperialist country as much as the United States; it merely wanted to take the place of the U.S. and gain a foothold in the area. At the Tripoli Islamic Conference in 1974, Khaddafi stated that Islam was more progressive than Communism and that Islam had provided the guiding principles for the happiness of the individual and of society. Communism was a vanguard party of individuals who had one thing in common -- "the lust for power".

Beginning in 1974, there was a reorientation which led to cooperation; in the sphere of ideology. Both sides agreed to

disagree, arguing "that which unites us is far more important than the divisions." Such a statement was not surprising from a pragmatic politician such as Mr. Kosygin; that militant Muslims should have accepted it is more noteworthy. The Soviet Union had lost at the time its foothold in Egypt and was looking for new rules. Libya, on the other hand, which had not been very successful in its attempts to gain leadership of the Arab world was searching for powerful allies. In the case of Khomeini, Soviet progress was less spectacular but nonetheless not negligible -- the result of both common interest and clever manipulation. True, there is in Iran traditional suspicion of the designs of the powerful neighbor from the North. But Soviet policy showed that these suspicions could be overcome by exploiting internal divisions in the Third World and between these countries and the West. It also showed that even extreme Muslim leaders are by no means impervious to realpolitik and that their fanaticism is not indiscriminate.

Unlike the West, Soviet experts and policy makers have never underrated the attraction of Islam; they were aware of the strength of the Islamic revival in Iran in the middle 1970s when most other observers tended to belittle it. On the other hand, they have not exaggerated it, as became the fashion in many Western circles after the fall of the Shah. As far as Moscow is concerned, Islamic revival is not the wave of the future, but a temporary manifestation of the general protest movement in backward societies.

Soviet experts assume that it will disappear following its failure to solve urgent economic and social problems. Pro-Soviet elements will try to take over the leadership of this inchoate radical movement, which, they assume, will gradually shed its Islamic coloring. But they also take into account that they may be mistaken, and they are moving with great caution.

DIPLOMACY

After three decades of inactivity the Soviet Union has been diplomatically more active in the Third World than any other nation. These activities include the exploitation of regional conflicts, as well as "classical diplomacy," the formalization of its relationship with other countries through treaties and agreements.⁹ No other country has been instrumental in arranging so many state visits and top level conferences. No other nation has invested so many efforts in cultural and quasicultural exchanges. The Soviet Union has tried on occasion to act as "honest broker" in conflicts between Third World nations. A large propaganda effort has been staged, Soviet periodicals and films are distributed by the embassies, local newspapers are subsidized, and Soviet radio stations beam broadcasts to the Third World in most Asian and African languages. This effort far exceeds the activities of the Western nations taken together.

THE EXPLOITATION OF CONFLICT SITUATIONS

It has been said that, but for the Indo-Chinese (and the Indo-Pakistani) conflict, but for the Arab-Israeli confrontation,

the dispute between Algeria and Morocco, and other such endemic conflicts, the Soviet Union would not have been able to make much headway in Asia and Africa. There is a kernel of truth in this assertion: The Soviet penetration of the Arab world began with the arms deals with Egypt in 1955 as the Arab-Israeli conflict became more acute. The rapprochement with India was intensified after India's defeat in the war with China in 1962. However, exploitation of such opportunities can explain Soviet achievements in the Third World only up to a point. Neither India, Pakistan, Israel, nor the Arab "frontline" states have joined the Soviet camp. Those which entered the Soviet orbit have not done so as the result of a conflict with their neighbors. Political help and military aid have created a climate of good will in India and the Arab world. But such good will can be translated only to a limited extent into tangible support for the Soviet cause. Only Syria among the Arab "frontline states" has signed a treaty with Moscow which may give substantial military advantages to the Soviet Union. The good will has mainly manifested itself in anti-American rhetoric rather than accepting the Soviet political and social model. It is quite likely that such anti-Americanism was unavoidable in any case as far as the more radical Third World countries are concerned.

Soviet diplomacy has tried to be on good (or at least better-than-normal) terms with as many Third World countries as possible. Thus they scrupulously refrained from taking sides in the war between Iraq and Iran. In other cases, e.g. Ethiopia and Somalia, it was clearly impossible to keep the good will of both

sides and the Soviet Union predictably switched to its support to the side likely to prevail. This "inevitability of choice" has created dilemmas for the Soviet Union and it will cause problems in future. Soviets' clients have been defeated (Nasser in 1967) and this necessitated deeper Soviet involvement than may have been thought prudent -- or cost effective. The process of involvement has a momentum of its own. Unless the patron takes good care of his clients, he loses face, his reputation suffers, other clients will be reluctant to entrust him their fate.

Lastly, exploitation of conflict situations is not the monopoly of superpowers. Small countries have played out one big power against another since time immemorial for their own purposes. Some have reached a degree of perfection in this field, changing sides fairly regularly, always on the lookout for the higher bidder. Europe in the age of wars of religion (the 16th and 17th centuries) is a perfect example of such practices, but they have, of course, been used anywhere and at all times. While the Soviet Union has no wish to be "used" in such a way, it cannot entirely escape this. There has to be give and take, alliances cannot be one way streets. The Soviet leaders will be fully aware (and accept) that their partners pursue interests which have little or nothing in common with their own. They will still be willing to make concessions inasmuch as they assume that in the longer run their smaller allies will become more dependent on them and the junior partner will have to follow the lead of the senior partner.

FEAR AND "FALSE CONSCIOUSNESS"

In Third World diplomacy the Soviet Union makes full use of two syndromes widespread in Asia and Africa (and to a certain extent also in Latin America) -- fear on one hand and "the-Soviet-Union-is-a-far-away-country" perception on the other. While much (perhaps too much) has been said and written about ideology as a weapon, fear of the Soviet Union is on the whole an underrated factor. Whereas the Soviet Union may not be able to extend much help to Third World countries in the economic field and in other respects, the countries situated not far from the Soviet borders know that their powerful neighbors are capable of doing considerable harm to them. If they should act systematically against Soviet interests, the full blast of Communist propaganda will be directed against them, they may be subjected to various measures of destabilization and Soviet displeasure will be made felt in other ways.

The projection of Soviet military power and its political use ought to be mentioned here. The presence of the Soviet navy has not only limited the possibility of American intervention, but showing the flag has a psychological impact today as in the past. Thus, the need for military action is obviated ipso facto by the Soviet presence -- i.e., the "demonstration effect." The same is true, a fortiori, with regard to the role of the Soviet army vis-a-vis Russia's neighbors. Whatever its economic weaknesses, the Soviet Union is a military superpower and it is conventional wisdom in the Third World that defiance is a risky business. The cautious behavior of Turkey facing Soviet (and

proxy) intervention in its domestic affairs, Pakistan's submissiveness despite all-out Soviet support for India, the restraint vis-a-vis Russia shown even by Khomeini and his followers may serve as illustrations.

On the other hand, in countries located far away from the Soviet borders the opposite syndrome is frequently encountered: Since the Soviet Union is (or seems) so far away¹⁰ it cannot possibly constitute a danger and therefore it is a natural counterweight, a political ally against the other (and nearer) superpower. For this reason, for many Latin Americans the United States will always be the greater threat.

By the same geopolitical logic the Asian and Middle Eastern countries situated near the Soviet border should look for American support against the superpower which is nearer, more dynamic and also happens to have the greater appetite. Common sense should make them wary of excessively close ties with the Soviet Union and look for better relations with the United States as a counterweight. This is true as much for Communist countries wanting to maintain their independence (as the Yugoslav and Chinese examples show) as for non-Communists. Interestingly, some of the Marxists have shown greater realism in this respect than the non-Marxists. Whatever their domestic orientations and ideological preferences, all these countries want to preserve their independence and sovereignty. Yet frequently it is not self interest or political savvy which dictates their behavior but "false consciousness." Their policies are affected by various delusions and misconceptions. The concept "false

consciousness" was first introduced by Marxist thinkers trying to explain the (to them) incomprehensible fact that many workers do not vote -- or act -- according to their class interest but give their support to conservative parties, (e.g., the "working class Tories"). Whether "false consciousness" is applicable in a domestic context is not certain; political decisions are clearly not influenced by class interest alone, nor is it always possible to identify who belongs to a class. Be that as it may, "false consciousness" is certainly of help to explain the otherwise inexplicable, namely the fact that countries in an exposed position, threatened by Soviet domination, and eager to maintain their independence, nevertheless may pursue a policy contrary to their own national interest. It is understandable that such countries will refrain from provoking their powerful neighbor. It is not readily intelligible why they should sometimes go out of their way to antagonize the other superpower which could redress the balance. Elementary logic seems to demand such a course of action, unless, of course, they have reached the conclusion that the other superpower (America) is too weak to help them. But this is decidedly not the case: America's military power more frequently than not is overrated, rather than underestimated, in Third World countries. Another possible explanation for the illogical and possibly suicidal behavior of some Third World nations is the assumption that America is indeed so strong that they have nothing to fear from the Soviet Union. For in the case of a Soviet encroachment America would, more or less automatically, come to their help, however bad the relations

had been previously. These assumptions are fairly widespread in Third World elites (and also among European neutrals and neutralists), but they alone cannot explain the seemingly paradoxical behavior described above.

This leads to the inevitable conclusion that their foreign policy is not mainly guided by logic, nor by self interest, but that powerful emotions such as xenophobia, of the West in particular, have a greater impact. Is false consciousness a permanent condition or a temporary aberration? Inasmuch as such behavior may lead to national suicide, and since societies, in contrast to individuals, rarely commit suicide, chances are that in the long run the facts of geopolitical life will prevail. But the emphasis should be on "in the long run" and it ought to be repeated that what has been said applies mainly to countries located near the Soviet borders. It certainly is not true with regard to Latin America or most of Tropical Africa. Seen from Moscow, it is in the best interest of the Soviet Union to perpetuate this false consciousness even though irrational behavior on the part of neighbors and clients may cause problems for Russia too.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AND EXCHANGES

The aim of the cultural policy of the Soviet Union, like that of every other nation, is to create interest in and sympathy for Soviet culture and the Soviet Union in general. This policy is pursued through countless local "friendship societies," radio programs and exchanges in every conceivable field. Between 1957

and 1978 the Soviet Union signed some forty agreements on cultural and scientific cooperation, the first ones (ironically) with Egypt (1957) and Guinea (1959). Russian language teachers have been sent to most Third World countries; 2000 arrive in Africa each year. Soviet ballet groups have visited the major Asian and African countries, and there have been extensive academic exchanges, common botanical and zoological expeditions, Third World technical experts trained in the Soviet Union, as well as the help of Soviet institutes in organizing and developing scientific research in selected Third World countries. There is cooperation in the field of public health, Soviet trainers have helped Asians and Africans to develop their sports facilities, and Soviet soccer teams have visited most African countries. Soviet musicians, painters and sculptors have toured the Third World and taken part in exhibitions; Gogol and have been performed everywhere and selected Soviet movies are shown in remote villages. It would be difficult to think of any field which has been omitted or neglected. In quantitative terms, the Soviet effort has been impressive; after decades of total isolation, tens of thousands of Third World citizens have stayed in the Soviet Union and other Communist bloc countries for shorter or longer periods and the Soviet cultural, scientific, and technological presence in Asia and Africa has also been very substantial.

Benefits that have accrued to the Soviet Union from these activities have been small and sometimes the efforts have been counter productive. The fact that so many Third World students

have been exposed to Soviet realities has not turned most of them into ardent Communists. An inclement climate, strange surroundings, food they dislike, a closed society in which contact with foreigners is discouraged, covert racialism, the virtual impossibility of finding female company, the drabness of Soviet daily life, and many other circumstances act as a damper on enthusiasm. For different reasons Soviet experts sent abroad find a prolonged stay in Asia and Africa less than congenial. Both groups -- the Asian and African students and the Soviet experts -- would greatly prefer America and Western Europe for a prolonged stay and they regard their destination as a poor second best.

The KGB still finds a few recruits among the foreigners, and a few Africans and Asians for unfathomable reasons may come to like the Soviet way of life. But the great majority will not. The fault is by no means all on one side. Some of the demands of the foreigners are unrealistic or even preposterous, given the nature of Soviet society. At one time the Soviets tried to concentrate most Third World students in the Patrice Lumumba University, whereupon the foreign visitors protested against being shut up in a ghetto. But their dispersal over Soviet institutes of higher learning has also not worked well in view of linguistic and other handicaps. As a result of past experience it has been Soviet policy in recent years not to expand exchanges much further but to provide more on the spot training.¹¹ The Soviets have established various institutes in Asia and Africa. On the primary school level Soviet influence has been more marked

(for instance in Algeria, Tanzania, Guinea). But the political impact of such kinds of cultural exchanges has been minimal. For while the Soviets stress the superiority of socialist over "bourgeois" pedagogical models the virtues of the socialist model are, in fact, those of yesterday's Western schools: greater discipline, higher demands from pupils, etc.

Soviet cultural propaganda has had few successes to its credit: Soviet exhibitions in the Third World attract little interest, and Soviet movies find few voluntary viewers (some are more highly appreciated in New York, London and Paris). Soviet books are not widely read. In all these respects Western importations are greatly preferred even though their level may be deplorably low. Soviet culture is thought to be boring not only by Third World highbrows but also on the grass roots level.

If the Soviet effort nevertheless has some effect, it is through its sheer size. Western books and periodicals are very expensive; Soviet books are far more readily available. The Indian and African student, school teacher or scientist may know that the quality of Western professional literature is superior but he will not be able to buy these books. Soviet radio programs attract no particular interest, but the stations are received loud and clear in English and the vernacular for many more hours than Western broadcasts. The endless repetition of the Soviet interpretation of world events is bound to have a cumulative effect. In short, if there are achievements in the field of Soviet cultural propaganda they are the result of an investment which, in some respects, is much greater than that

made by the West.¹² The Soviets, have to overcome, as in other fields, the handicap of inferior quality by sheer quantity and, in some instances, by cheaper prices.

SOVIET ECONOMIC AID AND TRADE

About Soviet economic relations with Third World countries, it can be said grosso modo that they were never very important, that they have decreased in relative importance during the last decade, and that this has not done any major political damage to the Soviet Union. Perhaps there has been less disappointment in the non-oil producing Third World countries than should have been expected because the Soviet leaders never made excessive promises. They always made it clear that their main contributions to Third World countries would be guidance rather than economic assistance. The Soviets are great believers in self-help; they would say that they pulled themselves from backwardness by their own bootstraps. (A comparison which is of doubtful value, for Russia in 1917 had a substantial industry unlike most of Asia and all of Africa after World War II).

For a long time now, too much attention has been devoted in the West to Soviet aid and trade with the Third World. Thus, a CIA study noted as recently as October 1980, "These long-term military and economic aid programs have enabled the U.S.S.R. to forward important strategic, geopolitical, and commercial objectives at low cost -- particularly in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia." A Congressional study published in 1981 said that in 1978 Soviet aid grants "sky rocketed" to a new

record, and a semi-official West German study (1980), claims that between 1968 and 1978 the amount of Soviet aid further increased.

Yet, in actual fact trade between the Soviet Union and the Third World decreased to 13 percent of the Soviet total in 1980 (from 15 percent in 1975), and Soviet economic aid disbursements fell from \$1 billion in 1972 to half that sum in 1980. (This should be compared with \$3-4 billion pumped into Cuba in 1982 alone). What causes some confusion is that sometimes no difference is made between economic and military aid. The latter has been substantial -- more than \$55 billion committed from 1954 to 1981, the former perhaps less than \$20 billion during the same period. Another reason for overrating the extent of Soviet aid is that no difference is made between aid offered and aid actually disbursed, which was less than half of the former over the last decades. On other occasions, Soviet help to Cuba and Vietnam is included in the figures for Soviet aid to the LDC's. Thus \$2.6 billion were pledged in 1979 to the Third World. Disbursement amounted to \$1.8 billion, of which the bulk went to Cuba and Vietnam. All others received \$5.6 billion that year. In the same year the Netherlands alone actively disbursed \$1.8 billion in aid.

The reasons for the low (and declining) Soviet economic presence in the Third World are threefold. The Soviet Union is not one of the world's leaders in trade, and most of its foreign trade is and will be with the other Communist bloc and industrial countries; the choice of Soviet goods for export is limited; the Soviet allies in Eastern Europe have suffered growing

difficulties in recent years which further limit Soviet capacity to extend aid elsewhere.¹³ However, and perhaps most importantly, it is not Soviet policy even to try to compete with the West as far as aid to the Third World is concerned. Soviet leaders believe that development aid (in contrast to trade) is not in the Soviet interest except in cases of an obvious political interest such as Cuba and Vietnam. The Soviet Union favors resource transfer from "North" to "South" -- but not for itself -- only for the Western "colonialist nations."¹⁴ According to Soviet thought, the best contribution which the Soviet bloc can make to world economic development is to grow in strength. If aid is given, it will be given bilaterally, not through multi-lateral agencies, so as to gain maximum propaganda benefit. But, by and large, Soviet leaders do not believe that friendship and influence can be gained through extending more aid.

In the 1950's the Soviet Union had higher hopes for political dividends from economic assistance and investments. During that period there was a concentration on a few major projects such as the Aswan Dam and steel works in India. Since then, the trend has been, on the whole, away from mammoth projects; one exception was the \$2 billion grant to Morocco in 1978 for the development of the local phosphate industry, the largest deal ever signed between the Soviet Union and a Third World country. But deals of this kind are straightforward commercial deals, not acts of charity. Morocco will have to pay back the Soviet Union in phosphate on terms considerably lower

than the world market price. (A similar, albeit smaller deal was concluded with Guinea concerning the production of bauxite: the first twelve year production will be to repay Soviet credits). To provide a few more illustrations: the Soviet Union pays less than the world market price for Afghan gas, for shoes from India, and for a variety of other raw materials or commodities, the production of which it helped to finance.

To what extent is Soviet aid directly serving political aims? The fact that many times more help has been given to Cuba and Vietnam than to Third World countries has been mentioned. The question thus arises only for a relatively small part of development aid. About three quarters of this went to six countries: India and the Middle East (Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Afghanistan). In recent years, Morocco and Algeria were added to this list. In most cases the political motivation is obvious -- the decline in trade relations with Egypt after Nasser, the disproportionate amount of aid given at one time to Chile and more recently to Nicaragua. On the other hand, the reorientation in the Middle East from Egypt to the oil producing countries had also commercial motives: the Soviet Union badly needed to increase its hard currency reserves. Given Egypt's economic situation, it must have occurred to the Soviet leaders that a good case could be made in favor of transferring their activities to countries which, in view of their natural resources, were likely to repay their debts fully and on time. Hence, for instance, the increase in trade in the 1970's with the Shah's Iran, and the relative decrease with Turkey. It could be

argued that in some cases aid was given to countries oriented towards the West (Turkey, Iran under the Shah, Morocco), with the intention to weaken their ties with "imperialism" and "monopoly capitalism."

But if such intentions existed, which seems quite likely, they were only one motive among many, and certainly not the decisive one. If a country had made the jump into the Communist camp, such as Cuba or Vietnam, political considerations were always paramount. But in relations with other Third World countries, friendly, unfriendly, and indifferent, economic motives have not been altogether absent. The Soviet Union wants to make political and economic profits in its dealings with Third World countries, and this is likely to cause problems in the future.

Poor Soviet aid performance in the Third World has provoked criticism on the part of Asian and African leaders. Among the specific complaints, the following have been repeatedly made:

- o The Soviet bloc loan terms are frequently harder.
- o Unlike the West, it seldom gives non-project aid such as raw materials, food, or fuel.
- o Little access is provided to Soviet bloc markets.
- o The goods supplied by the Soviet bloc are frequently of low quality; they would be unsalable elsewhere.
- o The Soviet Union has sometimes been reluctant to grant repayment relief to countries in economic difficulty.
- o Its voluntary payments to specialized U.N. agencies are small and made in non-convertible rubles.

- o The exchange rate between north and Third World currencies has been changed to the latter's detriment.
- o The Soviet bloc resells in the West products received from Third World countries ("switch trade").
- o The Soviet bloc avoids international conferences in which specific pledges or donations to developing countries are concerned. These and similar complaints are made, and as the Soviet aid programs come of age, repayments of debts on the part of Third World countries quite frequently exceed new grants. This is true not only with regard to Egypt, but also for India.

Given the fact that Soviet capacity to remedy these complaints is limited (and that there would be other complaints even if they did), the overall policy has been to put Soviet interests first, to give the very minimum necessary, and to concentrate on military aid. True, there have been discussions inside the Soviet Union about a more sophisticated approach towards the Soviet economic presence in the Third World. But in view of the limited trade and aid potential of the bloc, these have been largely academic.

But the salient fact is that a poor Soviet record has caused no major political damage. Similarly, the fact that the economic difficulties of non-oil producing LDC's are to a substantial part due to (or are at least aggravated by) OPEC policies has caused only mild protests in Third World capitals. How to explain this apparent paradox? The details about the economic situation are

known only to a small elite in Third World countries. The media are induced to give little exposure to these facts. Much more is expected from the "rich" West than from the Soviet bloc. And lastly, despite the disappointments, a certain mental affinity is still felt with the Soviet bloc ("socialism") rather than with the West, and this, at least in the short run, weighs more heavily than the economic facts of life. In the long run, needless to say, Soviet inability or unwillingness to offer greater help is having a negative effect on Third World attitudes. But the Soviet leaders also know that in their relations with the Third World the economic dimension will never be decisive. They may be good Marxists-Leninists, but they clearly believe in the primacy of policy over economics in their Third World agenda. Ironically, Western capitalists adopt quasi-Marxist attitudes when dealing with the Third World, expecting dividends as the result of economic investment.

China has followed, in this respect at least, the Soviet example: Chinese disbursements to Third World countries have steadily fallen since 1976 and are now less than \$100 billion, their lowest level since the 1960's. Most of this aid went to a few countries such as Pakistan, Burma, Sudan and Djibouti, but loans were also offered to some East African countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, and Zambia, in which China had a traditional, albeit small interest.

ARMS TRANSFER AND THE MILITARY OPTION

Military transactions with the Third World have been one of the most important levers in Soviet policy, yet for many years these have been given hardly any publicity: the early Soviet arms deal (with Syria, Afghanistan and Egypt in 1955/56) were systematically played down, the deal with Egypt was ostensibly carried out through a third party (Czechoslovakia). Having denounced for decades the "merchants of death", the Soviet Union found itself uncomfortable in the role of one of the world's leading arms suppliers. The Soviet leaders preferred to create the impression that their help to the third world was basically limited to disinterested fraternal advice: how to organize trade unions, to improve education and health services, and, of course, to help in practical ways economic development. But their capacity to render economic help was exceedingly limited, diverting resources to the Third World was never popular among the Soviet public, and the Soviet leaders soon realized that even major infusions of credits would not reap them much gratitude.

Ambitious Third World leaders such as Nasser or Sukarno wanted arms both for practical purposes and as status symbols. These could be obtained from the West only with difficulties and at relatively high cost. The Soviet armament industry on the other hand was capable of supplying great quantities of modern arms on terms which were far more acceptable from the LDC's point of view (barter deals such as Egyptian cotton for MIG's and tanks.) Gradually arms exports to the Third World became a substantial factor in the foreign trade of the U.S.S.R. While full figures are not available, arms agreements with the Third

World are estimated at \$55-60 billions since 1956 of which some \$45 billion were actually delivered. Non-military aid during the same period covered \$20 billion of which only \$10 billion were disimbursed -- a striking discrepancy.¹⁵ Total Soviet exports in 1977 were about \$45 billion of which some \$6-7 billion went to the developing countries. Soviet arms exports to LDC's that year were \$4 billion -- the largest single item by far.

Most of the Soviet military assistance originally went to the Middle East, about half of the total to the Arab countries. In recent years North Africa and Tropical Africa have also emerged as major recipients. First, agreements were concluded with Somalia (1963) South Yemen (1969) and Congo (1969). In the 1970s, Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia (1976) were added to this list. Today Libya, Iraq, Syria, and Algeria are among the leading recipients of Soviet arms. The great advantage from the LDC's point of view was, as already indicated, that they could buy more arms for less money. The price of one U.S. F-15 was equal approximately to that of two Soviet MIG-23's, and for the price of one F-4 they could obtain three MIG-21's. While U.S. planes were superior in performance it is not certain that they were substantially superior and the same is true a fortiori with regard to less sophisticated weapons. Exact prices, discounts on list prices, and forms of payment have been kept secret. We have it on the authority of the late Gamal Abdul Nasser who, in an emotional speech expressing genuine gratitude, related how he had gone to Moscow after the Six Day War in 1967, and how the Soviet leaders offered him virtually free of charge ("We would never

have been able to pay for it") far more weapons that he had dared to ask for. On the other hand most of the Soviet arms trade in the 1970s was directed to the oil rich countries of the Middle East and North Africa, and pressure has been exerted on not-so-rich recipients (including Benin, Congo and Madagascar) to pay for previous deals. Thus by the middle 1970s there was much reason to assume that Soviet "military aid" was, overall, commercially profitable.¹⁶

Soviet arms shipments to the Third World made recipients considerably dependent on Soviet advice, the supply of spare, parts, and logistic support, etc. True, it gave them, as in Egypt access to air and naval bases. Yet, the more sophisticated the arms system, the greater the dependence, which raises the broader question of military and political benefits accruing to the Soviet Union from these arms deals.

Soviet leaders have, of course, been aware for a long time that they could compete in this field with the West far more easily than in others and that they could, in fact operate as arms dealers from a position of strength. Arms deals, as in the case of Egypt in 1955 have been the point of departure for many Soviet political initiatives in the Middle East. But it is also true that neither arms deals per se, nor the presence of Soviet military advisers, nor the most favorable terms for payment have created a secure foundation for Soviet presence in the Third World. Military penetration in Egypt had been very thorough, but not sufficient to prevent a reversal in Egypt's foreign policy. Being men of the world, the Soviet leaders must have known that

gratitude is not a factor to be counted upon in world affairs. There, as elsewhere, complaints would harp on the quality of Soviet arms, and the behavior of Soviet military advisers. The inability to pay fully and on time among other bones of contention have further dampened Soviet-Third World relations. In fact, 2,000 Cubans in an African country may have a far more potent political impact than the 20,000 Soviet advisers had in Egypt. Third World countries have tried for a variety of reasons (technological, political, and economic) to diversify their sources of arms and supplies.

In the overall balance, political and economic gains clearly outweigh losses in Soviet arms trade and aid with the Third World. The supply of arms has not been a magic wand. Just as the decisive issue is not whether in a certain Third World country the banks have been nationalized for a foreign trade monopoly - or even a state party established the paramount question is not the supply of arms but in whose hands political power resides -- the problem of political leadership. And since power in most Third World countries has come to rest in the hands of the military, directly or indirectly, the decisive issue, seen from Moscow, is how to win over the officer corps in the Third World countries, or if this should not be possible, to help to overthrow and replace them by more amenable candidates. Soviet leaders remember the crucial fact that with the exception of the Allende government in Chile, committed pro-Soviet governments have never come to power through peaceful means but always through violence, mainly military coups and civil wars. This is

true with regard to Egypt in the 1950s and Somalia in 1969, it applies to Iraq and Congo-Brazzaville in 1968, to Benin in 1971 and Ethiopia in 1974, and of course, to Angola and Mozambique and Nicaragua. Likewise, Madagascar, Syria, Libya, and even the little island of Grenada, (even though the local 1979 coup there -- was bloodless) can be included here. True, in a few of these cases the military leader (or the junta) was only gradually converted to more ardent pro-Sovietism; this was the case with regard to President Nasser and Khaddafi; Colonel Kerekou of Benin is a special case since his various ideological conversions (to Marxism, to Islam, etc.) should be taken with some reserve. In one or two other cases, the attachment to the Soviet bloc came after an internal struggle within the leadership as in the overthrow of President Rubay of South Yemen by Abd al Fattah Ismail in 1978.

Soviet observers came to believe in the 1960s that as political parties were structurally too weak in most Third World countries, the Communists had not much of a chance and the officer corps was bound to be propelled into a position of leadership. At about this time the concept of the "military intelligentsia" was first developed in Moscow. This did not, of course, imply that all officers were good bets from the Soviet point of view, only the revoliutsionni demokrati pogonakh i.e., the "revolutionary democrats with epaulettes". This referred to sons of peasant or lower middle class families, who felt the resentment of poor people vis-a-vis the rich (and of the army officer stationed in the province against the capital,) who made

common cause with the radical intelligentsia and were willing both to carry out far reaching domestic reforms and to cooperate closely with the Soviet Union.

Soviet observers thought that in most Third World countries power would pass into the hands of these radical-progressive officers within a number of years. But military rule was regarded only as a transient stage. For with all their enthusiasm, the officers lacked the qualities needed for political work and organizational activity. They were (in the best case) patriots, devoted to duty, determined and disciplined. But they were not administrators, except on the lower and medium levels, and they could not mobilize the masses. This could be achieved only by an avant garde political party i.e., the Communists, and once such a party had come into being these regimes would cease, in fact, to be military in character.

Events during the last dozen years have not born out these Soviet assumptions. The army and the police are still the repositories of power and there is no reason to assume that this will change in the foreseeable future. It could be argued that from the Soviet point of view it does not greatly matter whether a certain country is run by a military junta or a small group of civilians, whether the dictator is a colonel or a doctor of philosophy, provided that Moscow can more or less count on his loyalty. This is no doubt true particularly with regard to the diplomats and the KGB, if not for the ideologists who face difficulties of Leninist interpretation. But it also means that

if power in a pro-Soviet country rests in a few hands, there is always the danger that these few will be killed or deposed if there is no mass party. A fairly substantial praetorian guard is needed, a native or "foreign legion". which remains loyal to the regime.

The Soviets originally assumed that pro-Soviet regimes could come to power as the result of decolonization and the "wars of liberation" without much assistance on the part of the Soviet Union. But decolonization has ended and if the Soviets wish to install more reliable pro-Soviet regimes in the Third World, this can only be done through violent action.¹⁷ The Afghani model - military occupation, seems impracticable for most Third World countries for the time being. Far more likely alternatives are coup d'etats instigated, engineered or at least assisted by the Soviet Union and its proxies, and civil wars on other internal unrest, in which massive help is provided by the surrogates to the pro-Soviet party.

The Soviet sphere of influence in the Third World will expand only as the result of a major effort. Everything points to the fact that the Soviet leaders are willing to make this effort; how much priority will be given will depend on the general orientation and the dynamism of the post-Brezhnev generation of Soviet policy makers. The capability to intervene exists - not everywhere, but in many countries - owing mainly to the presence of surrogates and the absence of such forces on the side of the West, the ability of the KGB to engage in covert action and the very reduced capacity on the part of the West to

undertake such action. The Soviet leaders will probably be careful not to intervene in places where the United States is heavily committed; this could lead to undesirable escalation of conflict. But the U.S. is not heavily committed in many places, and countries like Sudan and Zaire will remain obvious targets of destabilization and intervention. True, Moscow will continue to recognize inherent risks, but they may be acceptable. There is another danger from the Soviet point of view - that following a pro-Soviet take over in one country, there will be a negative reaction among its neighbors just as an infection produces antibodies. The price that has to be paid for Soviet advance may be too high: The ideal solution would be gradual (and necessarily slow) progress, on a broad front, towards pro-Sovietism in the Third World. In other words, it would be highly desirable if South Yemen would not be the pioneer in the Middle East, but if instead all Arab and North African countries would gradually move into the Soviet orbit. But this is illusory because local conditions vary greatly and also in view of the enmities between Arab and North African countries. Strong Soviet support for Libya is bound to antagonize its neighbors.

Similarly, very close Soviet ties with Syria will not be like elsewhere in the Arab world. This is a risk the Soviets have to take. Since the optimistic predictions of 1970 have not come true, they will, in all likelihood concentrate their efforts on a limited number of countries - to consolidate their hold on those they have, and to take over others, chosen in view of their intrinsic importance or because of a favorable prognosis for radical change.

K.G.B.

The activities of Soviet intelligence in the Third World have seldom been paid sufficient attention and this despite the fact that the KGB is an important tool in the penetration and consolidation of Soviet influence. Its tasks in the developing countries of Asia and Africa are different in kind from their assignments in the West: there are no industrial secrets to be stolen and the order of battle of the Cameroon army is of only limited interest to Soviet policy makers. On the other hand, Soviet operatives are very active in recruiting influence agents as well as establishing close relations with politicians and military men in key positions -- or candidates for such positions. They can offer both money and support for their career, and they have not been, on the whole, unsuccessful. On the other hand, Soviet intelligence has been active in covert action in the Third World countries against governments and parties deemed insufficiently pro-Soviet. These activities range from the instigation of military coups and supply of arms of insurgents to provision of political, financial, and logistic help to pro-Soviet groups.

Since Soviet intelligence has been apprehended in flagranti more than once in the 1960s there has been greater caution. A division of labor has been introduced and many of these operations are now carried by the Cuban DGI and the East German ministry for state security. However, the strong presence of the KGB in many Asian and African countries shows that Soviet intelligence by no means refrains from covert action of this kind even now.

The KGB has not been very subtle, to put it mildly, in its approach, but then subtlety is frequently contraindicated in Third World conditions. In theory, Soviet intelligence operatives are much better prepared than Western; their training, at least on paper, lasts much longer and they should have greater familiarity with local conditions, the language, etc. Yet, in practice this is often not the case, perhaps because the KGB recruits are frequently not of high quality, or perhaps because the more accomplished Soviet agents are not sent to Asian and African countries. Another source of weakness is the frequent difficulty to adjust to the mentality of foreign people, so remote in customs, outlook, and general character to the normal product of Soviet society. The lack of tact, the inability to take local susceptibilities in account, the open contempt frequently shown to the "natives" is a grave handicap. And yet, despite the fact that Russians have not been popular in most Third World countries, they have not been ineffective. They have, to a certain extent, learned from their setbacks in the past. They operate with a little more tact than before and they are, unlike their Western colleagues, most of the time on the offensive.

CONCLUSION

Soviet operations in the Third World raise several crucial questions: Are they part of a grand strategic design or are they generated by political opportunism, of vacuums filled? Is the main purpose of Soviet penetration the acquisition of military bases to threaten Western lines of communication and of mineral deposits both for Soviet use and to deny them to the West? (Interdiction theory") Does the Soviet Union practice something akin to a "counter-imperialism"? To what extent can the Soviet Union rely on its allies and clients in the Third World; when is the point of no return reached, in as much as the establishment of a Soviet stronghold is created?¹⁸

These questions, however vital, are outside the scope of this study; so is the issue of Western countermeasures. Only the last of the issues mentioned, the question of irreversibility, has a direct bearing on the present investigation and should be mentioned at least in passing. In principle, the Soviet Union cannot be certain of maintaining its hold on a country unless it is in physical, military control, or, at the very least, can count on the absolute loyalty of the local security forces (army and secret police).

Through its surrogates the Soviet Union is in physical control of a very few countries, but in a greater number of countries the Soviet Union has given absolute priority to infiltrating or even taking over the local security forces. How solid is this hold? The adherents of the "some-you-win-some-you-lose" theory claim that Soviet hold is never secure as shown by

the fact that many countries deeply penetrated by the Soviet Union managed to get rid of the Russians with relative ease. However, the examples given are neither many nor convincing (Indonesia, Ghana, Iraq, etc.) for Soviet presence in these countries was relatively small; neither the army nor the secret police had been taken over. The same is true, mutatis mutandis with regard to Egypt after Nasser; there were Soviet agents in the Egyptian army and the Mukhabarat, but not remotely enough to control them. Egypt, Ghana, and Guinea were, as Peter Wiles put it, simply allied to the Soviet Union, had not proclaimed themselves Marxist-Leninist, persecuted religion, founded or encouraged Communist parties. What happened in these countries is of little or no relevance with regard to the future of South Yemen or Mozambique. "The one that got away" (Barry Lynch's phrase,) is Somalia and it shows "that you can't escape unless the U.S.S.R. virtually declares war on you."¹⁹ To a considerable extent it depends how much time the Soviet Union had for the penetration of the key positions; that some countries are more resistant than others goes without saying. All this does not mean that de-Sovietization of a Sovietized country cannot possibly happen in the Third World. It only means that it has become difficult, and has not happened yet.

Of the instrumentalities of Soviet policy in the Third World, economic aid and trade are the least important, cultural and other such exchanges are not significant, the local Communist parties are in some respect of help, in others a hindrance; the impact of ideology should not be overrated. What does matter are

the operations of the surrogates for which there is no Western equivalent, and the "false consciousness" on the part of certain Third World countries and also military aid with all its implications.²⁰ Arms transfer and the training of Third World armies per se are no more a guarantee for the spread of Soviet influence than a treaty of friendship and co-operation. Only direct military commitment ("timely assistance by the socialist countries,") can secure a foothold and maintain it.

The willingness to do so and the capacity exist; one does not know how much priority will be given to Soviet forward strategy in the Third World by the post-Brezhnev leadership. At least in part it will depend on the ability and the will of the U.S. to counteract Soviet bloc expansion in the Third World. In the struggle for influence in the Third World, the initiative so far has almost invariably been with the Soviet Union. American attitudes and those of other Western countries have been based on the assumption that, if left to their own devices, the intensely nationalist feeling in the Third World will be the best guarantee for its independence in the years to come. It was in many ways an attractive vision, and it had the added advantage that it did not necessitate any active policy on America's part. Unfortunately, events of the last decade have shown that the assumption was over-optimistic.

FOOTNOTES

1. When the present writer began his work in the early 1950s on Soviet influence and Communism in Asia and Africa, he was told by some of his elders and betters not to waste his time with a non-existent topic.

2. It has been argued that the Soviet Union was ready to intervene militarily in Iran in early November 1979. According to some close observers, the Soviet Union was preparing such intervention but was deterred by the renunciation by the Iranian government of both the defense treaty with the U.S. (of March 1959,) and of articles five and six of the Soviet-Iranian treaty of February 1921, according to which the Soviet Union was permitted to intervene in case of an armed intervention by a third power. The present writer does not believe that there was a serious Soviet intention to occupy Iran in view of the incalculable consequences of such as action. But if there had been such determination, the Soviet leaders would not have been deterred by the renunciation of old treaties.

3. According to the "classical" Soviet definition, such a state must a) remove Western military bases from its territory, b) reduce Western economic influence, c) carry out far-reaching social reforms and, d) grant freedom of organization and democratic rights to political parties, trade unions, and other such bodies. The demand for the removal of Western bases is

naturally of basic importance, but it has been accepted long ago that the demand of democratic rights in countries with one party: (or no party,) is unrealistic.

4. It is estimated that about 70 percent of the Cuban soldiers in Africa are of African origin, but only 11 percent of their officers.

5. Cuban soldiers in Angola are said to be paid \$600 a month. Average per capita income in Angola is \$440 a year. East Germans are paid more than the Cubans.

6. Paladins are characterized in the standard works of reference as "knightly heroes, renowned champions, knight errants" seen in this light Khaddafi could be regarded as a paladin because he is less dependent on the Russians.

7. Religion does not appear in the Soviet census.

8. Only in the framework of a general weakening of Soviet rule is a movement towards separatism even thinkable.

9. When Bangla Desh became independent in 1971, the Soviet Union, within little more than one year, concluded not less than thirteen agreements with the new state. See "Soviet Diplomacy" below.

10. National leaders have sometimes strange geographical notions. Thus Nahas Pasha, the Egyptian leader, claimed after World War II, that "since the Soviet Union was 4000 miles away from Egypt its activities could not possibly jeopardize Egypt." In actual fact, the southern borders of the Soviet Union are nearer 1000 than 4000 miles from Suez.

11. In the middle 1979s there were some 12,000 African students in the Soviet Union. It is believed that their number has not gone up significantly since.

12. There are no accurate figures but the following estimates will not be far off target: About 55,000 students from Third World countries have been trained in Soviet bloc countries between the late 1950s and 1981; about two thirds in the U.S.S.R. and the rest in Eastern Europe. About 60,000 Third World military personnel were trained in the Soviet bloc and about the same number of Soviet bloc military instructors have been stationed in Asia and Africa. (These figures do not include the Cuban and East German officers and men on more or less permanent duty.) More than a 100,000 Soviet bloc technicians have visited Third World countries for shorter and longer periods over the last twenty five years; one third of them went to Algeria and Libya.

13. The term Soviet aid to the Third World in the present context refers to both Soviet and East European aid. Soviet aid amounts to about 60-70 percent of the total.

14. Until 1979, UNCTAD excepted the Soviet Union from such demands in view of the many common links between the LCD's and the socialist countries;" since then, it has been included.

15. According to some leading experts the CIA figures for Soviet arms deliveries are too low. See for instance Wiles loc.cit p. 376. The ACDA estimates are, broadly speaking, similar.

16. The value of Soviet arms delivered to Iraq and to Libya between 1975-1979 was about \$5 billion in each case: Syria's arms imports were 3.6 billion. Gur Ofer, "Economic Aspects of Soviet involvement" in Y. Roy (ed.) The Limits to Power, London 1979, p. 78.

17. There is, in theory, at least another possibility - that South Yemen, Mozambique, Benin, Grenada etc., will be so successful in "building socialism" that overwhelming enthusiasm will be generated in the Third World to adopt and emulate these models - hardly a likely assumption.

18. There are many other issues such as Sino-Soviet rivalry in the Third World which have not been touched. While China practices neo-isolationism at present, a more activist approach at some future point cannot be excluded.

19. P. Wiles (ed.) The New Communist Third World, New York, 1982, p. 20

20. It is interesting, though not perhaps very surprising, that there is an enormous Soviet literature on the non-issues in Soviet-Third World relations (i.e., ideology, cultural relations, economic aid, etc.) whereas the truly important factors are hardly ever discussed in the open literature. A recent study of Soviet military thought on the Third World (by Mark N. Katz,) notes that each successive step of Soviet military involvement is discussed by the military thinkers in Moscow only after it had occurred in practice. A similar observation was made by Raymond Gathoff back in the 1960s. That in fact a great deal of (unpublished) spade work has been done in recent years transpires from such recent studies like Vooruzhonnie Sili v politicheskoi Sisteme -- Academy of Science, 1981.

SOVIET DIPLOMACY IN THE THIRD WORLD

by

ARIEH EILAN

INTRODUCTION

Soviet Mentality and the Third World

Diplomacy is only one of the tools employed by governments in furthering their aims abroad; this is particularly true of the Third World. Trade, aid, and military assistance (whether it is merely the supply of weapons or also includes advisors and military personnel) go hand in hand with diplomacy, enhancing the diplomatic effort, or sometimes creating problems which the diplomatist is called upon to solve. Soviet diplomacy has sometimes paved the way for the acceptance by a Third World country of military assistance from the U.S.S.R., as it was in India. Conversely, it may be a Third World country's need for Soviet military assistance which enabled Soviet diplomacy to reap political benefits, as in Somalia, for example.

If one reviews the effectiveness of Soviet diplomacy in the Third World, one also has to take into account the activities of the KGB, which has been extremely successful, perhaps more so than Soviet diplomats, in making friends for the U.S.S.R. and influencing political events in Asia and Africa. In stressing the importance of the KGB we are, of course, not referring to the departments that deal with espionage, but only in those involved in the creation and maintenance of contacts with "liberation movements" such as SWAPO of Namibia, or in assistance to

opposition groups who work against pro-Western governments in the Third World, such as the alleged support by the KGB of Al Zulfikar, a guerrilla organization in Pakistan, supposedly directed by Murtaza Bhutto, son of the executed Prime Minister Ali Bhutto.

The establishment and maintenance of clandestine contacts with political groups and their leaders require, at times, much diplomatic ability, sensitivity and adroitness. For some reason, KGB officials engaged in such duties display all these qualities to a much higher degree than does the rank and file Soviet diplomat. The KGB officer working on such assignments seems to be entrusted with greater freedom of action than is his official counterpart in the Soviet diplomatic service. In addition, the decision-making process of the KGB seems to be less cumbersome and swifter than that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The large scale employment of the KGB in Asia, and especially in Africa, in purely political tasks, was natural Soviet response to the political conditions prevailing in parts of the Third World in the two decades after decolonization. There was political instability and frequent changes of government in many of the newly independent states - Pakistan, Indonesia, Ghana and Nigeria. There were also liberation movements actually fighting colonial regimes, as was the case in Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia and still in Namibia (S.W. Africa). In such situations official diplomatic channels and techniques are of little use.

Although there is no written proof, one can assume (on the basis of conversations with Soviet emigres and Third World

diplomats) that one of the results of the KGB in Asia and Africa is the creation of an institutional momentum which sometimes propels that agency into ventures which have not always been foreseen, or even considered particularly desirable, by the Central Committee, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Politburo. Whether or not there is truth in these assumptions, one cannot disregard the role of the KGB if one reviews the Soviet political effort in the Third World.

As for Soviet diplomacy itself, and those who pursue it and its political aims, attempts to discern a particular method or esoteric technique which is employed exclusively by Soviet diplomats present difficulties. If anything, the Russians, perhaps more than any other power in post-colonial Asia and Africa, have gone through periods of trial and error; sometimes repeating their mistakes, and sometimes learning from them.

Like the Americans, Israelis and Scandinavians, the Soviets were suffering from lack of familiarity with Asia and Africa. While the Russians today are somewhat more adept at dealing with Africans and Asians than they were in the Fifties and Sixties, they had, however, and still have to overcome particular obstacles which stem from the Russian character and the Soviet way of life.

Russia's own national experience is one of massive uniformity. The enormous expanse of the Russian landscape, unbroken by the irregularity of hill and dale, induces in its people a sense of uniformity which they regard as the natural order of things. Throughout the length and breadth of European

Russia (except for the Ukraine or Byelorussia) there is little difference of accent between the Russian spoken near the Arctic Circle and subtropical Crimea. Russians have, therefore, always regarded small countries, such as England, where accents and sometimes even social customs are liable to change every two hundred miles or so, with amusement and some contempt.

The innate Russian preference for uniformity has stood them in exceedingly bad stead in their dealings with Asians and Africans; in both continents the Russians came up against a bewildering pluralism of regional, ethnic, religious, linguistic and social characteristics which the Russian diplomat rejected and impatiently condemned as atavistic vestiges of a primitive past.

The Soviet way of life induces in every Soviet citizen a sense of vigilant suspicion against his fellow man. To lower one's guard in Stalin's days meant risking one's life or freedom; today it means risking one's job or chances of advancement. A Soviet diplomat is a product of his environment, and when brought into contact with a foreigner he naturally behaves with exaggerated circumspection, which in turn causes the Asian and especially the more extroverted African, to respond in kind.

All this has not stopped the Soviet Union from gaining a foothold in Angola and Mozambique, Ethiopia and South Yemen, to mention a few countries in Africa and the Middle East, or in exercising control over the nations of Indochina. However, the lack of trust the Russians generate has been a contributing factor in their ejection from Egypt, Guinea, Ghana, Indonesia and

Mali, and likewise, in their failures in Burma, Nigeria, Kenya, Singapore, etc.

"On a practical level the performance of Soviet diplomacy has been mediocre. Leaders of the Third World have often been offended by the coldness and frank, even rough, manner of the Russians. Genuine trust almost never develops, relations are smoother in situations where the client's dependency is nearly total and ideological ties are close - Angola and Ethiopia are models here. Yet even Nito and Mengistu were dismayed by the Soviet attempts to control or undermine them;...the arrogance and condescending manners of Soviet advisers are also notorious in much of the world."

A review of the Soviet political effort in Asia and Africa, though devoted to the diplomatic aspect, cannot disregard the ideological banner the Russian diplomat, soldier, aid official or KGB officer invariably carries wherever he goes, whatever he does. True, he may sometimes unfurl the banner or discretely tuck it away, depending on the exigencies of the situation; the importance of the banner lies not only in its ideological message but also in the Asian or African perception of it, whether favorable or hostile.

The political realities of Asia and Africa in the two decades after decolonization are so dissimilar that it is very difficult to discuss Soviet policy in the two continents simultaneously. Though occasionally one can discern common denominators in the Soviet attitude to both Asian and African problems they are too few and far between to establish paradigms of Soviet political methods common to both continents.

The causes for this difference are numerous; we shall mention two of them.

One: In Asia both main contestants for supremacy, China and the Soviet Union, are situated on the continent itself and share a common border. However, China, Russia and the United States are all outsiders in Africa and are regarded as such by the majority of Africans on both sides of the Sahara. Therefore, in Africa, all the super powers have to operate from afar - a fact which imposes on them special military and political problems.

Two: Soviet contact with Asia for the first twenty-five years after the Russian Revolution was carried out primarily on an ideological level. Only after 1955 did the Russians begin to employ diplomacy in Asia parallel to ideological conversion.

In Africa, on the other hand, with a few exceptions there was no Soviet ideological penetration prior to independence. In the early Sixties, a multitude of black African countries were suddenly plunged into independence by the fiat of the colonial powers. The absence of an anti-colonial struggle deprived the Soviets of the opportunity of exploiting it for their own ideological purposes. Only in a minority of African countries, where independence was delayed, as in the case of Portuguese and Spanish colonies, did the Russians have time to educate cadres fit to take power; this was particularly true of FRELIMO of Mozambique and the MPLA of Angola. These and other differences between the Soviet involvement in Asia and Africa caused Moscow to apply different political strategies.

In Asia, especially in their relations with India and Pakistan, the Russians employed diplomacy in its widest sense to broaden the sphere of Soviet influence. In Africa, where conditions were much more unstable, the Russians were forced to make the most of military aid, intervention by Soviet surrogate forces and clandestine recruitment rather than diplomacy.

The Soviet attitude towards Asia and Africa can be divided into four periods. First, the epoch of Lenin's revolutionary internationalism; then Stalin's catatonic isolationism; followed by Khrushchev's dramatic thrust into manifest commitment; the present period might be described as pragmatic adventurism.

Soviet Russia rarely creates conflicts, but often exploits existing ones. The post-colonial era, like the post-Imperial epochs of the past, gave rise to a multitude of small states, reviving ancient rivalries which had remained dormant under colonial rule. According to SIPRI, some 135 armed conflicts of all kinds have erupted since the end of World War II in what has come to be called the Third World. While not all of them have been exploited by the Soviets, nevertheless if the Israel-Arab and India-Pakistan and Ethiopia-Somali disputes were settled and a solution found for the problems of Namibia and the Moroccan Sahara, Soviet diplomacy in Asia and Africa would be obliged to undergo fundamental reorientation.

SOVIET DIPLOMACY IN SOUTH ASIA

Asia has been the subject of intense Soviet interest since the early days of the Russian Revolution. Soviet Russia, like the Russia of the Czars, considers itself an Asian power. The

Communists have changed the names of many cities in Russia, but Vladivostok, founded by the Czars, has retained its name under the Bolsheviks. Vladi is, in Russian, the imperative form of the verb "to rule," and Vostok means "the East."

Until the middle Fifties, Soviet involvement in Asian affairs was carried out on a strictly party to party basis. Under Lenin and Stalin, the task of certain departments in the Central Committee was to foster the creation of Communist parties in various regions of Asia and to assist them in every way possible. Since our concern is Soviet diplomacy in Asia, however, the period under review will begin after the middle Fifties, when the first serious moves designed to further Soviet interests through diplomatic convention were made. However, even in this period one cannot afford to ignore the effects of the ideological affiliation between Soviet and Asian countries, both in offering the U.S.S.R. ready tools for action, and in the manner that the very existence of such parties influenced decision making in the Kremlin.

As far as this paper is concerned, the existence of Communist states in Asia, and of large Communist parties in some Asian states is a political fact which, like strategic and economic considerations, influences the course of Soviet diplomacy. There is nothing in this situation which would be beyond the comprehension of Niccolo Machiavelli's 16th Century mind.

Russia's main preoccupation in Asia is China, and this governs Soviet moves and attitudes to much of what is happening

throughout Asia. The second focal point of great-power rivalry is the competition with the United States for control of the Indian Ocean, with everything that this confrontation entails. In response to these two challenges, Soviet diplomatic and military goals have been two-fold.

One: the Soviet Union had to do everything in its power to divert China's military attention from the 4000 miles of common border by creating military and political divisions, a "Second Front," of sorts, south of China, in the area of Indochina, India and Burma. At the same time, Soviet Russia intends to make the most of its enormous superiority over China in air and sea power by making its naval presence felt from the Sea of Japan down to the Indian Ocean.

Two: in the Indian Ocean, Russia's strategic aim is abundantly clear and analyzed in detail in innumerable books and articles. Suffice it to say here that if Russia were ever to control vital choke points, such as Bab el Mandeb and the Straits of Hormuz, it would not only be able to deny the West access to Middle Eastern oil fields, but would also be in a position to influence political events in East Africa, the Middle East and East Asia. In fact, the Russians are reverting to the classical 19th Century British Imperial concept in accordance with which power can be projected onto the landmass by control of vital waterways. The function of Soviet diplomacy in Asia (as in East Africa and the Middle East) is to create political conditions which would make it possible for Russia to reach these aims.

Both of these Soviet preoccupations, China and the Indian Ocean, have a common pivotal point which is the Indian sub-

continent - India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Therefore, in a review of Soviet diplomacy in Asia, much attention will be focused on the U.S.S.R.'s relations with India which have remained the central element in the Soviet diplomatic effort in Asia. Soviet involvement in Indonesia -- though considerable, was not as geopolitically essential to the U.S.S.R. as its relations with India -- will not be discussed in this review.

India was chosen as the stage upon which Khrushchev was to make his debut in 1955, breaking 30 years of Stalinist isolation of the U.S.S.R. Leonid Brezhnev's visit to India in 1973 was his first visit to an Asian state after becoming CPSU General Secretary in 1964. On the Soviet side, Brezhnev's visit was accompanied by an unusually heavy volume of publicity in both press and broadcast media.

Friendly relations with a country are judged not only by the number of agreements signed with the U.S.S.R., but also by the amount and level of official visits. Brezhnev, after visiting India in 1973, visited again in 1981; Kosygin made another five visits; Gromyko is a frequent visitor. The Soviet Defense establishment including Ministers of Defense, Marshalls of the Red Army, Air Chief Marshalls and Admirals of the Fleet have all visited India in one capacity or another almost every year since 1966.

Finally, India is the only non-Communist country in Asia to have signed a Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance with the U.S.S.R. This is in addition to more than 200 routine agreements reached between the two countries.

Given the importance of India for Soviet diplomacy, that country's relations with Pakistan and China determine Soviet Russia's attitude to much of the Asian power game. India's conflicts with China and Pakistan are thus of interest here inasmuch as they reflect on the diplomatic strategy of the U.S.S.R. vis-a-vis India.

Moreover, the outcome of the crowning Soviet diplomatic initiative in Asia -- the Collective Security Pact -- and the Soviet reaction to the India-sponsored proposal for the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace were to some extent the result of the attitude of New Delhi to these proposals.

Political realities would probably have caused India to seek Russian friendship regardless of ideology, or the political predisposition of the people in power in New Delhi. Nevertheless, the personal views of Nehru and his daughter, Indira Ghandi, have contributed considerably to the rapprochement between Russia and India.

Nehru's views of Russia in the Thirties were based simply on the old principle that "my enemy's enemy will be my friend." After India's independence, and in the course of the Cold War, Nehru maintained a neutral posture of non-involvement which the Russians greatly appreciated at the time. The Kremlin noted with satisfaction that India refused to join SEATO in 1954. They appreciated much less Nehru's refusal to accede to the urgent demarches of the Soviet ambassador in New Delhi, voicing the Soviet Union's desire to participate at the Bandung Conference of 1955. Nehru remained a riddle to the Russians throughout his

life. Publicly he proclaimed a foreign policy which the Russians supported because it chartered a course of independence from the Western Alliance. There were no parallel statements by Nehru of his desire to be independent of the Eastern Bloc.

At the same time, a succession of Soviet diplomats found Nehru to be a reluctant colloquist with a disdainful manner, rather like a bored aristocrat who put up with listening to the presentation of the Soviet ambassador, but was reluctant to maintain a dialogue.

Soviet diplomacy in India in the Fifties and Sixties cultivated the Indian political elite of the younger generation with uncharacteristic tact combined with typical Russian tenacity. Most prominent was the so-called "Ginger Group," at the head of which were Indira Ghandi and Krushna Menon. This group was greatly influenced by the left wing of the British Labor Party, and by publications such as the Iribune, a left-wing British weekly. In addition to the radicalism of the British Left, the "Ginger Group" also copied the rabid anti-Americanism of the British Socialist intellectual. Anyone who had the opportunity to discuss world events with Mrs. Ghandi in the early Sixties would agree that her views appeared to be much more anti-American than actually pro-Soviet. Her apprehensiveness of the United States has not lessened as the years have passed. At the same time, her attitude towards the Soviet Union has matured from youthful adoration to the pragmatism of a marriage of convenience.

In much of Africa and Asia the Soviet diplomat concentrates on cultivating the "ruling few," whoever they may be; in most countries of the Third World the educated elite is small and not necessarily from the strata of the population likely to produce political leadership. In Africa, for instance, army sergeants are more likely to become presidents than are schoolteachers. In India, however, with 120 universities annually graduating tens of thousands of students, Soviet diplomacy quite rightly devotes much effort in "spreading the word" over as large a section of India's educated class as possible.

The Soviet Embassy in Delhi and the Consulates in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras devote a great deal of time and effort to cultural propaganda. Soviet diplomatic missions are aided in pro-Soviet propaganda by the India-Soviet Study Center, established in 1973, the India-Soviet Cultural Society and other similar bodies.

"In its attempt to create favorable attitudes among the Indian people and to direct pressure at the Indian government from internal sources, the Soviet Union has built up a large propaganda effort, estimated in 1968 to cost \$15 million annually. One analyst (Sager, 1976) has estimated that one million words per month flow from the Information Department of the Soviet Embassy in New Delhi. Periodicals or other publications distributed by Communist missions in India had a combined yearly total circulation in 1972 in excess of 23 million. Over two score journals are distributed by the Soviet Embassy, compared with less than half that number published by the U.S. government. In addition, indigenous Communist and pro-

Communist newspapers and periodicals taking a pro-Soviet line (many directly or indirectly subsidized by the Soviets) have a circulation of well over 10 million. Radio Moscow and Radio Peace and Progress have, in recent years, broadcast to India over 125 hours per week.¹"

In 1973, a Soviet-Indian Protocol on Cooperation in Television and Radio was signed. The agreement called for the exchange of professional personnel in the field of communications.

Soviet diplomats have been active in promoting the placement of pro-Soviet and anti-American articles in the Indian Press. They are also known to have interceded with Indian authorities to prevent the publication or the distribution of anti-Soviet publications and books printed in the West. Soviet diplomats pay special attention to university departments teaching political science and international relations. They have been known to intervene by protesting the employment of Western lecturers and the use of Western, particularly American, books dealing with Sovietology.

Resentment on the part of some Indians against Soviet interference is frequently counterbalanced by the support given to it by powerful Communist and Leftist elements. The Soviet diplomat in India takes pains to distance himself from both of the two Communist parties. However, Communist elements are being used by the Soviet Embassy in Delhi to help the Soviet diplomat in his task of performing certain specific assignments.

"...Of whatever shade, the party has sympathizers all over the country, in every walk of life, and particularly in

educational institutions, both in the faculty and the student community. The two have frequent contacts with wholetime Communist workers who also advise them on the kind of activity they should take up; it may be to counter criticism of Soviet action in Afghanistan, or it may be to explain the situation in Poland. The view, of course, is as projected from the Kremlin. There could be some conscientious objectors with awkward questions, but they are to be pushed aside or thrown out. Whol timers decide who should be 'eliminated' and who should occupy² which position."

The Calcutta-based Statesman, describing the Soviet lobby in the Indian government says: "There are some nervous men in India's Foreign Office who at the slightest suggestion of Russian displeasure will send Moscow reassurances of India's undying³ love."

The investment of so much of the Soviet effort in India in the field of media control involving considerable financial outlays is unparalleled anywhere in the Third World. For lack of a more precise term what one might call the process of "Finlandization" of the Indian public media proves that the Soviets do not wish to repeat their mistakes made in Indonesia, Ghana, Egypt, Algiers, and Zimbabwe by relying entirely on the pro-Soviet sympathies of an individual national leader, or even on the exclusive allegiance to Moscow of Communist parties. In India, the Russians are taking a long-term view in trying to secure a pro-Soviet attitude on the part of a large section of Indian public opinion, both progressive and right-wing.

Although such facts are hard to determine with exactitude, it appears that the Soviet political propaganda in India has succeeded over the years in establishing a "pro-Russian party" which, regardless of ideological orientation, is in favor of the continuation of the "special relationship" between the two countries. The U.S.S.R. is perceived as a "reliable friend in need."

SOVIET DIPLOMACY - CONFLICT SITUATIONS AND TREATIES

The preceding brief review of Soviet propaganda efforts in India afford an idea of the depth of the U.S.S.R.'s commitment in the Indian sub-continent. We shall now consider the two main methods used separately and together to further the Soviet's interests.

The Soviet Union managed to exploit India's endemic conflict with Pakistan and the border dispute with China to its own advantage and to the detriment of the U.S.A. and China. At the same time, the Soviet Union sought to isolate China and establish a Pax Sovietica in Asia by means of bilateral and multilateral treaties, and by bringing warring sides to the negotiating table under the aegis of Soviet diplomacy. In reviewing the first method, the exploitation of conflict situations, let us first deal with the Indo-Chinese dispute.

SOVIET DIPLOMACY - THE USE OF CONFLICT SITUATIONS

I. The Sino-Indian Conflict

After India's defeat in the Sino-Indian War of 1952, and the open break between Peking and Moscow a year or two later, Soviet

diplomacy skillfully exploited India's most pressing need to its advantage by establishing close working cooperation between the Red Army and the Indian Army which was then undergoing a thorough reorganization.

Rightly or wrongly, the Indians blamed their defeat at the hands of the Chinese on having slavishly applied the British military model, and therefore Indian army generals were only too happy to send promising young Indian officers to the Frunze military academy. The Indian military intelligence was almost exclusively Pakistan oriented and lacked essential information about the Chinese army. Again the Russians were willing and well able to help since most Chinese military equipment was of Soviet design. In addition, GUR was probably the world's most knowledgeable source for the Chinese order of battle and Chinese training methods. The Indians appreciated the U.S.S.R.'s willingness to help, as well as Soviet discretion. Soviet diplomats made it a point never to refer to the cooperation between the two armies, thus scoring high in the esteem of Indian officials.

Perhaps because of this, Indian diplomats were prepared to accept at face value highly biased political information about Chinese designs to conquer further strategic strongpoints in the Aksai-Chin, transmitted by the Soviets to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs.

The cooperation between the two military intelligence services paved the way for the gradual change in India's military procurement from Britain, as a main foreign supplier, to the

Soviet Union. Indian pilots were routinely sent to Moscow for training and the Red Army would see to it that Indian trainees were not exposed to ideological proselytizing.

Soviet arms transfers to India became, in the course of time, one of the most important tools of Soviet diplomacy. The Indians found in the U.S.S.R. not only a very reliable, but also a very cheap source of sophisticated armament. Most important of all, Soviet Russia's readiness to accept Indian imports as part payment secured for the Soviets a continuation of a relationship which both sides found profitable. Although by 1977 two thousand and seventy-five Indian personnel had been trained in the U.S.S.R., there is no evidence that Indian trainees had become a pro-Soviet element in the Indian army. On the other hand, the arms transfers strengthened the image of the U.S.S.R. in India as that of a reliable ally. The utilization by the Russians of the Sino-Indian conflict represent Soviet diplomacy at its best. It knew how to seize the diplomatic initiative and further its aim with tact and much patience.

The Soviet position in the Sino-Indian dispute was, and is, essentially weak, owing to the very nature of the conflict. India's border disagreement with China is highly localized and plainly soluble if both sides so desire. The struggle for military advantage in the strategic mountain ranges of the disputed Himalayan region of Aksai-Chin can be resolved by territorial trade-offs. The Russians are painfully aware that to achieve this, India does not need Soviet help. In fact, the power constellation that is now emerging in Asia, after the

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, has caused the Chinese and the Indians to think of normalizing their relationship.

Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua's visit to India in June, 1981; the proposed trip of Mrs. Ghandi to Peking; and the agreement to set up the necessary diplomatic machinery to negotiate the border problems must be viewed as signs that both Peking and New Delhi have decided the time has come to resolve the conflict. Huang Hua's visit to New Delhi was reported in the Soviet press without comment or cheer. Basically, Soviet diplomacy cannot depend on the continuation of the Sino-Indian dispute as an aid to its own conflict with China. This might be one of other more important considerations which may have moved Brezhnev to make a bid for understanding with Peking.

II. The U.S.S.R. and the Indo-Pakistan Conflict

Ever since 1953, when American diplomacy initiated diplomatic consultations with Pakistan, with a view towards enlisting Pakistan's membership into a system of alliances later to be known as SEATO and CENTO, Pakistan has been thought of as being pro-Western. However, there were long intervals of cool relations between Washington and Islamabad. After the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war, the Soviet Union courted Pakistan, and relations between the two countries were sufficiently friendly to cause anxiety in New Delhi.

It has been said of Soviet diplomacy in the Middle East that had Israel not existed Moscow would have had to invent it. Political parallels are always slippery, but it can be said that Russian diplomacy has used India's distrust and fear of Pakistan

in a manner similar to Soviet reliance on Arab hostility towards Israel to further its aims in the Middle East.

India's fear of Pakistan is difficult for an outsider to comprehend. Being so much the stronger of the two, and having defeated Pakistan in the last two wars, one might have thought that, especially after the breaking-away of East Pakistan, India could have taken a more confident view of its own military superiority.

Whether the roots of Indian apprehension are buried in the Hindus' traditional fear of the Moslem conqueror, or in a civil war mentality is immaterial. Soviet diplomacy has, since 1955, been extremely successful in "stoking the furnace" in New Delhi, accomplishing by this not only the maintenance of a conflict situation favorable to the Soviet Union, but also insuring India's distrust of the U.S. for its role as Pakistan's occasional ally.

The recent Pakistan initiative in proposing that India sign a non-aggression pact caught the Russians off guard. During February and March 1982, Soviet diplomats told their Indian counterparts that the signing of a treaty of non-aggression with Pakistan might be in contradiction with Indian obligations under the 1971 Treaty with the U.S.S.R. The Russians went so far as to warn their Indian colleagues of the danger of an American military intervention in Pakistan, if that country ever considered itself endangered by the U.S.S.R. This, of course, is sheer nonsense, but the actual voicing of such possibilities by

the Russians is indicative of their nervousness as India seems to be mending its fences with both China and Pakistan.

A more official demonstration of Soviet jitters was provided by the visit to New Delhi of Marshall Dimitri F. Ustinov, the Soviet Minister of Defense, in March 1982. This was the first such visit by Ustinov to a non-Communist country; he was accompanied by 16 senior officers, among them Soviet Admiral of the Fleet, Sergei G. Gorshakov, and Air Chief Marshall, Pavel S. Kulakhov. Never before has so much top Soviet brass descended on any part of the globe. This visit in itself serves to emphasize the importance which the Soviet Union, rightly or wrongly, attaches to its ties with India.

The New York Times explains Ustinov's visit as evidence of the concern felt by the Russians over the diversification of arms purchases on the part of the Indians; especially the order for submarines in West Germany, the manufacture of the British Jaguar Jet Fighter in India, and ongoing negotiations with the French⁴ for a new Mirage Fighter.

Although India's attempt to buy arms from Western Europe, or to negotiate production rights of European weapons may cause some fears in the military-industrial complex in Moscow, it could not, in the opinion of this writer, account for the "showing of the flag" by Ustinov and company. After all, Soviet imports account for only 15 percent of India's arms production. The visit of the three heads of the Soviet Armed Forces to New Delhi should be seen in the light of a deeper and more serious anxiety felt in Moscow; namely that by mending its fences with Pakistan and China, New Delhi is depriving Soviet Russia of its main leverage

in the relationship between the two countries, thus changing the balance of power in Asia to Russia's disadvantage.

"New Delhi's reaction to the post-Afghanistan situation is another source of Soviet concern. Although Indira Ghandi and Indian diplomats have been enigmatic in their comments on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it now appears that the Soviet determination to stay on in Kabul indefinitely caused the Indian establishment to review the basic geopolitical assumptions that have hitherto guided Indian policy towards the Soviet Union. The 'natural ally' theory received a severe jolt when, as a result of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, it gradually became apparent to the Indians that Soviet proximity also meant a change in the relationship between the two countries. Before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the Indians were conscious of being able to negotiate with the Russians from a position of diplomatic advantage; however this would no longer be the case after the Red Army had established its presence on Pakistan's borders.

"Therefore, these days, New Delhi is vitally interested in the continued existence of a stable Pakistan as a buffer between India and Soviet controlled Afghanistan. In the course of Marshall Ustinov's visit to New Delhi in March of '82, the Indians informed the Soviet generals that any Soviet moves aimed at the destabilization of Pakistan would have an adverse effect on Soviet-Indian relations. This warning was repeatedly related through diplomatic channels.

"Indira Ghandi's 1982 visit to Washington may appear as the London Economist described it, a 'signal' to the United States.

Nevertheless, it should not be construed as an indication of an impending change of India's relationship with the U.S.S.R.; this will continue to be friendly but perhaps not quite as cordial as before."

Soviet diplomacy has repeatedly tried and failed to establish a foothold in Islamabad. The reasons for the Soviet failure to develop closer links with Pakistan are interesting because they demonstrate the kind of obstacles Soviet diplomacy finds difficult to overcome. To begin with, the Communist Party in Pakistan has always been small, ineffectual and clandestine. The Russians lacked, therefore, the kind of back-up support which the Indian Communist Party and its sympathizers have been able to lend Soviet diplomacy from time to time. In fact, in the conditions of Pakistan the pro-Communist elements have been an obstacle to Soviet diplomacy because they raised the fear of a Communist conspiracy. Many rulers of Moslem Pakistan have been army generals, and therefore did not share the intellectual and ideological inclinations of Nehru or Indira Ghandi. Throughout the Third World, Soviet diplomacy has always relied heavily on cooperation with a national leader; in this it failed in Pakistan, even when Bhutto, an intellectual with radical leanings, was Prime Minister. "Gromyko is reported to have described the Pakistani Prime Minister as an 'unstable hothead.'" For whatever reasons, Communist agitators and Soviet diplomats have failed to display in Pakistan the elasticity required to recruit friends.

Pakistan's strategic importance, before and after the Russian invasion of Afghanistan poses to the Russians certain

problems which the U.S.S.R. may try to solve by destabilizing Pakistan, thereby putting an end to Pakistani support (however limited) of the Afghan rebels. One of the ways of achieving this might be to encourage the irredentist aspirations of Baluchi tribes in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Presently the KGB is reportedly supporting "Al Zulfikar," a guerrilla organization allegedly led by Murtaza Bhutto, son of the executed Prime Minister.

SOVIET DIPLOMACY AND THE USE OF TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS

Soviet diplomacy has always put much faith in the formalization of the U.S.S.R.'s relationship with other countries through treaties and agreements. An Asian diplomat once described the Soviet love of signed agreements as "Russian Treatomania." When Bangladesh became independent in 1971, the Soviet Union rushed in and arranged for 13 agreements to be signed between February, 1972, and August, 1973.

The Soviets have felt the need to give legal sanction to their relationships with allies and friends in the Third World by means of a variety of treaties with client states, such as Cuba, Vietnam and South Yemen; and with allies of varying degrees of political affinity, such as Iraq, Syria, Nasser's Egypt and India.

Soviet Russia's endeavors to establish Soviet supremacy in Asia by diplomatic means can be separated into three categories: (a) the wish to act as an arbitrator of disputes between Asian states; (b) to formalize through treaties relations with

countries friendly to the U.S.S.R., such as India; (c) to attempt by means of a multilateral treaty of Asian States to isolate China, and give formal confirmation of the Soviet Union's position as an Asian state. Using India as a focal point again, we shall review examples from each category.

TASHKENT

The Soviet Union succeeded in bringing the 1965 war between India and Pakistan to an end when Kosygin invited the President of Pakistan, Ayub Khan, and the Prime Minister of India, Lal Shastri, to a peace conference in the city of Tashkent. The choice of venue was deliberate. The capital of Kirghiz Soviet Republic is close to China and Pakistan; convening a conference there on Asian matters was meant to emphasize Russia's "Asian Face."

The declaration of Tashkent in January, 1966, was perhaps Soviet diplomacy's most outstanding success in South Asia. In the words of a Pakistani commentator, "The document was neither a victory for Pakistan nor for India. It was, however, a triumph for the Soviet Prime Minister." ⁵ In spite of strenuous efforts, the Russians failed to repeat their successful role as arbitrator on the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971. The Indians declined to accept the good offices of the U.S.S.R. and instead conducted direct negotiations with Pakistan, culminating with the Simla Agreement.

Essentially, there is no contradiction between the role of peacemaker so ardently pursued by Soviet diplomacy and the exploitation and instigation of conflicts by the U.S.S.R. The choice the Russians present to the Indians and Pakistanis is

simple -- either endure continued conflict with your neighbor or allow the Soviet Union to arbitrate. If the U.S.S.R. had its way, it would probably prefer the role of arbitrator of conflicts over that of inciter because it might then establish a Pax Sovietica in South Asia, while preventing China from capitalizing on these same conflicts in the future.

The Soviet-Indian Friendship Treaty

The Russians succeeded in convincing the Indians to sign a treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in August, 1971. Under the prevailing conditions at that time, the treaty gave India Soviet backing for action against Pakistan. The Russians, on the other hand, were interested in signing a formal treaty with India at a time when Henry Kissinger was initiating the first American contacts with China. The treaty does not amount to much in terms of the actual obligations assumed by each side. It states that "India respects the peace-loving policy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" and that the U.S.S.R. "respects India's policy of non-alignment." There are the usual provisions for non-aggression. Article 8 stipulates that "each of the High contracting parties... shall not enter into or participate in any military alliances directed against the other party." In Article 9 both parties are to refrain from giving assistance to a third party engaged in a conflict with either signatory of the agreement. Article 10 stipulates that in the event of an attack or threat directed toward either by a third party, both sides

pledge to start mutual consultation immediately with a view to eliminating the threat.

Basically, the treaty was drafted in a manner which did not obligate either side automatically. It did not cost the Russians much to sign it, but it did provide Russian diplomacy precisely what it seeks -- a formal and juridical announcement of a mutuality of interests between the U.S.S.R. and an Asian non-Communist power.

In 1981, Indira Ghandi was invited to go to Moscow to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the treaty. She politely refused and sent a member of the cabinet instead. Moscow celebrated the anniversary with great pomp. In New Delhi the celebrations were more restrained.

Much of New Delhi's diminished enthusiasm can be attributed to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It was also a demonstration of Soviet diplomatic clumsiness. The Russians had been the initiators of the treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, which had been discussed for two years prior to the events of 1971, with little progress being made in the face of continued diplomatic procrastination by the Indians. The Russians finally succeeded when India needed Soviet support in the 1971 war against Pakistan. Ten years later, however, the situation in East Asia had changed and somehow the Soviet Embassy in New Delhi must have failed to convey the change of mood to Moscow.

THE ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PACT

The Soviet initiative for an Asian "Helsinki Agreement" was Moscow's most ambitious diplomatic enterprise in Asia, and it

thoroughly aborted because the Soviet Union failed to perceive that the idea essentially rested on a false premise -- i.e., that Asian states could be induced or cajoled into signing an anti-Chinese document drafted in Moscow.

It is difficult to believe that Soviet diplomats in Asia did not foresee the inevitable fiasco. One has to assume that since the idea originated at the very top of the Soviet leadership, ambassadors of the U.S.S.R. in Asian capitals had no option but to voice optimism in their reports to Moscow.

At the World Conference of Communist Parties in Moscow in June, 1969, Leonid Brezhnev, after stressing the importance of achieving a conference on European security, went on to say that "we believe the course of events is also placing on the agenda the task of creating a system of collective security in Asia." ⁶ Quite likely it was a trial balloon, however, the ensuing wave of speculation in the world's press apparently encouraged the Russians to go ahead.

Russian diplomacy is extraordinarily tenacious in its pursuit of declared diplomatic objectives. The Soviets are sometimes quite content to allow their initiatives to lie fallow temporarily, if the situation so demands, and to revive them at the earliest possible opportunity. There were periods when most observers in Europe believed that the Russians had finally abandoned their idea for a treaty of Collective Security and Cooperation in Europe. They were, as we know, proved wrong.

Japan and the states that make up ASEAN reacted with an unambiguous refusal to consider the Soviet idea. The Indians

played a more subtle game of qualified support: first when Mrs. Ghandi announced that she would endorse the idea of economic cooperation among Asia states, after which followed contradictory statements made by successive Indian foreign ministers. Finally, during Mrs. Ghandi's visit to Moscow in 1976, she decisively poured cold water over the Soviet initiative.

Russian diplomacy also had to cope with a competing idea put forward by the Prime Minister of Malaysia in July, 1971, which proposed that Southeast Asia be neutralized under the guarantee of the "great powers," which he specified as China, the Soviet Union and the United States, in that order. This initiative was calculated as an Asian response to the Soviet proposal to exclude China by putting it on par with the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. as guarantors of Asian stability.

Quite likely the Russians, in proposing an Asian Collective Security Pact, were carried away by their desire to exploit opportunities that seemed to present themselves to the strategists in the Kremlin at the end of the Sixties and the beginning of the Seventies.

The Nixon Doctrine assured the Russians that the Americans had no intention of stepping into British shoes as the guarantors of peace and freedom of navigation in the Indian Ocean and its waterways. The Nixon Administration obviously intended to end the war in Vietnam, and this also meant a reduced American presence in Asia. The Anglo-Americans were leaving, and the Russians, seeking to take their place in Asia, wanted a document which would lend legitimacy to their presence. They failed to

realize that in Asia they were still regarded as intruders, white men who have come from the East, instead of the West.

THE INDIAN OCEAN

Although the subject of the Indian Ocean does not properly belong to the part of this paper devoted to the use of treaties and agreements by Soviet diplomacy in Asia, the informal understanding reached between the U.S.S.R. and India on this subject is of considerable importance to the Soviet stance in this much contested part of the world.

For the last 15 years Soviet diplomacy has had a dual aim to pursue in New Delhi concerning the Indian Ocean. Foremost was Russia's urgent need to secure for the Soviet Fleet, coming from distant Vladivostok, naval servicing facilities in the Bay of Bengal, and in the Indian Ocean. In spite of rumors to the effect that such facilities have been granted to the Russians at Vizakapatam, and the Laccadive Islands, the Indians categorically deny them. The need for these facilities is not quite as critical to the Soviet Union now that they have acquired the right to use Vietnamese airfields and ports at Cam Ranh Bay and Danang. Nevertheless a Soviet presence in the Laccadive Islands would greatly strengthen the Soviet naval deployment in the Indian Ocean. It is, however, very doubtful that even Indira Ghandi's government would wish to risk further deterioration of its relationship with Washington by giving the Russians an additional edge over the Americans in the Indian Ocean. Too, the growing Indian Navy is reported to have voiced strong objections to a Soviet presence in what it regards as its own backwaters.

Moscow's second diplomatic objective in New Delhi, regarding the Indian Ocean, concerned a divergence between the Indian and Soviet positions on this matter at the United Nations. At the General Assembly the initiative to declare the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace was originally tabled by Sri Lanka in 1972, but was generally understood to have strong Indian support. The Resolution called upon the Great Powers to "enter into consultations with the littoral states with a view to halting the escalation of their military presence in the Indian Ocean and eliminating bases, military installations, logistical supply facilities, nuclear weapons, and any other manifestations of great power military presence. It also called on the permanent members of the Security Council, and other maritime powers to enter into consultation with states of the region for the purpose of insuring that military forces in the area not threaten the sovereignty or the territorial integrity of the littoral and hinterland states. Subject to these provisions and to the norms of international law, the right to free and unimpeded access by vessels of all nations would not be abridged."

From the very start, the Americans and the Soviets entertained severe reservations about the resolution and consequently abstained in the vote. Whatever their formal reasons, both great powers feared that a Declaration, or perhaps an accession to an International Convention would put constraints on freedom of navigation for the United States and Soviet navies, respectively.

During Brezhnev's visit in New Delhi in 1973, the Russians explained to the Indians that, as long as the Americans had a base at Diego Garcia, the Russians felt obliged to maintain a naval presence in the Indian Ocean. It is not necessary to follow each move of the diplomatic see-saw between the two powers on this particular matter. Suffice it to say that Soviet diplomacy was in trouble, opposing not only the Indians, but also going against the decisions of Heads of State Conferences of the Non-Aligned in this matter, which supported the Sri Lanka initiative. The problem was solved in a two-fold manner. On one hand Mrs. Gandhi, on the occasion of her visit to the U.S.S.R. in 1976, declared at the press conference in Moscow: "There is a difference between ships passing by and a permanent base, especially if it is a nuclear one." Thus, by denouncing the upgrading of the American base at Diego Garcia, the Indian Prime Minister was excusing the passage of ships of the Soviet Navy. On the other hand, in 1977, the Soviet Union changed her vote and began supporting the Sri Lanka Resolution on the Indian Ocean and thus made it easier for the Indians "to appear in Soviet company" at the United Nations. In actual fact, the Soviet support for the resolution of the General Assembly, and Mrs. Gandhi's statement in Moscow are only of marginal value. Important is the refusal of the Indian government to allow Soviet naval facilities on Indian shores.

Thus, in the Soviet-Indian quid pro quo on the subject of the Indian Ocean, the Russians have achieved unanimity with the Indians in the realm of declaratory diplomacy, but have failed to

obtain the military advantage they had hoped to gain from their
"special" relationship with India.⁸

SOVIET POLICY IN BLACK AFRICA

We shall select a limited number of "case studies" which serve to illustrate various phases and types of Soviet involvement; Soviet Russia's learning process-Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria; the scope and circumstances of Soviet intervention-Angola and Ethiopia; and finally, Zaire and Sudan are singled out as likely targets for future Soviet action. The "case study" method is constructive because, although Soviet aims in Africa are patently clear, the Russians have been guided and misguided by circumstances as they arose throughout the last twenty years.

SOVIET RUSSIA'S LEARNING PROCESS

Ghana

When Kwame Nkrumah was proclaimed Prime Minister of an independent Ghana in 1957, it was not only the Soviet Union, but also Washington and most of the Western world that were completely unprepared for the headlong rush to independence of so many African states south of the Sahara. Within four years, 17 African countries were to become independent and the chancelleries of the West and the East were busily looking for people to manage their African departments.

Today few people care to remember or admit that in the opinion of most international experts in the middle fifties, Africa was not due for independence for another two or three

decades. This attitude was not restricted to "reactionary Western circles." It was shared by most participants of the Bandung Conference. Whenever Africa was mentioned the reference was mostly to North Africa, and especially the Algerian situation. Though pious lip service was also paid to the situation of Africa south of the Sahara, almost the sole topic of discussion at Bandung was the future of Asia in the bi-polar struggle between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

All Soviet research about Asia and Africa was concentrated in the Orient Institute (Institute Vostokovedinya) which, in 1957, was still under the direction of an old-fashioned Bolshevik called Potekhin, who did not believe that there was much sense in developing relations with Asian or African leaders who were not outright Communists. When Ghana became independent Moscow sent a low-level delegation to the Independence celebration at Accra. The Russians, and especially Potekhin, were highly suspicious of Nkrumah who seemed to them to be too pro-Western. After a stay of several weeks in Accra, Potekhin returned to Moscow and gave grudging agreement to a number of measures which were to pave the way for the Soviet Union's first major involvement in African affairs.

The leader of the New Africa was undoubtedly Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, although Sekou Toure of Guinea and Modibo Keita of Mali were not only partners of Africa's surge towards independence, but sometimes also represented a more radical attitude towards the solution of Africa's many problems.

The Soviet Union, after initial hesitation, decided to go all out in their support for these three Western African

countries and their leaders. There was little in Russia's Asian experience at that time, with countries like Indonesia, North Korea, North Vietnam and India to guide them in their dealings with Africans. The absence in Africa of ideological affinity with the Soviet Union on one hand, and of an established pattern of diplomatic negotiations on the other posed problems to Soviet diplomacy for which there were no prefabricated solutions. The small group of "African experts" in Moscow at that time, were hammering out ideological justifications for the Soviet support of countries that lacked a Communist movement. This was accomplished by stating that, notwithstanding an absence of a bourgeois class, Ghana, Guinea and Mali already possessed the subjective preconditions for socialism. The Soviet diplomat, however, was painfully aware that each of the three leaders meant something different when they urged their people to emulate the Soviet example. Kwame Nkrumah had been greatly influenced by George Padmore, a West Indian ex-Communist who, in his book, Communism or Pan Africanism, preached the creed of "African Socialism," which meant pure heresy to the Russians.¹ Yet, the Russians had no alternative but to "grin and bear it." They saw in Ghana their gateway to Africa.

A Conference of Independent African States was convened at Accra in 1958, and in the same year Ghana played host to the first All-African People's Conference which brought together many of Africa's new and future leaders. Both conferences adopted numerous anti-colonial resolutions couched in clearly anti-

Western slogans. Soviet diplomacy could not miss this bandwagon for the sake of a difference in ideological terminology.

The Russians were rightly concerned with the stability of the regimes of their newly-found friends and also worried about the political reliability of leaders who were not orthodox Marxists. In Guina, the Russians made the fatal mistake of "rushing it" and apparently plotted to have Sekou Toure replaced by a more obedient politician. In Sekou Toure's words, the Soviet Ambassador, Solod, was "caught red-handed" and immediately expelled.² Consequently, Sekou Toure never made Nkrumah's mistake of entrusting his security arrangements entirely to the Soviets and the East Germans; although he had to survive several abortive coups, he managed to stay in power, never abandoning his radical cri de guerre, but never trusting the Russians beyond accepting limited Soviet technical assistance and repaying it with a low-key support of the Soviet Union in international arenas.

In Ghana, after a short flirtation with parliamentary democracy, Nkrumah came to realize that without concentrating power in his own hands and without building a political machine to help him maintain that power, he could not hope to achieve his political ambitions. The U.S.S.R. was prepared to provide him the wherewithal of a power apparatus, and the East Germans were called upon to organize the secret service and special police units to guard Nkrumah, a role they were to perform many times in Africa's future.

Nkrumah's total reliance on foreign protection cost him dearly. One morning in February 1966, Kwame Nkrumah was deposed,

the East Germans and a multitude of Soviet advisors were told to leave Ghana, and eight years of intense Soviet involvement with an African country which was regarded as the avantgarde of African independence was brought to nothing.

The Russian debacle in Ghana is known to have caused much heat in Moscow. Today it might be argued that had 10,000 Cubans been stationed in Ghana in 1966, Nkrumah would perhaps still be in power. The Russians came to realize that without strong ideological identification with Soviet Communism, African regimes could not be expected to provide the U.S.S.R. with the kind of control over them the Kremlin demands of its allies. The other lesson the U.S.S.R. learned with the downfall of Nkrumah was that Soviet control of the security apparatus alone was not sufficient to protect their political investments. Later in Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia both these mistakes were corrected. The political leadership of the MPLA, FRELIMO and the Derg are as solidly Marxist as the African dislike of ideological orthodoxy permits, and the presence of Cuban troops is there to ensure that the events of Ghana in February 1966, do not recur.

In Ghana, the Soviet Union also began to reassess realistically the nature and effectiveness of its technical assistance. Although technical assistance is not the subject of this paper, it cannot be ignored because, if desired, it can become an important tool on the part of the donor country to bolster its diplomatic effort in a Third World country. Suffice it to say that after the experience with Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Tanzania, Kenya and Nigeria, the Russians had to admit to

themselves that their aid was inferior to that of the West, and that even with East German and Czech assistance they had no chance of competing with capitalist countries. In the course of time, however, whatever fears the Soviets may have entertained in this respect were dispelled by the realization that, generally speaking, Western aid to African countries carried virtually no political strings. By the end of the Sixties, and certainly now, the Soviets may be found, however discretely, to urge their African friends to accept as much Western and multilateral aid as possible (except military) because this saves the Russians from facing African demands they cannot, or are unwilling, themselves to meet.

Having succeeded in excluding the Communist countries from any moral obligation to help the Third World, not being an accessory to the "crime of colonialism," the Soviet contribution to multi-lateral aid is minimal. There are signs that some Africans are beginning to be critical of these Russian tactics. The Secretary-General of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity, Mr. Akumo, said that; "...while the socialist countries are less generous to developing countries, particularly in Africa, they insist on buying African minerals like gold, at the same imperialist manipulated prices."³

KENYA

As Colim Legum points out, "virtually no nation states yet exist in Africa. The continental political systems are at different stages of evolution towards becoming or failing to become viable national states...all African regimes are

essentially temporary and transitional since with very few exceptions they do not operate within an established framework of viable and widely based institutions." ⁴ The temptation for the fledgling Soviet diplomacy in the Sixties to support certain tribes against others was, therefore, considerable.

In Kenya, the Soviets found themselves supporting a minority tribal group, the Lou's, headed Oginga Odinga against Jomo Kenyatta, President of the republic, who was the head of Kenya's largest tribe, the Kikuyu. Kenyatta had visited the Soviet Union in the Thirties, but left it soon disappointed with the Russian ⁵ dependency of a member of a Soviet Kolkhoz in the thirties. Russian diplomacy, therefore, could not repeat in Kenya its performance in Ghana where, one way or another, the modus operandi depended almost entirely on cooperation with the national leader. Oginga Odinga, however, proved a poor investment. His attempts to stage a coup were scotched on several occasions. A Soviet ship, the Fizik Lebedev, conveying arms to Odinga, was intercepted in Mombasa in April 1965, and Odinga's start began to wane. Subsequently, Russian diplomats and Tass correspondents were expelled from Kenya at short notice. In later years, the Russians became very wary of involvement in Africa's inter-tribal politics.

NIGERIA

If the Soviet experiment with Kenya was a textbook example of how diplomacy should not be conducted in Africa, Soviet assistance to Nigeria secured for the U.S.S.R. a reputation in

Africa of a reliable friend. Before the outbreak of the Biafra Civil War, the Soviets had been cautiously (after the Kenya experience) exploring the intricacies of Nigerian politics and had wisely decided to stay out. When the Ibos of the Eastern region rose in revolt in 1968, and after the West had refused to sell arms to the federal government, a Nigerian delegation went to Moscow and procured the required assistance.

The Soviet Union offered the most generous terms for credit but the Nigerians politely declined, saying that they would pay in cash or in cocoa (this was still before the major oil boom). The Czechs, who had been helping the Biafrans, had to be told by Moscow to stop forthwith. After the victory of the central government over Biafra, there was a brief period of euphoria in the relations between the two countries, but it soon died down because the Nigerian North (Moslem and conservative) discouraged close relations between Lagos and Moscow.

Nevertheless, Soviet diplomacy in Africa had been helped enormously. In the decade of Soviet inactivity in Africa that followed the civil war in Nigeria, Russia's prompt assistance to the central government has been frequently praised by African political leaders who, because of Africa's achronic internal divisions, were particularly appreciative of Soviet help to prevent secession.

SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTIONS

ANGOLA

The Soviet military intervention in Angola, with the help of Cuban troops and East German military and security specialists,

has been analyzed ably, realistically and in detail elsewhere. There is no need, therefore, in this paper to recall the course of events. Six years later, however, and after an equally costly intervention in the Horn of Africa, Russia's involvement in Angola still stands out as the Soviet Union's boldest military venture into a region of the globe extremely remote from the widest possible periphery of a Soviet sphere of interest.

The lesson of the Soviet debacle in Ghana a decade before must have played its part in Moscow's decision to go all out in Angola. In 1975, the Russians saw their tireless investment of some 15 years support for the M.P.L.A. in danger of dissolving because of internal power struggles within the movement, and as a result of the popularity in Angola of the two rival liberation movements, the F.N.L.A. and U.N.I.T.A., which were enjoying Chinese and American support.

For a number of reasons the M.P.L.A. was Moscow's only hope to gain and keep control of Angola. After a decade and a half of African experience, the Russians had become painfully aware of the African reluctance to embrace the dogmas of ideology. In the many years of training Angolans at the Lummumba Institute, it became apparent that Mesticos (mixed blood) and Assimilados (Africans who were given Portuguese citizenship because of their literacy and knowledge of the Portuguese language) were among the most eager to accept Marxism. The M.P.L.A. was largely dependent on the Mesticos and Assimilados for support, with a sprinkling of Angolans who belonged to the Kimbundu tribe. Thus, by supporting the M.P.L.A., the Russians were aware from the start that they

were choosing a minority group as their mainstay in Angola. This assured the Soviets control of the ruling elite of the future independent Angola; on the other hand, it deprived them of a wider tribal grass roots support. The events in Kenya a decade before were in danger of repeating themselves. However, another lesson from Ghana and Indonesia had been learned, the late Augustinho Neto was considered (especially before independence) a loyal supporter of the U.S.S.R., but the Russians were not banking on the loyalties of one man alone any more. The Politburo of the M.P.L.A., in spite of internal rivalries, was, on the whole, solidly pro-Soviet and it proved its allegiance to the U.S.S.R. after Neto's death.

Without going into the complexities of the power struggle among the various political movements that led up to the 1975-1976 war, suffice it to say that the Soviet Union was not prepared to allow either the results of democratic elections, or the fortunes of an inter-African war decide the fate of a pro-Soviet political party. They did not wish to leave to chance the installation of such a party in Luanda, nor its capacity to stay in power without being deposed by a coup, as have been so many African leaders in the past. The dispatch of surrogate forces became inevitable in Moscow's eyes, as soon as M.P.L.A.'s victory became questionable.

By 1974, i.e., before the revolution in Portugal, the Russians had already spent \$54 million on supporting the M.P.L.A. They had a further year to decide and prepare for the possibility of military intervention. The speed with which specially trained Cuban troops seem to have been available for transport to Angola,

and the efficiency of the Soviet airlift certainly suggests long-term planning. The intervention itself was therefore the fruit of a longstanding Soviet conception of the crucial importance of Angola, because of its own strategic assets in terms of the South Atlantic sea routes, its mineral resources, and its value as a staging ground for the support of SWAPU in Namibia.

It is not unlikely that the Russians underestimated the strength of the American reaction to their dispatch of Cuban troops to Angola. The Kremlin relies heavily on what is sometimes called "smoke signal diplomacy." The United States did not send up serious warning signals when the Russians had installed the pro-Soviet governments of FRELIMO in Mozambique and Paigl in Guinea-Bissau. In addition, the Russians might easily have been led to believe that the U.S. would quietly acquiesce to the take-over in Angola because of the attitude displayed by the Americans at the United Nations General Assembly, where the situation in Angola has been an item on the agenda for some fifteen years. Representatives of the M.P.L.A. and FRELIMO and other liberation movements would travel to New York, appear as petitioners before the Assembly's Fourth Committee, make their statements couched in the phraseology of a Communist pamphlet, and receive public support from the delegates of the Soviet Bloc. All of this occurred without much opposition or criticism on the part of the U.S. delegation which, by-the-way, was extremely well briefed on the extent of Soviet penetration of the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies.

Whether the Russians had miscalculated or not, they now have to underwrite an Angola to which they are bound by a twenty-year Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance, and with a government which, without Cuban help, cannot stand up to the challenge of UNITA's control of much of the countryside.

Even though Angola's profits from Gulf Oil's revenue defray much of the cost of maintaining the Cuban troops in a state of battle readiness, most of the country's economy is in shambles. The Soviet Union and its allies are unable to restore Angola to the level of prosperity it enjoyed under Portuguese rule.

Visiting American businessmen have often been told by Angolan officials that they would welcome closer economic ties with the U.S. There can be little doubt of the sincerity of the Angolans who, like many Africans, have come to terms with the limitations of Soviet aid. Even solidly pro-Soviet Angolans would doubtless be interested in an infusion of Western capital and know-how, especially as this does not oblige them to alter their political course or default in their support for the U.S.S.R. Nevertheless, the Russians, who traditionally suffer from oversuspiciousness, warned a visiting Angolan delegation in Moscow of an American plot to return the African nation to the American sphere of influence. The warning was given in January of this year at a Kremlin luncheon hosted by Prime Minister Nicolai Tichonov less than a week after the American Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester A. Crocker, held a meeting in Paris with Paulo Jorge, the Angolan Foreign Minister.

The New York Times report further mentions that the Angolan group, led by Lucio Lara, a member of the Politburo of the M.P.L.A., was to have said to have been empowered "to tell the Russians that their interest in the Angolan and Namibian⁶ situations would not be prejudiced by the American contacts." Mr. Lara took pains to stress Angola's loyalty and friendship with Moscow and its continuing hostility towards the United States.

Whatever the real feelings of the M.P.L.A.'s leadership may be, there exists no alternative for them but to continue with their pro-Soviet policy because the present government cannot survive without Cuban support.

The more the present government in Angola may have second thoughts about the "blessings" of an alliance with the U.S.S.R., the less the Soviets can contemplate a reduction of the Cuban presence in Angola; also, the Cubans have an additional role to play in helping SWAPO in its activities in Namibia, a crisis which is likely to continue for quite some time. Thus, the M.P.L.A., the Russians and the Cubans find themselves in a situation in which none can afford to let go of the other, whatever the cost.

For Soviet Russia, a defeat of its proxies in Angola would be such a staggering blow to its policies in Africa that it can be expected to go to any lengths to prevent such a loss. It is worth recalling that as the Angolan Civil War was entering a crucial state in 1976, a Kotlin class destroyer, Krista class cruiser, and an amphibious vessel carrying Soviet Sea Infantry were cruising off Angola.

SOMALIA - ETHIOPIA

The Soviet military presence in Somalia in the years 1971-1977 demands no speculative expansionist world power seeking to control vital waterways and other strategically important areas of convergence between Africa and the Middle East.

Soviet diplomacy did not have to exert much effort to gain a foothold in Somalia. President Siad Barre's government more or less invited the Russians to come in and in 1972, they gained unrestricted access to the port of Berbera. Apart from naval servicing facilities, the Somalis agreed to the installation of a long range communication station, and the rights to stage maritime reconnaissance flights from Somali airfields.

Although the Somalis professed ideological admiration of the Soviet Union, there was little pretense about the nature of the Soviet-Somali deal. In exchange for bases, the Somalis wanted Soviet weapons and Soviet military instruction. The Russians, for their part, were completely aware of the Somali's intention to use their newly-acquired military strength to conquer the Ogaden from Ethiopia.

The border between the two countries, though defined by an agreement between Ethiopia and the European colonial powers in 1897 and 1908, was never demarcated (with the exception of 18 miles) and the continuous border dispute actually postponed the proclamation of Somalia's independence until 1960. The Somalis agreed to a border settlement which left much of the Ogaden on the Ethiopian side most unwillingly, and this in order not to

give Ethiopia a pre text for demanding a further postponement of Somalia's independence.

Somalia's intention to annex the Ogaden was an openly proclaimed aim of each subsequent Somali government. Although the Russians had never officially supported Somalia's territorial claims, they were very much aware in 1972, of the inevitable Somali intention to use Soviet arms to attack Ethiopia. The U.S.S.R. was, as in so many other parts of the Third World, simply using a local dispute to further its imperial goals. Quite likely, Moscow was not only considering the acquisition of an important naval base well worth the risks of an entanglement in a Somali-Ethiopian war, but in the beginning of the Seventies, it was not averse to the prospect of a pro-Western Ethiopia being attacked by African proteges of the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet decision to support the Derg in 1976, (Ethiopia's radical military government after the overthrow of the Emperor) could not have been taken lightly. It must have been an agonizing choice, even if the Russians had seriously entertained hopes of stemming the hostilities between Somalia and Ethiopia by acting as arbitrators, and by proclaiming a Pax-Sovietica in a kind of African Tashkent agreement. One must, of course, remember that the risk of losing Berbera was made easier for the Soviets because of the gradual improvement of Soviet military installations in Aden and Socotra, and their hopes of gaining naval bases at Massawa and Assab. Nevertheless, the loss of an alliance with Somalia, which revoked the 1974 Friendship Agreement with Moscow, in 1977 at a time when Saadat, having expelled the Russians, was making his way towards the Camp David

Agreement with the approval of Sudan's ruler, Numeiri, must have caused considerable uneasiness in Moscow.

If anything, the loss of Soviet influence in Egypt and Sudan must have given the Russians additional reasons to seek a compensatory foothold in Ethiopia. In their drive for the control of the Horn of Africa, the Russians, having gamboled, had no choice but to make sure that their new ally would gain the upper hand decisively. This they did, and the cost of airlifting 16,000 Cuban troops, plus heavy equipment must have been enormous.

The expulsion of Somalia's invading armies from Ogaden with the help of Cuban and East German armed forces, reestablished Soviet prestige in Africa and the Middle East, and Soviet Russia is now perceived as the only super power (with the possible exception of France) which is able and willing to throw the full weight of its might towards the support of its allies.

The continued presence of the Cubans in the Ogaden region has been justified by the Soviets as a necessary measure to protect the inhabitants against the Ethiopians, and also as a means to prevent the Ethiopians from crossing the Somali border. There is probably some truth in the last assertion. If Mogadishu wishes to come to some kind of terms with Ethiopia, it can now turn only to the Soviet Union for help. In fact, the original Soviet aim of acting as an arbitrator in the conflict on the Horn of Africa is now a distinct possibility.

In the meantime, the Russians are beginning to experience completely predictable difficulties in their partnership with the

Derg, as Colonel Mengistu and his friends are finding it more and more difficult to run the country. Ethiopia, more than twice the size of France, has an extremely varied topography—from high mountain plateaux, impassable mountain gorges, untamed rivers, to malarial swamps and very few roads. All this favors the existence of regional fiefdoms and the Emperor rarely managed to exercise more than nominal control over local chiefs and divergent ethnic, linguistic and religious allegiances. Never having been a colony (with the exception of a brief Italian interlude), there exists no detailed land survey of Ethiopia. The rulers in Addis Abbaba, be they Emperors or Commissars, have no exact knowledge of the natural resources and food-growing potentials of the country. It is one of the ten poorest countries in the world, but in the opinion of some Israeli agricultural experts working in Ethiopia before 1973, the country could, under proper management, be not only self-sufficient in food supplies, but also become a large exporter of industrial crops. This would require enormous outlays of capital and know-how, and would also take many years of concentrated effort. No doubt this is what Mengistu would like the Soviets to help him accomplish; however, Moscow has other priorities, such as retrieving at least some part of the cost of airlifting military equipment and the two divisions of Cubans and East Germans into Ethiopia, conducting a war against Somalia and maintaining the surrogate forces in a state of battle readiness in the inhospitable desert regions of Ogaden. All that Ethiopia can offer by way of repayment is an excellent quality of coffee beans.

Consequently, tensions between the Socialist Republic of Ethiopia and the U.S.S.R. are inevitable, and in December of 1981, the Soviet Ambassador, Boris Y. Kirnovski, was asked to pack his bags. Ethiopian officials characterized the Ambassador's behavior "as being abrupt to the point of condescension." ⁷ Mr. Kirnovski is not the first Soviet Ambassador who had to leave an African country in a hurry, nor is he likely to be the last one. Had Lt. Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam consulted the late Augustinho Nito of Angola or Machel of Mozambique, they would, in comparing notes, have come to the conclusion that a change in behavior inevitably ensues when a Soviet ambassador begins to see himself as an imperial proconsul.

Difficulties in the close relationship between the U.S.S.R. and its African proteges should not, however, lead American observers to hope that the day is near when the Russians will be told to clear out, as they were in Egypt and Sudan. In Egypt, Sadat saw a clear alternative to subservience to Moscow, and the Egyptian Army was strong enough to use force against the Russians, if necessary.

There was no danger of an attack by Israel; Sadat, therefore, could not be blackmailed by Moscow. Sudan is not involved in any conflict the Russians could exploit, and Numeiri's only fear was that the Soviet Embassy would finally succeed in engineering a coup against him. In contrast to Egypt and Sudan, both the M.P.L.A. in Luanda and the Derg in Addis Abbaba will continue to be dependent on Soviet support and both

are unlikely to possess the military strength to force the Cubans to leave, if ever they so wish.

The U.S.S.R. obviously plans a long stay in the Horn of Africa. The "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation Between Socialist Ethiopia, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya" of August 19, 1981, stipulates in Article 16:

"In the event of aggression against anyone of the Contracting Parties, the other Contracting Parties, regarding it as an aggression against all, shall in the exercise of their right of individual and collective self-defense, defend together, the party so aggressed, with all means necessary."

In Article 17, the contracting parties undertake to promote cooperation in the military and security fields "on the basis of signed agreements among themselves."

There exists no unclassified information as to whether or not such additional agreements have ever been signed among the three signatories. The wording of the Treaty is of no great importance and does not oblige the parties to a definite course of action in the several conflict situations in which each of the signatories were involved at the time of signing.

Since two of the three signatories are close allies of the U.S.S.R., there can be no doubt whatsoever that this treaty was inspired by Moscow. Muamar-Al-Qaddafi joined because the agreement purports to establish an anti-Egyptian, anti-Sudanese, and anti-Sudi alliance which the Colonel supports. It may also be seen as desire by Moscow to establish a formal framework for

cooperation between two Soviet allies, Ethiopia and Southern Yemen, controlling the Gulf of Aden and the entrance to the Suez Canal.

LIKELY TARGETS - ZAIRE AND SUDAN

What is sometimes described as the "imperial impetus" is perhaps better expressed colloquially: "One thing leads to another." In the heyday of the Empire, the British were not interested in conquering what is now known as Nigeria; they were quite happy controlling the Gold Coast (Ghana). However, the enormous expanse of land north of the Gold Coast, as yet unclaimed by any European power, must have worried some strategists in the Colonial Office, so the British moved reluctantly into what was then called the "White Man's Grave."

There are no exact historical parallels, but one might safely say that the Soviet Union could easily refrain from seeking control over Zaire and Sudan without it impinging in the least on the status of the Soviet Union as a great power, or even without it affecting Russia's standing in Africa itself.

However, there are without doubt "African Interest Groups" in the Politburo, the Central Committee, the KGB, etc., that are able to point out that Zaire's enormous mineral resources are essential to Western economies, and therefore important to the Soviet policy of mineral denial. A cursory glance at the map is enough to explain Sudan's importance to whatever great power is interested in controlling the underpinnings of the Horn of Africa.

Once having committed so much money and political effort in their interventions in Angola and Ethiopia, the Soviets may quite reasonably come to the conclusion that it would be "penny-wise and pound foolish" to abstain from an additional, relatively minor effort, which would secure them more comprehensive control over Africa's mineral resources, and over the strategic complexities of the African approach to Egypt and the Middle East, respectively. There may also be minds in the Soviet capital that fully understand the relative ease with which Zaire and Sudan may be destabilized, as opposed to the much more difficult task of subsequently exercising effective control over these two largest countries on the African continent. The Russians are most likely to be guided in their decisions by opportunities as they arise, and by situations which they themselves have been instrumental in creating.

ZAIRE

Formerly the Belgian Congo, Zaire was the scene of one of Soviet Russia's earliest fiascos when the U.S.S.R., in supporting the erratic Patrice Lumumba, lost out to the West and to the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dag Hammerskjold, who genuinely believed that the United Nations would be able to act as a "Third Force" in the bi-polar struggle over the future of post-colonial Africa. The Russians were more successful in installing themselves across the river from Kinshassa, in Congo-Brazzaville. Although unimportant in terms of mineral resources, it provides the K.G.B. with an excellent listening post and a possible staging platform for an anti-Mobutu revolution in Zaire.

The Russians have twice tried and failed to detach Zaire's copper-rich province of Shaba (Katanga) from Zaire in 1977, and 1978, by armed incursion from Angola. Had it not been for the prompt interventions of France and Morocco, the Cubans would today be in control of Shaba and perhaps of the whole of Zaire.

The pro-Western ruler of Zaire is one of Africa's most corrupt and profligate dictators whose extravagances have become notorious, even in Africa. His personal fortune is estimated at more than \$3 billion, at a time when Zaire is on the verge of bankruptcy, with thousands dying of malnutrition, in what should be one of the richest countries in Africa.

This situation cannot last, and the U.S. is faced, not for the first time, with a dilemma for which there is no simple solution. On one hand, Zaire is rich not only in copper, but is also the world's principal exporter of industrial diamonds as well as the supplier of between 60 and 70 percent of the world's cobalt. On the other hand, Mobuto, who relies for support on a complex coalition of tribal and personal loyalties, cannot be so easily removed by the West without creating the kind of chaos the Russians, watching the scene from Brazzaville and Angola, are hopefully expecting.

It has been suggested that Nguza Karl I. Bond, the former Foreign Minister of Zaire, now residing in Europe and challenging Mobuto's authority, should be supported by the U.S. Whether or not this is feasible is not a simple question; however, something has better be done quickly.

SUDAN

To understand Sudan's importance in terms of African political geography, it should be remembered that it borders on Egypt, Libya, Chad, Central African Republic, Zaire, Uganda and Ethiopia. In terms of the political alignments of the Eighties, it borders on a pro-American Egypt and was one of the very few Arab states to support Sadat. Sudan's border with Libya and Ethiopia makes it a target of possible Soviet-inspired Libya-Ethiopia conspiracy, in conformity with the trilateral treaty of August 1981.

The results of a Soviet coup, with the help of its proxies, against Numeiri would be incalculable. With a Soviet control of Ethiopia and Sudan, Upper Egypt would be exposed to Soviet harassment; large stretches of the Nile would be under Soviet control, the Egyptian Army would be called upon to protect Egypt's "soft underbelly." Under those circumstances, it is very doubtful that any regime in Cairo could long maintain a pro-American orientation. The effects of such a turn of events on the Middle East and the Egyptian peace treaty with Israel are too obvious to require elaboration. In addition, as Sudan reaches into the heart of Africa, Zaire's future could not be unaffected for long.

Sudan, like most African countries, has its full share of regional and tribal difficulties ready to be exploited by whoever may be interested in so doing. President Gaafar al-Numeiri said recently that he believed Qaddafi would use the agreement to infiltrate agents along the Sudanese-Ethiopian border and "buy Sudanese" to stir up trouble. The civil war between the

Sudanese, South and North, fought for 17 years and although formally ended, has left enough unsettled problems to make it very easy for the Russians and Gaddafi to exploit. Sudan once possessed the best organized Communist Party in Black Africa, and although Numeiri has liquidated its leaders, one must assume that it has been driven underground and is still active. There is also the now so familiar pot-pourri of revolt, consisting of left wing University students, Islamic fundamentalists, dissatisfied Army Generals, and corruption in the government. The United States has a high profile in the Sudan, stepped-up American military aid worth \$100 million has begun to arrive, and the U.S. economic aid this year will total \$180 million, Washington's biggest aid package in Africa-apart from its support for Egypt.¹⁰

Again, one is faced with the old question of what else, if anything can be done to protect an unpopular leader in a country of chronic instability. If Numeiri were to go, quite likely every leader who followed him would suffer a similar fate. The Soviet solution to such problems in Ethiopia and Angola is the presence of Cuban battalions protecting Soviet investments. The United States, unfortunately, has no proxies it could install even if this was thought desirable.

There is no smooth solution to the protection of American interests in the quicksands of African politics. Neither butter alone nor guns, nor a combination of the two can guarantee success. The only way may be to "live dangerously," to exploit opportunities as they arise, to abandon the pursuit of outworn methods, to give Africans the feeling that the U.S. will support

its friends, but will no longer stand by leaders who have become unpopular. This demands the employment of highly specialized experts, who, keeping a low profile, can act swiftly and decisively. It also requires a more realistic understanding by the media of a situation where there are few "good guys," and a host of very "bad" ones.

ALTERNATIVE SOVIET TARGETS IN AFRICA

There are now thirty-seven independent Black African countries on the mainland of this vast continent; thirty-two of them maintain diplomatic relations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.¹¹ Only the Central African Republic, the Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Malawi and Swaziland have no Soviet Embassies in their capitals, either because diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union have been severed or were never established.

Are all of these thirty-seven newly established independent African countries potential targets for Soviet penetration and control? It is safe to assume that if all and each of them were suddenly to beg Moscow to manage their affairs, the Russians would be in real trouble.

Twelve of these African countries were former French colonies, and with the exception of Guinea and Mali, which passed through a brief period of close cooperation with the Soviet Union in the Sixties (and Benin and Congo/Brazzaville, which came under Soviet influence), most of French-speaking Africa was left untouched by Soviet ambitions. The reason for this Soviet self-restraint was Moscow's clear realization that France was

prepared and capable of intervening militarily to protect regions friendly to it-and which enjoyed considerable French economic support. Many French-speaking African states have defense treaties with their former colonial masters that are reinforced by the presence of some 8,000 French troops on the continent. The French units are highly mobile and can be quickly moved to a potential trouble spot. A well-developed network of French intelligence and security agents in all of French-speaking Africa provides the French with an efficient advance warning system.

Zaire, formerly a Belgian colony, is now also protected by the French writ. Without French help, Angola's M.P.L.A. would have, as we pointed out, conquered Congo's Shaba provinces. The French have, with varying degrees of success, intervened in the civil war in the Chad and Niger.

Moscow must also have realized that undue interference in the affairs of France's African allies might have had a negative influence on Soviet-French relations, especially in the periods of de Gaulle and Valerie Giscard d'Estaing, when France's European policies found great favor in the Kremlin. President Omar of Gabon, who is reputed to possess the most luxurious palace on the African continent, may not be the ideological soulmate of a Socialist like Mitterand, but Gabon's fabulous mineral wealth guarantees continued French protection of the existing regime.

Are the Russians likely to intervene in Africa whenever an opportunity presents itself? The cases of Ghana and Gambia offer insight to the contrary. In January of 1982, Flight Lieutenant

Jerry John Rawlings seized power in Ghana. He did so for the second time in two years, having abdicated 112 days before in favor of the elected civilian government of President Hilla Liman. The usual ills of high inflation, corruption and disorder followed and John Rawlings decided to return to power to put the house in order. In a sense, it was an African tragedy. There was Ghana, the first African country to become independent in the late Fifties; the British left it fully solvent with a considerable foreign currency reserve and a class of educated Africans, well able to administer the government and the country. Twenty-five years later, and after several coups, the country was bankrupt, the educated class having left Ghana long ago to seek employment elsewhere.

John Rawlings, an admirer of Colonel Qaddafi, invited the Libyans to reopen their embassy in Accra, and help Ghana find its way to prosperity. In the United Nations, African diplomats maintain that Rawlings had also sought Soviet assistance, but that he was coolly turned down.

If this is true it makes good sense because the Russians don't really need Ghana anymore. They have no interest in repeating their performance with Nkrumah, and find themselves again evicted with no way to recoup their losses. Today, the Russians have their hands full and they can also afford to pick and choose their African friends.

Not only did the Soviets decide not to get involved in Ghana, they also displayed no interest in the abortive left-wing coup in Gambia. There, on July 30, 1981, "a mixed group comprising some civilians and some members of the Gambia para-

military Field Force using the guns of the latter, took control of certain key points in and around the capital, Banjul, including the radio station. From here they broadcast that they had overthrown the government of President Dawda Jawara and proclaimed a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' under the leadership of a twelve-man 'National Revolutionary Council.'¹²" The rebellion was suppressed and subsequently Gambia merged with Senegal. Although no official information exists as to reasons for the revolt, there is no reason to suspect that it was Soviet instigated. Had the revolution succeeded, the Russians would have doubtless responded with official joy, but probably remained extremely niggardly in extending military or economic aid to the newest propagators of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" on the African continent.

Were a pro-Soviet coup to take place where Russia had some interest, such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, Zaire, Sudan or the Cameroons, the Soviets in Africa have become "peddlers of power," selling a "political-security" machine to African countries whose friendship the Soviets have reasons to cultivate.

The area of Soviet interest and involvement, actual and potential, in Africa is enormous. It consists of the states of Southern Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique, the so-called "confrontation states" in the conflict with South Africa, possessing enormous mineral wealth, the denial to Japan and the West of which is a recognized aim of Soviet diplomacy in Africa. Soviet publications speak constantly of the exploitation of Africa's mineral wealth by the greed of the

bourgeois imperialists. The conflict with South Africa is likely to continue for decades and the Soviets can therefore rely on making the most of a situation in which the West, for strategical and economic reasons, may have no alternative but to protect the regime of Apartheid.

Even if some agreement about the future of Namibia is researched, it is not likely to last given SWAPO's pro-Soviet leanings and South Africa's determination to keep control over the territory.

The Kremlin will need all of its pragmatic adventures, in addition to the continued availability of its Cuban proxies, to project and maintain Soviet power over such a vast expanse of territory, and in the face of so many conflicting inter-African disputes. The Chinese may be sitting on the sidelines, waiting to exploit Soviet failures. They have to some extent succeeded in Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Most Africans are, however, aware that in the near future Peking cannot provide them with the equivalent of either a Soviet-made "power package," or western aid.

The best way to illustrate the difference between the character of Soviet involvement in Africa south of the Sahara, and its involvement in Europe or Asia is to imagine a "worse case" scenario, from the Soviet point of view. If, for some reason or other, the Soviet Union were to lose all its military and diplomatic leverage in Europe or in Asia, one could assume that it would conclude, correctly or not, that its vital defense interests were seriously imperiled. If, on the other hand, the Soviet Union were to suffer a similar setback in Africa, south of

the Sahara, this would leave Soviet defensive arrangements completely intact, and would still allow a considerable, although somewhat more limited, Soviet offensive posture as a great power.

Africa, from the Soviet point of view, is therefore an area where the Soviet Union stakes its right to exercise influence as a great power which may intervene militarily, far beyond the mere requirements of national defense.

Consequently, Soviet intervention, through its proxies in Angola and Ethiopia, have to be seen in the light of Russia's global ambitions, much more so than the U.S.S.R.'s support for Vietnam in Cambodia, for instance, which may still be viewed as a part of a defensive move against China.

The Russians were not, of course, masterplanning a timetable for their imperial expansion, but responding to opportunities whenever and wherever they presented themselves. They were practicing "pragmatic adventurism." Quite likely, had the Kremlin been able to control the timing of the revolutions in Portugal and Ethiopia, they might have preferred to postpone these events for a year or two, in order to reap the full benefits of detente, including the ratification of SALT II and the postponement of American rearmament.

All of this is, of course, pure speculation. However, one can safely say that had events in Portugal and Ethiopia taken place a decade earlier, the Soviet Union could not have responded to them as it did in the Seventies, because then it did not possess the military ability to transport large masses of men and material over vast distances.

Consequently, Soviet diplomacy in Africa south of the Sahara in the Seventies and Eighties is in a position to present an image of a power which is capable of fulfilling what it regards as its mission in Africa, and above all, to give full support to its African allies.

What of the African perception of the Soviet Union? After two decades of political naivete, it now appears that most Africans have sized-up Soviet policy in very realistic terms. President Kaunde of Zambia incurred Soviet wrath by his now famous statement in which he compared the Cuban presence in Angola with a "plundering tiger with cubs." On the other hand, Kaunde, if he sees no alternative, may well decide to turn to the Soviet Union, hoping to keep his options open.

At the time of writing, five African states south of the Sahara—Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Benin and Congo (Brazzaville)—are allied to the Soviet Union both formally by virtue of treaties, and actually, by supporting the Soviet Union in Africa as well as the United Nations, and at meetings of the non-Aligned group of nations. The United States does not possess a single formal ally in sub-Saharan Africa, although Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Zaire are enjoying American support and can, in certain circumstances, be expected to be of assistance to the United States.

Both the Russians and the French have learned that because of the inherent instability of African regimes, whatever their ideology, the only way to protect one's African allies against coups is by the use of highly mobile military units, like the Cubans, or the modern equivalent of the French Foreign Legion.

No one can prognosticate how long Cuban troops are going to be available to perform guard duty for the Soviet Union. It means, however, that in addition to furthering Soviet goals in Latin America, Castro's Cuba has acquired a new role in Soviet designs on Africa which make her an indispensable ally to the Kremlin.

French-speaking African states that enjoy the military protection of France and benefit from her economic assistance, fully realize that the price for both is political loyalty to France. Outside the France zone of influence, and apart from African countries allied to the Soviet Union, the situation is highly unstable. The likely dream of an African dictator, after seizing power, would be to have the protection of the Soviet "power package," and at the same time benefit from western and especially from American aid and trade without political strings. It is doubtful that this sort of arrangement would serve American interests because the United States would, in such cases, in effect be subsidizing a Soviet presence.

On the other hand, African leaders who, like Mugabe of Zimbabwe, profess radical views should not automatically be rejected by the U.S. because many Africans fully realize, by now, the constraints on their freedom that the Soviet "power package" entails, and may, in spite of their views welcome not only American help but also political and military assistance.

In Africa in the Eighties there are no ready-made solutions to cover all contingencies. The United States may do worse than adopt some of the advice given by Anatoly Gromyko (the son of the

Foreign Minister), head of Moscow's African Institutes to Soviet "Africanists": "Soviet specialists in African affairs will be required to study the differences in the stages of development of individual countries...to follow their conduct in international forums, their foreign policy profiles...and pay special attention to influential countries like Nigeria."¹³

This advice is a far cry from the rigidity of Soviet thinking in the Fifties and Sixties, and displays the flexibility required for the pursuit of a successful policy in Africa. It also implies that African countries will be judged in the Kremlin in accordance with their conduct in matters of foreign policy. Should the United States be less insistent?

FOOTNOTES FOR SOVIET POLICY IN BLACK AFRICA

1. Later African countries actually allied to the Soviet Union, such as Congo (Brazzaville), Benin, Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia claim to practice "scientific socialism."
2. The Reds and the Blacks, William Atwood, Harber & Rowe, 1967.
3. Africa Currents (24), July, 1981. Published by the African Publication Trust. Report of a statement by the Secretary-General of the Organization of Trade Union Unity broadcast by Radio Accra, April 12, 1981.
4. Africa in the 1980's, 1980's Project/Council on Foreign Relations.
5. In a conversation with the writer, sometime in 1975.
6. New York Times, January 22, 1982. "Soviet warns Angolans on U.S."
7. New York Times, December 17, 1981. "Ethiopians' Links To Soviets Strained."
8. New Afreican Observer, Winter, 1981. p.21.
9. New York Times, February 22, 1982. "Regional Dispute Divides Sudan."
10. New York Times, February 17, 1982. Clamor For Change Is Sounding Across the Sudan."
11. For the purpose of this paper, I'm not referring to the Soviet oriented regimes on islands such as the Seycheilles. Cape Verdi, etc.
12. The Round Table, The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs, October, 1981, "Revolt in Gambia."

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translation by the writer.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

How successful has Soviet diplomacy been in securing for the U.S.S.R. some or all of the strategic and political goals described at the beginning of this paper?

Before attempting to answer this question we must bear in mind the difference between the achievements of Soviet diplomacy and those of Communist ideology.

Communist ideology has been propagated in Asia in one way or another since the early Twenties. Soviet diplomacy arrived on the Asian scene as recently as 1955. Russia's most solid success in Asia-the alignment of Vietnam with the Soviet Union-was more the result of Ho Chi Minh's (and his successor's) doctrinaire allegiance to Moscow, Vietnamese reaction against U.S. intervention, and the revival of the ancient enmity between China and Vietnam than it was the fruits of Soviet diplomacy: this is not meant, though, to detract from the skill of Russian diplomacy with creating and maintaining a special relationship with India which resulted in Kosygin presiding over the Indo-Pakistan peace talks in Tashkent in 1965, and in the signing of a Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance with India in 1971. Some of this success has been somewhat ephemeral. The Indians refused to allow the Russians to arbitrate between them and the Pakistanis a second time, after the war of 1971, and the Simla Agreement came about without Soviet participation. The Indo-Soviet Treaty is unique in that part of Asia, but it does little to prevent India from pursuing an independent policy towards China and Pakistan.

In the ongoing relationship between Moscow and New Delhi, the Russians are generally the supplicant -- fearing the inevitable normalization of relations between India and Pakistan. The main goal of Soviet diplomacy, to have India ally itself with Russia against China, has not been attained and is not likely to be reached in the foreseeable future.

By supporting India against Pakistan at the Security Council in 1965 and in 1971, and through the supply to India of advanced weaponry, the U.S.S.R. has succeeded in projecting the image of a reliable friend and thus widened the circle of its supporters in India beyond the limits of ideological sympathies.

Soviet diplomacy has failed to secure naval servicing facilities for the U.S.S.R. in Indian ports. This has now become somewhat less vital for the Soviet Union because it can contest American power in the Indian Ocean from its bases in Vietnam and South Yemen.

No doubt Moscow is looking forward to a change of regime in Pakistan which would deprive the U.S. of an ally on Afghanistan's border and would not permit the Afghan refugee camps on the Pakistani side of the border to be used as recruiting grounds for anti-Soviet guerrillas. If the Soviets were to succeed in destabilizing Pakistan it would greatly strengthen their bargaining position vis-a-vis New Delhi, ("even at the risk of straining their relations with India."); and help them pacify Afghanistan. Quite likely, this is the only move left to the Russians in Asia where it now finds itself in a state of diplomatic immobility.

The Soviet ties with Indonesia, once so close, have been broken and shown no evidence of being renewed as long as Sunarto is in power.

Soviet Russia's major diplomatic venture in Asia was the proposed Asian Collective Security Pact. This was a dismal failure and must have convinced the Kremlin that with the exception of Vietnam and states under its control, no Asian government is now willing to enter into a bilateral or multilateral arrangement aimed against Peking.

In Burma, Soviet diplomacy has tried but failed to supplant the Americans in arms delivery and has not succeeded in persuading Ne Win to ask the Russians for help against Chinese incursions into Burmese territory.

If one reviews Soviet relations with the countries of Asia, it would appear that more was achieved by way of Communist ideological propaganda than by ways of diplomatic persuasion. However, the schism between Moscow and Peking deprived the Russians of profiting from the worthwhile spread of Communism in Asia. Therefore, in the Eighties, the Kremlin is not looking forward to the coming to power of the Communist parties in Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand and Sri Lanka, because in all likelihood these Communist parties would take their orders from Peking rather than Moscow, or they might become embroiled in such internecine struggles that any geopolitical gain in ideological orientation would be obviated.

At the time of Krushchev's visit to India in 1955, Asia may have looked like a chess board with innumerable possibilities for favorable moves for the Russian side: nearly thirty years later

the Russian chess player in Asia can at best hope for a draw. There is little tactical mobility for the Soviet diplomacy in Asia these days; unlike Africa, no strategic gains can be secured in Asia for the U.S.S.R. by the dispatch of several thousand Cubans.

The main task of Soviet diplomacy in Asia now is not so much to conquer new positions as it is to contain expansion of Chinese influence.

In South Asia there is little perception of Soviet power, although there is acute awareness of China's future role on the continent. Even fear of Vietnam, a Soviet proxy, does not enhance Soviet prestige. Bangkok or Rangoon prefer to negotiate directly with Hanoi, rather than act through Moscow.

On the other hand, the growing role of the Soviet Navy worries the defense establishment of some Asian states, especially those that make up ASEAN. Their hope is for rearmament of Japan.

"Mr. Thanat, the Thai Deputy Prime Minister, declared that 'it is time for Japan to do more than rely on the U.S. umbrella' for security. If Japan 'only defended the immediate area,' he declared, Soviet forces deployed in Asia would be 'tied down instead of prowling the Pacific and Indian Oceans.'"

It would appear that where Soviet diplomacy and Communist propaganda have failed, the Russian Naval Force may be the means by which the U.S.S.R. leaves its impact on Asia.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Soviet - Indian Alignment: Quest For Influence, Robert N. Donaldson, University of Denver, 1979.
2. "Seminar" September 1981. 265. "The Soviet Connection". New Dehli.
3. New York Times, March 16, 1982.
4. The Soviet Union & the Indo - Pakistan Sub - Continent, Hasan Askari Rizvi, Progressive Publishers, Lanore, 1974.
5. New York Times, March 16, 1982.
6. Ibid.
7. In 1980, during Brezhnev's visit to New Delhi, the Russians laid forth a five-point proposal for the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean. It was drafted in a manner gauged to find favor with Indira Ghandi. In this, Moscow succeeded, but it is doubtful if the Soviets ever perceived it as anything but a move to improve relations with India. The U.S., Japan and the ASEAN countries rejected this Soviet proposal because it would have prevented the United States from projecting its own power into the Persian Gulf.

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THE SOVIET UNION IN INDIA

By Robert A. Donaldson

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to analyze the nature and extent of Soviet influence in India as manifested in the political, economic, commercial, and cultural fields. When one state seeks to influence another, it is attempting through various acts or signals to change or sustain the behavior of that state. The observable result of a successful Soviet attempt at influence would be India's doing something (or refraining from something, or continuing something) that it would likely not have gone in the absence of the Soviet attempt. Clearly, the realization of Soviet objectives is more likely to occur insofar as they are compatible with India's own objectives as perceived by her governing elite.

But certain actions taken by the Indian government that favor the realization of Soviet objectives may not result from an application of Soviet influence to the extent that these actions are perceived by the Indians as contributing to their own objectives. If Moscow and New Delhi appear to be acting in tandem on a number of issues, it may not necessarily be a result of Soviet influence on India, or of Indian influence on the Soviet Union, but rather of a common but independent perception on the part of policymakers in the two states that their interests lie in a similar direction. On the other hand, if the Soviets make a request for Indian action on an issue of little moment to the

Indians -- in which they perceive scant vital interest of their own -- or if Moscow seeks to alter or sustain Indian behavior in a matter on which New Delhi's objectives run counter to those of the Soviets, then the degree of Soviet influence is indeed being put to the test. A favorable Indian response in the latter case would of course signal the greater strength of Soviet influence than in the former instance, in which Indian compliance could be achieved at a much smaller cost to New Delhi.

Moreover, an influence relationship is rarely completely one-sided; there is often feedback effect that must be taken into account. Thus the Soviets might influence the Indians to take a particular action, while the Indians are at the same time influencing the Soviets to act in a manner favorable to the achievement of New Delhi's goals on a separate issue.

An important determinant of the degree of influence one state is able to exert on another in pursuit of its objectives is the type and quantity of capabilities it can muster in trying to affect the behavior of the target state. It is important to realize, however, that the mere existence of resources is in itself sufficient; a state's willingness to expend its capabilities and the skill and credibility with which it does so are also very important factors.

But quantity and credibility of capabilities and the degree of skill with which they are brought to bear are not simply correlated with actual influence. Also important is the extent to which there is dependence between two countries in a influence relationship. A country that needs something from another is vulnerable to its exercise of influence. Thus, in this case, the

more dependent India is upon the Soviet Union, the more likely it is that Moscow's efforts will succeed in changing or sustaining New Delhi's behavior. But we should also consider the degree to which the Soviet Union needs India. To the extent that Soviet dependence on India approaches or surpasses Indian dependence on the U.S.S.R., there may well be a reduction in the Soviet potential to exert influence on New Delhi.

In addition to availability of resources and perception of need, a final variable determining the degree of influence is the target state's responsiveness -- its willingness to be influenced. Are the Indians, at either the elite or the mass level, disposed to receive Soviet requests with sympathy? An examination of the attitudes both of government officials and of members of the Indian public toward the Soviet Union can aid in assessing the likely weight of this factor in the Soviet-Indian relationship.

In evaluating Soviet successes and failures in India, this study thus examines specific instances of Soviet-Indian interaction in recent years in the diplomatic, propaganda, military, and economic fields in order to arrive at an empirically-based understanding of the actual extent of Soviet influence in India.

Leonid Brezhnev arrived in New Delhi in December 1980 as the champion of "reliable friendship" between the Soviet Union and India. The trip was his second to India in eight years -- a record made more notable by the fact that India is the only non-Communist Third World country that Brezhnev has visited even once in the seventeen-plus years since he assumed the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Clearly, the Soviet leaders highly value their country's friendship with India -- a theme Brezhnev stressed in his first speech in New Delhi: "It may be said without fear of exaggeration that the Soviet people and their leaders are friends India can rely upon. Friends in good times and in hard times, in clear weather and in bad weather."

Welcoming Brezhnev upon his arrival was a familiar partner in these periodic demonstrations of state-to-state friendship -- Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister again after a hiatus of almost three years. Mrs. Gandhi, Brezhnev's hostess on his previous visit, had herself been received on three formal visits in Moscow. Brezhnev's words might thus have rung familiar, since they echoed a statement he had made as she was welcomed in the U.S.S.R. on her last visit there in June 1976: "In this connection may I repeat again: the Soviet Union has been and remains a reliable friend of India and the Indian people." Prime Minister Gandhi was widely perceived as a special friend of Moscow's but the expressions of India's trust and confidence in the relationship of these two powers were not the product of a particular individual's preferences. Indeed, the Janata Party

government of Morarji Desai that had held power in New Delhi during the closing years of the 1970s had disappointed some observers who had expected that Mrs. Gandhi's departure would produce a distinct reorientation of India's diplomatic, economic, and military bonds away from the U.S.S.R. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Janata government's foreign minister and prominent politician from the right wing of India's political spectrum, had seemed no less ardent than his Congress Party predecessors when he used, in welcoming a Soviet parliamentary delegation in April 1978, the very same phrase of which Brezhnev was so fond: through various trials and tests, Vajpayee said, "our country always found the only reliable friend in the Soviet Union alone."³

On occasions too numerous to detail here, both Soviet and Indian leaders have cited the stability of their friendship as the key to the maintenance of peace in the region. And as they are at pains to repeat, the notion of reliability is central in their perception of their relationship. Both India and the Soviet Union have worked carefully over the past decade to foster this perception of reliability. The two states calculate that their objectives are best served if regional and global rivals are led to conclude that New Delhi and Moscow can count on each other's support, without fear of abandonment or betrayal. An examination of the record shows that neither side has trusted in their formal ties alone -- including most prominently the 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation -- as the sure guarantor of a durable relationship. Diplomats in both capitals have recognized that such treaties cannot endure if either partner loses its

sensitivity to the other's needs or ceases to work at limiting the damage that results from inevitable differences. As we will see, the Soviet leaders in particular, aware of the shambles that were made of similar treaties concluded with Egypt and Somalia, have shown in their dealings with India that they know the value of continued efforts to cultivate a reputation as a reliable friend.

The preservation of a stable bilateral relationship is not seen in New Delhi or Moscow as an end in itself, but rather as the means by which each side is able to promote its own particular foreign policy objectives. It is important to examine these objectives, as they might be inferred on the basis of each state's pronouncements and behaviors in recent years, so that in understanding the extent to which they converge and differ we might anticipate the points at which either compatibility or strain might be expected.

The most important Soviet objective in South Asia, pursued ardently for most of the last two decades and likely to persist for the foreseeable future, is the enlistment of Indian participation as a counterweight to China in the Asian "balance of power" game. Attainment of this objective requires exclusion of Chinese influence from India and Bangladesh, and minimization of Chinese influence in Pakistan. Thus Moscow's friendly posture toward the Indians has needed to be balanced by the maintenance and even strengthening of its ties with Pakistan and Bangladesh. Given traditional Indo-Pakistani enmity, this has required a delicate balancing act, generally guided by the calculation that efforts to stabilize the situation in the subcontinent best

promote Soviet security. From the Soviet viewpoint, India's role in this enterprise of deterring Chinese military action and containing Chinese influence in South Asia is furthered by her visible partnership with the U.S.S.R. in "collective security" efforts. The greater the public Indian enlistment in this anti-China campaign, the more confident Moscow can be in the permanence of the hostility between New Delhi and Beijing.

Though China is presently viewed by the Soviets as the greatest threat to their security, Moscow has a second major adversary in Asia, and India's participation is also sought in the limitation of American presence and influence in the region. Thus the Soviets encourage New Delhi to take diplomatic and commercial decisions that assist in lessening American and Western influence, just as they seek India's support and practical assistance in projecting their own capabilities, particularly in the key areas of the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf.

A third Soviet objective is to encourage the Indian government, as a leader in the Third World, to take positions on international issues as close as possible to those taken by the Soviet Union. In both its public pronouncements and in its behavior in international bodies, India's support is sought by the U.S.S.R. For Moscow, the image of a Soviet-Indian identity of views is valued both for its impact in Washington and Beijing and for its influence on the rest of the Third World.

Their Marxist convictions lead the Soviets to believe that India's reliable friendship can best be ensured if her domestic

politics and policies reflect an orientation in the direction of a socialist economy (the "non-capitalist path") and a "progressive" polity (the "national-democratic state"). Not since the early years of Khrushchev's leadership have the Soviets viewed the creation of a Communist government in India as a realizable near-term objective; in recent years, in fact, they have demonstrated their awareness that such a development may create more problems than it would solve. After working rather contentedly with Mrs. Gandhi's "national bourgeois" government for many years, the Soviet leaders shuddered at her defeat in the 1977 elections. Nevertheless, they soon showed their willingness to cooperate with a Janata Party they had labelled reactionary, so long as it continued a foreign policy acceptable to Moscow.

As intermediate goals that help in the pursuit of the aforementioned objectives, the Soviets have sought to build strong and lasting commercial ties with India -- both as a way of weakening the fabric of "imperialist" economies and as a useful partner for their own economy -- and, through propaganda and cultural exchange, to create attitudes among the Indian elite and mass that are favorable to the U.S.S.R. Instrumental in the creation of such attitudes is the fostering of a sense of need among the Indians -- a feeling that continued Soviet support and assistance are vital to the realization of India's own objectives.

In the area of security and regional alignments there appear to be, for the present at least, certain parallels in Indian and Soviet objectives. But there are also certain incompatibilities that raise doubts that the Indo-Soviet relationship will be

either permanent or free of tension. Thus, we would expect that the Indians would desire more balance in their relations with the "great-power triangle" than the Soviets would like, and that the Soviets would hope to maintain more balance in their own relations in the subcontinent than the Indians would like.

In this arena there is the greatest likelihood that one side's actions might arouse suspicions and feelings of betrayal in the other. For example, we would expect to find some Indian resentment of the Soviet Union's attempts to strengthen its influence in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and Soviet nervousness over Indian efforts to improve relations with Beijing and Washington. We would expect that the Indians would be suspicious of Soviet-American dealings that appear to be aimed toward a superpower condominium, and specifically that New Delhi would take a different position on superpower activities in the Indian Ocean than would Moscow. We would also expect a more generalized tension arising from India's desires to maximize its freedom of action, minimize its dependence, and build up self-sufficiency in the security field, as contrasted with Moscow's desires to construct a reliable anti-China security system in Asia, and its opposition to further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

With respect to Soviet and Indian positions on other international issues, there is also a large degree of parallelism, most prominently in the area of opposition to colonial and neo-colonial activities in the Third World. But the Indians clearly wish to avoid appearances of following the Soviet lead; rather, New Delhi wants to stake out its own positions,

which -- in the case of North-South issues -- may well put an anti-superpower gloss on the issue.

In commercial relations it is not surprising that both sides perceive continuing benefits in their strengthened trade ties. The Indians, however, are pressing for Moscow to purchase more Indian manufactured goods and to make available more raw materials and nonproject assistance that the Soviets would like. And finally, with respect to India's internal development and political processes, the two sides' objectives are sufficiently different that it is not unexpected to find some tension resulting from Soviet propaganda and from efforts to create in India lobbies that pressure the Indian government to move in a more "progressive" direction.

Although the compatibility of some of their objectives might in itself provide a basis for Soviet-Indian friendship and cooperation, this is not a sufficient foundation on which to build a friendship that can endure "in clear weather and in bad weather." Far more important in motivating the two states to form a "reliable friendship" is the existence on each side of a sense of dependence upon or need of the other. A country that needs something from another is more vulnerable to its exercise of influence -- more likely to change (or sustain) its behavior in a direction that it would not have taken had not the other state⁴ desired it -- and thus more predictably cooperative and loyal. It is important to assess the degree to which India and the U.S.S. perceive themselves to be dependent upon each other.

In the military sphere, India relies both upon Soviet assistance in the event of an attack from Pakistan and China, and

upon the military equipment that Moscow has proved willing to supply. The effect of the long-standing American arms embargo on the subcontinent -- extending from 1965 to 1975, with a "one time exception" in 1970 -- was compounded by the apparent U.S. decision (as manifested in 1971) to abstain from pledging assistance to India in the event she becomes embroiled in hostilities with China. In these circumstances, India's need of Soviet help became even greater. In fact, there have been occasional indications in the past that India is willing to accede to certain otherwise undesirable aspects of her relationship with Moscow in order not to jeopardize her source of reliable military assistance.

But there are definite limits to India's defense needs from the Soviet Union. The vow of Soviet support in the event of attack has already been formalized and proclaimed through the 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty. In the wake of India's victory in the December War and the breakup of Pakistan -- which not only demonstrated her military superiority on the subcontinent but also substantially reduced the immediate threat to her security -- India's sense of need has greatly lessened.

India's dependence upon the Soviets for supply of arms is also limited, to the extent that the end of the U.S. embargo (announced in February 1975) and greater availability of foreign exchange now makes arms from the West more accessible, and also to the degree that she succeeds in achieving self-sufficiency in domestic production of military equipment at the earliest possible date. Economically, India continues to rely upon

external assistance. Her available foreign exchange resources remain constricted even though they have expanded in recent years, due largely to homeward remittances from Indians working in the Persian Gulf countries. A large portion of India's trade has been reoriented toward the Soviet Union and the COMSA bloc, and she will continue to require the imports that she can currently acquire from Communist sources without the expenditure of foreign exchange. She has incurred a massive debt with the Soviets, the repayment of which (expected to reach an annual rate of \$325 million by 1980) will require a continued flow of exports to the U.S.S.R. for many years to come.

Here again, however, there is evidence of a limitation on India's perception of the need of the Soviets. In the mid-1970s, Mrs. Gandhi flatly and publicly denied that India planned to join the Soviet trading bloc. Government trading representatives have in recent years sought to expand India's commercial relations with the Common Market in recognition of India's inability to satisfy her needs through trade in Eastern Europe. There are also obvious limitations to the Soviets' own willingness or ability to greatly expand their commercial and aid relationship with India. The Soviets have proved quite unwilling to adjust certain prices to India's liking or to supply certain raw materials that New Delhi requires.

In the political-diplomatic sphere, although India has occasionally relied upon a Soviet veto in the Security Council to protect her interests, and although she enjoys certain leverage and status in dealings with the West and the nonaligned world by virtue of her relationship with Moscow, the limits of dependence

are even more evident. India's determination to retain independence of action and to preserve nonaligned credentials underlines a sensitivity to political dependence and a desire to maintain a balanced relationship with outside powers, while not undermining her beneficial ties with the Soviets.

Even though this attitude had become increasingly evident in the final years of Mrs. Gandhi's first period in office, it was more forcefully articulated by the successor Janata administration. Within an hour of assuming office, Prime Minister Desai declared: "The foreign policy of nonalignment should be⁵ fully nonaligned, with no suspicion of alignment with anybody." In contrast to Mrs. Gandhi, who often spoke of India's "special relationship" to the U.S.S.R., Desai insisted that "we won't have⁶ special relationships with other countries." A few months later, Foreign Minister Vajpayee put it more bluntly: "Mrs. Gandhi committed the blunder of making India too much dependent on⁷ Soviet Russia. But now...a new chapter has opened."

In its attempt to create favorable attitudes among the Indian people and to direct pressure at the Indian government from internal sources, the Soviet Union has built up a large propaganda effort. One analyst has estimated that one million words per month flow from the Information Department of the Soviet Embassy in New Delhi.⁸ Periodicals or other publications distributed by Communist missions in India had a combined yearly total circulation in 1972 in excess of 23 million. Over two score journals are distributed by the Soviet embassy, compared with less than half that number published by the U.S. Government. In

addition, indigenous Communist and pro-Communist newspapers and periodicals taking a pro-Soviet line (many directly or indirectly subsidized by the Soviets) have a circulation of well over 10 million. Radio Moscow and Radio Peace and Progress have in recent years broadcast to India over 125 hours per week.

In the allied area of cultural activity, powerful assistance to the official Soviet effort is given by the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society (ISCLS), which has over 800 branches and 100,000 members in India. Through these and other auspices, numerous nonofficial exchanges are conducted; for example, in 1971-72 a total of eighteen Indian delegations traveled to the Soviet Union and twenty-three Soviet delegations toured India.

A significant role in this sphere is played by the Communist Party of India (CPI), which voices an undeviating pro-Soviet line. In addition, there are about a dozen Indian branches of international Communist front organizations, all of which contribute to the propaganda effort and serve as pro-Soviet lobbies on the internal Indian political scene. The combined effect of all this activity is a substantial aggregate influence on public opinion.

In light of this impressive array of capabilities the Soviets are able to bring to bear in the pursuit of their objectives in India, it is worth reiterating that the skill with which these resources are applied can be an important and even a decisive factor in determining the degree of Soviet influence. Apparent advantages brought about by the sheer quantity of resources can be canceled by the ostentatious display of these resources or by a heavy-handed exercise in arm twisting. Talent

also is required in the proper matching of capabilities and objectives. Although the Soviets have in general been sufficiently cautious not to arouse Indian sensitivities, the record of recent years contains instances in which Soviet capabilities have been nullified by a clumsy approach.

A revealing study of the limits to the Soviet impact on the thinking and behavior of the Indian elite was published in April 1973 by Canadian political scientist Stephen Clarkson.⁹ Based on interviews with 100 Indian officials, journalists, scholars, and businessmen conducted during March and April 1972, Clarkson's article concluded that "neither in theory nor in practice have the Soviets had any noticeable impact on the Indian elite's ways of thinking or acting in governmental affairs." This conclusion he found surprising in view of his expectation that there would be considerable Soviet intellectual and policy influence on the Indian elite given the coincidence between Soviet doctrine and the views of the bulk of Indian intellectuals concerning the importance of national economic independence, the imperialism of American foreign policy, and the need for state control of the private sector.

Instead he found warm and even enthusiastic attitudes toward Soviet foreign policy existing side by side with great distrust of the political bias of Soviet scholars and the low quality of Soviet writing on these subjects. As he put it, the attitudes of those Indian intellectuals who could a priori be expected to be most familiar with Soviet thinking "can best be presented in three dimensions: little information, low credibility, and poor

personal contact." Even among CPI intellectuals he found only "weak" Soviet scholarly influence. Few Indians speak Russian, and the preponderance of Soviet books available in India in English are technical and scientific texts rather than works in political economy.

In sum, Clarkson found no evidence at all of any policy spin-off from the excellent economic and diplomatic relations between Moscow and New Delhi. Among the elite there were both great friendliness and underlying distrust. Thus, though attitudes toward the Soviet Union as an international power "are warm and friendly, attitudes toward the Soviet system and ideology are hostile and suspicious."

The regular surveys by the Indian Institute of Public Opinion (IIPO) of public attitudes toward the Soviet Union and the United States enable us to assess the trends in popular responsiveness toward these countries. The IIPO survey is conducted among 1,000 literate adults, randomly selected from the election lists, and evenly distributed among the four largest cities of India: Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, and Madras.¹⁰ An examination of recent surveys shows that Indian opinion of the Soviet Union shortly after the 1971 war surpassed the previous post-Tashkent high, while opinion of the United States had sharply declined. (In April 1972, the weighted score of the United States was even lower than that of the People's Republic of China.) A year later, while American popularity had risen sharply, Soviet popularity, slipping slightly, continued to be quite high. The opinion rating of the United States declined again in the spring of 1975, following Washington's announcement

of readiness to resume arms sales to the subcontinent. But a year and a half later, the opinion of the United States had improved markedly, returning to pre-1971 levels. And in the August 1977 survey, with the Janata Government's return to true nonalignment and with the end of the Indochina War and the accession of a Democratic administration in Washington, The United States outscored the Soviet Union in the survey for the first time in over a decade! However, this did not signal a growth in negative opinion toward the U.S.S.R.; of those surveyed, 77 percent found Indo-Soviet relations "satisfactory," and 60 percent (as compared to 57 percent for the United States) agreed that the "basic interests" of the two countries were in agreement.

The fluctuations could be attributed to international activity -- especially as it relates to the subcontinent -- of the two superpowers and by the perceived health of bilateral relations; there does not seem to be any correlation between the volume of propaganda activity within India and the public attitude toward either country. What the surveys do not tell us is the precise effect of public attitudes upon the behavior of the Indian governments, i.e., whether the favorable opinion of the Soviet Union is passively permissive in nature or whether it can be translated more directly into actual public pressure in favor of a particular foreign policy stance. At the very least, however, we may conclude that Indian public opinion does not stand as an obstacle to the achievement of Soviet influence in India.

Ironically, much of the Soviet Union's efforts to woo Indian opinion reveal a certain degree of Soviet need of Indian backing: India's position as the strongest power in South Asia and the only other mainland Asian power that can act as a counterweight to China creates a lasting Soviet need for Indian support in its effort to contain China. If India were to become hostile or indifferent to the Soviets, Moscow would be left with no major asset in the area. If New Delhi's strained relationship with the United States and China can be judged to be less irreparable than Moscow's own conflict with Beijing, then it would appear that India has greater flexibility in its external ties than does the Soviet Union, and that it may be less "reliable" for Moscow than Moscow is for New Delhi.

The importance of the China factor in shaping Soviet perceptions of India has been sharply underscored in recent years. Sino-Indian relations had been exacerbated in 1974 and 1975 by India's nuclear explosion, her annexation of Sikkim, and China's growing influence in Bangladesh following the coup that removed Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. In the summer and fall of 1975 there were reports, ostentatiously reprinted in the Soviet press, of incidents on the long quietened Sino-Indian border.

In 1976, however, relations between Beijing and New Delhi showed signs of thaw, as the Chinese began to pursue a more active diplomacy. In January, China suggested that Sino-Indian diplomatic relations be upgraded, and within six months an Indian ambassador had been dispatched to Beijing, ending a fourteen-year

break. Just prior to the ambassador's arrival, Mrs. Gandhi was in Moscow, and though the communique was silent on the question of China the Indian premier told a press conference in the Soviet capital that "when we discuss the international situation we cannot leave out a country like China, but India's decision to send an ambassador to China will not stand in the way of Indian-Soviet friendship."¹¹

The movement toward normalization appeared to quicken with the accession of the Janata government. Foreign Minister Vajpayee told an interviewer in October 1977 that "we are willing to take such steps as are necessary to further the process of normalization." acknowledging that the border dispute would not be easily solved, he stated that the best course would be to "keep it frozen" for the time being, seek other avenues for establishing trust, and once the general climate had improved, return to "more serious problems." Although it was probably of little comfort to listeners in Moscow, Vajpayee took pains to state that normalization between India and China should not be at the cost of India's friendship with any country.¹²

Prime Minister Desai reportedly repeated these assurances to Brezhnev during a visit to the U.S.S.R. later that month, but the Soviets nevertheless remained nervous. Their worries were doubtless heightened by Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping's visits to Burma and Nepal early in 1978, during which he reiterated Beijing's hope for better relations with India. According to one report, other signs that China was seeking to curb Soviet influence in South Asia -- including the expansion of trade ties

with India, the dispatch of a delegation to New Delhi for a goodwill visit, and the issuance of an invitation to Vajpayee to visit Beijing -- prompted Soviet embassy officials to make discrete inquiries of the government regarding the contemplated scope of Sino-Indian normalization.

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After one postponement, Vajpayee undertook his visit to Beijing in February 1979. Hoping to reopen negotiations on the border conflict, he claimed that the visit brought progress by helping to win China's assent to preservation of tranquility along the Sino-Indian frontier. For its part, China was eager to display Vajpayee's visit as a sign of India's willingness to loosen its close ties with Moscow. But the cause of Sino-Indian rapprochement was not aided by China's choice of this moment to launch her punitive attack on Vietnam, nor by Deng Xiaoping's ill-advised reference to the attack as analogous to the 1962 border war with India.

China's seeming blunder and the early departure of Vajpayee came as a welcome relief to the Soviets in the face of their fears that New Delhi would drift toward neutrality in the Sino-Soviet conflict. Although these Soviet fears were clearly exaggerated, their relief over the interruptions in the Sino-Indian dialogue proved to be temporary. An Indian diplomat again travelled to Beijing in June 1980 for talks on the border issue. And although the Chinese angrily postponed a scheduled return visit of Foreign Minister Huang Juain, the wake of India's recognition of the Hen Samrin regime in Kampuchea, Huang's visit finally took place in June 1981, much to Moscow's consternation. Huang publicly agreed to the opening of official talks on the

border questions, but Soviet press commentaries sought to dampen any Indian hopes that Sino-Indian relations might actually improve. And indeed, when the first round of border talks in Beijing in December 1981 and the second round in New Delhi in May 1981 adjourned without visible progress, the Soviets again displayed relief.

Further confirmation of the Soviet sense of need of India is available. Through their actions in the 1971 crisis, the Soviets made it clear that the preservation of their relationship with India was more important to them than their interest in seeking to prevent a potentially destabilizing war in the area. Earlier in the same year, the Soviets had demonstrated that their interest in preserving their ties with the Congress government overrode any potential benefit they might have seen in the victory of an anti-Congress coalition in the Indian parliamentary elections; the Soviets were not interested in change in India if this would bring uncertainty and instability. Brezhnev's direct praise of the Congress Party and its program during his November 1973 speech at the Red Fort in Delhi amounted to Soviet certification of the progressive credentials of Mrs. Gandhi's government. This endorsement further diminished the ability of the Communist Party of India (CPI) to criticize as insufficiently radical the ruling party's policies. Brezhnev's statement left some Indian observers concluding that the Soviet stake in Mrs. Gandhi's Congress had heightened, making the CPI a redundant appendage in Indian politics.¹⁴

The 1975 political crisis in India, culminating in Mrs. Gandhi's proclamation of emergency rule in June, was initially welcomed by the Soviets for its seeming reversal of a mounting reactionary tide. But the period of the emergency freed Mrs. Gandhi of any parliamentary dependence on the CPI, and the harsh restrictions on political freedom limited the capabilities of the Communists as well as other parties. But Moscow saw no viable alternative to Congress, viewing the opposition Janata Party as "the direct tool of extreme reaction...and the defender of the interests of landowners, usurers, and the local foreign monopolies." Its foreign policy platform was characterized as opposed to India's traditions, as well as to "such achievements¹⁵ as India's friendship and cooperation" with the U.S.S.R.

Soviet fears of a sharp reversal in Indian foreign policy, in the wake of Mrs. Gandhi's surprising defeat in the 1977 elections, were soon allayed. The warm sentiments expressed by Foreign Minister Gromyko on his first visit with the new government in April 1977 -- that friendly Indo-Soviet relations "are not the result of transitory circumstances of expediency" --¹⁶ were reciprocated by the Indian leadership. The Soviet press, elatedly hailing the "important political results" of Gromyko's trip, showed its relief that "the high hopes of the imperialist forces that Soviet-Indian relations would deteriorate were not¹⁷ justified." Although their worst fears were not realized, Soviet commentators nevertheless continued to assume a cautious, even nervous, stance toward the Desai regime, regarding it as a far less reliable ally than its predecessor.¹⁸ (

III

In the record of Indo-Soviet relations of the last decade or so, there are many instances in which each side has demonstrated to the other (and to the world) the steadfastness of its commitment and willingness to cooperate. Examples abound of "fair weather friendship," when cooperation is relatively painless or mutually beneficial. But of greater interest in documenting the existence of a particularly firm bond of friendship are occasions on which giving support to one's partner is done only at significant cost to one's own resources or interests.

In the context of India's security problem, one valuable resource the Soviets command is the ability to pledge their assistance in the event of an attack on India. The usefulness of this promise is, of course, as great in its deterrence value as in the case of actual hostilities.

Though lacking in specificity and not of a binding nature, such pledges of support could be highly valued by the Indians in the face of the prospect of joint attack from Pakistan and China. Fearing such a contingency in the summer of 1971 -- compounded by an American message of non-support in the case of Sino-Indian hostilities -- the Indians and Soviets agreed to make a public declaration of Moscow's support. The Indian government's perceived sense of need of the Soviets was clearly high at this point, and the Soviets were seeking to utilize this in their effort to encourage New Delhi not to take action that might

precipitate military conflict on the subcontinent. The objectives of both sides were thus served by the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty in August 1971.

For the Indians, the pressures of the civil war in Pakistan and consequent refugee flood into India were catalytic in reviving the idea of a treaty (discussions about which had actually begun two years before). Another important factor in the calculations of both sides was the revelation by President Nixon in July that Henry Kissinger had traveled to Beijing to arrange a visit by Nixon in 1972. A detail of special interest to the Indians was Pakistan's role in facilitating Kissinger's secret journey. Thus, with the cooperation of India's sworn enemy, the American president was making overtures for a new relationship with China, India's second major antagonist in Asia. In its two wars in the 1960s, India had enjoyed first the support and assistance of the United States against China and then its strict neutrality in the 1965 war with Pakistan. As India faced the prospect of another round with Pakistan -- supported by China -- in 1971, could she even count again on American neutrality? Indeed, reports were circulating that Kissinger had warned Mrs. Gandhi in the summer of 1971 that China might not remain aloof from a war in the subcontinent, and that the United States might not give New Delhi its support as it had in the Sino-Indian war of 1962.¹⁹ In this context, the public promise of Soviet support was particularly welcome in India.

The Soviets, no less concerned over the prospect of a Sino-American rapprochement, saw India's dilemma as an opportunity both to gain influence in New Delhi and to avert another

enervating conflict in the subcontinent. A large-scale Indo-Pakistani war could only intensify the drain on India's resources, thus likely wasting not only the Soviet economic investment in India, but substantial Soviet arms investments as well.

The actual obligations the Soviets incurred from the treaty were minimal. Apart from pledges to strengthen economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation, and to continue regular contacts on international problems, each party to the treaty promised: (1) not to enter into any alliance or commit any aggression directed against the other (Article 8); (2) not to undertake any commitment incompatible with the treaty (Article 10); and (3) in the event of an attack or threat directed toward either by a third party, immediately to start mutual consultations with a view to eliminating this threat (Article 9).

From the Soviet point of view, the treaty's main purpose was to formalize and extend Russian influence for the immediate end of stabilizing the situation in South Asia, both by deterring the Pakistanis and their Chinese patrons and by providing a psychological crutch to the Indians designed to forestall an emotional drift toward early recognition of Bangladesh and consequent war on the part of New Delhi. Technically, the Soviets were under no greater obligation to give material assistance to India in case of attack than they had been prior to the treaty's signing. India, on the other hand, while not denying herself the option of unilateral military action against Pakistan, had solemnly declared her intention to consult the Soviets in the

event of any threatened attack, thus formalizing and displaying for the benefit of third parties the strong Soviet interest in subcontinent affairs.

The official Indian view of the advantages brought by the Treaty stressed not only the deterrence of hostile powers through Soviet support, but also a gain in India's credibility and flexibility in the world. Soviet support of India's positions on Bangladesh and Kashmir was said to be assured, and Article 10 was read in New Delhi as prohibiting further Soviet supply of arms to Pakistan.

When war came in December, the Soviet provision of military and diplomatic support to India proved of great value. In the latter sphere, Ambassador Malik used his vetoes in the Security Council to block cease-fire resolutions while the Indians completed their military operations in East Pakistan. The Soviet position in the aftermath of the December war was anomalous. Though the Soviets had failed to bring about the removal of the refugee burden from India by peaceful means, they had at least played a major role in India's victory, while their American and Chinese rivals had both lined up on the side of the loser. They might well have expected India's gratitude to produce even greater Soviet influence in New Delhi. But, as Mrs. Gandhi has said, "one of our faults is that we are unable to display gratitude in any tangible sense for anything." ²⁰ Ironically, the Soviets, by helping India to eliminate an effective military threat from their main antagonist of nearly a quarter of a century, had thereby reduced India's need of the Soviets and with it, perhaps, chances of enlarging the Soviet potential for

influence. A militarily stronger and more confident India would therefore prove to be a mixed blessing for Moscow.

On the other hand, although the Soviets set about attempting to rebuild their relations with Pakistan so as not to leave it to the exclusive blandishments of Washington and Beijing, the Soviet Union now needed India more than ever, for she had become an even more valuable asset in the effort to outflank China. In addition, the Soviets were likely to be faced with a greater burden of both military and economic aid in an area in which prospects for stability had by no means been enhanced. But there seemed to be no alternative open to the Soviet Union but to shoulder the greater burden as the price for the hoped-for greater influence, for the maintenance of this influence still seemed to require that the Soviets seek stability in South Asia.

The ability of the Soviet Union to supply advanced weapons and training in their use to the Indian military, as well as to assist India in the development of her domestic defense industry, is an important pledge of Moscow's friendship. The value of the Soviet supply relationship, which amounted to \$3.6 billion at the end of 1977 and was enlarged with a new \$1.6 billion deal in 1980, is heightened by the fact that the United States, at least until the lifting of the arms embargo, had refused to act as an alternative supplier to the Indians. As Prime Minister Desai expressed it in an interview given to an American periodical, "if we buy more from the Soviet Union, it is the fault of the western countries for not selling to us."

For a period of several years, then, the Soviet Union has been the major supplier of weaponry to India, providing roughly four-fifths of New Delhi's total military imports since 1965. Important for the Indians is the fact that these arms are purchased without the direct expenditure of foreign exchange; rather, they are paid for with Indian exports through the Soviets' rupee account. On most purchases, ten percent down payment is required, with the balance covered by nine or ten year credits at two percent interest.

Moscow's reliability as a supplier of military equipment is matched by her importance to India as a steady source of economic assistance and trade. Between 1950-51 and 1971-72, India's trade with the U.S.S.R. and Communist East Europe rose from 0.5 percent to 20 percent of her total exports, and from a negligible amount to fully 11 percent of her imports. Although the volume of Soviet-Indian trade has continued to rise in the 1970s, the relative weight of Soviet imports and exports in the total Indian trade picture has fallen off since the peak years of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although some instances of friction have accompanied this decline, still it is clear that Soviet trade is important to India both in drastically reducing her economic dependence on the West and in allowing her to make important purchases without the expenditure of scarce foreign exchange.

Prior to 1977, when a new \$340 million Soviet credit was announced, the total amount of Soviet economic aid to India since 1954 had been 1.943 billion in credits. Of this amount, over \$450 million had not been drawn by the end of 1976. The decline in India's aid drawdowns, and consequently in Indian imports of

Soviet products, is largely a result of Moscow's reluctance to shift away from the traditional pattern of public-sector project aid, involving primarily credits for heavy industrial equipment, to nonproject aid and the provision of raw materials -- both of which are increasingly desired by the Indians as their own industrial capacity expands. Nevertheless, the undeniable fact is that Soviet aid and trade have been an important element in India's economy -- thus making more important the Soviet Union's reliability as a source of economic cooperation.

Especially timely and valuable signs of Moscow's devotion were several recent Soviet actions designed to relieve India's burdens in the arena of energy resources. During the energy crisis of 1974, the U.S.S.R. agreed to deliver to India one million tons of kerosene and 100,000 tons of diesel fuel. More importantly, the Soviets agreed in December 1976 to a long-term petroleum supply relationship with India that for the first time obligated Moscow to supply New Delhi with crude oil on a barter basis. The four-year trade protocol called for the Russians to deliver 5.5 million metric tons of crude oil in return for Indian pig iron. The foreign exchange savings for India -- and the consequent loss of hard currency earnings for the U.S.S.R. --
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were indeed significant.

In 1979 Soviet assistance was again critical in alleviating a serious shortfall in India's crude oil imports in the wake of the Iranian revolution. The Russians announced during Premier Kosygin's March 1979 visit that an additional 600,000 tons of Soviet crude would be bartered in 1979 in exchange for Indian

rice (which Moscow reportedly planned to send to Vietnam). And in the course of Brezhnev's 1960 visit, agreements were signed that called for generous Soviet assistance to India in the fields of coal mining, oil exploration and refining, and power plant construction.

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One other agreement, also announced at the time of the 1976 oil deal, occurred in the politically sensitive area of nuclear fuel supplies. Prior to India's detonation of a nuclear explosion in May 1974, the United States and Canada had served as her sources of supply for heavy water and enriched uranium. But these sources were at least temporarily cut off by the adverse Canadian and American reactions to India's nuclear test, and as 1976 drew to a close the Indians badly needed a supply of heavy water to recharge their reactor in Rajasthan. It was announced in December that the U.S.S.R. had agreed to sell India 240 tons of heavy water, 25 percent of which would be shipped immediately, subject only to an Indian pledge that it would not be used in the production of plutonium for explosive devices.

The Soviet sale was seen in the West as a departure from Moscow's rigid non-proliferation stance, for there was no indication that the Indians would be required to agree to international safeguards on all their nuclear reactors. This, New Delhi had previously refused to do in its dealing with North American suppliers. The Soviet Union, however, did apparently try to avoid diluting its non-proliferation principles for the prospect of a political gain in New Delhi, and it sought to apply its influence in a case where India's need to achieve a modification of the Indian position was strong. In the end,

however. the Soviets apparently had to compromise. managing to win Indian assent only to safeguards that were limited to the time and place that the Soviet heavy water was actually used. That the Indians refused to accept the original Soviet conditions, even in the face of Moscow's strong interest in effective safeguards and its heavy pressure on New Delhi, is an instructive illustration of the current "balance of influence" in the relationship, as well as an indication of the extent to which the Soviets are willing to go to demonstrate their commitment to India.²⁴

Lacking great wealth or material resources, the Indians can best demonstrate their loyalty and friendship to the Soviet Union by giving Moscow a less tangible assistance: diplomatic support for key Soviet actions or initiatives. On some occasions, this has taken the form not of praise and backing for Soviet behavior, but rather of silence or abstention from criticism at a time when the U.S.S.R. is being widely attacked for its actions. To look at the most dramatic examples, on each of the three occasions in the past 25 years when the Soviet Union has invaded a neighboring country, India has responded with its own peculiar blend of expression of regret combined with a refusal to join in international condemnation of the Soviet actions. Although the Soviet Union would undoubtedly have preferred active support of its actions, it has shown that it recognizes as friendly gestures India's refusals to condemn the Soviet invasions.

In 1956, even though Indian leaders gave an estimate of the Soviet attack on Hungary that differed from that of the socialist

camp, still they failed to support the western position. Indeed, V.K. Krishna Menon's was one of only two non-Communist votes in the United Nations against the resolution calling for free elections in Hungary; he had earlier abstained on the U.S.-sponsored resolution calling for a withdrawal of Soviet forces. Preoccupied at the time with the Suez question, India seemed to prefer to take her stands on clear-cut cases of "imperialist aggression" against non-western countries and to stand on the sidelines when Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe was at issue.

Perhaps the clearest example of an Indian statement framed with an eye toward its possible effect in Moscow occurred in 1968 at the time of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. And yet the Indian statement, while couched in milder terms than the United States would have liked, could have been phrased in a way that would have pleased the Soviets even more. Mrs. Gandhi's apparent compromise was to issue a statement that viewed the events in Prague with a "heavy heart" and "profound concern and anguish." Her statement explicitly took note of India's "close and many-sided" relations with Moscow, which New Delhi wished to "preserve and extend." ²⁵ And the Indian government instructed its delegate to abstain on the Security Council resolution that sought to condemn the Soviet action. This behavior, which caused an uproar in the Indian Parliament, clearly demonstrated India's unwillingness in 1968 to jeopardize its relations with the Soviet Union.

In reacting to a Soviet military intervention that occurred much closer to home -- the December 1979 invasion of Afghanistan -- the Indian government concocted a similar blend: public

statements of regret and concern balanced by polite acknowledgements of the Soviet version of events and adamant refusal to be drawn into international condemnations of the Soviet action. On the eve of the 1980 elections, Mrs. Gandhi issued a statement on the Soviet invasion: "I am strongly against any interference. But in Afghanistan, the Soviet interference is not one-sided. Other interferences were going on there."²⁶

Abstaining on the United Nations vote condemning the Soviet action, the Indian representative said that "we have no reason to doubt assurances, particularly from a friendly country like the Soviet Union" that Russian troops had intervened in Afghanistan on the request of the government there.²⁷ Privately, the Indians have told the Soviets on many occasions that they would prefer that Soviet troops be withdrawn from Afghanistan. But they have not publicly disputed the Soviet line that Moscow was "provoked" to protect its interests when anti-Soviet rebels in Afghanistan received aid from Pakistan, China, and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.²⁸

Joint declarations issued on the occasions of visits to Moscow by the Indian president and foreign minister in 1980 signalled the inability of the two countries to agree on a common position on Afghanistan by simply omitting any mention of the issue.²⁹ Similarly, there was no direct reference to Afghanistan in the joint declaration that was issued in December following the visit to India of Soviet President Brezhnev. There was, however, a paragraph dealing with Southwest Asia, which said that "India and the Soviet Union reiterate their opposition to all forms

of outside interference in the internal affairs of the countries in that region." Both sides, it says, "are confident that a negotiated political solution alone can guarantee a durable settlement of the existing problems of the region." ³⁰ This formula was consistent with the public positions of both sides and yet committed neither one to endorsement of the other's views on the specific question of how the crisis is to be resolved. In any case, India's cool and reserved statements on the issue have been publicly appreciated as "sober" and "realistic" by the Soviets, who are undoubtedly pleased to have at least one large nonCommunist country abstain from the noisy condemnation of their Afghan adventure.

IV

On some other occasions, when the Indians have adopted positions or taken actions in support of Soviet objectives, they have done so in a context that has lessened some of the potential satisfaction that such support might have given to their Soviet friends. For example, in 1970, after much apparent urging from members of the socialist bloc, India took actions that constituted recognition of regimes whose legitimacy Moscow was hard-pressed to establish. Within a two-week period, the government of India announced the impending official visit to New Delhi of Madame Binh, Foreign Minister of the Vietcong government, and the establishment of consular-level relations with the German Democratic Republic. And yet these actions were taken in the wake of the dismissal of Mrs. Gandhi of her pro-

Soviet Foreign Minister, Dinesh Singh -- almost as if their chief purpose were to soften the blow for Moscow of this important cabinet change.
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In similar fashion, India's recognition in July 1980 of the regime of Heng Samrin, Vietnam's puppet in Kampuchea, took place some sixteen months after Premier Kosygin had, during a visit to New Delhi, urged that the action be taken. It was not coincidental that Mrs. Gandhi's decision to extend recognition was taken in the wake of the announcement that Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua would visit India at the end of 1980. By this timing, the Indians accomplished the dual purpose of giving a nod to the Soviets at a time when their concern would be aroused, while taking a slap at the Chinese at a time when they might have interpreted India's invitation as a concession and a sign of weakness.

India's gestures toward the Soviet Union have thus not brought unalloyed happiness in Moscow; often, they have seemed less than the gifts of a "reliable friend." And yet it is a sign of Moscow's sense of need that it has seemed to seize upon India's actions as a sort of victory for the forces of peace and progress. A press commentary on Soviet-Indian relations published in Moscow in October said:

Its sober approach to the Afghan events and recent official recognition of the people's republic of Kampuchea are but two instances of the peaceableness, common sense, and realism distinguishing the policy followed by Indira Gandhi's government.³²

A later comment suggested that Moscow's appreciation of the Indian actions might well have been enhanced by the grief which

these acts had brought to Washington and Beijing: "U.S. imperialist circles and the Beijing neogemonists are enraged by Delhi's sensible, realistic stand on the question of Afghanistan and its official recognition of Kampuchea and its government headed by Heng Samrin."³³

While there have been occasions on which Soviet actions in the subcontinent have occasioned shock or disappointment in New Delhi, these have been relatively few in recent years, in part because of the willingness of both sides to mask their disagreements. Certainly there has not since been a year as difficult for Indo-Soviet relations as was 1968. India's disquiet over the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia pales in significance next to her alarm over the Soviet sale of military hardware to Pakistan. Coming on the heels of Pakistan's decision to close down the U.S. intelligence facility in Peshawar, the Soviet sale of armored personnel carriers, tanks, and artillery to Pakistan was part of an effort to wean Islamabad from its close ties to Washington and Beijing. The resulting protests from India were accompanied by riots at the Soviet embassy in New Delhi. The widespread disillusionment over India's alleged "special relationship" with the U.S.S.R. included the introduction by a parliamentary opposition group of a motion calling for the censure of the government for its friendly policy toward the Soviet Union.

The Soviets hastened to reassure India that they had no intention of altering the military balance in the region. Characteristically, Mrs. Gandhi's response in Parliament was to express profound concern and misgivings about the Soviet deal

while refusing to question the motives or good faith of the Soviet government. Her answer revealed a great deal about her expectations concerning "friendship," while indirectly revealing almost as much about India's own standards of behavior. Warning against complacency or a lack of realism, she noted that one could not reasonably expect a friendly country to "give up everything, even its own interest, for the sake of our friendship....We must accept friendship as it is; it may be more, it may be less. I for one cannot understand the argument that trusting a country or believing in its friendship has done us harm.³⁴

During the same year the Indians had reason to be disappointed by a Soviet action in the sphere of commercial relations. During a January 1968 visit, Premier Kosygin had promised that the Soviet Union would purchase all the rails and railway wagons that India could produce over the next five years -- though in fact Soviet railways were built on a different scale. This pledge raised Indian hopes of boosting the production of some of their public-sector industries to a level closer to full capacity. A protocol was signed calling for 2,000 cars to be delivered in 1969, and up to 10,000 per year by 1973, with a total over the period of 26,000. But the deal fell through after prolonged haggling between the two sides. The Soviets offered a price amounting to roughly one-half of India's production costs, and then stipulated in the specifications for the wheel assemblies the use of lead and zinc alloys available only from the U.S.S.R. at a high price. The Russians reportedly even

attempted to make their purchase of Indian railway wagons conditional on India's purchase of Soviet commercial aircraft. When the deal finally collapsed, the Indians tried to convince Soviet negotiators of their obligation to buy other manufactured goods equivalent in price to the rejected railway wagons. This argument, however, was apparently scorned by the Soviets.³⁵ The entire incident, especially when viewed in context with the Pakistani arms deal, hardly enhanced the Soviet Union's reputation for reliability. It is worth noting, however, that although there have been subsequent Indo-Soviet disagreements in the commercial field, there apparently has been nothing in recent years to rival in scale this particular breach of promise.

Indeed, for the past few years the Indians have proved far more reluctant customers and the Soviets far more ardent salesmen than their relative economic standing might have suggested. Clearly, political attitudes also play a role in this realm, and India's reluctance to conclude certain deals with the U.S.S.R. stems in part at least from her calculation that overreliance on a single supplier or market can bring undue political dependence. One of the most pointed demonstrations of Indian dissatisfaction in recent years came in 1977, when the Indian government refused the offer of Soviet participation in construction of the second stage of the giant Bokaro steel complex, the first stage of which was built under Soviet auspices. The decision, first announced a few days prior to Gromyko's arrival in April 1977, was officially couched by both New Delhi and Moscow in terms of India's achievement of a self-reliant position in steel production -- heretofore the primary sector of Soviet-Indian economic

collaboration. The main purpose of the 250 million ruble credit announced during Bromyko's visit was thereby obviated, though the Russians offered it on terms more generous than previous credits and hastily agreed that it could be used for any other projects mutually agreed upon.

Subsequent press reports indicated that the Indians were actually seeking a better grade of technology than the Russians could supply. A steel ministry spokesman confirmed in August that the Soviets lacked the necessary sophisticated technology for completion of the Bokaro plant, and that two American firms had been approached for help on the project.³⁶ The Bokaro case could thus be seen as an instance of a more general Indian shift from Soviet to Western industrial technology. Other recent examples of this phenomenon include the replacement of Soviet designs for 200-megawatt power generators by West German designs (for generators with 1,200-megawatt capacity), the gradual displacement of Russian antibiotics by drugs based on Italian technology, the replacement of Russian and Rumanian oil-exploration experts and of Soviet oil rigs with Western ones. The share of the Indian market for machinery and equipment accounted for by Soviet imports fell from about three-fourths in 1968 to under one-fourth in 1977. The coming of age of Indian industry had necessitated a search for the best technology, which Moscow was only rarely able to supply, and India was thereby becoming a far less reliable customer of Soviet export firms.³⁷

Even in the sphere of arms merchandizing, the Soviets have recently been unable to use their political sway to persuade the

Indians not to deal with the competition. Just one example of the greater Indian disposition to shop for military supplies in the west came in 1977, when a press report indicated that she had decided to purchase the French "Ragie" air combat missile for her air force in preference to one offered by the Soviet Union. According to this report, India "will go in for the best equipment regardless of political considerations and the rupee trade account."³⁸ A year later, it was announced that India would accept an Anglo-French offer to supply the Jaguar deep penetration strike aircraft as opposed to a competing offer from Moscow for an improved version of the MiG-23. At the same time that he announced this decision, the Indian Defense Minister also revealed that India was negotiating with European manufacturers of submarines for the establishment of a submarine plant in India.³⁹ What is illustrated by these examples is not merely the failure of Soviet influence in the critical realm of arms supply, but also the dogged Indian determination to avoid a relationship of dependence on the U.S.S.R. and to achieve a position of military self-reliance. As Prime Minister Desai put it in an interview, in the context of a discussion of India's technological borrowing, "we must learn and then be independent again, not remain perpetually dependent on someone else."⁴⁰

The Soviets used the occasion of Brezhnev's December 1980 visit to try to recapture some of the Indian market and re-establish the close economic and military relationship that had existed prior to Mrs. Gandhi's defeat. In addition to new Soviet commitments to the development of key public-sector industries, Indo-Soviet collaboration was announced in the manufacture of

transport aircraft, and it was revealed that a contract was under discussion for the purchase and manufacture of advanced MiG-23s.

As one western account put it, Brezhnev

...showered India with gifts and promises...as part of an obvious attempt to win back the country to the close relationship that existed until four years ago...(and to check a drift toward economic collaboration with the West, not only on new projects but in the expansion of existing plants, some of which had been the exclusive preserve of the Soviet Union.⁴¹

In the spring of 1981 India found new impetus for its arms shopping after the Reagan Administration announced its intention to sell a substantial quantity of modern weapons -- including the F-16 fighter-bomber -- to Pakistan. Although India had herself only recently made major arms purchases, she viewed the American arms agreement with Pakistan as provocative and destabilizing. Announcing that "a few" MiG-25 aircraft had been acquired, India visibly stepped up the pace of talks with both Soviet and Western arms merchandisers.⁴²

The Soviets could scarcely contain their glee at this deterioration of Indian-American relations. The American arms deal with Pakistan, together with the Reagan Administration's decision to consider arms sales to China, effectively removed the Indian spotlight from the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan and again seemingly underscored for New Delhi the value of its alliance with the U.S.S.R. On the tenth anniversary of the Soviet-Indian treaty, Foreign Minister Gromyko accused the United States of trying to destabilize Asia by selling arms to Pakistan and China, and he pointedly warned that the Soviet Union would "take all measures" needed to defend itself and its allies.⁴³

Once again, however, Mrs. Gandhi took pains to emphasize India's independent stance. She coolly declined an invitation to appear in Moscow on the treaty anniversary and seemed again to play down its significance in her own statements. Subsequently, she journeyed to Paris for talks that included plans for enlarging Franco-Indian military cooperation. In February 1982 India and France signed a preliminary agreement for Indian purchase of 40 of the new Mirage-2000 fighter bombers.

Only a month later an extraordinary delegation of Soviet military personnel descended on New Delhi in a last-minute effort to prevent the loss to a Western competition of major arms contract. The delegation of sixteen senior Soviet officers, including Air Chief Marshal Kutakhov and Admiral of the Fleet Gorshtkov, was led by Defense Minister Dimitri Ustinov -- making his first visit to a nonCommunist country. Despite reaffirmations of Soviet-Indian friendship from both sides, the Soviets failed to steer India away from its purchase agreement with France. Significantly, a major issue in the negotiations was the two prospective suppliers' willingness to agree to transfer production rights and facilities to India, thus aiding in her effort to become ultimately self-reliant in arms manufacturing. ⁴⁴

Far more serious than India's reluctance as a Soviet customer in the commercial and arms spheres have been the occasions on which she has refused to endorse major Soviet political initiatives -- especially when the Soviets have ardently sought India's support. The best example for this is found in India's persisting refusal to endorse Brezhnev's 1969 proposal for creation of "a system of collective security in

Asia." When various attempts in the early 1970s to enlist Indian spokesmen in support of the proposal met with failure, Brezhnev himself sought to take on the role of salesman. During his November 1973 visit to India, he expounded at length before the parliament on the merits of collective security in Asia. But again, no explicit Indian endorsement of the concept was forthcoming -- an obvious personal rebuff to Brezhnev. Another attempt was made during Mrs. Gandhi's June 1976 visit to Moscow, but again the joint declaration failed to endorse the concept. In fact, Mrs. Gandhi appeared to throw more cold water on the Soviet proposal by means of her skillful evasiveness at a Moscow press conference:

A correspondent asked about holding an Asian conference on security similar to the Helsinki conference. The Prime Minister said the problems of Asia are exceedingly complex. Everything should be done to see that there is greater stability...She pointed out that security depends on many factors. To us, the most important factor now is stability with economic strength. Bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation is the best way to ensure stability.

Other examples of India's unwillingness to endorse Soviet diplomatic initiatives or to change her own stance in response to Soviet requests include New Delhi's long-standing refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty, despite Soviet urgings that it do so, the persisting differences between the two countries on the issue of declaring the Indian Ocean a "zone of peace" free of superpower naval rivalry, and the cool Indian reaction in the

mid-1970s whenever Soviet leaders would seek endorsement of Soviet-American cozente. On the latter subject, Mrs. Gandhi occasionally infuriated the Soviet leaders by her equal application of the term "big powers" to Moscow and Washington. For example, during a trip to Canada in 1973 she implied that the Soviet-American summits might amount to a big-power conspiracy to carve out spheres of influence, and she declared that the only safeguard against such big-power hegemony was for smaller nations to stand together. CPI leader Bhupesh Gupta made a scathing attack on Mrs. Gandhi's statement, and the Soviets reportedly were ready to call upon their Indian friends to mount a letter-writing campaign in criticism.

The striking feature surrounding these occasional Indo-Soviet disagreements is the care that both sides have taken to confine their frankest exchanges to private meetings and in other ways to limit the damage that such conflicts inevitably impose on the relationship. It is this quality, rather than the unrealistic expectation of totally convergent interests, that is the true hallmark of "reliable friendship" between India and the Soviet Union.

Thus India, for example, in making its overtures for a reopening of relations with China, was always careful to emphasize in public that its actions were not intended to detract from its relations with Moscow. Typical was the statement of Foreign Minister Vajpayee in November 1977: "in seeking new friends we have no desire to abandon tried and proven friends with whom we have shared ideals and common interests." More

recently, in the context of Soviet-Indian disagreements over Afghanistan, Mrs. Gandhi referred publicly to attempts that were being made in the press to misrepresent Indo-Soviet relations or to create misunderstandings between the two. "But we have withstood all such attempts and have constantly striven to strengthen mutual trust."⁴¹ Addressing the same theme, the lead editorial in a recent issue of a widely-circulated Soviet foreign affairs periodical explained that what was important was not agreement on every detail but closeness in basic positions:

The social systems of the U.S.S.R. and India differ from each other. It is not surprising then that at times differences of nuance are to be observed in their assessments of some international problems. But in vain do the opponents of rapprochement between the two countries count on capitalizing on this. The important thing is the identity of their basic positions of principle, their awareness of the sameness of their fundamental historical interests....⁴⁷

V

A major element that is present in Moscow's approach to South Asia, and utterly lacking in the American policy, is a sense of a need to seek influence in the region, stemming from a policy framework that sets a relatively high priority on the region. We have seen in detail now this Soviet dependence on India has produced a greater willingness to devote a steady flow

of resources and diplomatic energy toward preserving Moscow's rather large investment in the Indo-Soviet friendship. To lose its standing as the "reliable friend" of the strongest regional power in South Asia would cost Moscow heavily. It would entail some risk to its security in a bordering region that both offensive and defensive value in the Soviet conflict with its primary rival, China. Moscow's substantial stake in the existing order in South Asia thus gives it an interest in helping to stabilize the region by playing the role of "reliable friend" to India.

The United States, by contrast, has developed very little stake in South Asia. Its interest in the region has been sporadic at best and is usually occasioned by a threat or challenge to its interests that arises in an adjacent region (Southeast Asia or the Persian Gulf region). American attention to India and Pakistan has, like the American military aid program in the region, been shut on and off periodically, in response to specific crises or provocations. Having not needed India (or Pakistan, for the most part) in the pursuit of any of its more vital objectives, the United States has had no particular incentive to establish its presence or develop its influence in the subcontinent.

Understanding this point should help us to avoid being surprised by the substantial Soviet interest and presence in South Asia and by the relatively high esteem with which Moscow is regarded by the states of the region. It might also help us to avoid being alarmed at the Soviet presence in South Asia, having

seen that Moscow's considerable investment has by no means won her inordinate influence or turned India into a puppet state, and that much of the Soviet "victory" over the United States in the superpower competition in this region has in effect been accomplished by default.

FOOTNOTES

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