

Because "there is no alternative to co-existence," we must study Russian policy and ideology very carefully, according to the author of this concluding article. As he sees it, "... the highest principle guiding the makers of Soviet foreign policy is the rule of expediency, the condition of a Soviet raison d'etat."

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF RUSSIAN COMMUNISM

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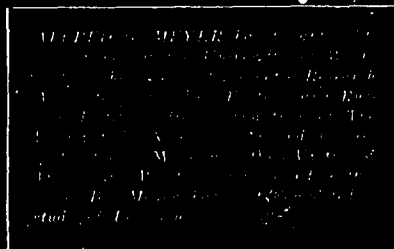
WHEN the Communist Party came to power in November, 1917, it had already formulated a foreign policy platform for the simple reason that they had no intention to enter into relations whatsoever with non-Communist governments across the globe. To do so, they felt, would compromise their principles and solve their already plenty. They were convinced moreover that no such relations were necessary, for as they firmly pointed to the immediate suppression of the bourgeoisie in Europe.

To be sure, the first Soviet cabinet included a People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. But this office was in the hands of the chief strategist of the revolution, Leon Trotsky, and, if we can speak about its policies at all, we find that they consisted of measures designed only to hasten the disappearance of the bourgeois governments. The Foreign Commissar regarded it his

chief task to help "transform the international war into a world revolution," i.e., into a world wide civil war. No longer should nation be pitted against nation, or state against state, but class should line up against class on a global scale. Lacking any more effective means of attaining this end, the Foreign Commissariat relied chiefly on propagandistic devices of various sorts designed to embarrass, weaken, and undermine the bourgeois order. Since the Communist leaders were convinced that the fall of capitalism was imminent in any event, they carried out those policies with boundless enthusiasm and optimism.

At the same time, they were prepared to take up arms for a revolutionary war, to give developments a push in the direction which they *know* they would take. The beginning of such a revolutionary war, they thought, would act as the psychological catalyst around which the revolutionary class consciousness of proletarians everywhere would crystallize at once, and bourgeois rule would be at an end. This would end the necessity of engaging in foreign policy, since the workers of all the world would unite in a single socialist commonwealth.

The basis for these sanguine expectations is to be found partly in traditional Marxist commonplaces concerning the nation states, which we have not space



enough to discuss, and partly in some peculiar Russian circumstances. According to the Marxist theory of revolution, Russia could not be considered a country ripe for socialism, because this comparably backward society possessed neither the material nor the human resources which were regarded as the pre-conditions for a successful proletarian revolution. Still, the Communist leaders insisted on carrying through such a revolution in Russia. In order to give it meaning, they argued that this revolution was going to be supported by similar uprisings everywhere. The Russian revolution would act as a spark which would kindle a world conflagration, an explosion which would set off a chain reaction of explosions everywhere. Lenin made the belief in this chain reaction into a dogma, and could thus conclude that the seizure of power in Russia would surely start the world revolution, which in turn would insure the viability of a Communist regime in backward Russia.

MINORITY NATIONALITIES

These ideas were supplemented and complicated by certain considerations regarding the viability of the nation-state in general, considerations which were expressed on a tactical level in Lenin's policy toward national minorities, and, on a broad theoretical level, in his theory of imperialism. Communist nationality policy was based on the recognition that national loyalties and aspirations were a strong force in the contemporary world, and on the desire to make use of this force. Communist strategy is characterized by the readiness and eagerness to use any and all forces available at the moment, even though they be basically hostile.

To the Communist, all ye-ups that constitute society are anyway hostile as long as they are not part of his own Party machinery; yet many of his enemies may have certain goals in common with the Party, and may therefore be natural allies. The Party sees its own goal as a two- or three-fold one. Its

long-range aim is to transform world society into a socialist commonwealth. As a means to this end, it wants to rule over society. Finally, in order to accomplish both these ends, it seeks to destroy the existing social and political order. It is this last goal which is shared by many individuals and groups in the contemporary world who are not Communist; and among these groups are minority nationalities which feel themselves wronged by the nation to whose state they belong.

The Russian Marxists were naturally aware of the political dynamic surrounding the minorities on Russia's borders, and the Communists sought to release this explosive stuff to their own advantage. They sought to attract minorities to the revolution by exploiting their race hatred against present national masters. Their party thus argued that every nation had the right to self-determination. In actual fact, the population was qualified by many different and explicit reservations. First, the revolution was a struggle wherever the nation stood in the way of the State. The first rule of the Communist undertaker in the Communist government was a list of four: the expulsion of Finns, Latvians, Estonians, and other minorities from the erstwhile Russian empire.

The theory of imperialism was a broad and all-comprehensive system of the Marxist theory of capitalism and its breakdown. It attempted to explain why the most important products of the progress of Marxism had turned out wrong, and at the same time to reassert confidence in the eventual triumph. The gist of this theory was that capitalism had escaped from the dead end road of the insupportable contradictions of its widening the scope of its activities, ruling the world (North America by the beginning of the next five years) or capital being developed areas. As if capitalism had failed to collapse, instead it had brought unprecedented prosperity to the West which had raised the living standard

even of the working class to such an extent that its revolutionary movement was softened and weakened.

At the same time, however, the contradictions of capitalism had reappeared, though on a global level, as a struggle between exploiter nations and exploited nations. When talking about the coming world revolution, Communist leaders now visualized it as a double process in which the revolt of the workers in economically advanced nations would be accompanied by the revolt of the underdeveloped nations against the White Man. For this reason, another aspect of foreign policy emerged at once after the October revolution: friendship of the Communist state with Asia in its fight against the West. Hence our previous statement that Soviet Russia did not at first have a foreign policy applies only to her relations (or absence of relations) with the Georgians and people in Asia. On the other hand, the Kremlin, from the beginning, sought to establish friendly relations with the Western governments whose revolt against foreign capital was to be the beginning of the inevitable devastation of the bourgeois world order.

The fact that the specter of chaos, in which the world crisis of capitalism did not come of itself, meant to say that the Communist slogan, the isolation of the masses of bourgeois states, it actually threatened the very existence of the regime. This threat of doom, which became very tangible at the time of the Allied intervention in the civil war, was dramatized for the first time by the German advance into central Russia in the spring of 1918. The danger of tentative threats to destroy Communist Russia even before the workers of the world could use the revolution to end the system, and with the terrible dilemma of either complete defeat, determining the revolutionary spirit and overthrowing foreign masters, or compromise of their own plans of proletarian overthrow by joining a compromise, meant and accepting the ter-

min peace terms. The decision which was taken after long and bitter debates constitutes the beginning of Soviet foreign policy: by signing the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Communist Russia for the first time entered into formal relations with a bourgeois government and thus began to conduct foreign policy.

In arguing for the acceptance of the German terms, Lenin declared that the international revolution of the proletariat had, so far, made one important gain, namely, the establishment of a stronghold in the form of the Russian Communist state which constituted a bridgehead in the territory of capitalism. This bridgehead, if it remained isolated, would never be able to transform itself into a socialist community. Yet giving it up would be a betrayal of the working class everywhere. For the time being, he implied, the interests of workmen everywhere were being promoted and symbolized by the Communist state. In its time and strength, the Communist state would, therefore, be working for the world revolution.

A "BREATHER"

These arguments, based on the basic principle underlying all Soviet Russian foreign policies since, its leaders argue that the national interest of the Soviet state are identical with the interests of the proletarian revolution, at least as long as this revolution does not make significant gains in the more important strongholds of capitalism. How long this situation will prevail is not explained. Lenin, at the time he spoke about a "breather," was at that moment during which the world revolution might catch its breath, if it were, before making further advances. It was during this breathing space that Russia was to regard the preservation of her own power as the chief aim. Later, as Europe crumbled, he declared that the post-war aftermath, the term "transitional period" was substituted for "breathing space" and Lenin came

to talk about this transitional period as an entire "era of world wars and revolutions." The national interests of Soviet Russia would thus be high on the agenda of world communism for an entire historical "era."

In this manner, the highest principle guiding the makers of Soviet foreign policy is the rule of expediency, the considerations of a Soviet *cursus d'etat*. The unprincipled pursuit of the Soviet-Russian national interest turned into the over-riding principle, while the abandonment of old doctrines was made palatable to the Communist rank and file by tamade manipulations of ideas and slogans. This raises the question whether the study of Communist ideology was thus made irrelevant for an understanding of subsequent Soviet policies. Our answer is in the negative. For one thing, the very insistence of realism and expediency can be understood only in connection with the traditionally realistic part of Communist thinking. Further, Marxist-Leninist concepts have not ceased to be tools of analysis for Soviet political intelligence. Finally, Communist ideas remain as a guide to action. This statement does not contradict what we said about the rule of expediency. For this rule does not indicate precisely what the Soviet national interest is, or how it is best promoted.

All these are problems to be solved and they are solved in terms of Marxist-Leninist concepts. Here, as in the Communist attempt to understand and describe the world, the theory fails utterly in short-range problems of policy formulation, and retains its importance in formulating long-range programs. For instance, the Soviet attitude toward the underdeveloped nations is broadly determined by Lenin's theory of imperialism, and that Moscow is likely to support all non-Western strivings in such areas and to base its policies on the firm expectancy that such strivings will always be strong. The theory does not, however, give prescriptions as to how this support is

to be given, in what form, or what means, to what parties or groups, and a great number of policies have been tried with varying degrees of success.

MOSCOW PARANOIA

Similarly, the Western world is analyzed in Marxist-Leninist terms, and a general mode of action, which Nathan Leites has called the "operational code" of the Kremlin, is derived from this analysis. To be sure, this operational code is highly contradictory, even in its most fundamental principles. Two axioms form its basis: one, that the non-Soviet world is hostile to Communist Russia and wishes to destroy her; the other, that the non-Soviet world is doomed to destroy itself by crises and internecine wars. The first of the axioms leads to an attitude of intense suspicion, to an almost pathological sensitivity, and to the general resolve to "use" Man by all means, cunning, and utilize all possible means for the purpose of maintaining national independence.

The second axiom gives the Soviet policy-makers a measure of patience and flexibility in attempting to elude a treaty without a barriade. It provides a certain counterweight against impulsiveness and hypersensitivity. Thus, and other elements of the operational code are determined by Marxist-Leninist theories. Russian policy-makers do not think in terms of decades, but of momentary situations. Operational thinkers in both terms. They are resolved to make the most of any opportunity by stimulation and every scene preoccupied with problems that are immediately at hand. Yet they are ready to trust a long-range program only to a limited degree when the long term is

Pragmatism and opportunism, as mixed with remarkable dogmatism and stability. Within the welter of double-trigrams and policies, guiding a path, with each other or alternating in zig-zag fashion, the Soviet leaders feel that they have, if not a plan, then a well-articulated, firm orientation, which

to guide their steps. What should be remembered, however, is that these broad theories do not indicate how the long-range aims ought to be pursued, what policy-conclusions should be drawn, or how such policies had best be implemented.

WHAT IS NATIONAL INTEREST?

We have seen that Communist doctrine elevates the pursuit of the Soviet national interest to a world mission. But what is this national interest?

In the case of Communist Russia, the national interest obviously consists in a number of objectives, such as security from attack by *external powers*, freedom from the exploitation of dependent areas, relations with non-Soviet states for any number of purposes, *territorial expansion* for the sake of increasing the nation's economic, demographic, and military strength, *isolation of the non-Soviet world* for defensive or aggressive reasons, *peaceful relations* with the outside world for a variety of reasons. These are typical objectives of any government conducting foreign relations with its neighbors; hence it would be futile merely to enumerate them. The special nature of Soviet foreign policy becomes apparent only when these different aims are seen in their relation to each other. In particular, we have to examine which of these aims have been dominant in the minds of Soviet policy makers.

Soviet foreign policy was characterized by the fact that it was guided almost throughout by an overwhelming fear of the outside world, coupled with a sense of weakness. The Soviet state, which was as lively and enterprising as any in the midst of the imperialist world system, had to be guided by the fact that Soviet policy makers lived with the nightmare of an anti-Soviet crusade undertaken by a united Western world. As long as this was the view of the world situation, the chief aim of the Kremlin was security; and one of the means toward this aim was old-fashioned power politics. In the traditional manner of

weak states, the Soviet government aimed at isolating the strongest nations and allying itself with the weak, the disgruntled, the threatened, the revisionists—Germany, Italy, and Japan in the 1920's; France in the mid-1930's.

Its current interest in fostering "neutrality" is related to this effort. Communist ideology does not, fundamentally, believe in the possibility of fraternity, and its adherents take a stern "either for-us-or-against-us" attitude toward all outsiders. In practical politics, however, this rigorous dogmatism is tempered by pragmatic considerations, hence, failing to make actual allies out of nations that might be won away from collaboration with the leading nations of the West, the Soviet leaders accept an attitude of neutrality as a limited advantage.

Germany's attitude in the 1920's, symbolized by the treaty of Rapallo, was basically a neutralist attitude. And although the Kremlin never tried in its attempts to transform this German policy into one of repudiating the West and collaborating with the Soviet Union, the Russians must have been aware that German neutrality was all they could hope for, and should therefore try to foster.

The actual implementation of Soviet aims in the game of power politics thus is adapted to the possibilities which are open. The position which Russia would like to maintain is a position of aloofness from the conflicts of the Western world, so that she can at the same time fan and exacerbate these conflicts. "When two men fight, the third man is pleased," says a German proverb, and we might therefore speak of the position of the *loathing third man* as the chief aim of Soviet foreign policy.

It is a position of strength which, in political dividends in the form of ever-greater strength in the future, Soviet Russia has, so far, occupied it only once, in the summer of 1939, when a stroke of Molotov's pen made a major war between Germany and the Western powers inevitable, a war which the

Kremlin believed would last long, cripple the major European powers, and leave Russia time to build up her own strength.

However it might be defined, the Soviet national interest, we saw, was identified with the interest of the world revolution. The two pursuits were seen as complementing, supporting and fulfilling each other. The Communist state was defined as the *ochag revoliutsii*, the hearth of the Revolution, a term which intentionally left the meaning open to interpretation, but gave the vague impression that the revolution would flame up if the hearth were tended carefully.

Conversely, the Soviet state came to regard proletarian revolutions abroad as a weapon of foreign policy. It began, as it were, to invest in Communist activities for the sake of furthering national aims, so that the Communist trade-union network, the Communist International, and all its affiliates and dependencies turned into operational branches of the Soviet foreign office. There is no doubt that Soviet foreign policy, particularly military intelligence, profited by this novel way of conducting foreign relations.

But these gains should not be overestimated. On the contrary, a careful analysis of Soviet policies and international Communist policies will reveal that this merger of revolutionary with diplomatic pursuits has handicapped both these aims.

After the Second World War, when Germany was beaten, the colonial world seemed to be disintegrating, communism emerged in great strength in Western Europe, and Russia emerged as the second strongest nation of the world; the two interests seemed to coincide for the first time. Soviet foreign policy became expansive; the Red Army exported revolution. At the same time, revolutionary drives in Asia gave the Soviet states powerful allies. But the Red Army did not march far long; and when it waits, revolution must wait. And, where it occurs nevertheless, it

may be a source of embarrassment to the Kremlin, or it may crystallize into a hostile regime, as in Yugoslavia.

DOMESTIC PROBLEMS

But let us return to our examination of the Soviet national interest. To a certain extent, this interest is derived from constant (geographical) facts which have nothing to do with the type of government ruling Russia. We have also discussed the role played by Marxist-Leninist ideas in realizing these "natural" aims of any Russian state. In addition, we ought to be aware of the impact of domestic problems on the conduct of any country's foreign policy. Anyone who follows congressional debates over the aims of American foreign policy knows that international relations are a delicate affair and have a strong impact on domestic politics.

Most of us are somewhat conscious that this is a reciprocal relationship, that purely domestic conditions inevitably influence the conduct of foreign relations. To such an extent that a strict separation of foreign from domestic affairs is meaningless. For instance, students of Soviet politics know that the Communist International was organized by Moscow, not only because world communism had acquired under some inability, but also because the administrative apparatus of the International had to be "Sovietized" in order to make the stabilization of the Soviet Russian state apparatus more effective. Stalin's struggles over German policy were thus a part of the fight against his domestic opponents.

Similarly, the war in China, which started in Moscow in the summer of 1927, and which had a number of repercussions in the conduct of Russia's foreign affairs, was a consequence of the need of important international allies, and acquired importance for the same reason, mainly because it could be used to cow the oppositionists, to rally the people behind Stalin's leadership, and to strengthen the arm of the political

police; an imaginary crisis in foreign affairs was conjured up in order to justify the introduction of police-state methods. Again, the isolationism which characterized Soviet foreign policy around 1930 is clearly a consequence of Moscow's intense preoccupation with domestic affairs—the first five-year plan and the civil war against the peasantry.

Similarly, the debacle of Soviet policies in Spain during the Civil war is intimately connected with the ravages of the Great Purge then at its height in Russia; and, conversely, both the five-year plans and the purges of the mid-1930's are explained in part by Soviet Russia's international situation, namely, the clear and present danger of German and Japanese aggression.

The relationship between foreign and domestic policies can be complicated by inconsistencies. To take a simple example, foreign trade is not only an economic matter, but also a political one; the economic acts may conflict with the political. The concessions granted to foreign capitalists in the 1920's were such a means to help the Soviet economy back on its feet and a part of the Foreign Office in letting the outside world trade business with Russia. Here domestic and international considerations coincided. But, at the same time, the concessions granted constituted a threat to the flesh of the Soviet economy; and, finally, the presence of foreign businessmen on Soviet soil was highly undesirable from the point of view of counter-intelligence and the political police.

It is, in the whole "peace campaign" that has been waged by Soviet leaders in the last few months and years, intimately related to domestic problems. The opinion is often voiced that Soviet Russia is inevitably driven to war by the necessity to maintain control over its population. "Totalitarian rulers," George Kennan said recently, "are always moved to try to eliminate the awkward standard of comparison involved in the existence of freedom elsewhere,

particularly in the country just next door." And it is true, that international complications, such as "capitalist encirclement" are used by Russia's rulers as ideological devices to instill loyalty and enforce compliance. But it would be a mistake to think that they are really dependent on such devices. Moreover, such talk need not lead to aggressive action.

On the contrary, all evidence points to the conclusion that the Kremlin fervently wishes to stay out of a war. The reasons, as we indicated, are primarily domestic. For one thing, the present government seems to deem it expedient to satisfy its subjects' yearning for peace by tangible successes. In addition, they have apparently decided to raise the living standard of the population, a goal which can be achieved only if the international scene remains undisturbed. Finally, the Soviet policy makers must surely remember the disastrous weeks of the German advance in 1941, when millions of soldiers deserted to the enemy, and the government temporarily lost control of the civilian population in the rear, particularly in the city of Moscow. They must surely know that the only thing that threatens their rule is war.

TRADITIONAL POLICIES

To conclude this brief discussion of the Soviet national interest, let us compare the aims of Communist Russia with those of the Czars. It is here, of course, that the constant geographical factors mentioned above come into play and give continuity to Russian policies, regardless of the nature of the regime. The necessity to command ice-free ports, once a compelling motive for international advances, is still worrying the Soviet Foreign Office, although it may have declined in importance in the air age, which gives unprecedented strategic weight to the Arctic.

Today as under the Czars Russia is a multi-frontal state with fluid and open borders both in the steppe area of Asia and in the North-European plain.

Today as before Russia, as the strongest power to the east of Germany, is a major disturbing factor in European politics. Today as in the decades preceding the revolution she is weak and underdeveloped in comparison with the leading nation of the West, and her awareness of this, her antipathy toward the West, and her readiness to use the West in order to beat the West are in tune with a tradition dating back to the Sixteenth Century.

Still, it should be clear that the differences far outweigh the similarities. Russia may still be an expansionist Eurasian power commanding vast areas of barren territory, locked in by mountains, deserts, ice and a hostile West with its Asiatic dependents. But the Soviet way of analyzing their situation, their program of dealing with it, and the methods at their disposal give Soviet foreign policy such a novelty and dynamism that the similarities with Czarist politics become almost coincidental. And the successes of Soviet policy in the last ten years have virtually obliterated all similarities.

Can we "co-exist" with a powerful state whose leaders regard us with such undisguised hostility, and who can justify the pursuit of their national interest by reference to a "idea which is still making converts daily." Part of the answer to this question must be derived from the nature of the technological revolution of our time. It seems pretty clear that in the age of thermo-nuclear weapons the only alternative to co-existence is co-non-existence. But, in this article, we have to discuss the question in the light of Soviet foreign policy. From what has been said, it becomes apparent that, in the short run, co-existence is entirely possible.

The Soviet people are tired, and their leaders afraid, of war. Indeed, the Kremlin so much wishes to avoid war that it tends even to restrain revolutionary activities abroad, for the sake of peace. This is something seldom pointed out to those who, openly or in veiled fashion, advocate preventive war:

Russian domination has weighed heavily on world communism, and there are many indications that many revolutionary parties would have tared better if Moscow had left them manage their own affairs. In the light of this, the destruction of the Soviet state would only liberate those movements and give them greater virulence. In any event, the destruction of the Soviet state would not by any means signify the destruction of world communism.

The point is that there is no alternative to co-existence. Co-existence of two hostile worlds need not be "advocated" or "defended" simply as a fact to be taken into consideration, and a problem to be solved. The problem takes the form of the Cold War, a state of suspended hostility between the two worlds during which they engage in a race for strength and for position. It is an alternative to what the stalemate may have been, or may already be, a race for a strategic pre-emptive, in which the United States is still safely ahead of Communist Russia, and a race to win the hearts and minds of people, which the United States is losing since it began.

This race for hearts and minds is perhaps the most important part of the Cold War and the most difficult to win. Obviously, this is a race to be fought for the hands of not least to be discussed without a thorough examination of everyone involved. Here we transcend the bounds of a discussion of Soviet policies. As a matter of fact, Soviet policies play the least important part in this Cold War, which goes on within each nation and each individual.

It is a war in which the United States has the advantage, and it is a war that may be won. If the United States can only come together and act as a united front, then Communist Russia can be patiently watching the non-Soviet world disintegrate and turn to the Left. Indeed, this seems to be the present foreign policy of the Soviet regime.