

*In the Far East, the U.S.S.R. has changed both tactics and methods, but has maintained the imperialistic foreign policy of the Czars. "The Soviet regime did not renounce the expansionist ambitions of Czarist Russia as the Soviet declarations of 1919 and 1920 led many to believe."*

## RUSSIA'S FAR EASTERN POLICY

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YEARS before the "opening" of China and Japan for trade with the West, Russia had by virtue of geographical proximity felt the need of negotiations with these Far Eastern countries. Before the Perry expedition to Japan, Russia had made repeated attempts to establish relations with the Japanese government, and as early as 1689, Russia signed a treaty with China to define the boundary lines between Chinese and Russian territories in the Amur region. Consequently, when the Western powers began trade and diplomatic relations with the Far East, Russia was more than ready to take full advantage of the opportunity now available to all.

The weakness of China in the Nineteenth Century opened the way for foreign exploitation. Each time there was an opportunity for further advance in China, Russia took advantage of it and reaped sizeable gains. In 1858, despite her own weakened position as a result of the Crimean War, she took advantage of China's preoccupation with the Taiping rebellion and the second war with England, and successfully passed

China into conceding to Russia all territory north of the Amur river.

Even at this early time, however, she notes her clever way of pursuing aggressive plans while posing as the friend and defender of helpless China. In 1860, when British and French troops occupied Peking and demanded further concessions from China, Russia broke with her former allies and declared her opposition to pressure on the Manchu government. At the same time, however, Russia exacted from China a concession which would give all territory east of the Ussuri river. One may either praise the Russian tactics as shrewd and unscrupulous and them as hypocrites, but the fact remains that from the Chinese War, 1854-1856 to 1858-1860, Russia emerged as the country which achieved the greatest territorial gain in the Far East.

The same approach was followed in 1895 and in 1904. On the former occasion, Russia utilized the moral obligation against Japanese aggressions toward the aid of England and Germany, successfully blocked the Japanese acquisition of the Liaotung peninsula after the Sino-Japanese war. As a reward, Russia got the permission to construct a railway for the Sino-Manchurian through the heart of Manchuria, and to establish Vladivostok by a direct railway. For Russian defense of Chinese territory was no more than a temporary expedient, evidenced by the fact that three years later she appropriated for herself the same Liaotung peninsula.

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The Boxer uprising in 1900 gave Russia another chance to pose as China's friend and defender. With the allied troops in occupation of Peking, Russia insisted that the foreign troops must evacuate before the signing of the Boxer Protocol in order to avoid undue pressure on the Chinese government. While she stood opposed to allied intervention in the internal affairs of China, she was pushing her own aggressive design in Manchuria. Moreover, her professed friendship for China did not prevent her from claiming the biggest share of the indemnity that the Boxer settlement imposed on China.

By this time, however, the other powers had become alarmed by the aggressive nature of Russian policy. Russian occupation of Ili in Sinkiang province in 1871 and Russian occupation of Manchuria during the Boxer disturbances showed that Russia was quite ready to use direct force if it was not possible to get what she wanted by diplomacy. In both instances Russia sent troops into Chinese territory on the pretext of protecting Russian interests, and in both instances Russia refused to withdraw her troops after the disturbances were quelled.

It is natural that Britain, having more at stake in the Far East than the other powers at that time, should be the most anxious to curb Russian expansion. Britain had initiated the idea of the Open Door in order to preserve the *status quo*. Alarmed by Russian expansion, the British had made specific moves to block Russian advances. In 1884, when Russia threatened to occupy Port Lazareth on the Korean coast, Britain occupied Port Hamilton off the southern coast of Korea and finally withdrew only when she was satisfied that Russia would not occupy Port Lazareth. Then in 1898, when Russia acquired the lease of Port Arthur, Britain again made a countermove by demanding the lease of Weihaiwei, to be effective "for so long a period as Port Arthur shall remain in the possession of Russia."

Now, in the intervening years between the Sino-Japanese war of 1894 and the Russo-Japanese war of 1904, Russian designs on the Far East were becoming increasingly clear. Russian aggressive policy in Korea in 1896-1898 worried Britain as much as Japan. And Russian refusal to withdraw troops from Manchuria after the Boxer Protocol left little doubt that Russia intended to dominate Manchuria as well as Korea. In order to stop Russia, Britain decided to support Japan in her struggle for power in East Asia, and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 was the result. The United States, it may be noted in passing, also identified Russia as the chief threat to the Open Door Policy and took a definite stand on the side of Britain and Japan. There is no doubt that American sympathy was entirely with Japan in the course of the Russo-Japanese conflict culminating in the war of 1904.

#### EARLY SOVIET OVERTURES

Shortly after the establishment of the Soviet regime in Russia, its leaders turned their attention to the Far East. Early in 1919, the Chinese Workmen's Association in Moscow was already pushing a plan to send propagandists into China. Asian delegates were invited to attend the First Congress of the Communist International at Moscow in 1919, and in the following year the Congress of Oriental Nations was held at Baku. The First Congress of the Toilers of the Far East at Moscow in 1922 and the establishment of the Communist University for the Toilers of the Orient in 1923 were only a part of a planned program to spread communism into the Far East.

Starting off a vast propaganda campaign, the Soviet authorities declared in 1919 and 1920 that they were ready to relinquish the territorial gains and other privileges exacted from China by the Czarist government and they offered to open new negotiations with China on the basis of complete equality. Coming at a time when China had become

thoroughly disgusted with Japanese imperialism and was sorely disappointed by what seemed to be an indifferent attitude on the part of the Western powers, such promises by Moscow sounded like sweet music to Chinese ears and produced a deep impression on all Asians struggling to free themselves from the shackles of imperialism and colonialism.

Keenly aware of the powerful force of rising nationalism in Asia, the Soviet leaders knew that there is no quicker way of winning the hearts of Asians than the promise of support in the liquidation of imperialism and the attainment of national independence. Ever since then, anti-imperialism has been the constant keynote of Communist propaganda in the Far East, and it would be foolish to think that this propaganda has not been effective. The initial approach to the Far Eastern countries has always kept communism itself in the background, and in each country the Communists have made their biggest advance by posing as the champions of national independence and taking an aggressive lead in a concerted attack upon imperialism. Raising the banner of nationalism, they have captured the imagination of youth and secured the cooperation and support of patriots who firmly believe that deliverance from foreign domination must be the first step in national salvation and national regeneration.

In China, Soviet promises made a strong appeal to Dr. Sun Yat-sen. He had become a sadly disillusioned person after repeated betrayals by scheming warlords at home and after the failure of the Western powers to lend support to China's national cause in the Paris peace conference and the Washington conference. The founder of the Chinese Republic thought at the beginning of his revolutionary career that Japan would be the country to lend China a helping hand. After Japan launched its program of aggression, Sun looked to the West for assistance; but the assistance failed to come.

Now, the words from Moscow were precisely what he had been hoping for; at last, China was to get the help of a friendly nation in her struggle for national unity and national independence. The Soviets exploited this psychology with adroitness. They assured Sun that they had no motive other than that of helping China fulfill her legitimate aspirations. Their emissary, A. A. Joffe, conferred with Sun in Shanghai and the two leaders issued the famous joint statement of January, 1923, in which they declared their complete agreement that communism or Sovietism was not suitable for China and that China's most pressing problems were the achievement of national unification and independence. Thus the Soviets managed to allay Sun's fears of communism and paved the way for his consent to allow Chinese Communists to join the Nationalist Party.

#### SINO-SOVIET HONEYMOON

Russia's gestures at this time did not consist merely of sweet words. A familiar technique of Communist propaganda is to make many big promises and to make good just enough of them to justify their claim that they always carry out their promises. Following the grandiloquent pronouncements against Czarist imperialism and in favor of the independence and equality of all peoples, Soviet Russia declared null and void the obnoxious secret agreements made by the Czarist government with Japan for the joint exploitation of the northern Chinese territories. She actually relinquished extraterritoriality and the remaining unpaid portion of the Boxer indemnity.

Ever since then, Communist propaganda has never ceased to cite such actions as proof of genuine Soviet friendship for China and Soviet desire to help all oppressed people in their fight for freedom and independence. It has seized every opportunity to point out to the people of China and of Asia that at a time when all the powers were lined up in an imperialist bloc clinging

to the special privileges of Nineteenth-Century imperialism, Soviet Russia alone willingly renounced all such special privileges and offered to readjust relations with China on a basis of equality and reciprocity.

#### EXPOSURE OF REAL SOVIET INTENT

This propaganda still sounds convincing to many uncritical people. It certainly created no small measure of goodwill toward Russia during the 1920's. At a time when China's instability caused much friction with the powers, Soviet Russia again posed as China's friend and loudly condemned the imperialist actions of the powers. As time went on, however, Soviet policy did not seem to have made such a clean break with Czarist policy. Even in the negotiations immediately following the sweet promises, Soviet representatives made it clear that Russia was not willing to give up the control of the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria. As a matter of fact, over the protest of other interested powers, Soviet Russia tightened her economic grip on the Chinese Eastern Railway and fully restored the pre-war Russian position in northern Manchuria. So uncompromising was the Soviet attitude in Manchuria that increasing friction developed between Russia and Nationalist China until relations were officially severed during the second half of 1929.

The essential continuity of Russian Far Eastern policy was also observable in Outer Mongolia, which the Czarist government had tried to claim as a sphere of influence. Russia had actively interfered with the internal affairs of Mongolia and encouraged the growth of a movement to weaken the ties with China. Although China had tried to reassert her authority in Mongolia at the time when Czarist authority was declining, the Soviet authorities promptly took steps to reinforce the policy which the Czar had pursued.

Bolshevik troops from Siberia invaded Mongolia and organized a "Mongolian People's Revolutionary Govern-

ment" at Urga in 1921. At the very time that Joffe affirmed in a written declaration that his government had no intention to carry out imperialist policies in Outer Mongolia, at the very time that Soviet Russia signed a treaty recognizing Outer Mongolia "as an integral part of China," Russia continued to maintain troops in Mongolia and negotiated a treaty with the "Mongolian People's Revolutionary Government" without any reference to China. In August, 1922, the First Congress of the Mongol Peoples was held in Urga in which it was resolved that the policies of Mongolia should be in keeping with Soviet policies. Thus, when the secret Yalta agreement of 1945 provided for the independence of the "Mongolian People's Republic" it was merely the final fulfillment of a scheme that Russia had consistently pursued since the Czarist days.

The story of Russian expansionism up to this point shows that although the change of regime in Russia brought about no essential change in the objective of extending Russian influence in the Far East, the Soviets did adopt new methods. One of them is propaganda, as seen in the Moscow declarations of 1919 and 1920. Another important method is the use of the Communist party. Through the Third International, Russia directed the activities of Communist parties in other countries and was able to exert influence without sending any troops. The Chinese Communist Party, which was formally organized in 1921 and joined the Communist International in the following year, became an important instrument of Soviet policy. From now on it was not necessary for Russia to resort to the outmoded methods of territorial occupation, leases and concessions. Instead, it was possible to exercise a powerful influence on Chinese affairs by means of an indigenous Communist Party.

Misled by Soviet protestations of friendship, Dr. Sun welcomed Borodin and other Soviet advisers and entrusted

them with the important mission of reorganizing and revitalizing the Kuomintang. He agreed to admit Chinese Communists into the Kuomintang with the understanding that the Communists would accept the Kuomintang ideology and submit to Kuomintang discipline. Little did he suspect that Borodin was at all times acting as an agent of Moscow to guide a plot for Communist advance in China; nor did he realize that the decision of the Chinese Communists to cooperate with the Kuomintang was the execution of a plan that originated in Moscow.

At any rate, the ensuing years of "cooperation" witnessed a steady increase of Communist influence and growth of membership in the Chinese Communist Party. Communists occupied high positions in the Kuomintang, which was also being skillfully manipulated by the Russian advisers. Communists took charge of the propaganda machinery and gave Kuomintang ideology a new pro-Communist orientation. During the Nationalist expedition against the Northern warlords the masses as well as the armies were given intensive indoctrination in this Communist-flavored propaganda.

It is now a truism to say that the Russian advisers and the Chinese Communists used the Kuomintang for their own ends. Their machination culminated in moving the seat of the Nationalist government to Hankow, where they set up a government dominated by the Communists and Leftists. After Chiang Kai-shek and his followers set up their Nationalist government in Nanking, the collapse of the Wuhan government was hastened by the seizure of Soviet documents in Manchuria, Tientsin and London and by revelations made by M. N. Roy, a Comintern representative in Hankow. These proved beyond doubt that the Soviet advisers and the Chinese Communists were acting upon orders from the Comintern. No Czarist troops occupying areas in Sinkiang or Manchuria could have influenced China's internal affairs so much as the new

Soviet method of control through the Comintern and the Chinese Communist Party.

As a result of Chiang Kai-shek's anti-Communist purge, the Chinese Communists went underground and finally established their base in the southeastern part of China. Through their vicissitudes, the Chinese Communists continued to retain their ties with the Comintern. The hand of the Comintern is clearly seen in the major shifts in policy and in party leadership.

True, policies dictated by the Comintern and the official leadership of the Chinese Communist Party did not always succeed and at one time it was necessary for Mao Tse-tung to move ahead in the face of contrary instructions. But communism has a way of covering up mistakes by putting the blame on scapegoats and the Comintern managed to maintain its prestige and its hold on the Chinese Communist Party. Disputes on crucial issues were often referred to Moscow for final decision. The decision on the Long March to the northwest was not made until specific instructions were received from Moscow.

#### WORLD WAR II

The Japanese conquest of Manchuria in 1931 brought the danger of further invasion close to Russian doors. Stalin decided to adopt all possible means to stay out of war. Russia became an ardent protagonist of collective security. In the Far East, Russian policy was threefold: to appease Japan and avoid conflict, to sustain Nationalist China's resistance against Japanese aggression, and to make preparations for an eventual military showdown. To placate Japan, Russia sold the Chinese Eastern Railway to Manchukuo, over China's strong protests. The Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact of 1941 was also signed in the face of Chinese protests.

At the same time, Russia tried to make sure that China would not yield to Japanese conquest. Knowing that a

stable Chinese government under Chiang Kai-shek was necessary for resistance against Japan, Russia instructed the Chinese Communists to join the Kuomintang in a united front. The Soviet Union used her influence to save Chiang Kai-shek's life at the critical time when he was "kidnapped" in December, 1936. After the outbreak of Sino-Japanese hostilities in 1937, Russia signed a non-aggression pact with China, and for a short while Russia sent direct aid to Chiang Kai-shek's government to sustain his war against Japan. These conciliatory gestures toward Japan and support of China seemed contradictory to other nations, but they were manifestations of a consistent Soviet policy designed to stave off the Japanese threat as long as possible.

Meanwhile, Russia was fighting the Japanese menace in other ways short of war. Again ignoring China's protests, she negotiated a Mutual Assistance Pact with the "Mongol People's Republic," thus serving notice that Russia would not tolerate Japanese advance into Outer Mongolia. Preparing simultaneously for an eventual showdown, she took steps to consolidate her position in the Far East. The colonization of Siberia was stepped up, and an economic program was launched to develop resources and increase agricultural production in Siberia. Railway construction was speeded up and military defense was strengthened. Russia was not putting all her eggs in one basket.

During the latter part of the war, the Allies tried hard to get Russia to play an active part in the Far Eastern theater. Soviet policy seemed to be to avoid military commitments in the Far East as long as possible but to get into the war in time to have a share in knocking out Japan to ensure a voice in Far Eastern affairs at the conclusion of the war. As late as 1944, Russia was still making friendly gestures toward Japan. In March 30 of that year a Soviet-Japanese agreement was signed in which Japan surrendered her coal and iron concessions in northern Sak-

halin while Russia promised to supply oil to Japan for a period of five years after the war. When the Allies pushed Stalin for early action in the Far East, Stalin's stand-by excuse was that Russia was bound by a neutrality pact with Japan.

The fact is that Russia was better informed in regard to Japanese weakness than the Allied powers. Before Russia entered the Far Eastern war, Japan had approached Russia and asked for good offices in mediation for peace. That the Neutrality Pact could have been no deterrent whenever Russia wanted to join the Far Eastern war is evidenced by the fact that when Russia finally declared war on Japan in August, 1945, the Neutrality Pact, signed in April, 1941, to be valid for five years at least, was technically still in force. One must conclude that Russia's real intent was to wait till the last moment in order to avoid too much effort but still to claim the rightful rewards of a co-belligerent.

#### POSTWAR AND PRESENT

The last act of the war-time period was the signing of the Chinese-Russian Treaty of Friendship and Alliance in 1945. This treaty seemed important at the time and was heralded by optimists as an indication of Soviet readiness to cooperate with the Chinese Nationalist government. While China agreed to the independence of Mongolia, to joint Sino-Soviet ownership of the important Manchurian Railways, and to joint use of Port Arthur as a naval base, Russia pledged support for the Nationalist government and non-interference in China's internal affairs. Actually, the treaty was only a confirmation of what Messrs. Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin had agreed upon at Yalta.

It is now well known that Russia did not carry out the spirit of the treaty in good faith. She did not withdraw her troops from Manchuria in accordance with the agreed schedule; she blocked the establishment of Chinese Nationalist authority in Manchuria; she turned

Dairen into a closed port and refused to transfer its civil administration to Chinese Nationalist authorities. In a word, Russia acted in such a manner as to open the way for the occupation of Manchuria by the Chinese Communists. So reprehensible was Russian behavior that the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution condemning Soviet violation of the Sino-Soviet treaty of 1945.

It is not possible in this article to discuss the various aspects of relations between Russia and Communist China in the last few years. The various treaties and pacts signed since 1949 and the intricate ramifications of the "Learn from Russia" movement in China which has opened the way for the influx of Russian advisers and the wholesale introduction of Russian influence into many phases of Chinese life would require a separate article. We must be satisfied at this point with a few generalizations without detailed discussion.

No one can gainsay that Russian influence in China is today greater than it has ever been. Furthermore, Russia today plays a more prominent role in the Far East than ever before. Much speculation has been made by observers in regard to the nature of the new relationship between Russia and China, and whether there is a tendency for China to vie with Russia in assuming the role of leadership in East Asia. They have also raised the question whether China is not becoming too big for Russia to handle, or whether Mao Tse-tung may turn out to be a "Chinese Tito." Much of this speculation seems to the writer to be of academic interest only.

People who pose the alternatives of satellite relationship or Chinese Titoism are looking for two hypothetical phenomena which are not there. To be sure, Red China's position is quite different from that of the satellite states in Europe. But there is no doubt that Red China remains unshakably in the Soviet orbit and considers its entire domestic and foreign program as a part of the world revolution of which

the Soviet Union is the unquestioned pioneer and leader. Red China calls Russia the "Big Brother" and insists that the example and guidance of the Big Brother is essential to the success of the Chinese revolution.

Certainly, there are no signs that Red China is about to break away from Russia the way Tito did. Up to this time, in spite of the great effort made by some observers to look for and to point out possible points of friction between Russia and Red China, there are no clear signs that the "Love Russia" and "Learn from Russia" campaign of Red China has in any way been de-emphasized. Evidently, China is neither a satellite nor a Yugoslavia-in-the-making. But as long as Red China willingly accepts Russian guidance, Russian influence will continue to exercise dominant influence in China.

It seems that Russia is quite ready to adjust her relations with other Communist countries as long as she can get them to accept the major objectives of the world revolution, which is now the vehicle Russia has chosen for her expansionism. It is possible that Russia learned a lesson in dealing with Tito and is now treating Red China with more finesse and avoiding excessive pressure that may possibly arouse a beligerent Chinese nationalism. There is no question that Russia has accorded more respect to Red China than to the smaller satellite states of Europe and Asia, and the leaders of the Kremlin have taken pains to speak of "the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic, and the people's democracies" when they refer to the nations within the Soviet orbit. This does not necessarily mean an emergent "Chinese Titoism."

#### RUSSIA AS SENIOR PARTNER

To keep China within the Soviet orbit Russia may be willing to adjust relations with China on a partnership basis, provided that Russia is recognized as the senior partner. In recent months, the Soviet leaders have made a definite effort to bring Tito back into the fold, and it is possible that they may succeed

If they do, they will probably be ready to treat Yugoslavia, too, as an equal and a partner. As far as actual Russian influence is concerned and for the benefit of the world revolution, this partnership relationship serves all practical purposes and may even produce better results than the satellite relationship. Russia will be satisfied as long as she is recognized as the senior partner whose voice will carry greater weight than that of the other partners. So far, all indications point to Red China's readiness to accept and respect Russia as senior partner or "the Big Brother."

By way of summary and conclusion, we observe that the Soviet regime did not renounce the expansionist ambitions of Czarist Russia as the Soviet declarations of 1919 and 1920 led many to believe. Soviet Russia, however, employs methods and tactics which are very different from those of Czarist Russia. The czarist government used the regular methods of imperialism shared by other imperialist powers in the Far East. In the Nineteenth Century, this imperialism took the form of invading troops and territorial conquests, ranging from leases and concessions to cessions and annexations. After 1900, military and territorial imperialism was overshadowed by financial and economic imperialism.

The new Soviet imperialism is different from the imperialism of the past because it employs an entirely new weapon, namely, the ideological weapon. The ideological weapon works in two ways. First, it enables Russia to exercise control in foreign lands by means of an organizational tie-up between the Kremlin and the Communist parties in various countries. Secondly, it co-ordinates action by virtue of the dedication of Communists all over the world to the common goal of the world proletarian revolution.

We must recognize that the new ideological weapon is more effective than the methods of the old imperialism. It enables Soviet Russia to attack the old imperialism and to pose as the

leader of the struggle against imperialism, a struggle dear to the hearts of Asians. It makes possible the technique of infiltration, which incites uprisings and makes them appear as indigenous revolutionary movements. It is less conspicuous and not so likely to arouse nationalistic opposition as the old methods of imperialism. It seems to support the Soviet contention that revolutions cannot be externally imposed and that the Soviet government does not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

Native Communists and pro-Communist "independents" are in the limelight and occupy the official positions, but Russian advisers wield great power behind the scene. The government is under the direction of an indigenous Communist party, but that party accepts the leadership of the Kremlin.

Common allegiance to the world proletarian revolution makes the old imperialist-colonial relationship unnecessary and obsolete. Ideological fervor insures common action without conspicuous external pressure or compulsion. In co-ordinated international action, Communists in different lands are led to believe that they are engaged in the common cause of proletarian revolution and the population in general is led to feel that there is voluntary national action rather than submission to foreign domination.

The one all-important assumption, of course, is that the proletarian or socialist revolution in any part of the world cannot succeed without the leadership and guidance of the U.S.S.R. As long as this is accepted, united action within the Soviet orbit is assured. It may be feasible for Russia to accept some of the nations within the orbit as full equals and to accord to all a large measure of freedom and independence in purely domestic affairs, but as long as there is co-ordinated action in foreign relations, Russia is getting what she wants and she is expanding her influence more successfully than the imperialist powers of the past.