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U.S. - SOVIET RELATIONS IN A "QUALITATIVELY NEW ERA"

INTRODUCTION

.../T/he form of the struggle can change and does change constantly, depending on various comparatively separate and temporary causes, but the essence of the struggle, its class content cannot change while classes exist. (Emphasis in original).

These words of Lenin were quoted in an unsigned commentary in the June 1972 issue of Kommunist, the theoretical journal of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This quotation takes on increased significance when one remembers that it was repeated at the very time President Nixon was in Moscow to initial the SALT I accord; in other words, in the very thick of the euphoria which accompanied that event, now considered to have been the height of the new detente relationship between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

At the time this and similar Soviet statements received little or no notice in the United States, so taken were we with the ambiguous "triumph" of the Moscow summit. However, American unwillingness to take seriously authoritative Soviet pronouncements on the nature of the new superpower relationship is nothing unusual, and the Carter Administration is certainly doing nothing new when it fails to heed (at least publicly) Soviet statements that contradict some of our hopes for detente, or the "SALT process," which has become the latest euphemism for detente.

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1. V.I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii (Complete Works), 5th ed. vol. 27 p. 372 (Moscow: Politicheskaya Literatura Publishers, 1969). As quoted in "The Leninist Course of the Foreign Policy of the CPSU," Kommunist (The Communist), no. 9, June 1972, p. 79. (All translations from the Russian are by the author.)

The reasons for this benign attitude on the part of senior Administration officials are no doubt varied and complex. However, adamantly refusing to give serious consideration to the Soviet world view, passing off disagreeable pronouncements as mere propaganda, reflects a common American tendency to wish away what the Soviets have never attempted to conceal. Former Secretary of State Kissinger gave what is perhaps the best description of this sort of willful ignorance when he spoke of "...the tendency to escape current dilemmas by making the most favorable assumption about the future."²

If the Soviet Union limited itself to such bellicose statements American policymakers would have less to worry about. As it is, similar pronouncements coupled with a marked escalation in Soviet overseas adventures in recent years compel us to pay closer attention than ever before to just what it is that the Soviets are saying about this "qualitatively new era" in international relations. In other words, events in Angola, Ethiopia/Somalia, Afghanistan, South Yemen and other areas in the past few years add a new and real dimension to current Soviet evaluations of the world scene. Only by examining this dimension of U.S.-Soviet relations can SALT be placed in a meaningful context. Thus, this brief study, by focusing on more recent official Soviet literature and statements, examines the basic Soviet perception of their relations with the United States and other Western nations.

THE U.S. VIEW - DETENTE

In the United States the term "detente" has been wrapped in a mass of confusing definitions every since the word first came into wide usage during the late 1960s. Since becoming common coin in this decade the term detente has successfully defied description - at least on the American side.

The American view of detente, quite naturally, in view of our legalistic tradition, is filled with references to "rules," "norms" and, in general, notions about the "code of detente," as if the emerging superpower relationship was nothing more than a legal squabble to be adjudicated by the participants' lawyers. It is believed that once the "rules of the game" are agreed upon there remains little else to do but to police the agreements and fine the violators accordingly. Marshall D. Shulman, now special advisor to the Secretary of State, exemplified this attitude perfectly in an article a few years ago, when he wrote: "...R/ivalry can be less dangerous to the world and less overcast with hostility if it operates within commonly accepted rules of the game...."³ Further on, he stated that "a codification of rules of engagement in unstable areas is urgently needed."⁴

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2. "Is There a Crisis of Spirit in the West? A Conversation with Dr. Henry A. Kissinger and Senator Daniel P. Moynihan," Public Opinion, May/June 1978, p.6.
 3. Marshall D. Shulman, "Toward a Western Philosophy of Coexistence," Foreign Affairs, October 1973, vol. LII, no.1, p.50.
 4. Ibid., p.53.

Other Americans speaking on the subject of detente - perhaps excited by the prospect of profiting financially from the new relationship - lapse into almost Marxian terminology. They have, in effect, adopted the doctrine of economic determinism, and see the bounty of increased trade between the U.S. and the Soviet Union as bringing about profound changes in the nature of Soviet foreign policy and of Soviet society itself.

One such individual is Donald M. Kendall, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Pepsico, Inc., which enjoys extensive trade ties with the Soviet Union. In a speech delivered in early 1978, Mr. Kendall put forth the typical formulation of this outlook. Speaking of the Soviets, he stated:

.../T/heir leadership may begin to define Soviet self-interest more in the direction of pragmatism than ideology - more in terms of cooperation in commercial and other peaceful fields, and less in terms of competition in the strategic and political arenas.

Shulman is even more forthright in his assessment of the role commercial factors play in Soviet decision-making. "The condition of the Soviet economy is clearly the primary determinant of present Soviet foreign policy." (Emphasis in original) Elaborating further, he argues that "...the growth of economic interdependence will encourage restraint in Soviet behavior, contribute to a relationship of confidence, and may lead to long-term transformations in the Soviet system."

Trade between the United States and the Soviet Union increased from U.S. \$642 million in 1972 to U.S. \$2½ billion in 1978.⁸ However, intervention by the Soviet Union and its Cuban allies in Angola, Ethiopia and elsewhere has increased even more dramatically. Perhaps the Soviets were displeased at the U.S. refusal to grant them Most Favored Nation trade status and granting only \$432 U.S. million in loans through 1978.⁹ Other Western nations have granted more generous terms of trade, but evidently these actions have also had no effect upon Soviet policies which have remained rigid in both foreign and domestic affairs.

RAZRIADKA - DETENTE SOVIET STYLE

The Soviet counterpart to detente is the phrase razriadka naprizhennosti, or "dispersal of tension." This phrase, usually

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5. Donald M. Kendall, "U.S.-Soviet Trade Relations: A Time to Re-examine and Re-think Our Positions," Vital Speeches of the Day, April 15, 1978, p.392.
 6. Shulman, op.cit., p.43.
 7. Ibid. p. 55.
 8. Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of East-West Trade.
 9. Source: Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States. Issues in East-West Commercial Relations (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), p.209.

shortened to razriadka, is the follow-on to "peaceful coexistence," a term popularized by Nikita S. Khrushchev in the 1950s, although it was coined by Lenin. "Peaceful coexistence" implied a more static and one-dimensional Soviet appraisal of the world and has since been largely superseded by the more dynamic term razriadka.

Unlike the seemingly indefinable term detente, the Soviets have always been very careful to define just what exactly constitutes the term razriadka. Razriadka is at once a very limited and a wide-ranging and dynamic idea connoting rapid change on a world scale. In both instances American hopes for a brighter future are not met.

On the one hand, the narrower Soviet version of detente deals only with interstate relations and is concerned primarily with avoiding nuclear war between the superpowers. Missing are the rosy hopes for expanded contacts, freer emigration and a reduction of ideological tensions that are an integral part of the Western concept of detente. The Soviets openly acknowledge that the current stage in the history of international relations in which both sides to the conflict possess the capability to destroy one another is unprecedented. This "qualitatively new" era calls for a new policy - razriadka.

While the avoidance of nuclear conflict is certainly a worthy goal, the other half of the razriadka equation should make those Americans who might think that the Soviets have embraced the U.S. view of detente pause. The more activist side of razriadka sees the present state of international relations in a state of constant change, in which the advantage is shifting ever more decisively in favor of the forces of "peace and socialism," i.e., the Soviet Union and its allies.

If one could imagine a Soviet graph of the present world situation it would probably show two lines having different origins gradually approaching, intersecting, and then moving apart as the lower line continues its upward movement and the upper one sinks still further. In the Soviet view these two lines represent themselves and the U.S. and show how the U.S.S.R. has gradually caught up and finally surpassed the United States, an event which probably occurred around 1975. In their long-term view of events the Soviets see the United States as a country that has "peaked" as a world power and is now on the historical decline, and one which must increasingly accommodate itself to the wishes of the dynamic new power of the Soviet Union. The vast strategic nuclear and conventional military buildup begun under Khrushchev and continued unabated by his successors has come to fruition. This factor, coupled with the continuing reluctance of the United States to become involved militarily overseas and to match the Soviet Union's strategic and conventional buildup has had the effect of surrendering the strategic initiative to the Soviet Union by default and has given the latter an unprecedented opportunity to extend its influence throughout the world. In the Soviet view, history is on their side.

To the Soviets, conflict between capitalism and communism outside the realm of direct superpower confrontation is inevitable. Lest American get the wrong impression of just what razriadka entails, the Soviets have been more than explicit in their pronouncements.

It is no accident that many imperialist ideologists are attempting to put forward as a condition of razriadka some sort of containment of the struggle of revolutionary forces or the undertaking by the Soviet Union of a "moderate course." ...Such an appeal to a definition of the limits of action of razriadka has nothing in common with the realities of our time.¹⁰

According to the Soviet view razriadka has the virtue of not only opening up new possibilities in the struggle against capitalism, but the new-found authority of the Soviet Union has significantly impaired the ability of "imperialism" to resist the revolutionary forces. As one Soviet observer put it:

Razriadka creates favorable international conditions for the further growth and extension of the anti-imperialist struggle of peoples, for an offensive against the positions of monopoly capital...it has opened new possibilities for success in the national liberation struggle of peoples.¹¹

As for the forces of "imperialism":

In an atmosphere of international razriadka, the space for social maneuvering, to which monopoly has always resorted and still resorts to has significantly narrowed, which has allowed the widening and variation of the forms of the struggle... and to strengthen the positions of the revolutionary forces.¹²

To the Soviets, therefore, conflict of some sort is inevitable. The strategic arsenals of both superpowers have shifted the locus of the struggle downward on the scale of conflict, while the ideological struggle, which provides the theoretical framework for this policy, continues unabated and, in fact, increases in intensity, just as a stream of water when dammed seeks other outlets with renewed force. Or, in the words of another Soviet commentator:

.../T/he struggle of the two social systems on the ideological front acquires an especial sharpness in an area where there is not and cannot be peaceful co-existence.¹³

10. A. Sovetov, "The Contemporary World and Razriadka," Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn', (International Life), no. 5, 1979, p.13.

11. Ibid., p. 9.

12. Ibid.

13. V. Smolyansky, "From the Theory of 'Convergence' to 'Planetary Consciousness': The Class Essence of the Evolution of Bourgeois Theories," Kommunist, no. 8, May 1978, p.101.

However, the policy of razriadka, according to the Soviets, is not one which can be adopted and abandoned at will, but one which is determined by the laws of the class struggle itself. This conflict, in whatever form it may manifest itself, is historically inevitable, based as it is upon the irreconcilable struggle between classes. This is why, in speaking of the policy of peaceful coexistence, Soviet commentators can say ".../T/he principled essence, the class character of the policy has remained unchanged."¹⁴

Thus in the Soviet view of things, while seeking to avoid a direct military confrontation with the U.S., the Soviet Union is under no obligation to remain indifferent to those movements which threaten the international position of the United States. On the contrary, the Soviet Union has repeatedly declared its intention to support those conflicts in the world which they see as serving to weaken the forces of "imperialism."

.../T/he policy of peaceful coexistence, embracing the sphere of inter-state relations, does not and cannot determine the evolution of social processes within individual countries. From this come the baselessness of demands, issuing from certain circles in the capitalist world, that the policy of peaceful coexistence guarantee the socio-political status quo.¹⁵

Against this phalanx of determined belligerence Shulman can only reply weakly that "the difference in social systems need not be a source of conflict."¹⁶

The tendency to pass off unfavorable Soviet statements as not worthy of attention generally goes by the term "mirror-imaging." Mirror-imaging is a view of the Soviet Union that adheres to the theory that the Soviet leaders are not, after all, really that different from their Western counterparts. In its less extreme form, mirror-imaging holds out the hope that while there does exist a marked divergence in outlook, we should be trying to "educate" the Soviets in the realities of the world.

This is a profoundly myopic and highly ethocentric view which posits that nations, regardless of their past traditions, share a generally Western outlook, which even a cursory glance at the condition of political and other rights in the majority of the world's countries refutes immediately. Nowhere is this more true than in the Soviet Union, where the leadership regards all forms of thought deviating from its own interpretation of Marxism-Leninism -both internal and external - as illegitimate. Or, in the words of one famed analyst of the Soviet Union:

14. Y. Zakharov, "The World Revolutionary Process and Peaceful Coexistence," Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn', no.3, 1978, p.80.

15. Ibid., p. 84.

16. Shulman, op. cit., p. 50.

"No other regimes have, in principle, any right to exist, any more than other parties do within the U.S.S.R."¹⁷.

Mirror-imaging completely ignores the relevant cultural, historical and ideological factors which influence the Soviet view of the world and which sees that Soviet Union as gradually evolving toward some kind of Jeffersonian democracy, a process which the U.S. should facilitate in every way possible. This is a point of view which can only be arrived at through an almost willful ignorance of the Russian/Soviet historical tradition.

This great divergence in American and Soviet outlooks has obvious foreign policy consequences. Colin S. Gray of the Hudson Institute has defined this difference succinctly.

The Soviet commitment to world dominion is nonnegotiable. American concepts of stability and order are contrary to the political basis of the Soviet state. In practice, the bureaucrats of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union many behave like the patrimonial aristocrats of the Old Regime, but those bureaucrats know that their only right to rule over the Heartland rests upon a theory which posits a deadly and inescapable struggle between the antagonistic social systems of socialism¹⁸ and capitalism/ imperialism (and deviant socialism).

THE WORLD CORRELATION OF FORCES

The theoretical explanation of the current situation is, of course, to be found in the laws of the class struggle. In other words:

International evolution has its own logic, which is subordinate to definite laws, and is dictated by the complex interaction of the most variegated¹⁹ class, political, ideological and other factors.

The more concrete basis for the new-found authority of the Soviet Union, however, is contained in the phrase "correlation of forces" (Rus. sootnoshenie sil), which is best defined as the sum total of the moral, economic, political and military factors which constitute the power equation of any country. As General

17. Robert Conquest, "Why the Soviet Elite is Different From Us," Policy Review, Fall 1977, p. 70.

18. Colin S. Gray, The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era: Heartlands, Rimlands and the Technological Revolution (New York: Crane, Russak & Company, Inc., 1977), p. 38.

19. Sovetov, op. cit., p.5.

Secretary of CPSU, Leonid I. Brezhnev has stated: "Razriadka has become possible because a new correlation of forces has been established in the world arena."²⁰

In the words of one Soviet commentator:

The correlation of forces embraces besides the military, also factors of an economic, scientific-technical, political and ideological nature; not only the entirety of contemporary international relations, but also the internal situation of individual countries, the interrelationship of their classes and parties, and the social processes of the contemporary world.²¹

It is clear that for the Soviet Union the military potential of the state is the key component in their calculations. For no matter how much Stalin or Khrushchev may have declaimed the moral and economic superiority of the Soviet Union, the fact remained that the Soviet Union was indeed militarily inferior - and was recognized as such - to the United States. This was proved dramatically in a number of crisis situations from Berlin in 1948 to Cuba in 1962. In both cases, faced with either the local-conventional or strategic-nuclear superiority of the United States, the Soviet Union was forced to back down under humiliating circumstances.

Since the advent of the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime in 1964 the Soviet Union has been engaged in a conventional and nuclear buildup unprecedented in history. This continued up to and beyond the time when the Soviet Union achieved rough strategic parity with the United States in 1971, and has shown no sign of slowing down. This dramatic increase in Soviet military power has caused some observers in the West to conclude that the Soviet Union has now achieved strategic military superiority and stands to increase its overall advantage significantly by the early 1980s when its present program strategic nuclear modernization is completed.

In their own way the Soviets are saying much the same thing, although they refrain from using such crude material comparisons and seek to pitch their statements in a more elevated plane. Even as early as the Moscow summit in 1972, a Soviet commentator was writing that

The historic initiative is today firmly in the hands of the socialist community, the international working class, and all revolutionary forces.²²

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20. L.I. Brezhnev, Lenninskim Kursom. Rechi i Stat'i (On a Leninist Course: Speeches and Articles), vol.5, p.317. As quoted in Sovetov. p.8.
21. A. Vakhrameev, "The Correlation of World Forces and Razriadka," Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn', no. 12, 1978. p.89.
22. "The Leninist Course of the Foreign Policy of the CPSU," Kommunist, no. 9, June 1972, p. 78.

However, the recognition of the Soviet Union by the United States as an equal power and the signing SALT I were not the only rewards of the 1972 summit. From the Soviet point of view, the fact that the summit was held at all was implicit recognition that the United States had been compelled by the developing correlation of forces to accept the Soviet view of things. Or, as another Soviet commentator put it:

The new correlation of forces in the struggle between socialism and capitalism in the international arena has forced the leaders of the capitalist world to look differently at their relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, and to accept and carry out a practical transformation of relations with them of the principles of peaceful coexistence.²³

In the Soviet view the past few years have given dramatic evidence that the world correlation of forces has indeed decisively in their favor. Since the Moscow summit in 1972 a number of wars and internal upheavals have taken place, the consequences of which, if not directly beneficial to the Soviet Union, were at least damaging to some degree to the United States. Such views are consonant with the Soviet outlook that the superpower rivalry is eventually a zero-sum game in which any gain which accrues to the Soviet Union is a commensurate loss for the U.S. While this is certainly a crude analysis, its importance may lie not so much in its correctness as in the fact that the Soviet leadership may actually view events through the prism of this particular interpretation, and act accordingly. Certainly the past seven years have given ample demonstration of Soviet unwillingness to adopt our view of detente in spite of our eager attempts to "educate" them in the "rules of the game."

In each of four situations since 1975 (Angola, 1975-76; Ethiopia/Somalia, 1977-78; Afghanistan, 1978; and, South Yemen, 1978), the United States was either unwilling or unable to effect an outcome more favorable to its interests, or the Soviet Union (alone or in tandem with the Cubans) was able to produce an outcome more favorable to its interests.

As stated earlier, the Soviet Union achieved rough strategic parity with the United States in approximately 1971. The next four years constitute a "transition period" in which the Soviets occupied themselves in upgrading their strategic nuclear forces by the introduction of the SS-17, SS-18 and SS-19 ICBMs, as well as a number of other sea-based systems.

By 1975 one could argue that the balance of power, or the correlation of forces, had swung in favor of the Soviet Union -certainly as regards its military component. By that time not only had the Soviets secured an advantage in most indices of strategic nuclear weaponry, but they had also increased their

23. Vakhrameev, op. cit., p. 88.

preponderance in conventional arms as well. In addition to this, the Soviets had for the first time begun to acquire a considerable troop and supply airlift capability, an absolutely essential requirement for the long-range projection of power.

This new capability (and equally important, the will to use it) was first observed at the time of the Angolan Civil War in 1975-76, when the Soviets airlifted some 15,000 Cuban soldiers across the Atlantic to fight on the side of the pro-Soviet MPLA guerrilla group. This aid, coupled with American reluctance to support other guerrilla factions, resulted in the MPLA's predominance in Angola by early 1976, in a situation where the Western powers had most of the advantages.

The situation was somewhat different in 1978 war between Ethiopia and Somalia, where the Soviets abandoned their former ally Somalia in order to aid that country's arch-enemy - Ethiopia. Perhaps heartened by the increasingly leftward movement of the Ethiopian revolution since 1974, the Soviets, through massive material and Cuban troop support to the beleaguered Ethiopian regime, were able to hold and then defeat Somalian attempts to annex the contested Ogaden region of Ethiopia.

Soon after the Soviet-Cuban triumph in Ethiopia came the revolution in Afghanistan in April 1978, in which local communist forces overthrew the regime of General Mohammed Daoud and established their own unabashedly pro-Soviet government in its place. Since that time the expanding civil war in Afghanistan has caused the Soviet Union to undertake a large commitment in men and materiel in order to shore up the vulnerable Taraki regime in Kabul.

The Afghani situation was repeated only two months later in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY or South Yemen), which occupies a position of great strategic value on the Arabian peninsula at the southern entrance to the Red Sea. In June of 1978, the PDRY, already closely associated with the Soviet Union since its independence in 1976, lurched still further left with the overthrow and assassination of President Salim Rubay'i Ali and his replacement by a group more closely aligned to the Soviet Union. As with Afghanistan, the large Soviet-East German (and in the case of South Yemen, Cuban) military-advisory presence may have played a key role in the eventual outcome.

Soviet protestations to the contrary, armed force (or the threat of it) has always played an extremely important and effective role in their diplomacy. This unusually heavy reliance on military power as an instrument of policy is by no means an innovation of the Soviet regime, but rather has its roots deep in Russian history. As Colin Gray points out:

The Russian and Soviet states sustained themselves by force. While military force is the ultima ratio of all regimes and governments, Soviet officials cannot be

ignorant of the facts that Soviet power was established in Russia by force of arms; Soviet power was defended by force of arms in the critical period of War Communism and later in the Great Patriotic War; and that military power is the only index of interstate comparison on which the Soviet Union has registered a very marked success over recent decades.²⁴

The historic Russian/Soviet reliance on the military takes on a particularly ominous cast when it is placed in the service of an ideology of world-wide pretensions which carries in its very heart the notion of an irreconcilable struggle with capitalism.

However, the attractiveness of the Soviet ideology is so impaired at this stage that the chances for a successful, spontaneous revolution based on the Soviet model independent of the force of Soviet arms are very slight. Today the Soviet Union is almost everywhere recognized as a heavy-handed dictatorship which combines modern technology with the knout and a country whose record, outside of military conquests, has been quite unimpressive.

Although this is certainly regrettable from the Soviet point of view, the present situation is certainly to be preferred to the 1930s, when the Soviet experiment held a much greater attraction overseas, but the Soviet state itself lacked the means to take advantage of this sympathy. It is quite evident now that the Soviet Union has entered a new, imperial stage, grounded in a recognized strategic nuclear superiority, which allows its rulers to pursue political goals with military means on a global scale with a minimum of risk.

RAZRIADKA AND "NATIONAL LIBERATION"

One of the many hopes entertained by American supporters of detente is that the Soviet Union, having now become a "conservative" and "status quo" power, would, in the interests of furthering its relationship with the United States, stop, or at least slacken its support for various revolutionary movements in different parts of the world. President Carter himself has spoken of the rules of the "restraint" and "mutual respect" which "...can progressively be applied to other troubled regions of our planet."²⁵ It is argued that the Soviet leaders, plagued by their own domestic economic problems and increasingly burdened by the enormous cost of maintaining their armed forces, now have had an equal stake in promoting international "stability." While it is certainly true that the Soviets are desirous of stability (in Eastern Europe), it is equally true that in Soviet doctrine

24. Gray, op. cit., p. 39.

25. Jimmy Carter, in Vienna Summit, Selected Documents no. 13, pg. 4 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979).

a true and lasting stability can be achieved only in a worldwide system of socialist states and the abolition of classes resulting therefrom.

As to the onerous burden being placed upon the Soviet economy by record arms expenditures, American Sovietologist Jeremy R. Azrael has written:

A healthy dose of skepticism on this score is justified by the Kremlin's sustained unresponsiveness to the strong internal economic pressures that were generated and exacerbated by its pursuit of the very policies to which the United States objected.²⁶

Once again, no one can accuse Soviet theoreticians of dissimulation when it comes to defining just what the place of the "national-liberation" movement is in an atmosphere of international razriadka. On the contrary, they have been more than frank in explaining the connection.

It is completely clear that razriadka does not give imperialism any sort of guarantees against crises and social upheavals. On the contrary, under conditions of the slackening of international tension, the broad popular masses are activated still more... this, in its turn, facilitates the strengthening of the revolutionary and liberation movements.²⁷

The current state and future prospects of the assorted revolutionary movements are directly dependent on the existing correlation of forces. Thus the shift of these factors in favor of the "world socialist community" over the past several years has appreciably increased the chances for success of those forces involved in the "anti-imperialist" struggles, by significantly narrowing the field of action available to the capitalist powers. Unlike the days of the Cold War, the "imperialist" powers - first and foremost, the United States - are severely constrained in the means to which they can resort in order to maintain their positions in the underdeveloped countries.

Under these conditions the resort to military force by imperialism in the struggle with the national-liberation movement, the trampling of independence and interference in the internal affairs of the liberated states becomes a more difficult matter.²⁸

It is quite probable that the Soviet leaders saw the lack of U.S. response to the Cuban intervention in Angola as confirmation of this thesis. While it is certainly true that the American

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26. Jeremy R. Azrael, "Soviet-American Relations: Notes on Detente," Current History, October 1978, p. 119.
 27. Sovetov, op. cit., p. 14.
 28. Zakharov, op. cit., p. 83.

refusal to become involved in Angola was conditioned by other factors besides military ones, can the Soviet leadership with its great emphasis on the political utility of military power, be blamed for thinking that their theories had been confirmed by events?

The Soviets have been equally straightforward about the willingness of the socialist camp to render aid to the "liberation" movements. For just as the new rules of razriadka constrict the freedom of action of the "imperialist" powers, so too do they allow unrestricted freedom to the Soviet Union and its allies to strengthen such movements against "aggression."

.../P/eaceful coexistence, in creating favorable conditions for the solution of economic and social tasks in all countries without exception, in no way contradicts the right of oppressed peoples to use all means in the struggle for liberation, the right of all states²⁹ to use outside support for the repulsion of aggression.

.../T/he socialist states, as true and reliable friends, are ready to render these countries not only moral and political support, but also economic and organizational - right up to aiding in strengthening defense.³⁰

The Soviets are also remarkably frank concerning the degree to which the recent victories of the "national-liberation" struggle are directly attributable to the influence of the Soviet Union: "/W/ithout the constant material and moral support of the Soviet Union for the national-liberation movements, many victories over imperialism would have been impossible."³¹

Barring any unforeseen diminution in the military might of the Soviet Union the chances for any significant lessening of Soviet support for those subversive movements which it favors are exceedingly slim. In fact, the probability is that more and more dissatisfied minorities and opposition groups within certain countries will look to the Soviet Union for aid in realizing their aspirations. Also, as the recent wars between North and South Yemen, and Ethiopia and Somalia show, Soviet military assistance is not solely limited to internal conflicts, but can be used to affect the outcome of conflicts between states.

Conversely, if present trends continue over the next decade the United States will increasingly become a helpless observer of events in a world which will be by and large run according to Soviet wishes. As the world balance of power continues to shift in favor of the Soviet Union the wishes of the United States are

29. E. Tarabrin, "The National-Liberation Movement: Problems and Prospects," Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn', no. 1, 1978, p. 68-69.

30. Ibid., p. 73.

31. Ibid., p. 76.

increasingly disregarded as doubts about the capability and will of this country grow. In effect, American foreign policy is becoming irrelevant in today's world.

CONCLUSION

It is now quite clear that the Soviets see the world and interpret it in a way a different from Americans, even discounting particular, historical or geographical influences. The Soviets continue to assert that the Marxist-Leninist ideology and its central thesis regarding the irreconcilability of class interests is the basis of their foreign policy.

Unfortunately, it is this rigid, ideological view of the world that so many Americans seem to be incapable of understanding. Accustomed by history and habit to dealing with problems in a "pragmatic" and "practical" manner, Americans, by and large, have traditionally shunned all-embracing ideological solutions. This phenomenon makes Americans particularly incapable of understanding and dealing with an opponent who professes to be guided by a set of abstract tenets so thoroughly alien to us.

Colin Gray has described the American dilemma perfectly writing that:

.../I/t is difficult to resist the thought that the United States is, by some margin, the country least well-fitted by political culture to be charged with a major power-balancing role vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.... Many of the virtues of the United States translate into vices when it comes to the practice of international realtions.³²

The principal American weakness can be found to lie in our failure to understand an enemy who operates from premises which we fail to take seriously. At the heart of things lies a peculiarly American scorn for ideas which hinders us in our dealings with the Soviets. This is part and parcel of what could be termed our "businesslike" approach to our relations with the Soviet Union, and approach whose underlying premise is that we and our opponents are basically businessmen at heart and that we should get down to serious "horse-trading" as quickly as possible and not be bothered by such nonsense as ideology.

Thus it is that the United States, the greatest industrial power in the world and potentially the strongest militarily, is seen by many at home and abroad to be falling behind the Soviet Union in the struggle for influence around the world. How is it that a country with so many advantages - extant and potential - has come to such a pass?

32. Gray, op. cit., p. 36.

In a number of ways it would be wise to look at the example offered by the Soviet Union. The highly-centralized Soviet party and state structure allows the Soviets to most efficiently funnel the necessary human, economic and ideological resources into a single area, such as the military. The Soviet state produces precious little else either in abundance or with any degree of efficiency - but they do this well, thanks to a unity of views at the top of the politico-military structure. This unity of purpose makes them especially formidable. Still, the Soviet Union is an industrially backward country which, aside from military capability, ranks quite low on just about every index by which societies are measured, but which has nonetheless arrived at a position of great power and influence because its leaders have fairly successfully harnessed the energies of their people toward single, well-defined and consistently articulated goal - the achievement of a decisive degree of military superiority over the West. It is only in this context that the people and governments in the Western world can deal effectively with the Soviet Union.

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