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THE MANY WAYS THE U.N. SERVES THE USSR

INTRODUCTION

While the U.S. is constantly under siege at the United Nations and reluctantly has come to regard it as hostile terrain, the U.N. seems to work quite satisfactorily for the Soviet Union. In 1982, for example, the majority of U.N. members, the so-called nonaligned, voted with the USSR 83 percent of the time in the General Assembly. The U.N.'s New York headquarters has become a powerful base for Soviet espionage and propaganda. And the Soviet foreign policy agenda almost always is furthered by U.N. actions and rhetoric.

A main reason for Moscow's success is its adroit manipulation of the U.N. rules, at times in violation of the U.N. Charter. From the outset, the USSR saw the U.N. as a forum for spreading Soviet views. It has behaved with a more cynical but also more realistic assessment of the U.N.'s capacities and prospects than have Western nations.¹ The result is a sharp contrast between how the U.N. serves the USSR and how it serves the United States. Examples:

- o None of the Soviet citizens working in the U.N. Secretariat are permanent international civil servants; they all report regularly to the Soviet Mission to the U.N. By contrast, there is no coordination whatsoever by the U.S. government of American U.N. employees, the vast majority of whom are permanent U.N. civil servants.

¹ Alexander Dallin, The Soviet Union at the United Nations: An Inquiry into Soviet Motives and Objectives (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), p. 25.

- o Over one-third of Soviet employees are involved in espionage activities, according to the FBI. By contrast, knowledgeable insiders doubt that any American in the U.N. is working for U.S. intelligence agencies.
- o Soviet fronts use the U.N. for propaganda activities. No comparable American efforts exist.
- o The Soviets have infiltrated several key departments in the Secretariat and have access to privileged personnel information. No American has such access.
- o The Soviet Union has three votes in the General Assembly; the U.S. has only one.
- o The U.N. recognizes Soviet oriented "national liberation movements," but blacklists pro-Western or anti-communist liberation groups.
- o The USSR is nearly \$200 million in default to the U.N., paying much less than its fair share of peacekeeping operations; the U.S. pays over 25 percent of those operations.

Moscow will continue manipulating the U.N. so long as the organization's rules remain unchanged. And while the U.S. could try to emulate Soviet tactics, such actions would make Americans feel uncomfortable and probably be criticized by Congress. What is needed, therefore, is modification of the rules to recapture the original spirit of the U.N. Charter.

HOW U.N. RULES WORK IN MOSCOW'S FAVOR

Articles 100 and 101 of the U.N. Charter

The spirit of these articles is clear: Secretariat employees are to be international civil servants, loyal to the U.N. rather than to any particular nation. Yet Article 101, paragraph 1, opens a loophole, allowing the Secretary General to appoint staff according to General Assembly recommendations. This has permitted "fixed-term" appointments, known as "secondment."² Secondment permits U.N. employees to serve the U.N. temporarily, an average of five years, and then return to service with their own governments. All Soviet Secretariat employees are on secondment from

² The Preparatory Commission, in 1945, provided for fixed-term appointments in the the Secretariat (PC/20 at 85, 92-93)--a practice later adopted by the General Assembly in Resolution 13 (I) of February 13, 1946. In 1956, the merits of career vs. fixed-term appointments were dealt with in the report of the Salary Review Committee, established under General Assembly Resolution 975 (X) (1955). For details of the history, see Theodore Meron, The United Nations Secretariat (New York: Lexington Books, 1977), pp. 28-33.

Moscow. These employees, moreover, reportedly turn their U.N. paychecks over to the Soviet government, of which only a fraction is returned. This amounts to a U.N. subsidy of the USSR.

Article IV, Section 11, of the U.N. Headquarters Agreement (1947)

This allows U.N. employees, representatives of nongovernmental organizations, and other persons invited to the headquarters to travel freely anywhere in the U.S. According to the FBI, the Soviet Union has abused this privilege by using at least one-third of its nationals in the Secretariat for espionage missions in the U.S.

Resolution 1296 of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (1968)

This facilitates cooperation between the U.N. and so-called nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Through various front groups, such as the World Peace Council, which have gained NGO status in the U.N. and are affiliated with the Department of Public Information, ECOSOC, and other U.N. organs, the Soviet Union uses U.N. forums and U.N. funds to stage conferences that promote Soviet foreign policy objectives.

General Assembly Resolution 35/210 (1980)

This codifies a longstanding practice in the Secretariat: it ensures that, when vacancies occur at posts staffed on a fixed-term basis (that is, primarily Soviet bloc nationals), the replacements will be from the same country as their predecessors. This has allowed Moscow, through years of clever maneuvering, to capture some key Secretariat posts, and along with them, access to personnel files (used by the KGB, the Soviet secret police, to recruit new agents), the Department of Public Information (used for propaganda purposes), and the U.N. library (whose copy machines can provide an abundance of material from U.S. public and university libraries). In addition, Soviets run the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs and coordinate the activities of the Center against Apartheid.

Article 3 of the U.N. Charter

This declares all "states" that ratified the U.N. Declaration of January 1, 1942, to be "original Members of the United Nations." Accordingly, the Soviet Union is represented at the U.N. by three countries: the USSR proper, the Ukraine, and Byelorussia, despite the fact that these two republics enjoy no independence in the Soviet system today. This not only allows Moscow three votes in the General Assembly, but also permits three separate New York-based Missions, about a third of whose employees are, according to the FBI, heavily involved in espionage.

General Assembly Resolutions 2105(X) (1965) and 2708(XXV) (1970)

In this, the General Assembly recognizes the legitimacy of national liberation movements (NLMs) and of U.N. funding for them. With the help of various U.N. organs, notably the Committee of 24, this boosts, and gives legitimacy to, Soviet supported insurgent groups that use military means to reach their objectives--contrary to the spirit of Article 2 of the U.N. Charter urging restraint from support for the use of force against Member States.

Article 17 of the U.N. Charter

Section 2 of Article 17 states that "the expenses of the Organization [U.N.] shall be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly." The Soviet Union has taken advantage of the Charter's failure to mention peacekeeping operations specifically to contribute virtually nothing to missions designed to keep peace in the Congo, the Golan Heights, or Lebanon. Currently, the USSR is in arrears in its payments to the U.N. by about \$200 million, nearly all of which is peacekeeping nonsupport.³

The ambiguity of Article 17 also gives the Soviet Union the option of paying its share of the U.N. budget in rubles--at an exchange rate determined by the Soviets (which greatly overestimates the real value of the ruble). In recent years, the USSR has chosen to make its voluntary and assessed payments in rubles, which are virtually useless outside the USSR.

SECONDMENT: UNDERMINING THE SECRETARIAT'S IMPARTIALITY

As early as 1961, the Soviet Union started undermining the concept of a permanent U.N. civil service.⁴ In 1968, Platon Morozov, the Soviet member of the 1968 Committee on the Reorganization of the Secretariat, demanded that permanent employment contracts no longer be issued. In 1975, E. N. Makeev, the Soviet delegate to the Fifth Committee, stated that members of the Secretariat "were not citizens of the world but nationals of Member States," and asked for an end to appointments that benefitted "overrepresented states" (by implication, permanent contracts).⁵ Today, every one of the approximately 200 professional Secretariat employees from the USSR are on a fixed-term

³ In July 1962, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), at the request of the General Assembly, gave an advisory opinion declaring that the expenses of the U.N. Emergency Force and the U.N. force in the Congo should be paid by Member States. In December 1962, the Assembly accepted the Court's opinion. Yet the Soviet Union ignored the ICJ's decision.

⁴ See Meron, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-33.

⁵ A/C.5/SR.1753, November 28, 1975, paragraph 33.

contract. In addition, virtually all but the highest-ranking Soviet personnel are obliged to live in a Soviet-controlled diplomats' compound in the Riverdale section of the Bronx. These Soviet employees of the U.N., observes Richard Jackson, a professional foreign service officer and political advisor to the U.S. Mission to the U.N. during 1980-1983, are "indistinguishable from government apparatchiks."⁶

All the activities of Soviet Secretariat employees, moreover, are coordinated in detail by the Soviet Mission to the U.N.⁷ According to Arkady Shevchenko, the Soviet who was U.N. Under Secretary General until his 1978 defection to the U.S., Soviet employees are obliged to turn their U.N. salaries over to the Soviet government and receive only a fraction in return. One Western diplomat said: "The whole world is underwriting their work." It is estimated that about \$15.2 million of the \$22.7 million earned each year by the Soviet Secretariat staff ends up in Moscow.

UNRESTRICTED TRAVEL

As the FBI long has known, the U.N. headquarters in New York provides an excellent base for Soviet espionage. R. Jean Gray, head of the FBI's New York division, told The Heritage Foundation that there were about 1,100 communist bloc officials in New York. About 200 to 250 are Soviet professional Secretariat employees;⁸ one-third of these are estimated to be agents of the KGB and other Soviet intelligence services.

FBI attempts to monitor the activities of Soviet Secretariat employees are greatly hampered by the privileges conferred by the U.N. headquarters agreement, which allows all U.N. employees--unlike Mission personnel--to travel freely anywhere in the U.S. Arkady Shevchenko agrees, stating that Soviet KGB agents in the Secretariat take advantage of this privilege frequently to conduct high technology espionage actions, after calling in "sick."

MOVING UP THE RANKS

The USSR has been remarkably successful in increasing its numbers in the high-level posts of the Secretariat.

Senior Posts as a Percentage of Total Posts

	<u>1977</u>	<u>1983</u>
USSR	12.7	15.0
U.S.	10.5	9.7

⁶ See Richard L. Jackson, The Non-Aligned, the U.N. and the Superpowers (New York: Praeger, 1983), p. 162.

⁷ Juliana Geran Pilon, "Moscow's U.N. Outpost," Heritage Foundation Back-grounder No. 307, p. 2.

⁸ Exact updated figures are difficult to procure, partly because of the relatively large turnover of Soviet personnel.

One reason for the Soviet success is Resolution 35/210 which allows those countries that provide staff members on fixed terms, or on secondment, to provide replacements on a continuous basis.⁹

In addition to the occupancy of high-level posts, moreover, the Soviets have penetrated key departments.

Office of Personnel Services. Soviet skill in using the personnel rules and the files of the U.N. Personnel Office is a key to Moscow's success in the Secretariat. The Director of Policy Coordination in the Personnel Office, Victor Elissejev, is only one of several Soviet bloc employees with access to U.N. personnel files; they are in an excellent position to manipulate the U.N.'s job promotion procedures. According to several U.N. sources, including former Under-Secretary General Shevchenko, Moscow uses this opportunity to repay Secretariat employees who cooperate with the USSR and punish those who do not. A former employee in this Office, David Arnold, a U.S. foreign service officer currently at the Columbia University Center for Human Rights, states that the U.S. has been virtually "eased out" of policy positions in the Personnel Office in recent years. He also indicates that the previously unbroken tradition of having an American as one of the three Directors in this Office was discontinued in the spring of 1983.

Department of Public Information. The Director of the External Relations Division of this Department, Anatoly Mkrtchyan, has been identified by Arkady Shevchenko as a KGB colonel. Mkrtchyan directs the dissemination of U.N. material to all 64 U.N. Information Centers throughout the world. His powers were strengthened by the January 1982 transfer of the centers' Administrative Unit from the Office of General Services (headed by an American).¹⁰ The Department's tendency to slant U.N. DPI publications in line with Soviet propaganda efforts has been amply documented.¹¹ The DPI, for example, has managed to avoid any reference to the Soviet destruction of KAL Flight 7. In its press releases, DPI has referred to "the Korean airliner draft decision," "the destruction of Korean aircraft," "the Korean airlines incident," "the loss of a Korean airliner," "the disappearance of a Korean airliner," "the downing of Korean aircraft," "the airliner tragedy," but absolutely never to its Soviet perpetrators.

⁹ The resolution, to be sure, also affirms that "no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State." The contradictory language has been seen as an attempt to meet the concerns of developing countries while protecting the interests of Soviet bloc countries. Secretariat practice indicates that Soviet nationals are permitted to hold on to a position almost on a permanent basis.

¹⁰ A/AC.198/61, p. 4.

¹¹ Roger Brooks, "The U.N. Department of Public Information: A House of Mirrors," Heritage Foundation Background No. 332.

Department of Political and Security Council Affairs. This is the Soviet stronghold in the U.N. Headed by Viacheslav Ustinov, it provides Secretariat services for the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies, which allow it great political influence in the U.N. apparatus. According to Arkady Schevchenko, the Center against Apartheid, one of its principal divisions, is under KGB guidance.

The Dag Hammarskjold Library. Headed by Vladimir Orlov, the library is potentially a useful Soviet tool. Library loan facilities give the Soviet Union access to documents throughout the U.S., unobtrusively, and their copy machines offer reproductions at no charge of any materials that Moscow finds useful.

Department of Conference Services. Headed by a Pole, Eugeniusz Wyzner, the DCS is controlled by Soviet bloc citizens. The Russian translation section, for example, is widely known to U.N. staffers as a significant KGB stronghold. Headed by Boris Fotin, none of its translators and interpreters come from outside the Soviet Union, although there are plenty of non-Soviets who are excellent Russian-speaking translators. According to New York University law professor Theodore Meron,

it appears that one of the understandings reached between the U.N. and the Soviet Union pertaining to the [programme subsidized by the U.N. in Moscow to train translators and interpreters for the U.N.] was that in the future the U.N. would not recruit Russian interpreters (and translators) except from the Soviet Union. Thus, an exception was established to the salutary policy of the U.N. whereby language staff (which is not subject to the principle of geographical distribution) is recruited on the basis of competitive examinations open to all.¹²

As a result, the translation section is free of "intrusion" by non-Soviets who might expose the real activities of the Soviet employees. No other nation has such privileges. Indeed, one high-level U.N. official gives this as a clear example of the principle that "what the Soviets want, the Soviets get."

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

An important Soviet advantage in the General Assembly stems from additional votes and representation in committees--a result of their being three Soviet Member States of the U.N.--Byelorussia, the Ukraine, and the USSR proper. As the historical record indicates, the Soviet Union gained this advantage by threatening to disrupt and stall preliminary talks leading to the formation of

¹² Meron, op. cit., p. 32.

the U.N.¹³ The USSR justified requesting the additional memberships for the Ukraine and Byelorussia by claiming that under "the recently amended Soviet Constitution [these republics] could maintain independent relations with foreign governments."¹⁴ That claim, however, is contrary to reality, for Byelorussia, the Ukraine and every other Soviet "republic" are anything but independent. On February 22, 1984, Congressman Don Young (R-Alaska) revived a 1971 congressional resolution urging the President of the U.S. to seek to end this anomaly and urge the U.N. to expel the two additional Soviet republics from the U.N.

NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs)

The USSR was responsible to a considerable extent for the privileges extended to the NGOs through the U.N., especially those affiliated with the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹⁵ Moscow's efforts on behalf of the World Federation of Trade Unions, created partly to counter the efforts of Western unions on behalf of free trade associations, culminated in the WFTU's gaining "consultative status" in ECOSOC. Such status allows a NGO to be an observer at all public ECOSOC sessions and submit statements that can be circulated as Council documents. ECOSOC resolution 1296 adopted in 1968 placed 30 organizations in the consultative category.

In addition, NGOs have consultative status in the DPI--and several have been identified as Soviet fronts.¹⁶ Among the most active in the U.N. is the World Peace Council, which uses such U.N. organs as the Center against Apartheid to stage conferences. The proceedings of one such, the "International Conference on the Unholy Alliance between South Africa and Israel," cosponsored with the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization in Vienna from July 11-13, 1983, were subsequently seconded or reaffirmed by the General Assembly. This means that the United Nations disseminated this material using regular U.N. funds and the official U.N. emblem.

¹³ Ruth Russell, A History of the U.N. Charter (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1958), pp. 596-598. See also John C. Etridge, "Ukraine and Byelorussia in the U.N. Background and Arguments for and against Expulsion," Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, November 5, 1971.

¹⁴ Herbert Feis, Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 554.

¹⁵ Harold Karan Jacobson, The USSR and the U.N.'s Economic and Social Activities (South Bend, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963), pp. 22-28.

¹⁶ The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization; The Christian Peace Conference; International Association of Democratic Lawyers; International Organization of Journalists; Women's International Democratic Federation; World Federation of Democratic Youth; World Federation of Trade Unions; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; World Peace Council. There are probably others.

SUPPORT FOR SOVIET-BACKED INSURGENT GROUPS

The General Assembly's 1960 resolution on colonialism (1514 XV), a project encouraged by the late Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, stated that possessing colonies involves a denial of human rights. This enhanced considerably Soviet prestige in the Third World. With the help of the General Assembly's so-called Committee of 24, which is largely Soviet dominated,¹⁷ the General Assembly began adopting resolutions that became ever more explicit in approving armed struggle as a means for achieving independence. During the 1970s, moreover, several national liberation movements (NLMs) obtained the legitimacy of "observer status" in the General Assembly and U.N. specialized agencies. Indeed, in 1974, resolution 3280 extended a "blanket invitation to observer status...to all NLMs recognized by the Organization of African Unity."

An indictment of the Soviet Union's use of the U.N. machinery on behalf of NLMs comes from Richard H. Shultz, Associate Professor of International Politics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy: "The Committee [of 24] has been unyielding in its commitment to promote within the U.N. numerous principles which conflict with both conventional international practice and the original tenets of the U.N." The same criticism applies to the results of that Committee's efforts, reflected in financial support as well as extensive publicity for NLMs.

FINANCING THE U.N.: A FREE RIDE

The USSR is stingy when it comes to the U.N.: in 1981, it paid only 4.21 percent of the costs--voluntary or assessed--of the U.N. compared to the American taxpayers' contribution of about 25 percent.¹⁸ What is worse, according to a congressional staff analysis entitled "U.N. Financial Management" prepared for the House Subcommittees on International Organizations and on International Operations in late 1981, the Soviets at times have made assessed and voluntary contributions to the U.N. in soft Soviet rubles, which can be used only inside the Soviet Union. (The U.S., of course, pays in hard dollars.) Thus, states the report, "the Soviets can claim that they have fulfilled their legal obligation when, in reality, they have burdened the U.N. with a currency it cannot readily spend." The burden is actually much greater considering the fact that the exchange rate is set by Moscow at far above the ruble's world market rate.

¹⁷ The Committee's full name is "Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples." For a fuller discussion of the Committee of 24, see Arieh Eilan, The General Assembly: Can it Be Salvaged?, The Heritage Foundation, 1984.

¹⁸ A/36/11.

The question of Soviet default on nearly \$200 million for U.N. expenses, primarily for peacekeeping, has had a long history. In 1960, a U.N. Committee of Experts to Review the Activities and Organization of the Secretariat presented a proposal by a Soviet expert which allowed any state to opt out of obligations it did not wish to assume.¹⁹ While this was not adopted, Moscow began applying it to itself in 1963 when it refused payment for some budgetary accounts. Today, the Soviet Union still maintains that it is not required to contribute to peacekeeping operations--and has in fact contributed very little to total peacekeeping expense.

CONCLUSION

The Soviet manipulation of U.N. rules runs counter in many cases to the spirit of the U.N. Charter. But the blame is not solely Moscow's. Washington is at fault for making so little effort to require that the letter and spirit of U.N. rules be respected. There are a number of steps available to the U.S. that at least might modify Soviet behavior.

Among them:

- o The U.S. could seek to curtail the travel privileges of U.N. personnel from countries on the State Department's "restricted" list--which includes the USSR.
- o The U.S. could seek to limit the size of the three Soviet Missions to the U.N. in New York.
- o The U.S. could demand that the membership of the USSR in the U.N. be restricted to one seat, instead of the current three, thus bringing it in line with Soviet diplomatic practice elsewhere in the world.
- o The U.S. could freeze its contribution to the U.N. until the practice of secondment, or fixed-term appointments, applies to less than one-third of the total Soviet staff.²⁰
- o The FBI should be given additional funds for surveillance of Soviets connected with the U.N. Perhaps even more important, however, the FBI should coordinate its efforts with other intelligence services (including the New York

¹⁹ Ruth B. Russell, The United Nations and United States Security Policy (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1968), p. 339. For an incisive discussion of the history of Soviet default, see pp. 333-343.

²⁰ In a report presented to the General Assembly in 1965, the Secretary General explained that the practice of maintaining the proportion of staff serving on career appointments to those serving on fixed-term appointments at about 3 to 1 was designed to balance considerations of efficiency of operation. (A/5841, 20 GAOR, Annexes, Agenda Item 84, at 3.)

Police Department's intelligence section) to pool information related to Soviet U.N. personnel and Soviet activities through the U.N. FBI performance, moreover, should be monitored through the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board or some other appropriate administrative body.

- o The U.S. should curtail the privileges of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the U.N. The proportion of the U.S. contribution should be withheld for all NGO sponsored conferences, including U.N. dissemination of their proceedings through the Department of Public Information.
- o The U.S. should seek to place Americans at high levels on some of the key Soviet-infiltrated U.N. departments, such as Personnel, Conference Services, Office of Legal Affairs, and Department of Public Information. The U.S. should also seek to replace the Soviet head of the U.N. library with an American.
- o Congress should extend P.L. 98/164, Section 114, which provides that the U.S. withhold its proportion of funds for U.N. programs that help promote the South West African People's Organization and the Palestine Liberation Organization, to include the rest of the "national liberation movements" recognized by the U.N., all of which provide useful tools for Soviet propaganda and insurgency.
- o Congress should recommend that the U.S. withhold the same proportion of its U.N. contribution as does the Soviet Union. Since the USSR is in arrears nearly \$200 million, the U.S., which pays twice as much to the U.N. in assessed contributions, should withhold \$400 million until the Soviet Union pays.
- o The U.S. should demand that the U.N. accept Soviet payments only in convertible currency, thus excluding rubles.
- o The U.S. should explore the possibility of moving the U.N. headquarters out of New York and even from the U.S.--possibly to Vienna, or on a rotating international basis.

Such measures would indicate that the U.S. is not overlooking Soviet misuse of U.N. rules. Unless it thus demonstrates its serious intent in the U.N., the U.S. stands to lose more than it gains from participation in the U.N.

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