

SOVIET AFFAIRS ANALYSIS SERVICE

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NEW ASPECTS OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

Khrushchev's Latest Speech To USSR Supreme Soviet

At the October 31, 1959 meeting of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Khrushchev delivered a report entitled "On the International Situation and the Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union." In this report Khrushchev mentioned what he called the "new aspects" of Soviet foreign policy. These "new aspects" have evoked some favorable response in the free world. Essentially, they may be reduced to : (1) a readiness to compromise in negotiations on several questions which acutely concern the Western world; and, (2) a willingness to cooperate in creating a more or less permanent basis for peace through the "coexistence" of the Communist and the Western systems.

Khrushchev's main stipulation for a compromise on the Berlin question is the conclusion of peace treaties with both West and East Germany. This obviously involves an acceptance of the status quo--i. e. the West would recognize the German Democratic Republic and acknowledge the Oder-Neisse line.

Khrushchev also expressed his belief in the possibility of reaching a compromise on the problem of general disarmament. While agreeing on principle to unlimited disarmament, he insists, however, as a prerequisite for any partial disarmament, on the acceptance of all the Soviet proposals that have been repeatedly rejected by the West: the banning of nuclear weapons; the curtailment of foreign troops on European soil; the liquidation of military bases on foreign soil; the conclusion of a non-aggression treaty between the members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact; etc.

Khrushchev also proposed that a compromise be reached on creating a system of international control of atomic weapons. The value of this proposal is, doubtful, however, since it is difficult to see how even the detailed preparation in theory of a system of control can guarantee its being carried out in full.

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Khrushchev versus Lenin on "Coexistence" and "Compromise"

It is worth examining the theory behind Khrushchev's policy on these compromises with the West. In his speech before the Supreme Soviet, Khrushchev stated that this policy would be an accurate reflection of Lenin's ideas on this subject, which were outlined by Khrushchev as follows:

Lenin taught that the working class, both before and after the seizure of power, must be capable of conducting a flexible policy, of making compromises and agreements when this is required by life and by the interests at stake (Pravda, November 1, 1959).

But Khrushchev failed to quote the most important part of Lenin's observations on this matter. What Lenin really wrote was this:

The entire history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is full of cases of (diplomatic) maneuvering, making agreements and compromises with other parties, including bourgeois parties.

To wage war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie--a war that is a hundred times more difficult, prolonged and complicated than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between states-- and to reject beforehand (the idea of) jockeying for position, of exploiting conflicts of interest (even though they be temporary) between enemies, of making agreements and compromises with potential, even temporary, unsteady, shaky, (conditional) allies-- is this not absolutely ridiculous?...

The defeat of a more powerful opponent is possible only if one makes the greatest possible effort and only if one exploits, in the most meticulous, careful, cautious and skilful manner, every "split", however small, between enemies, every conflict of interests between the bourgeoisie of various countries, between various groups or types of bourgeoisie within individual countries and also every opportunity, however slight, of acquiring a mass ally, even though the latter be temporary, shaky, unsteady, unreliable, conditional. Whoever does not understand this has not the slightest inkling at all of Marxism or scientific modern socialism. (Lenin, Works, Vol. XXV, Moscow, 1935, p. 210).

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Hence it is clear that if Khrushchev adopts Lenin's tactics of compromise, he will be merely taking another carefully calculated step in the struggle for world dominion.

The main topic raised by Khrushchev is that of "peaceful coexistence," which he also presents as one of Lenin's fundamental principles. Khrushchev in his speech to the Supreme Soviet said:

The Soviet government, the entire Soviet people, proceed from the Leninist principle of the coexistence of states with differing social systems. (Pravda, November 1, 1959).

In fact, Lenin wrote as follows about this issue:

... It is possible that the victory of socialism will take place first in (only) a few capitalist countries, or even in one. The victorious proletariat in this country, having expropriated the capitalists and organized a socialist (system of) production at home, would rise against the rest of the capitalist world, attracting to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, raising in these (countries) a rebellion against the capitalists and attacking, if necessary even with military force, the exploiting classes and their states (Lenin, Works, Vol. XVIII, Moscow, 1931, pp. 232-33).

In this connection, the chief task of the Soviet armed forces would be to establish the world-wide rule of Communism.

With the transfer of power to the toiling and exploited classes, the need has arisen for the creation of a new army, which will constitute the fulcrum of Soviet rule in the present, and will serve as a support for the future Socialist revolution in Europe (Documents on the History of the Civil War in the USSR, Moscow, 1949, Vol. 1, p. 101).

This was Lenin's version of "peaceful coexistence" between the "socialist" states and the free world. It is also the Peking version; it is also Khrushchev's, except that he proposes to take the longer way home of making compromises and avoiding overt hostilities.

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Soviet Asian Policy Unchanged

There are several other points in Khrushchev's report to the Supreme Soviet which do not justify a complacent attitude by the West toward future Soviet foreign policy. While taking a favorable view of the present international situation, Khrushchev attributes the entire credit for the relaxation in tension to the might of the Soviet Union and to his own diplomatic skill:

The fundamental reason lies in the increased power and international influence of the Soviet Union. . . . an especially important and far reaching step toward a fundamental improvement in relations between the USSR and the U. S. A. , toward the general relaxation of international tension, was the agreement for an exchange of visits by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the President of the U. S. A. (Ibid. , November 1, 1959).

As to the problem of China, Khrushchev guaranteed full Soviet support for Peking in its claims to Formosa and repeated Soviet demands for the admission of Communist China to the United Nations and its inclusion as a permanent member of the Security Council:

The Soviet Union understands and sympathizes with the desire of the Chinese people and the government of the Chinese People's Republic to secure the return to the Chinese state of Taiwan and the other islands which belong to China but are occupied by foreign troops. On this question, we wholeheartedly support and shall support the government of the Chinese People's Republic until it gets a decision as to this question. Juridical and moral right are on its side. (Ibid. , November 1, 1959).

In dealing with the equally important question of Korea , Khrushchev paid a compliment to the United States by saying that the latter "is not seeking a conflict there. " But he immediately added: "It is not only South Korea which has allies-- North Korea has them as well. " His main proposal--that all foreign troops be evacuated from South Korea--is, of course, envisaged as a preliminary step to Communizing South Korea.

As for Indo-China, Laos and the Near East, Khrushchev merely repeated previous proposals. In his attacks upon the policies of "ruling circles" in Turkey and Iran, he also condemned the foreign policy vis-a-vis those countries of Great Britain and the United States.

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New Soviet "Line" on France?

A noteworthy feature of Khrushchev's speech was the section devoted to France and to President De Gaulle. His main point was:

The people of the USSR would like to live in peace and friendship with the people of France. They wish France prosperity and greatness. (Ibid., November 1, 1959).

Relations with France, he said, were developing normally, "although France's participation in military blocs directed against us has a certain impact upon her policy." After expressing a very favorable reaction to what De Gaulle had said about the Oder-Neisse line, Khrushchev indicated his approval of De Gaulle's plan for the solution of the problem of Algeria and even went so far as to stress France's historical claims to this area.

It is well known that France and Algeria are linked by close bonds which have been formed during the course of history. Naturally, if in the future, these bonds are founded upon a new, mutually-acceptable basis, including a genuine observance of (the principles of) voluntary action and equal rights, this will promote the establishment of peace in this area. (Ibid., November 1, 1959).

These remarks of course, are intended to prepare the way for Khrushchev's forthcoming visit to Paris. At the same time, they are an example of the classic device of using promises and compliments--in this case with the long-range goal of undermining the unity of NATO--to lure France away from her Western allies and destroy the alliance between De Gaulle and Adenauer.

No Compromise on Soviet Ideology

Particular stress should be laid upon the attitude taken by Khrushchev concerning ideological differences between the Communist camp and the democratic world. Here, more firmly than ever before, Khrushchev declared the impossibility of a compromise:

Here there can be no question of any concessions or compromises. All concessions in principle, in matters of ideology, would mean lowering ourselves to the positions held by our opponents and also a qualitative change of policy, a betrayal of the cause of the working class. (Ibid., November 1, 1959).

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This unequivocal statement can only mean a continuation, if not at this time an intensification of the "cold war" by the Communist Party Central Committee. By stating that in matters of ideology the Communist Party of the USSR remains true to the principles of Lenin, Khrushchev makes it clear that the Party's main thesis in foreign policy is the need for world revolution. Consequently, even complete disarmament does not mean that the Party Central Committee will abandon its other varied plans for the attainment of world Communist dominion.

... A conflict is inevitable. Here lies the greatest difficulty of the Russian revolution, its historical problem: the necessity of solving international tasks, of provoking an international revolution (Lenin, Works, Vol. XXII, Moscow, 1931, p. 317).

The quotations given above make it quite clear that the "new aspects" of Soviet foreign policy set forth by Khrushchev offer the democratic world little hope of a favorable solution of the most important problems of international affairs. The present aim of Soviet foreign policy is to gain time by securing the political and economic acquiescence of the West. Without time the Party Central Committee can hardly cope with its problems on the home front and prepare for the final battle for world dominion.

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