

SOVIET FOREIGN RELATIONS, 1933-41

MAP OF EUROPE

I. THE DUALITY IN SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY.

1. Ever since 1917 the Soviet Union has pursued 2 general objectives:

- (1) Promoting the national interests of Russia, and
- (2) Promoting the cause of World Revolution

1st Objective -- pursued primarily by the Commissariat of F.A.

2nd Objective -- pursued " " " Comintern.

2. Methods Used --

(1) In furthering the national interests of Russia, the Soviets signed trade treaties, established diplomatic relations, i.e., they ~~maintained~~ carried on normal diplomacy with capitalist states.

"Peaceful coexistence"

(World Revolution)

(2) 2nd Objective -- In pursuing the 2nd objective/the Soviets worked through the Comintern and other agencies, ~~using~~

- Helped to organize Communist parties.
- Gave financial aid to revolutionary movements.
- Sent agents and arms abroad.
- Spread revolutionary propaganda.
- Worked to strengthen the Comintern

3. Conflict between These 2 Objectives:

- a. Difficult to have friendly relations with a government which one is openly and admittedly trying to overthrow.
- b. Revolutionary Propaganda -- Naturally angered the govts. which the Soviets were trying to destroy.
- c. Comintern and Commissariat of Foreign Affairs -- sometimes working at cross purposes.

4. Avowed Revolutionary Objectives -- Caused Capitalist govts to look upon the Soviets with suspicion and distrust.

5. Soviets Had no Close Friends or Allies -- ~~Nobody~~ Nobody trusted them.

6. Russian National Interests Got Top Priority --

- a. Signing of Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Rapallo Treaty (1922)
- b. "Socialism in a Single Country" (Stalin)
- c. Half-hearted support to Revolutionary movement in Germany
- d. Secret Military cooperation between Russia and Weimar Germany.
- e. Italy -- diplomatic relations with Fascist Italy.

7. Efforts to Promote Revolutions Failed:

-Failed everywhere, except in ~~unimportant~~ Outer Mongolia.

8. Traditional Diplomacy Succeeded:

- Got trade treaties, diplomatic recognition.
- Treaty of Rapallo with Germany strengthened Russia's position.
- Series of Non-Aggression treaties with her neighbors stabilized her frontiers.

9. Why didn't the Soviets Abandon their Revolutionary Propaganda???

- Why ~~was~~ didn't they dissolve the Comintern??
- Ideological Commitment -- to cause of World Revolution.
- Comintern -- ~~was~~ felt it could be used to promote Russian national interests. Gain support among the working classes throughout the world. Make other countries Communist, who would be friendly.

10. Diplomacy of the 1930's --

- Cannot be understood ~~more~~ unless one bears in mind:
 - a. This duality in Soviet foreign policy, and
 - b. How it made other countries suspicious of Russia, and hesitant to become allies of Russia.
- Prevented the formation of a solid front of ~~European~~ states to oppose Hitler.
- Prevented united action to ~~the~~ halt aggression.

11. Cordell Hull (Secretary of State under Roosevelt) wrote:

"The efforts of the Comintern to overthrow other govts and the fact that Stalin in effect controlled both the Comintern and the Soviet Government...doubled our difficulties in dealing with Moscow."

(Mazour, Rus Past & Present, 588)

12. Today - Still a problem.

- Still have this duality.
- Still pursue these 2 objectives.
- Revolutionary propaganda + support for revolutionary movements still hinders friendly relations with U.S. + other countries.
- Causes suspicion + distrust.