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THE SOVIET UNION IN THE THIRD WORLD: PURPOSE IN SEARCH OF POWER

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ABSTRACT

Although the Soviet Union inherited its ideological commitment to revolution in the Third World from Lenin, it was only in Khrushchev's time, after industrialization and victory in World War II had made the USSR a world power, that this commitment became an important component of Soviet foreign policy. Khrushchev envisaged a fairly rapid transition by postcolonial states toward socialism, i.e., toward Soviet-type societies and close association with the Soviet international bloc. This "objectively inevitable" process was to be guided by the example of Soviet national development, protected from the depredations of imperialism by the deterrent shield of Soviet strategic power, and accelerated by a modicum of Soviet economic and military aid. But Khrushchev's vision exceeded the USSR's power to fulfill it. The developmental process proved to be extremely difficult. Nationalists in

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power throughout the Third World, even those close to the USSR, advanced their own visions of the future, often at variance with Soviet views. And the Western powers were not restrained from intervening actively in the Third World where their interests were at stake. Khrushchev's successors have been less sanguine about the process and the timetable of transition in the Third World. They have tended to concentrate more heavily on specific areas of the Third World they deem important, the Middle East and South Asia. They have also been more willing than Khrushchev to intervene, albeit very cautiously, in Third World military conflicts directly or indirectly involving the United States, as in Vietnam and the Middle East. Only the future will show whether they use their increased power with the restraint that weakness imposed upon them in the past.

Moscow has been interested in the Third World from the very birth of the Soviet state. Lenin's views on the socio-economic roots of politics and, even more, his analysis of the prevailing international order, advanced in Imperialism, imparted to the Bolsheviks a profound sensitivity to the revolutionary potential of the East. Despite their inevitable preoccupation with Europe, as Professor Ulam has written, "from the beginning, the premises of Soviet-Comintern policy in the East and what is now known generally as the underdeveloped world were sounder than in the case of Europe."* Lenin's ultimate

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*Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence: The History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1967, Frederick A. Praeger, New York, 1968, p. 125.

hopes that the postcolonial revolution would contribute substantially, even decisively, to the collapse of the capitalist order can be deemed illusory. His more proximate anticipation, that decolonization would revolutionize the international system, was thoroughly realistic. But not only was the Third World revolution just beginning in earnest, the Soviet Union of Lenin's day clearly did not possess the power to guide or shape this revolution in any meaningful way. And, while he quickly adjusted to the doctrinal and diplomatic demands of Realpolitik, Lenin never fully made the transition to the view that Soviet state power represented the central ingredient of the revolutionary process on a world scale.

Stalin completed this transition with a vengeance: revolution became synonymous with Soviet state power. Anything which was beyond or did not contribute directly to that power was inherently suspect, if not reactionary. At the same time, Stalin's foreign policy was cautious in practice and extremely defensive in motivation. It was designed to protect the process of forced industrialization from military threats arising out of Europe and Japan. By achieving industrialization and by filling the territorial vacuums of Europe left by the defeat of Nazi Germany, Stalin did indeed revolutionize the Eurasian and hence the world balance of power.

But it remained in essence a continental operation. As important as the vacuums on Soviet borders which the war created and permitted Soviet power to fill were those developing as a result of the war in colonial Asia and Africa, in which arose the nationalist movements and regimes

which so dominated events of the ensuing two decades. In most un-Leninist style, Stalin at first showed no real interest in the opportunities opening to Soviet policy in the colonial areas. He was not in them militarily; he could not get into them without undue risk. He was notably suspicious of his own ability to control his only other instrument for projecting Soviet influence into these regions, local Communist parties, even where they were strong enough to be relevant. Toward the very end of his life, he began a general reappraisal of Soviet policy, including that toward the distant colonial world.* His death interrupted this reappraisal but his successors completed it.

KHRUSHCHEV'S THIRD WORLD VISIONS

Preceded by doctrinal revisions commencing as early as 1952, the new "Eastern" policy of Stalin's successors was effectively instituted in 1955, the year of Bandung, when Khrushchev and Bulganin went to Asia and Soviet arms began appearing in the Middle East. In a very real sense one can say that the Kremlin leaders resurrected for their foreign policy the ethos of world revolution which had perished at the gates of Warsaw in 1920 and had been buried under "socialism in one country."

Doctrinally, the Soviets elevated the anticolonial metamorphosis, postcolonial nation-building, and economic

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*See Marshall D. Shulman, Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraisal, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1963, passim.

development -- all under the heading of the national liberation revolution -- to the status of a component part of the world revolutionary process. The building of communism/socialism in communist states, the national liberation revolution, and the struggle of the working class in capitalist states were seen as comprising this process. They recognized the "national bourgeoisie," i.e., local nationalists who were not workers or peasants, as an "objectively progressive" and, indeed, leading force, where they had previously been rejected as agents of the colonial powers. They searched around, rather unsuccessfully, for doctrinal constructs according to which they could confidently describe the transition of the newly independent states toward socialism as they conceived it. A preponderant role in this transition was assigned to the force of the Soviet example as a developing society. The role of local communist parties remained ambiguous in Soviet doctrine for a variety of reasons. Finally, they declared that the growing nuclear power of the USSR represented a stout shield that prevented the military intervention of the imperialists against the national liberation movement, often citing the Middle East crisis of the mid- and late 1950s as representative. For example, according to a basic doctrinal handbook of the late 1950s:

> The postwar years have convincingly demonstrated the role of the socialist states as a mighty factor of restraint against the aggressiveness of the imperialists who, in other circumstances, would fall on the national liberation movement with all their power and crush it.*

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*Osnovy Marksizma-Leninizma, Moscow, 1959, p. 454.

In practice, the policy involved a broadly based Soviet penetration of the underdeveloped world, involving a variety of diplomatic, economic, semiofficial political and military aid activities. The total silhouette of the Soviet political presence in the underdeveloped world was markedly raised. In ultimate political terms, the Soviets saw their goal as the expulsion of Western influence from these regions and their gradual gravitation into the socialist camp or commonwealth.

Initially, the Soviets were confident that the systematic revolution in the Third World could be largely self-sustaining, that its favorable progress would little tax their economic, even less their military resources. In any case they had little of these to spare. During the decade 1954-64 Soviet economic credits and grants to non-communist underdeveloped countries totaled slightly more than $4 billion, of which only about $1.5 billion had actually been drawn.* By the end of 1964, Soviet military assistance, mostly in the form of long-term credits, had been extended to more than 15 countries but at a total volume probably not much over $3 billion.** During the period 1946-1965, total U.S. economic and military aid to less developed areas exceeded $100 billion. In the main the Soviets hoped to accelerate and guide by political means an indigenous process.

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*Current Economic Indicators for the USSR, Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, GPO, Washington, D.C., June 1965 p. 174.

**The Soviet Military Aid Program as a Reflection of Soviet Objectives, Georgetown Research Project, Atlantic Research Corporation, June 1965, passim.

This simplified picture characterized Soviet policy toward the Third World from 1955 to 1960-62. It complemented Soviet concentration on internal economic progress, the construction of a viable nuclear deterrent, and a modulated detente with the West which kept the risk of war low while offering opportunities to press objectives in Europe. It projected Soviet power and influence into the Third World for the first time, and it did so cheaply. No doubt, when Khrushchev contemplated the Third World in detail, he saw many disturbing complexities. But he felt confident in the sweep of history.

PROBLEMS OF VIOLENCE, CREDIBILITY, AND CONTROL

From 1960 onward, the complexities eroded the basis for Soviet confidence. Two fundamental problems arose which challenged the relevance of the Soviet approach to the Third World, both connected with and aggravated by the growing Sino-Soviet rift. One remained essentially a doctrinal matter, but extended discussion of it, which is still going on, indicated that important leaders were worrying about the future of policy. The Soviets began to wonder, now that the colonial empires had largely disappeared, how in fact the transition from the nationalist to the socialist phase of the revolution is to take place. They saw nationalists acquire power who, while anti-Western, had their own notions about the future, reciprocated Soviet opportunism in their dealings with Moscow, and showed no inclination to step aside for the "objective laws of history" or to tolerate alternatives to their rule in local Communist parties. Notwithstanding Moscow's

historic unconcern about the fate of local parties when state issues were at stake, the latter problem became urgent in the competition with Peking. Although a variety of ingenious formulae have been invoked, such as "national democracy," "revolutionary democracy," and the "noncapitalist path," and cautiously ascribed to a changing number of developing countries, a satisfactory model for postcolonial development has yet to be worked out by the Soviets.* In practice, this doctrinal question has not been demonstrably influential in shaping immediate Soviet policy in the underdeveloped world, but it has weighed upon the minds of a leadership which appeals consciously to an historical Weltanschauung for its legitimacy and political aims.

The second problem which emerged around 1960 was far more vexatious and pertinent to immediate action: the problem of violence in the revolutionary process and Soviet support for it. The Soviet position on violence and the use of military power in the Third World, which stressed peaceful revolution behind a deterrent shield and limited Soviet military aid largely to established governments in low-risk situations, came under attack on two fronts. On one hand, the Chinese began to attack it bitterly as representing excessive caution at best or treason to the cause at worst. Peaceful paths, they insisted, are possible only in exceptional circumstances;

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*See Uri Ra'anan, "Moscow and the Third World," Problems of Communism, January-February 1965, pp. 22-31; and Robert F. Lamberg, "Moskau und die Dritte Welt: Vorzuege und Gefahren des Pluralismus," Osteuropa, January 1968, pp. 792-802.

and growing Soviet nuclear power now broadens the scope for armed struggle by inhibiting the response of imperialism. To this, the Soviets replied by backing deeper into the doctrinal box of deterrence: the deterrent shield is strong, therefore peaceful methods are to be preferred as less costly, and less dangerous, unless the imperialists intervene. They began admitting at this point that their nuclear posture was not as formidable a barrier as earlier declared.

Khrushchev outlined the Soviet case on armed conflict in the nuclear age in his commentary on the 1960 Moscow Declaration of 81 Communist Parties, itself an ambiguous document. First, general nuclear war would be an unmitigated catastrophe and must be avoided. Moreover, despite the unchanged aggressiveness of imperialism, Soviet strength makes such avoidance possible. Second, local conflicts are very dangerous because escalation is likely, and virtually certain if nuclear powers get involved. Third, national liberation wars, local revolutionaries fighting local reactionaries, are possible and just; Moscow must "support" them when they occur. It is one of the major ironies of our time that this thesis was totally misread by the new Kennedy Administration as a wholesale Soviet endorsement of subliminal violence in the Third World. It meant precisely the opposite, as the Chinese lost no time in pointing out. Khrushchev was keenly aware, and hoped others would be as well, that the line between national liberation and local wars had to be an obscure one, especially if great power interests became involved. National liberation struggles

could easily become local wars, which could easily escalate to general war, in spite of Moscow's proclaimed nuclear might. This was as powerful a brief for caution in the use of violence and as explicit an admission of Soviet weakness as Khrushchev could bring himself to make. As a general principle, he did not want national liberation wars and, if they had to occur, he did not want to get involved militarily. In practice, he deviated from this doctrine under pressure of events, but only slightly as the very cautious behavior of the Soviets in the Congo, in Laos, and in Vietnam through 1964 indicates. Unfortunately for Khrushchev, his line was not persuasive in Peking and not understood in Washington.*

The Kennedy Administration, impelled among other things by its reading of the Soviet line, mounted the second challenge to Khrushchev's position by rapidly developing the capability and declaring the intention to intervene directly against insurgent movements it believed communist-inspired or otherwise dangerous. Indeed, it expanded American capabilities for action across the entire spectrum of limited conflict situations while dramatically fortifying its posture for general nuclear war.

The strategic basis for Khrushchev's optimism of the 1955-59 period was further weakened by the Cuban missile crisis. The core of Soviet strategic posture was demonstrably too weak to sustain an assertive foreign policy

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*This reading of Khrushchev's "national liberation doctrine" is elaborated in the author's master's thesis, "Current Soviet Doctrine on National Liberation," 1963, on deposit in the Russian Research Center, Harvard University.

in Europe and the Third World. Khrushchev reacted by retrenching his foreign policy objectives, seeking detente with the United States, and turning his major attention to civilian economic development and an effort to stem the disintegration of international communism.

Developments between 1962 and 1964 in Southeast Asia also inflicted considerable damage on the pattern of political assumptions and perceptions supporting Khrushchev's policy. Despite a substantial material and political investment in the region, in Indonesia, Khrushchev adhered to his position of disengagement from the armed conflicts of Indochina. The Soviets did supply limited military assistance to the insurgent movements in Laos and Vietnam during this period, but such as it was, it seemed aimed primarily at retaining some leverage against escalation. In Vietnam, however, the conflict did escalate, and it became a test case on which the Soviet position was highly vulnerable. First, it proved that neither Soviet military power at the general nuclear level nor Soviet restraint in local theaters of conflict could prevent the growing intervention of the United States. Second, it seemed to prove that a properly managed armed insurgency could succeed against local resistance massively supported by the United States. Third, if a major risk was involved at this point, it was that of U.S. attacks on North Vietnam which would bring into play quasi-alliance responsibilities to a communist state. As events proceeded, especially after the Tonkin episode of August 1964, Khrushchev's stance of disengagement appeared to look more and more like the appeasement which Peking always insisted it was. Khrushchev fell from

power for a variety of reasons, but this was probably one of them. The new leadership promised to take a new look at its relations with China and its policy on Vietnam.

To assert that the disintegration of Khrushchev's policy toward the Third World represented its failure in a literal sense would obviously be inappropriate. At worst, his reach considerably exceeded his grasp; but his grasp was sufficient to bring a substantial penetration of Soviet influence in areas geographically important to the USSR and among elite groups playing vital roles throughout the underdeveloped world. The weakness of the Khrushchev policy was the intellectual weakness of Marxism, its over-reliance on the operation of self-generated conceptions of historical inevitability. The policy as a whole rested heavily on the "objective necessity" of the post-colonial revolution moving of its own momentum toward socialism and all this meant for the Soviets in terms of domestic and international alignments. Nationalism was one difficulty. The Soviets did not underestimate its power; on the contrary, they bet heavily on it. But they ignored its capacity to generate its own political visions, including visions of "Arab," "African," and other "socialisms" which sorely troubled doctrinal monopolists in Moscow. The volatility of politics within developing countries was another factor they underestimated, largely as a result of their ideologically motivated search for "class forces." And they found many of their early convictions about economic development to be excessively optimistic.

Essentially the problem was one of power. In a decade of intensive effort, the Soviets exercised the ability to penetrate and operate in the underdeveloped world, but

they could not shape it. In political, socio-economic, and military terms, the events and developments over which they could exert determining influence seemed far outranked in importance by those which were beyond their control.

PRAGMATISM SINCE KHRUSHCHEV

Developments confronting Soviet policy in the Third World since 1964 have contributed further to the sobering lessons being drawn in the years just before Khrushchev's fall. In addition, there have been some rather tude shocks. Among the latter must be numbered the early phases of the U.S. bombing campaign against North Vietnam in 1965, and the June 1967 Middle East war. In Vietnam, the United States seemed able to attack a socialist state with impunity. In the Middle East the Soviets found their fully armed clients unable to defend themselves against a numerically inferior opponent. Moscow's Third World "deterrent shield" looked disturbingly thin. Equally shocking to Moscow were a series of political coups in underdeveloped countries of Africa and Asia which removed leaders highly favored by Moscow, foremost among whom were Ben Bella of Algeria and Nkrumah of Ghana, and testified to the political fragility of states Moscow had deemed traversing the "noncapitalist path" to socialism. In fact, these events, coupled with rising pressure on Soviet authority in Eastern Europe, produced a somewhat hysterical doctrinal reaction against what Moscow perceived as the "global counterattack of imperialism."

Other trends were less dramatic but unsettling, nevertheless, Moscow found large segments of the Third World, including the elites of countries with which relations were cordial, such as India, moving into positions of truculent and, to Moscow's mind, undiscriminating irritation toward both the superpowers. The USSR was lumped with the United States as part of the prosperous North and found for that reason to owe the developing South more extensive economic aid.* Similarly annoying to the Soviets was the view, which "has also gained currency among political leaders of some developing states," that Soviet support for the nonproliferation treaty represented a dictatorial condominium of the superpowers.** Finally, each passing year of continued backwardness and population growth in the underdeveloped world, plus technological and economic progress in the industrialized world, seemed to lengthen enormously the time perspective in which the former could be seen as moving toward socialism.

All was not uniformly gloomy, however. If Moscow's performance in defense of the national liberation movement failed to measure up to previously proclaimed standards, these failings did not redound to the undiluted benefit of

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*As evidence of Moscow's annoyance over this, see Soviet comment surrounding UNCTAD's 1968 sessions and, inter alia, A. Kodachenko, "The Developing Countries and Economic Progress," Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta, No. 10, March 1969, p. 45.

**I. Shatalov, "The Leninist Foreign Policy and the National Liberation Movement," International Affairs, No. 1, January 1969, p. 74.

the United States. The Soviets found that with patience and good luck, mainly in the form of American restraint, they could recover lost ground or at least cut losses. In Vietnam, the Soviets found that they could provide military support which may have been as critical to the endurance of Hanoi as U.S. intervention in 1965 was deemed critical to the survival of the Saigon government. The United States could intervene with force, but it could not win; and stalemate in Vietnam seemed to be undermining the entire American commitment to the Third World. In the Middle East, expensive as it was to redeem the losses of the June war, the net effect within a year of the dramatic setback seemed to be an augmented Soviet position in the region.

The patient diplomacy of the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime in a number of Third World states consolidated existing positions and opened new ones. The USSR managed to improve its relations with Pakistan without serious damage to Soviet-Indian relations and even facilitated control of conflict between the two neighbors through the Tashkent summit. Both Turkey and Iran were courted with considerable success, a trend that the USSR hoped would improve its position in the Middle East and vis-a-vis NATO. Even Latin America, a region of the Third World hitherto most likely to be termed a U.S. preserve, was proving susceptible to Soviet diplomatic and commercial blandishments.

Another trend which certainly encouraged the Soviets, although hardly a function of their own behavior, was the progressive political isolation of China in the Third World as a result of her intemperate behavior and the

Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. A similar if somewhat less prominent development was a slight ebbing of Castroite appeal in Latin America upon the failure of Guevara's Bolivian adventure. Both cases represented a reduction of pressure from the left upon, first, Moscow's political ties to communist parties in the Third World, and, second, upon Moscow's doctrinal disinclination to grant the tactics of guerrilla insurgency a blanket endorsement. The threat of "ultra leftism" among Moscow's coreligionists and doctrinal allies remained, but became somewhat more diffuse.

Finally, a plus not to be discounted was the growing intellectual sophistication of Soviet thinking about the Third World.* Khrushchev's doctrinal optimism of the late fifties and early sixties was reflected in and reinforced by scholarship and journalism founded on equally unjustifiable optimism. But under the impact of specific reversals and disillusionments, Soviet observers tended to become more sensitive to the political, social, and economic "complexities" at work in the Third World. (The term slozhnosti or "complexities" is a sure sign that difficulties are being encountered which do not fit the desired pattern.) If one takes seriously the private claims voiced by many Soviet social scientists and area specialists that they have lately enjoyed improved access to decision makers, one would assume that this sophistication contributed to the caution of Soviet policy in many regions of the Third World.

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*See Elizabeth Kridl Valkenier, "Recent Trends in Soviet Research on the Developing Countries," World Politics, July 1968, pp. 644 ff.

As the Soviet leaders have drawn a running tally of their recent experiences, they appear to have developed a number of rough operational guidelines to shape their Third World policies:

(1) They have seen fit to concentrate their attention and resources geographically. The Arab World, from Morocco to the Persian Gulf, and South Asia, from Iran to India, represent the high-priority targets for Soviet diplomatic, economic, and military efforts. Latin America, Subsaharan Africa, and Southeast Asia (apart from Vietnam) are clearly accorded a lower priority. Of course, the concentration of Soviet attention in the Arab world and South Asia is not new; it was prevalent under Khrushchev. But it has noticeably increased under his successors. For example, according to data published by the U.S. State Department, new extensions of economic credit and grants to the Arab/Mediterranean area (including Turkey and Sudan) and South Asia increased from about 80% of total new extensions to underdeveloped countries during 1954-1964 to about 90% in the years 1965-1967, even though five additional aid recipients were added in other areas.* Were recent data on military assistance available, the concentration might be even more marked. Although much of the shift is accounted for by the deterioration of Soviet-Indonesian relations after 1965, and does not include Soviet aid to North Vietnam, the trend is nevertheless noteworthy.

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*U.S. Department of State, Director of Intelligence and Research, Research Memorandum, "Communist Governments and Developing Nations: Aid,and Trade in 1965," RSB-50, June 17, 1966; and "...in 1967," RSB-120, August 14, 1968.

The reasons for this choice are fairly obvious. These are regions where successful past investments have been made and can be protected. Their location gives them some strategic importance in relation to Moscow's European and anti-Chinese goals. The other regions are seen to offer targets of opportunity for low-cost, occasional efforts rather than a sustained campaign.

(2) The Soviets remain convinced that, for the present, their interests will not generally be served by intra- or international violence in the Third World. They are even more convinced that, should such violence occur, their support of it or participation in it must be most circumspect. Indicative of this mood is a recent Soviet rejoinder to calls for more military involvement in national liberation conflicts:

> Twice in the lifetime of one generation, Soviet people fought with unexampled energy and valor against the principal forces of imperialist aggression, saving the world and all mankind. The Soviet Union has never shirked and does not intend to shirk its responsibilities for peace and world progress. But this does not mean that the principle of military support should irrationally be made absolute. In the age of atomic weapons, calls to settle scores with imperialism by the military might of the Socialist countries are extremely reckless. They conceal...the desire of their authors to evade their own duty of creating a powerful, united, mass anti-imperialist movement.*

Despite this general stance, however, the USSR has seen fit to engage itself deeply, if indirectly in two Third World

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*Ibid., p. 72.

conflicts fraught with risks of escalation. It concluded that the risks in Vietnam and the Middle East were manageable and the costs of disengagement would be too high to bear. It may learn from these conflicts that its past inhibitions about limited conflict in third areas are unjustifiably confining in an environment of increased Soviet strategic and regional power. Furthermore, it has diverted scarce resources to the expansion of its capability to establish a visible military presence in third areas, in the Mediterranean and, so far only intermittently, in the Indian Ocean.*

(3) On a doctrinal plane, the Soviets seem comparatively disinclined to advance elaborate models of the developmental process which describe the transition of post-colonial, backward societies to some form of socialism. They are eager to understand the developmental process and even to prescribe, ex cathedra, the paths which they insist sooner or later must be taken to assure the real emergence of the emerging nations. The "revolutionary democracy,"" with its mass-based radical politics, the "noncapitalist path," with its socialized and Soviet-oriented economics, remain meaningful symbols of the true way. The Soviets are still troubled by the almost uniform refusal of their noncommunist favorites to tolerate the participation of communist parties in their countries' politics.** But in theory, they are prepared to admit

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*See Thomas W. Wolfe, The Soviet Quest for More Globally Mobile Military Power, The RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, December 1967.

**On these doctrinal themes, see K. Brutents, "On Revolutionary Democracy," Mirovaia Ekonomika i

that the developmental process will be long and complex, not susceptible to detailed prognostications at the present time. And in practice, these doctrinal issues, while reflecting the concern of many communist decision-makers with things ultimate, do not impose real constraints on Soviet foreign policy.

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Soviet policy, like everything else, manifests continuity and change at any given moment. The present Soviet rulers are the legitimate heirs of Lenin's conviction that the Third World is an arena of revolutionary transformation in which vital elements of the ultimate world political order are being forged. They inherit from Stalin, among other things, the conviction that augmentation of Soviet state power is the main vehicle of world revolution. This imposes upon them general tactical cautiousness in foreign affairs and a set of international priorities in which Soviet internal development, the strategic relationship with the United States, and interests in Europe come before goals in the Third World. Nevertheless, as a result of their cumulative inheritance, today their power to act upon, if not necessarily to shape, the international environment, including the Third World, is far greater than in the past. And, as a result of Khrushchev's ambitious policies, they are committed to vital areas of the Third World in strength.

Mezhdunarodniya Otnosheniya, No. 3, March 1968, p. 15 ff and No. 4, April 1968, pp. 24 ff; and Ye. Zhukov, "The National Liberation Movement of the Peoples of Asia and Africa," Kommunist, No. 4, March 1969, pp. 31 ff.

In short, the USSR is becoming, in the sense that the United States has been for nearly three decades, a truly global power, perceiving interests and possessing strength which easily dominates the local powers in many areas of the Third World. It is beginning to acquire the power to match the universal pretentions born with the Soviet state itself. The vital question: upon attaining such power, after a half century of containment and self-conscious inferiority, will the USSR be as conscious of the limitations of power in the Third World as the United States has become at no insignificant cost? History, as usual, does not offer a confident answer.