A RAND NOTE

THE NEW SOVIET STRATEGY IN THE THIRD WORLD

Alexander R. Alexiev

June 1983

N-1995-AF

Prepared for

The United States Air Force

35th Year

Rand
SANTA MONICA, CA. 90406

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PREFACE

This study of the evolution of Soviet strategy toward the Third World draws upon empirical research previously reported to the Air Force by Stephen T. Hosmer and Thomas Wolfe, and is a part of Rand's project "Enhancing U.S. Leverage in Middle East/Persian Gulf Conflicts" under the supervision of the Strategy Division in the Directorate of Plans (AF/XOXIS).

This study sets forth in broad outline several major changes observable in recent Soviet strategy for penetration in the Third World, details the specific instrumentalities of the Soviet quest for leverage, and addresses some of the Soviet Union's strengths and weaknesses.

SUMMARY

This Note discusses the evolution of Soviet strategy for gaining leverage in the Third World and examines the major change in the Soviet approach in the early 1970s. It describes the background, determinants, and objectives of this new strategy and analyzes its military, political, and economic instrumentalities. The general conclusions of this study are the following:

- The strategy that the Soviets have embarked on in the Third World since the early 1970s is new in the sense that it abandons the notion that Third World countries will inevitably and spontaneously recognize the superiority of the Soviet political and economic model and will naturally gravitate toward the "scientific socialism" system. The Soviets now emphasize the need to steer and control this transition period directly.
- The principal means for effecting this transition are direct Soviet or Soviet-sponsored military intervention and massive arms transfers.
- The principal means of assuring lasting Soviet influence is the radical socioeconomic and political restructuring of client Third World societies along the Leninist model.
- The greatest vulnerability of the new strategy obtains from Soviet reluctance to provide sufficient economic support to its newly gained clients. As a result, most of them find themselves in a dire economic predicament and continue to rely on Western aid and trade to stave off economic collapse.
- The practical application of the new Soviet strategy over the past ten years has revealed a number of specific political and economic vulnerabilities that the West could and should exploit.

- Although its long-term success is by no means certain, the new Soviet strategy presents a challenge to the West that could seriously affect the global military-political balance unless it is defused by a firm, coherent, and aggressive Western counterstrategy.

The Soviet Union has always shown some interest in the Third World, but its actual involvement was superficial until the mid-1950s. Even during the period of rapid worldwide decolonization after World War II, when developing countries acquired heightened international importance, the Soviet Union failed to exploit the anti-Western predilections of these emerging nations. This reluctance was due primarily to Stalin's dogmatic belief in the so-called "two-camp" theory, which denied the possibility of an independent, non-aligned stance between the Soviet bloc and the West.

It was Khrushchev who saw the opportunities for Soviet gains in the Third World and first pursued an active policy of cultivating the leaders of developing countries and supplying substantial amounts of Soviet military and economic aid. Khrushchev's major doctrinal innovation was to repudiate the "two camp" theory and formulate the "zone of peace" theory, which viewed the socialist bloc and the Third World together as a counterweight to imperialism. Underlying this renewed activism was the belief that the newly independent Third World states would promptly recognize the superiority of the socialist socio-political and economic model and spontaneously embark on a "peaceful transition" to socialism. In general, this period was characterized by optimism regarding the eventual transition of the Third World to Soviet-style socialism, which was seen as historically inevitable.

By the late 1960s, it had become evident that Soviet efforts to gain lasting influence by relying on spontaneity and the self-proclaimed "socialism" of Third World leaders had not paid off. Soviet proteges were overthrown in a number of countries considered ripe for socialist transition, and considerable Soviet political, economic, and military investment was lost. The expulsion of the Soviets from Egypt in 1972 was just the culmination of a series of setbacks that began in 1965.

The failure of Soviet policies to achieve tangible results apparently led to a reassessment in the early 1970s and eventually to the formulation of a new and far more assertive strategy. The doctrinal underpinnings of the new approach implicitly rejected the theory of "peaceful transition" and "spontaneity" and emphasized instead "direct revolutionary action" and the imperative of Soviet control. This strategy was attractive to the Soviets not because they had greater confidence in the potential of indigenous revolutionary movements, but because they had greater confidence in their own ability to determine events in areas where they had been unable to exert influence before. Among the important reasons for this new confidence were:

- Moscow's achievement of strategic parity with the United States,
- The development of global Soviet air and naval power projection capabilities,
- American retrenchment after Vietnam,
- Western vulnerability to a strategy of resource denial following the energy crisis of 1973.

The Soviets' main instruments for ensuring their influence under the new strategy are direct Soviet-sponsored military intervention and massive arms transfers. Direct military power projection is often accomplished through the use of proxies--an important and novel element of the strategy, which allows the Soviets to disclaim direct responsibility and diminish the chance of superpower confrontation without relinquishing de facto control. As a rule, Soviet-sponsored military intervention provides assistance to revolutionary elements that do not enjoy sufficient popular support and would not be able to assume or keep power without such assistance. As a result, when these groups come to power, they become dependent on Moscow for political survival. This guarantees the Soviets and their surrogates long-term military presence and control. Angola, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan are three examples of this phenomenon. Military presence also allows the Soviets to control the indigenous armed forces, and, through a concerted

politicization effort along the Soviet model, to diminish the military establishment's perennial threat to Moscow's political proteges. Large-scale Soviet arms transfers--a trademark of the new strategy--serve to promptly reverse regional balances to the advantage of promising proteges and convince would-be clients that friendship with the Soviet Union guarantees an immediate military edge over foreign or domestic enemies. Massive armaments deliveries also result in an influx of Soviet and proxy instructors, advisors, and technicians--often serving in direct management and control positions and thus further binding the given developing country to the donor. The pronounced military dimension of the new Soviet quest for lasting leverage has resulted in two major threats to Western security:

- The substantial improvement in Soviet access to strategically located bases and facilities, especially in southern Africa and the Horn, provides the potential for steppingstones for future penetration of adjacent areas, as well as interdiction of Western sea lanes in these areas.
- Supplies of Soviet offensive arms in quantities well beyond the ability of indigenous forces to man them may indicate potential use as prepositioned stocks in Soviet contingency planning.

In the political realm, Soviet strategy calls for the prompt socio-political transformation of client states along Marxist-Leninist lines, under Soviet bloc guidance. The transformation generally consists of setting up a one-party system controlled by a "vanguard" party, establishing an extensive internal security apparatus loyal only to the party, creating a party monopoly over the means of information and communication, and gradually introducing the socialist economic model and collectivization of agriculture. The goal of this restructuring is to create a system that, like those in Eastern Europe, is likely to have a vested interest in close ties with Moscow. Moreover, because the restructuring penetrates below top levels, sudden reversals--e.g., overthrows, severing of ties, etc.--are far less likely.

The economic dimension of Soviet policies in the Third World is perhaps the most vulnerable aspect of the new strategy. Despite its massive military and political involvement, the Kremlin has refused to underwrite its newly acquired allies economically and has conducted economic relations primarily on the basis of economic profitability. Indeed, there is evidence of Soviet exploitive practices similar to those observed in Soviet relations with Eastern Europe following World War II, such as unequal trade treaties, "joint stock" companies, etc. As a result, many of the Soviet clients in the Third World who follow the prescriptions of the socialist economic model find themselves in a serious economic predicament without the benefit of substantial socialist aid. Assistance from the West appears the only alternative to economic crisis in the long term--a fact that offers political opportunities to the West.

The long-term success of the Soviet Union's new Third World strategy is by no means certain. It suffers from major weaknesses, such as the inherent difficulty of imposing a social system that has little relevance to conditions in the developing countries and failure to address glaring economic problems. Furthermore, so far it appears to be effective primarily in countries characterized by extreme levels of political and economic underdevelopment and to be less promising elsewhere. Nevertheless, given the demonstrated Soviet determination to use force for the expansion of its influence in the Third World and the concerted effort to secure its presence through remodeling developing societies, the Soviet Union is likely to present a growing threat to Western interests in the Third World unless countered by a similarly firm, systematic, and well-coordinated Western strategy.

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I. INTRODUCTION

During the past ten years Soviet policies in the Third World have been characterized by growing activism and involvement. Both the scope and the nature of Soviet involvement since the mid-1970s have differed markedly from those of previous periods, indicating a qualitatively new approach in the long-term quest for securing Soviet influence. In the process, Moscow has achieved a number of important successes in establishing its influence in areas of the Third World where it had been unable to exert such influence before. Since 1975, the Soviet Union has established a pervasive presence in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Afghanistan. Lately, developments in Central America and particularly in Nicaragua and El Salvador seem to point to a determined Soviet effort to extend its influence in the Western hemisphere as well. Western observers seeking to understand Soviet policies and objectives have forwarded a number of hypotheses explaining Soviet behavior and have detailed the Soviet *modus operandi* in numerous case studies of Soviet involvement. Some of these studies have provided valuable insights into various aspects of Soviet policies with regard to individual developing countries in the past few years. However, there have been very few attempts to look at Soviet policies as a conceptually novel and coherent strategy, examine its origins and determinants, point out its objectives as well as the means and methods employed to achieve them, and consider its implications for the West. Such an effort would facilitate Western understanding of Soviet involvement in a given country, which is often obscured by the cultural, political, and geographic diversity of the given area and would help predict Soviet behavior at a given stage of commitment. The West might then be able to develop timely and effective countermeasures. This Note is an initial attempt at such a study.

This study has emphasized analysis of the conceptual underpinnings and highlights of what is perceived as a new Soviet strategy. It has consciously avoided, to the extent possible, any detailed attention to and description of individual cases of Soviet involvement. The analysis

has concentrated instead on examining the novel elements of the strategy and comparing them with earlier policies. In particular, the Note emphasizes the new doctrinal determinants of Soviet policies, the changing role and nature of direct military involvement, the imperative and techniques of Soviet-sponsored socio-political restructuring in target countries, and Soviet behavior in the economic realm.

Section II traces the origins and evolution of Soviet Third World policies up to the early 1970s and examines the causal factors and circumstances leading to a reassessment of Soviet policies and the formulation of a new strategy. Section III highlights the international circumstances and Soviet military-political realities providing incentives for the new approach and analyzes its doctrinal-ideological framework. The specific methods and instrumentalities--military, political, and economic--of Soviet penetration of the Third World under the new strategy are addressed in Sec. IV. The main conclusions are presented in Sec. V.

II. ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF SOVIET THIRD WORLD POLICY

POLICIES UNDER LENIN AND STALIN

Soviet interest in the Third World dates as far back as the October revolution and even earlier in the writings of the leading Bolshevik ideologues. Lenin considered the underdeveloped and colonial parts of the world, which he called collectively the "East," "the weakest link" in the imperialist-colonialist system and credited them with substantial revolutionary potential.[1] He further argued that liberation movements of the East were *ipso facto* the natural allies of the socialist revolution, even if led by nonproletarian--bourgeois nationalist--elements. Consequently, at the Second Comintern congress in 1920 he urged all communist parties to actively support their struggle for self-determination. Yet the fledgling Soviet state, for the most part, did not practice Lenin's preachings.[2] In areas where strong nationalistic and anti-colonial movements had sprung up as, for example, in the Caucasus and Central Asia (formerly part of the Russian empire) and several colonial subjects had declared their national sovereignty, the Soviet Union proceeded to reannex them and brutally extirpate national-emancipation movements by force of arms.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, Soviet concerns about the East lost intensity, as did the world-wide revolutionary ardor precipitated by the Bolshevik revolution. Moscow's interests and objectives in the Third World, to the extent that they were at all clear, were pursued by the Comintern and other lesser tools of Soviet influence such as the League Against Imperialism and the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers.[3] Even such limited involvement

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[1]For a detailed account of early Soviet attitudes toward the Third World, see Roger Kanet (ed.), *The Soviet Union and the Developing Countries*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1974, especially Ch.1, "The Soviet Union and the Colonial Question: 1917-1953."

[2]A possible exception is the military and economic aid provided to the Turkish nationalist movement headed by Kemal Ataturk in the early 1920s.

[3]For Soviet attitudes toward Africa in this period see, for example, Edward Wilson, *Russia and Black Africa Before World War II*, Holmes & Meier, New York, 1974.

was largely terminated from the mid-1930s on as a result of the dramatic shift in Soviet foreign policy conditioned by the emergence of Nazi Germany. Feeling acutely threatened, the Soviet Union sought to enhance its security by advocating a "collective security" alliance system with the major Western powers. Seeking to enhance its credibility with its would-be allies, who were also the main colonial powers, Moscow ordered the Comintern and its client parties to desist from efforts to agitate and foment revolution and national-liberation movements. This policy continued through World War II and led to the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943.

In the aftermath of the war, Soviet attitudes toward the Third World continued to be characterized by a fair amount of disinterest, even though the extant colonial system was rapidly disintegrating and new independent countries were emerging by the score. Involvement was by and large limited to support for subversive communist activities; communist-sponsored insurgencies in China, Indochina, Malaya, etc., either directly or through the instrumentality of the newly founded Cominform; and to attempts to extend influence in bordering areas by direct Soviet action. Such was the case, for example, in Iran in 1945, where Soviet occupation authorities set up "independent" Azerbaijani and Kurdish republics. The reason for the Soviet failure to exploit the radical nationalistic and anti-Western tendencies in the newly decolonized areas in this period is to be sought primarily in Stalin's assessment of the postwar international realities. With the breakup of the wartime alliance and the onset of the Cold War, Stalin's attitudes seem to have been determined by a starkly Manichean worldview positing a rigid delineation of the world into a socialist and an imperialist camp and denying the possibility of a nonaligned stance between the two.[4] According to this "two camp" theory, the nationalist governments of the newly formed states, to the extent that they were not socialist, remained firmly in the imperialist camp, and those that had remained colonies were considered valuable reserves of the imperialist camp

[4]This "two camp" thesis was first formulated by Stalin's trusted collaborator, Andrey Zhdanov, at the founding meeting of the Cominform in 1945.

rather than potential allies of the Soviet Union. Indeed the Soviets came close to denying the importance of the decolonization process and negating the possibility of political emancipation under the leadership of nonproletarians. In the words of Prof. Ivan Potekhin, the most prominent Soviet specialist on the Third World at the time, "Stalin's theory of colonial revolution proceeds from the fact that the solution of the colonial problem, the liberation of oppressed peoples from colonial slavery, is impossible without a proletarian revolution and the overthrow of imperialism."[5] As a result of such dogmatic attitudes, during Stalin's lifetime Moscow failed to exploit the considerable reservoir of anti-Western sentiment among the Third World or to attract the sympathies of its nationalist leaders.

POLICIES UNDER KHRUSHCHEV

Soviet policies and perceptions regarding the Third World underwent a dramatic *volte face* in the mid-1950s under the stewardship of Nikita Khrushchev. Several factors contributed to this reorientation. Perhaps most important was the emergence of the Soviet Union as a global actor on the international scene. Having achieved considerable successes in rebuilding its shattered economy in the preceding decade and having established itself as a worthy military antagonist of the United States, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev broke out from its largely self-imposed isolation and began pursuing a forward strategy on a global scale. In the process, many of the ossified ideological postulates characterizing the Stalinist period were modified and numerous doctrinal innovations made to justify the new course ideologically. Thus Stalin's dictum of the inevitability of war between the two opposing social systems was replaced by a theory proclaiming the possibility, indeed the necessity, of "peaceful coexistence." Of particular relevance for Soviet Third World policies were two corollaries to the above theory. The first affirmed the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism, which, in effect, rejected the Stalinist tenet of the proletarian revolution as the only conduit to socialism, and the second repudiated the "two camp" theory and thus opened the way for a

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[5]Cited in Kanet, *The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations*, p. 53.

reexamination of the Third World as an independent factor. This latter point was forcefully demonstrated to the Soviet leaders at the Bandung Conference of 1955 where the Third World countries for the first time appeared to be acting as an independent bloc.

Khrushchev quickly recognized the increasing importance and weight of the Third World as well as its anti-Western potential, and he initiated efforts to harness it to the Soviet cause. The Soviet policy shift was clearly enunciated during the XX Congress of the CPSU in 1956. In his report to the Central Committee the First Secretary declared that the "disintegration of the imperialist colonial system has become the most significant trend of our era," and stressed the importance of the Third World by stating that "the new period in world history history, predicted by Lenin, when the peoples of the East play an active part in deciding the destinies of the whole world and have become a new and mighty factor in internal national relations, has arrived."[6] The Soviets now not only recognized the Third World as an important autonomous factor on the world scene but hastened to enlist it, at least in theory, as a valuable ally. This was done through the formulation of a so-called "zone of peace" theory, encompassing both the socialist community and the Third World as a counterweight to the warmongering imperialists. According to this theory, the Third World, though not yet socialist, had basic interests and objectives highly compatible with those of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries; therefore, a common front against imperialism and ever closer cooperation were inevitable.

An additional factor making the Soviet policy shift possible was the official Soviet recognition of the validity of different--non-Soviet--models of socialism and the right of countries to pursue their own road to socialism, a recognition clearly implied in the Soviet reconciliation with the arch-revisionist Tito on his terms in 1955.

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[6]Leo Gruliow (ed.), "Current Soviet Policies: The Documentary Record of the 20th Communist Party Congress and Its Aftermath," *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* Praeger Publishing Company, New York, 1957, p. 33.

In practical terms this metamorphosis of Soviet doctrinal precepts dictated important changes in Soviet attitudes and expectations toward the developing countries. It was now assumed that national independence could be achieved through peaceful means and that the establishment of a "national-democratic" state was a positive development, even though it may at first still be based on capitalist principles. Political emancipation was considered a prerequisite for the achievement of complete independence and eventual transition to socialism. More important, the national bourgeoisie was recognized as a progressive force and its leading representatives proclaimed to be "revolutionary democrats" deemed worthy of support.[7] For the Soviet Union, as the prominent Soviet theorist Rostislav Ulyanovski has put it, "the important thing is not so much the fact that national democracy is still a non-Marxist trend as its actual fight against imperialism, and capitalism as a social system, and that revolutionary democrats make a constructive effort to build a new society."[8]

This Soviet doctrinal shift was based on the conviction held by Khrushchev and others that Third World elites will inevitably recognize the advantages and superiority of the Soviet developmental model and promptly gravitate toward socialism. The model through which the revolutionary democrats were expected to bring their countries to the ultimate goal of "real" or "scientific" socialism was defined by Soviet theorists as "non-capitalist" development. Its essential doctrinal innovation consisted of the possibility for Third World countries, most of whom were at a pre-capitalist, pre-industrial stage at the time of political independence, to bypass the capitalist stage and transit directly to socialism, provided that they cooperated closely with the socialist community. Many of the new revolutionary democrats and self-proclaimed "African" or "Arab" socialists, such as Nkrumah, Nasser, and

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[7]The utility and ideological underpinnings of the term, "national democracy," for the Soviets is ably analyzed in Richard Lowenthal, "On National Democracy: Its Function in Communist Policy," *Survey*, April 1963.

[8]Cited in *The Soviet Union and the Third World: A Watershed in Great Power Policy,* Report to the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., May 8, 1977, p. 23.

Ben Bella, were even anointed, authentic socialists "capable of leading the masses to socialism."[9]

Armed with a panoply of doctrinal justifications, the Kremlin set about to extend its influence in the Third World in a systematic manner. Political relations were quickly established with most of the newly independent countries and numerous political leaders were actively courted. The Soviet Union tried to present itself as a selfless protector against imperialist machinations and a source of political and economic support for the struggling developing countries. Between 1955 and 1965 some $5 billion were extended to developing countries in the form of economic credits and grants.[10] No less important was the apparent willingness of the Soviets to provide substantial military aid to countries perceived as anti-Western. Military assistance amounting to some $4 billion was provided to 16 of the developing countries in the same period.[11]

Underlying this massive involvement was the Soviet conviction that developments in the Third World pointed to a major restructuring of the international balance of power that would inevitably redound to their benefit. This restructuring was seen as exemplified by the avalanche-like successes of the national-liberation movement, which, it was believed, the imperialist powers "could to a certain degree hinder, but they couldn't stop."[12] Not only was the final breakup of the Western colonial system seen as seriously weakening the capitalist system, but, with Soviet help, the new states were expected to quickly fall in line behind the Soviet Union.

Soviet optimism regarding the prospects of world socialism at the time was almost boundless. Describing the political climate in the newly independent states, one expert wrote that "the national liberation movement today is considerably more progressive than in the past" and

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[9]Cited in the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. 15, No. 51, 1963, p. 13.

[10]*The Soviet Union and the Third World*, p. 25.

[11]Ibid.

[12]I. Potekhin, "Politicheskoe polozhenie v stranakh Afriki," *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie*, No. 1, 1956, p. 25.

that "it would be very difficult to find in these countries a social movement that does not advocate socialism."[13] Another specialist claimed that out of 32 founding members of the Organization of African Unity, 25 "had chosen the socialist road to development in one form or another."[14] In Khrushchev's own words the victory of socialism was "just over the horizon." A Soviet theorist was later to criticize as unwarranted euphoria the widespread belief in the late 1950s that "the struggle was almost at an end, that the way to liberation was easy and the forces of imperialism were played out."[15]

SETBACKS AND REASSESSMENT IN THE POST-KHRUSHCHEV PERIOD

Despite considerable Soviet gains and penetration in the Third World in the preceding decade, by the mid-1960s it was becoming increasingly clear that the "struggle" was far from over and socialism hardly over the horizon. An initial reassessment and a certain retrenchment of Soviet policies became noticeable soon after Khrushchev's ouster and his replacement by the more stolid and cautious Brezhnev in 1964. This was particularly the case with Soviet economic policies that had been followed primarily with political considerations in mind and without much regard for economic realities and feasibility.[16]

Yet, it wasn't until a series of disastrous setbacks for Soviet hopes in the Third World from 1965 on that the highly optimistic expectations of the preceding period began to be questioned and the need

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[13]K. Brutents, "Socialism and the National-Liberation Movement--Unbreakable Alliance," *New Times*, No. 46, 1963, p. 5.

[14]K. Grishechkin, "African Prospects," *New Times*, No. 41, 1963, p. 7.

[15]K. Brutents, "African Revolution: Gains and Problems," *International Affairs* (Moscow), No. 1, January 1967, p. 21.

[16]It had been a fairly typical Soviet practice, for example, to provide substantial aid for industrialization projects such as mammoth steel mills of dubious economic value on the assumption that industrialization promotes state control and therefore hastens the transition to socialism. For a detailed analysis of Soviet economic relations with the Third World during this period, see Elizabeth Valkenier, "Soviet Economic Relations with Developing Countries," in Kanet, *The Soviet Union and Developing Nations*.

for a thorough reexamination of Soviet assumptions and policies became imperative. Starting in 1965 in a spate of *coups d'etat*, mostly organized and carried out by the military, a number of Moscow's favorite Third World leaders, such as Sukarno of Indonesia (1965), Ben Bella of Algeria (1965), Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana (1966), and Modibo Keita of Mali (1968) were overthrown and replaced by regimes that often took anti-Soviet positions. It was also realized that despite over ten years of active Soviet involvement and substantial amounts of economic and military assistance, most Third World countries were no closer to socialism than at the time of their emancipation from colonialism. Of 66 newly independent countries in Asia and Africa, lamented a Soviet specialist in 1966, only seven had chosen the noncapitalist path of development.[17] Moreover, even those leaders considered until recently "authentic socialists," not infrequently pursued policies detrimental to Soviet interests. Thus, Sukarno, before his overthrow, had shown increasing pro-Chinese leanings, and Nasser's pan-Arabic policies were hardly conducive to long-term Soviet objectives in the Middle East. An additional irritant was the persistent refusal of even "progressive" developing countries, which otherwise relied heavily on Soviet support, to accept their indigenous communist parties as a legitimate political force. Despite remarkable Soviet flexibility on this issue, and the formulation of a special "national communism" theory for avoiding confrontation, the Communist party, for instance, was outlawed in Algeria, Ghana, Mali and elsewhere, while in Egypt, the Sudan, and Iraq communists were regularly persecuted, jailed, and even executed.

The increasing awareness of the Soviet leaders of the failure of the Khrushchevite policies to assure lasting gains in the Third World received a staggering confirmation with the dramatic expulsion of the Soviets from Egypt in 1972. Since 1955 Egypt had unquestionably been the showcase of Moscow's efforts in the developing countries, long considered the most promising candidate and consequently the beneficiary of considerable Soviet largesse. The ease with which Soviet influence carefully cultivated through the years and a huge economic and military investment were lost almost overnight may have finally convinced the

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[17]N. A. Sumonya, "On the Character of the National-Liberation Revolutions," *Narody Aziii Afriki*, No. 6, 1966, p. 14.

Kremlin of the futility of previous policies and precipitated a radical rethinking of Third World penetration strategies.

Several lessons are likely to have been drawn from the past experience:

- The "revolutionary democrats" have shown themselves to be basically nationalistic, opportunistic and of marked "petty-bourgeois" propensities and are unlikely to lead Third World countries to "scientific socialism" if left on their own.
- Even if some leaders could be won over for the Soviet cause, given prevailing societal power structures characterized by conservatism, and considerable Western influence, they are unlikely to remain in power long enough to effect the transition to a Soviet type of socialism.[18]
- "Peaceful transition" to socialism has proven illusory under present day circumstances.
- The emergence of powerful communist-led revolutionary movements capable of seizing power without outside help is not a realistic expectation.
- Soviet economic aid has not secured significant political payoffs, nor have developing countries shown any enthusiasm for embracing the Soviet model of economic development. Indeed, the Soviet Union could not attempt to compete with the West in economic aid to the Third World.

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[18]A particularly painful example of this was the overthrow of Allende in September of 1972, an event much discussed by Soviet Third World theorists.

III. THE NEW SOVIET QUEST FOR LEVERAGE

INTERNATIONAL SETTING AND MILITARY-POLITICAL DETERMINANTS

This shift in thinking occurred during a period in which the West was showing increasing readiness to cooperate with the Soviets through detente and arms control and seemed resigned to the ongoing decline in its position. The Soviet leaders saw this as a highly favorable and seemingly inexorable trend in the "correlation of forces" and thus a decisive watershed in relations with the West. The socialist community was seen as finally having acquired the military and political potential required to determine the course of events at the global level. The historical Soviet fears of a "capitalist encirclement" could finally be laid to rest and a new strategy of "socialist encirclement" of the embattled West seemed feasible.[1]

The rethinking of Soviet strategy and tactics for penetration in the Third World in the early 1970s coincided with and was influenced by a number of important trends and developments on the international scene. Of particular relevance were the far-reaching changes taking place in the military balance of power between the Soviet Union and its chief capitalist antagonist, the United States. Through the means of a relentless military build-up, by 1975 the Soviet Union had achieved strategic parity with the U.S. while preserving and increasing its conventional superiority. With respect to Soviet objectives and instrumentalities in the Third World, the most relevant development in the military field had been some dramatic accretions, both qualitative and quantitative, to Soviet naval and air power in the preceding period, which gave Moscow a truly global power projection capability for the first time in Soviet history. At the same time the United States, having just suffered the most humiliating defeat in the history of the

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[1]For a perceptive analysis of the evolution of Soviet foreign political attitudes reflecting this shift in the balance of power see R. Judson Mitchell, "A New Brezhnev Doctrine: The Restructuring of International Affairs," in *World Politics*, Vol. XXX, No. 3, 1978. An excellent expose of the Soviet policy shift, particularly as it pertains to the Middle East is provided in Francis Fukuyama, "A New Soviet Strategy," *Commentary*, Vol. 68, No. 4, October 1979.

nation in Vietnam, and rent by internal divisions and recriminations, seemed to be retreating from global responsibilities and determined to avoid involvement in areas outside of its "vital" security interests, at almost any cost. Whether the Soviets saw this American retrenchment as a permanent trend resulting from the "deepening general crisis of capitalism"[2] or a temporary retreat following the bitter experience of Vietnam, it was clear to them that Soviet interventionist policies in the coming period were less likely to be directly challenged by Washington.[3]

Yet another development that seriously influenced the Soviet calculus regarding the Third World and strongly reinforced inclinations toward an aggressive forward strategy was the World energy crisis precipitated by the Yom Kippur war of 1973. The oil crisis graphically illustrated the critical dependence of the Western democracies on Third World energy supplies and may have sensitized the Kremlin to their vulnerability to a strategy of resource denial. It also made the Soviet leaders aware of the vital importance for the West and vulnerability of key sea lanes such as those around Cape Horn. In short, following the 1973 crisis, the Third World, or key areas in it, may have been seen in Moscow as a sort of soft underbelly of the West, offering new opportunities for Soviet probing and promising significant payoffs at relatively low risk.

DOCTRINAL-IDEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The doctrinal underpinnings of the new Soviet course exhibit some marked differences from the theoretical precepts guiding Soviet attempts to gain influence in the '60s, and implicitly reject their continuing validity.[4] The most significant change in terms of its policy

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[2]Speech by Brezhnev, TASS, June 25, 1971.

[3]"After the shameful failure of its aggression in Indochina,' one Soviet expert wrote, "the United States has been very wary, and inclined to operate through others." V. Kudryavtsev, "A Policy of Aggression, Threats and Fanning Conflicts," *International Affairs*, No. 11, November 1978, p. 83.

[4]For a detailed account of the Soviet doctrinal shift see Konrad Melchers, *Die Sowjetische Afrikapolitik von Chruschtschow bis Breschnew*, Oberbaumverlag, Berlin, 1980.

implications has been the shift away from a belief in the possibility of "peaceful" transition to socialism and increasing emphasis on direct revolutionary action. Soviet theorists increasingly took issue with the relevance of "liberal bourgeois" notions such as free elections, multi-party systems, majorities, etc. "A revolutionary majority for the Third World," admonished Konstantin Zarodov, the Editor-in-Chief of *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, "does not result from the creation of representative and elected organs but is created in the course of direct revolutionary action by the masses, through their independent political activity which goes beyond the bourgeois norms of peaceful conduct." According to him, "to believe that the results of an election are capable of expressing the will of the majority is opportunistic and reflects the degeneration of 'revolutionary democrats' into parliamentary cretinism."[5] Having rejected parliamentary methods and identified "revolutionary action" as the preferred means for a transition to socialism, the Soviets emphasize that the success of such action will depend largely on direct Soviet support. The major factor seen as contributing to the creation of favorable conditions for the victory of progressive forces is the already mentioned shift in the "correlation of forces" in favor of socialism. It is "the strengthening of the world system of the socialist states as an *international power* that has become a powerful accelerator of the historical processes and especially the revolutionary movement" and

> the presence of the socialist world system has given the revolutionary democratic forces the real opportunity, through the support of this international power, to deepen the social content of the national liberation movement and to lead it not only in the anti-imperialist but also the anti-capitalist struggle."[6]

This is realized through the "ever growing moral, political, economic, technical and military support of the socialist states."[7] The

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[5] *Pravda*, August 8, 1975.
[6] Iskanderov, *New Times*, No. 25, 1972, p. 24.
[7] Ibid.

dependence of Third World movements on the Soviet Union is thus elevated into a key element of the present stage of their evolution. It must be stated clearly," asserts Boris Ponomaryov, Secretary of the International Department of the Central Committee of CPSU and the man responsible more than anybody else for Third World policy, "that the national liberation movements could not emerge victorious, if the Soviet Union did not exist."[8]

The alliance with the socialist community is seen as essential, not only because of the machinations of international reactionary circles, but also because the working class and other progressive forces in the developing countries are considered inadequately prepared for a leading role unaided. In most of the Third World, according to Ponomaryov's deputy, Vadim Zagladin, the working class is characterized by "numerical weakness, low cultural levels and petty-bourgeois, tribal and religious prejudices," and is further "underdeveloped, disorganized and politically immature."[9] Thus "history itself required that the Afro-Asian peoples be given powerful external revolutionary stimuli in order to awaken them for the political struggle for their rights, social progress and socialism."[10] The dilemma facing Soviet Third World theorists trying to chart out the victory of the "proletarian" revolution in countries with few proletarians and at the same time providing an ideological justification for Soviet involvement is solved by means of a newly formulated theory of the international dictatorship of the proletariat. Simply stated, the theory asserts boldly that in a period of greatly increased power and prestige of the "international proletariat"--the socialist bloc--a strong indigenous proletariat is not absolutely necessary for a successful revolution. In Zagladin's words:

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[8] *Befreiung*, No. 6, 1976, cited in Melchers, *Die Sowjetische Afrikapolitik*, p. 35.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Anatoly Gromyko, *Afrika: Progres, Trudnosti, Perspektivii*, Moscow, 1981, p. 95.

> The successes of the international workers' movement and the increasing might of the socialist world system have created the preconditions for the enhancement of the prestige of the working class, regardless of its numerical strength in a given country. The influence of the indigenous proletariat is thus fused with the influence of world socialism.[11]

Another leading Soviet specialist on the Third World is even more direct in implying that the success of a Soviet-style revolution depends on outside help: "It is the international dictatorship of the proletariat in the person of the socialist world system," he asserts, "that can further develop a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship into a dictatorship of the proletariat."[12]

The Khrushchevite theory of "peaceful transition" to socialism based its hopes on the national "revolutionary democratic" leadership to effect the transition and assure Soviet influence. To that extent it was to be a "revolution from above." The present Soviet doctrine of international dictatorship of the proletariat, in contrast, sees little chance for installing a scientific socialism system in a developing country without external involvement, and thus a Soviet-sponsored revolution from outside is seen as the most promising way of securing Moscow a lasting presence.

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[11]Ibid, p. 97.

[12]R. I. Ulyanovskii, "Scientific Socialism and the Liberated Countries," cited in Melchers, *Sowjetische Afrikapolitik*, p. 97.

IV. TACTICS AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF THE NEW STRATEGY

The new Soviet quest for leverage and control in the Third World has been pursued simultaneously on the military, political, and economic levels. This section will attempt to analyze the Soviet *modus operandi* in each of these areas and draw conclusions in terms of its implications and effects on Western interests.

THE MILITARY DIMENSION

Military involvement, both direct and indirect, has unquestionably become the most important instrumentality of Soviet efforts to gain leverage in the 1970s. The two most pronounced aspects of military intervention demonstrated in a number of developing countries have been direct projection of Soviet-controlled armed forces in target areas and massive supplies of modern weaponry designed to assure the military preponderance of promising Soviet clients and bring about favorable political outcomes through the use of force. In some cases, such as Soviet intervention in Angola (1975) and Ethiopia (1977) these two related dimensions of power projection have been carried out simultaneously on the basis of a well-coordinated plan. In Afghanistan, South Yemen, and Mozambique, one or the other has taken precedence.

The novel element in the Soviet use of military power for the achievement of political goals in the Third World is the extensive use of proxies. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to examine in detail the role of surrogates in the new Soviet Third World calculus, several important implications should be noted.[1] First, the use of proxies allows Moscow to disclaim direct involvement and responsibility and diminishes the risk of confrontation with the United States.[2]

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[1]On the Cuban role in Soviet proxy policies see Edward Gonzalez, "Cuba, the Soviet Union and Africa," in David E. Albright (ed.), *Communism in Africa*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1980. A useful examination of the proxy issue is also contained in Gavriel Raanan, *The Evolution of the Soviet Use of Surrogates in Military Relations with the Third World, with Particular Emphasis on Cuban Participation in Africa,* The Rand Corporation, P-6420, December 1979.

[2]The misperception of Soviet proxies as independent actors and

Second, the use of proxies, at least in the initial period of intervention, is often more palatable politically for local actors and less likely to prompt negative reaction than superpower involvement. Finally, the use of surrogates allows the Soviets to avoid spreading their military-intervention resources thin and alleviates the manpower burden of interventionist policies without detracting from Soviet military-political control and decisionmaking dominance.

To date, direct projection of Soviet or proxy military forces on a massive scale has been used successfully in Angola (1975), Ethiopia (1977/78), and Afghanistan (1979).[3] In all three cases the indigenous elements that eventually assumed or consolidated their power under Soviet auspices would probably have suffered defeat without Soviet or proxy military intervention. To that extent, Soviet policies from the mid-1970s have more in common with the imposition of communist rule in Eastern Europe in the aftermath of World War II than with previous Third World practice. Lacking sufficient legitimacy of their own, the leaders of such Soviet-sponsored regimes become dependent on foreign military

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therefore somehow less threatening to Western interests continues to be widespread. The best known example of this was the statement of the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, that the Cubans in Angola had a stabilizing--i.e., positive--influence, a point of view to which President Carter himself promptly subscribed. See "Cuba Called Stabilizer in Angola: President Carter Concurs with Statement by Ambassador Young," *The Washington Post*, April 17, 1979.

[3]There is by now a voluminous literature on the Soviet proxy intervention in these cases. The following studies are representative: David E. Albright, "The USSR and Africa: Soviet Policy," *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1978; Colin Legum, "The USSR and Africa: The African Environment," *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1978; "Angola and the Horn of Africa," in Stephen S. Kaplan et al., *Mailed Fist, Velvet Glove: Soviet Armed Forces as Political Instrument,* The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., September 1979; David Rees, "Afghanistan's Role in Soviet Strategy," *Conflict Studies*, No. 118, Institute for the Study of Conflict, London, May 1980; Jiri Valenta, "The Soviet-Cuban Intervention in Angola," *Studies in Comparative Communism,* Spring/Summer 1978; "The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: The Difficulty of Knowing Where to Stop," *Orbis*, Summer 1980; "From Prague to Kabul: The Soviet Style of Invasion," *International Security*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Fall 1980; "Soviet-Cuban Intervention in the Horn of Africa: Impact and Lessons," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 34, No. 2, Fall-Winter 1980/81; Peter Vanneman and Martin James, "The Soviet Intervention in Angola: Intentions and Implications," *Strategic Review*, Summer 1976.

support for their continuing tenure in power and political survival. In turn, this necessitates the continuing and seemingly long-term military presence of Soviet or surrogate forces in a quasi-occupational function long after the initial struggle for power has been settled in favor of the Soviet proteges.[4]

Apart from the introduction of combat forces, Soviet penetration tactics in the 1970s have made successful use of massive arms deliveries as a means to establish a foothold and eventually control a Third World client. In the process Moscow has often been able to dramatically reverse regional power balances in favor of its clients in a short time. For instance, after aligning itself with the Soviet Union in the early 1970s, Somalia, a country with a population of three million and a marginal economic potential, emerged by 1975 as a major military power among African countries, in the possession of a modern air force and a mechanized army capable of offensive operations,[5] enjoying decisive preponderance over its neighbor and archenemy, Ethiopia. Two years later, having switched sides to Ethiopia, Moscow reversed the balance completely in a few short months through a spectacular airlift of armaments to Addis Ababa worth some $1 billion.[6] Soviet arms delivery

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[4]Cuban forces in Angola, alongside sizable contingents of Soviet and East German military personnel in advisory roles, are now entering their ninth year of presence; in Ethiopia, their seventh year. Soviet deployment in Afghanistan is in its fourth year.

[5]One Western source, *The Guardian*, February 24, 1975, described the capabilities of the Somali armed forces as follows:

> Somalia's air force of about 50 modern combat aircraft is the largest and best equipped between the Arab states and South Africa and its 220 tanks outnumber all the rest in Africa.... Together with over 100 artillery pieces and more than 200 armored personnel carriers, they give Somalia a capability for rapid, deep penetration in the best blitzkrieg style which is almost unique in Africa.

Soviet policies in the Horn of Africa are exhaustively detailed in Aryeh Y. Yodfat, "The Soviet Union and the Horn of Africa," a three-part article published in *Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1979-80; Vol. 2, No. 1, and Vol. 2, No. 2, 1980.

[6]In the period 1974-1977 alone Soviet-supplied military aid to Somalia totaled $340 million, compared with the less than $300 million the United States provided to Ethiopia in the 25 years between 1953 and 1977. See *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1970-1979*, USACDA publication #112, Washington, D.C., 1982.

policies to the Third World have sought to create the not unjustifiable impression that whoever enjoys the Kremlin's favor is guaranteed a military edge over its real or imagined enemies, foreign or domestic.[7] Soviet military aid enjoys several major advantages over Western military transfers that undoubtedly make it attractive even to developing countries lacking any political motivation to turn to the Soviets. Moscow is, as a rule, capable and willing to supply large numbers of modern weapons on a short notice, and--if political considerations dictate--often on favorable terms. Nor is it squeamish about providing offensive armaments capable of destabilizing a given region, as for example in the Horn, South Yemen, or currently in Nicaragua. The West, in contrast, more often than not takes years to fulfill even modest orders because of inadequate production capacities and sometimes seems to frown upon arms transfer as a legitimate tool of gaining leverage in the Third World.

Yet another advantage accruing to the Soviets from their arms transfer policies stems from the practice of supplying only limited quantities of spare parts and ammunitions, leaving the client always dependent, particularly in crisis situations, and thereby increasing Soviet control.

The massive arms transfers to developing countries have been accompanied by a sizable influx of Soviet and proxy military personnel as instructors, advisors and technicians. At the same time more and more Third World students receive military training in the Soviet Union and elsewhere in the Soviet bloc. One Western source estimates the number of Soviet military personnel in the Third World in 1981 at 22,065. The comparable number of U.S. personnel is 1,144.[8] Besides the difference in numbers of Soviet personnel involvement from the mid-1970s on, compared with the preceding decade, the Soviet "advisors" increasingly assumed a more direct management and control function in

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[7]This point is particularly well illustrated in Paul Henze, "Arming the Horn, 1960-1980," Working Paper #43, The Wilson Center, Washington, D.C., July 1982.

[8]Francis J. West, Jr., "The U.S. Security Assistance Program: Giveaway or Bargain?" *Strategic Review*, Winter 1983, p. 55.

the indigenous armed forces, rather than a strictly advisory one. For instance, among Soviet military personnel in Ethiopia, estimated at 2,000 by one source, there are reportedly seven generals serving at various levels up to and including the general staff.[9]

Such direct penetration of the military establishments of target countries creates conditions conducive to the accomplishment of a major Soviet desideratum regarding the army in the new period--penetration and thorough politicization. The experience of the 1960s, when several Soviet proteges were overthrown in military coups, convinced Moscow that the army plays a crucial political role in Third World society. As early as 1969, the best known Soviet expert on the Third World military, G. I. Mirskiy, argued that it is nearly impossible to bring down a "reactionary" regime in a developing country without military help.[10] Although the potential utility of the army was recognized, the same analyst argued somewhat later that the army "cannot become the political vanguard of society" nor are Third World officers capable of political leadership without appropriate ideological preparation.[11]

The failure to "revolutionize" the armed forces entailed the grave risk that they would become a tool in the hands of reactionaries and eventually lead either to the overthrow of progressive regimes or else to the weakening and eventual defeat of socialist elements. Lack of political work in the army is said to be one of the factors facilitating counterrevolutionary coups such as those in Ghana in 1964, Indonesia in 1966, and Chile in 1972; and Nasser's inability to introduce the institution of the political officer in the military is seen as causing the gradual departure of Egypt from the socialist orientation.[12] To avoid such pitfalls, Soviet strategy in the 1970s called for and provided decisive assistance in the establishment of rigid political controls over the military of Third World clients. As a result, a

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[9]*Le Monde*, July 16, 1981.

[10]*New Times*, No. 48, 1967, p. 15.

[11]G. I. Mirskiy, *Tretii Mir, Obshchestvo, Vlast, Armiya*, Moscow, 1976, pp. 248, 299.

[12]See *Vooruzheniye sili v politicheskoi sisteme*, Nauka, Moscow, 1981, p. 38; and Mirskiy, *Tretii Mir*, p. 112.

Soviet type of political control system based on the politcommissar model is either in place or being built in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Afghanistan.

In most cases the training and indoctrination of political cadres for the military has been exclusively the domain of Soviet instructors.[13]

A final noteworthy feature of Soviet-Third World relations in the military realm and one indicating the growing Soviet influence concerns the clause specifying an obligation to consult in security matters contained in most "friendship treaties" between the Soviet Union and a number of countries that have come under Soviet influence in the 1970s. It is difficult to imagine the Soviet Union consulting South Yemen or Mozambique, for example, on its military policy, so this clause comes close to giving Moscow a contractual right to interfere in the security affairs of its clients. It is a qualitatively novel element in Soviet-Third World policy that some analysts have seen as an attempt to widen the jurisdiction of the Brezhnev doctrine outside the Warsaw Pact area.

Several important implications for Western interests follow from the examination of the military aspect of the concerted Soviet quest for influence in the Third World. In a military-political sense, the presence of large contingents of Soviet and proxy military personnel seriously affect the power balance in key strategic areas. To date such a shift toward the Soviets is observable in Southern Africa, the Horn of Africa, and South Central Asia (Afghanistan and the Arabian peninsula). The establishment of Soviet-beholden regimes facilitates the penetration and subversion of adjacent targets and the cooptation of local revolutionary elements under Soviet aegis. For example, after the establishment of a pro-Soviet regime in Angola, the Namibian guerrilla organization SWAPO severed its ties with the pro-Western UNITA and

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[13]The guiding principles in the building of an army of the socialist type in the Third World, according to Soviet theoreticians, include: (a) control of the army by the ruling party, (b) anti-imperialist solidarity with national-liberation movements and the armies of other countries of the socialist orientation, (c) multi-faceted military cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist bloc. *Vooruzheniye sili v politicheskoi sisteme*, Nauka, Moscow, 1981, p. 25.

became completely dependent politically and logistically on the Soviets and the Angolans. Other likely targets for expansion from areas of established Soviet influence are North Yemen and Djibouti, Sudan, Namibia, and others. Closer to home, the establishment of a pro-Soviet regime in Nicaragua has seriously affected the military-political situation in El Salvador and the prospects for stability in all of Central America.

Perhaps more important from a military-strategic point of view is the establishment of a wide-range of Soviet basing rights and access arrangements on the territory of Third World proteges. Facilities used by the Soviets to one degree or another at present include Aden and Socotra Island in South Yemen, Dahlak Island and Massawa in Ethiopia, Luanda and Mocamedes in Angola, Maputo and Beira in Mozambique. These facilities have considerably improved Soviet naval and air power projection and interdiction capabilities and provide stepping stone access for present or future military intervention in Third Areas.

The massive Soviet arms deliveries to the Third World suggest yet another important if less well understood military consideration. In many cases the Soviets have supplied sophisticated armaments to selected clients in quantities clearly beyond the indigenous manpower and technical ability to use them.[14] It is not inconceivable that such materiel may be envisioned as prepositioned stocks in Soviet contingency planning thus transforming these countries into forward *places d'armes* for a Soviet rapid deployment force.

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[14]For instance, in 1975 the armed forces of South Yemen, a poverty stricken country of less than 2 million, possessed 50 ancient T-34 tanks, 27 combat aircraft (mostly obsolete MiG-17s), and no personnel carriers. By 1982 they had been equipped with 450 modern medium tanks (T-54/-55 and T-62), 300 armed personnel carriers and 114 combat aircraft--mostly modern MiG-21, MiG-23, and Sukhoi-22. *Military Balance*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1975 and 1982. According to information provided to me by Omani military officials, the South Yemeni forces are capable of manning only a fraction of the available equipment.

THE POLITICAL DIMENSION

Alongside direct military intervention and extensive arms transfers, the Soviets have sought to guarantee their long-term influence in Third World countries through a comprehensive strategy of political involvement. One of the important lessons learned by Moscow from its setbacks in the 1960s was that countries in which traditional societal and political structures prevailed sooner or later proved inhospitable to Soviet influence, even if led by "progressive" regimes. The ultimate failure of such regimes was seen as the result of their inability to "radically transform the prevalent social structures." A Soviet analyst has argued, "It has become increasingly evident that the accomplishment of national objectives is impossible without a social transformation going beyond the overthrow of the monarchy, and limitations on large-scale land ownership."[15] Whether it is true that the developing countries can achieve their national objectives only through radical societal transformation, it is clear that in the 1970s, the Soviets saw such a transformation as conducive and perhaps essential to securing their long-term leverage. Moscow's major political objective has become the restructuring of client state societies into as close an approximation as possible of the Leninist-totalitarian model. The building of a Soviet type of polity under close Soviet guidance offers twofold benefits. On the one hand, it facilitates control of the population by the Soviet-dependent regime and diminishes the likelihood of serious internal challenges; on the other hand, it allows the Soviet patron to penetrate the body politic below the top and thus ensure his control over the country's political direction.

The goal of establishing Leninist social systems in the Third World is by no means an easy task, and ultimate success is anything but assured. Nonetheless, there is overwhelming evidence that the Soviet Union has consistently and systematically steered its most promising allies onto the socialist road. Some of the developments that have already taken place in Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Afghanistan indicate a degree of transformation in the direction of "scientific socialism" that clearly goes well beyond anything achieved during previous periods of Soviet Third World involvement.

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[15]Mirskiy, *Tretii Mir*, p. 302.

In order to succeed, every communist-led revolution invariably entails two stages. The first involves the actual takeover of political power and the formation or consolidation of a hegemonial political organization or party. During the second phase, the party uses its monopoly of power to liquidate all real or imagined opposition and carry out the arduous and prolonged task of transforming the traditional socio-political and economic structures into a Leninist social system, which alone can guarantee its continued hegemony. Moscow's main goal in the initial stage of societal transformation in Third World clients is the establishment of a hegemonial "vanguard" party and a single party political system. According to an authoritative Soviet definition, a Third World vanguard party is characterized by a "scientific ideology of the working class, and organizational principles and policies borrowed from the experience of the proletarian Marxist-Leninist parties."[16]

The rationale behind the drive for establishing vanguard parties rests on the goal of concentrating political power in the hands of a small trusted elite capable not only of dealing decisively with assorted counterrevolutionaries, but also preempting the dangers of "stikhiinost," the uncontrollable revolutionary spontaneity by the masses long considered the nemesis of Leninist orthodoxy. The Soviets' preference in this respect seems to be leaders who do not have large independent power bases or charismatic qualities but are of the faceless bureaucrat type and thus are expected to be more dependent and easier to control. The imposition of a one-party system in itself is not a novelty in developing countries and has become, with few exceptions, the rule in the post-colonial period. The establishment of a Leninist hegemonial party, however, has seldom been attempted before. The Soviets consider the creation of a vanguard party to be of critical importance for successful transition to real socialism.[17] The following

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[16]See A. A. Gromyko (ed.), *Dva Napravleniya: Sotsiyalno Ekonomicheskovo Razvitiya v Afrike,* Nauka, Moscow, 1980, p. 72.

[17]Soviet efforts to establish Marxist systems in Africa are dealt with in some detail in Peter Janke, "Marxist Statecraft in Africa: What Future?" *Conflict Studies*, No. 95, May 1978; also see Marina Ottaway, "The Theory and Practice of Marxism-Leninism in Mozambique and Ethiopia," in Albright (ed.), *Communism in Africa*. Two recent studies that adequately reflect Soviet views are Y. A. Krasin and B. M. Leibzon,

quotations are fairly typical of doctrinal attitudes on this question: "At a certain stage of the revolution the revolutionary-democratic parties must be transformed into proletarian parties in order to ensure a socialist perspective introduce socialist changes and lead the transition toward socialist construction."[18] And "The establishment of a vanguard party dedicated to the task of building socialism is a mandatory precondition for the successful development of a (Third World) country on the non-capitalist road, which under conducive international circumstances can lead to socialism."[19] Another theorist asserts that building a vanguard party on the basis of the experience of the "victorious socialist revolution" and learning from the "negative experiences" of other developing countries is the only guarantee for the "creation of objective class and political conditions for the transition to a proletarian revolution."[20] Despite the complete absence of what Marxist theory considers to be necessary pre-conditions--a large industrial working class, a high degree of urbanization, a well-defined bourgeois-capitalist exploitive class, etc.--the Soviets have had considerable success in encouraging the setting up of such parties. Since the mid-1970s, ruling vanguard parties have been established in Angola, Mozambique, South Yemen, and Ethiopia.[21] All of these parties

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Revolyutsionaya teoria i revolyutsionaya politika, Politizdat, Moscow, 1979; and S. P. Nemanov, "Partii avangardnovo tipa v afrikanskikh stranakh sotsialisticheskoi orientatsii," *Narody azii i afriky,* No. 2, 1979.

[18]A. S. Kaufman, "Einige Fragen der Rolle der Arbeiterklasse und ihrer Partei in der Landern mit Sozialistischer Orientierung" *Asien, Afrika, Latein Amerika,* No. 1, 1978, p. 23.

[19]Mirskiy, *Tretii Mir*, p. 299.

[20]Alvin Krebs, "Volksrepublik Angola: Kampf Eines Vom Kolonialismus Befreiten Volkes Fuer Eine Sozialistische Zukunft," *Asien, Afrika, Latein Amerika,*, No. 6, 1980, p. 1022.

[21]In Angola the ruling MPLA (Movimento Popular para a Libertecao de Angola) declared its organizational transformation into a Leninist party at its I Congress in December of 1977. Mozambique's Frelimo had undergone the same metamorphosis at its III Congress in February of 1977. In South Yemen a Marxist ruling party calling itself the Socialist Party of Yemen was founded in October of 1978, and in Ethiopia the final step toward the organization of a communist party was taken in December of 1979 with the setting up of a Commission for Organizing the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE).

are characterized by a striking programmatical subservience to the Soviet Union. They espouse such doctrinal precepts as dictatorship of the proletariat, democratic centralism, and the class struggle that are not only of little relevance to Third World conditions, but have also been rejected as obsolete by many modern communist parties outside the Soviet bloc. According to the late president of Angola, Augustino Neto, "The fundamental goal of our revolutionary vanguards, the MPLA and the CPSU, of our states and governments and of our two peoples should be absolutely identical."[22] Frelimo's statements stress the leading role of the party in Mozambique society on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and calls for the "construction of a new society through a radical transformation of the economic, social and political structures."[23]

COPWE's program specifies as its two most important objectives

(a) to disseminate and propagate the Marxist-Leninist philosophy among the organs of government, mass organizations, cooperatives and the working masses,

(b) to organize a single, powerful party of the working class on the basis of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, whose historical mission is to do away with feudalism, imperialism, and bureaucratic capitalism in Ethiopia, to establish the new Peoples Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and to orient the people toward the construction of a socialist and communist society."[24]

In contrast to other revolutionary movements in the Third World, these parties have little use for non-Soviet types of socialism. "We reject the idea that there can be an 'African socialism' or a 'Mozambiquan socialism,'" proclaims Frelimo's leader, Samora Michel, "we consciously

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[22]Cited in Janke, *Marxist Statecraft in Africa*, p. 4.

[23]Cited in Herbert Graf, "Die Bildung und Entwicklung der Volksrepublik Mozambique: Beispiel einer neuen Qualitaet der Staatsentwicklung in Afrika," *Asien, Afrika, Latein Amerika*, No. 2, 1981, p. 316.

[24]"Proklamation ueber die Gruendung der COPWE," *Horizont*, No. 15, 1980, article V, p. 1.

affirm that there can be no socialism other than scientific socialism."[25]

The transformation into aspiring Leninist parties of the ideologically amorphous erstwhile liberation movements, whose rank and file consisted primarily of illiterate peasants, has transpired under the direct supervision and involvement of Soviet and proxy political operatives and organizers. The training of political cadres, for the nascent parties, has been a Soviet responsibility from the beginning. Apart from extensive training programs in the Soviet Union itself, party schools have been established with Soviet help in Luanda, Addis Ababa, Aden, and Maputo, as well as at the provincial level.[26] In most cases, the Soviets or their Eastern European allies provide both study materials and instructors. Soviet experts have also played a key role in organizing the parties' propaganda apparatus and ensuring traditional communist monopoly over the sources and means of information. Characteristically, the formation of Leninist parties under Soviet auspices has been accompanied by wide-ranging purges of nonconformist revolutionaries and alleged deviationists from the official line.[27]

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[25]Cited in Albright, *Communism in Africa*, p. 125.

[26]For instance, by late 1980 in Angola, apart from the National Party School in Luanda, there were nine provincial party schools offering courses from five months to three years. Over 6,000 trained cadres were said to have successfully set up 2,300 basic party cells with 26,000 members and candidate-members. See *Horizont*, No. 50, 1980, p. 12. In South Yemen, the Higher School for Scientific Socialism in Aden, built by the Soviet Union as a present to the Socialist Party of Yemen, was reported to have graduated 7,000 cadres by late 1979. See *Entwicklungspolitik Kommunistischer Laender, Trends und Analysen,* Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert-Siftung, Vol. II, 1979, p. 141. The Ethiopian political academy Yekatit-66 had reportedly trained over 10,000 cadres by late 1982. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 9, 1982.

[27]In Angola the purge was called a "correction movement," and a special "National Corrective Commission" was set up for the purpose in May of 1978. Its task was to examine the ideological purity of MPLA members and weed out those of insufficient militancy. The commission was reported to have successfully completed its objective by 1980. *Horizont*, No. 50, 1980, p. 12. In May 1981 the party called for a "general offensive against liberalism and disorganization" described as a long-term campaign and an important form of the "class struggle," *Journal de Angola*, Nov. 12, 1981. In Mozambique, Frelimo organized "vigilance brigades" whose task was to establish the party organization in the countryside. They were also charged with compiling dossiers and

Next to the establishment of a vanguard party as the sole repository of political authority, the process of restructuring Third World society along "real socialism" lines zeroes in on the transformation of state organs into obedient party tools and breaking down traditional societal structures. Of paramount importance in this respect, as traditional Leninist theory teaches, is the formation of powerful internal security organs. Particularly active in the setting up of the security apparatuses in countries that have fallen under Soviet influence have been some of Moscow's junior partners, especially the East Germans. Under the supervision of experts from the GDR ministry for state security, Soviet types of security organs have been established in a number of countries.

In some cases Soviet and allied specialists have become directly involved in the running of these services. Special paramilitary militias responsible directly to the party have also been formed, based on Soviet models--for example, the so-called "People's police" in Mozambique or the newly constituted "People's brigades" in Angola.[28] The determination of the new vanguard parties to apply the experience of "real socialism" have also been reflected in the organization of state-run trade unions and various youth and women mass organizations. Of more lasting consequence have been steady and at times radical policies aimed at the socialization of the economy.

Private ownership of land was abolished in both Mozambique and Ethiopia in 1975 and a system of "peasant associations" introduced as a first step toward collective agriculture. In South Yemen, where "state

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establishing the political reliability of members. Extensive purges were carried out also among the ranks of the former guerrillas, and those judged opposed to the party were either dismissed or sent to "reeducation" camps. Some 100,000 putative opponents of the regime are reported to have served in the camps. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, January 1979. Ethiopia's revolutionary regime, after consolidating its power with the help of the Soviets and their Cuban and East German surrogates in late 1977, dealt with their opponents and alleged counterrevolutionaries through a campaign of "Red terror" designed to assure the dominance of cadres who had undergone Marxist-Leninist training. The number of those who lost their lives in this campaign may have been as high as 10,000. Up to four times that number are reported still in jail as of mid-1981. *Le Monde*, July 14, 1981.

[28] *Horizont*, No. 52, 1981, p. 25.

farms" have already been established, 80 percent of the agricultural output is reported to come from the socialized sector.[29] In Angola the pace of deprivatization has been slower because the MPLA regime does not control much of the country's territory. The establishment of state control in the nonagrarian sector has also been pursued vigorously. In all of the countries mentioned above, most major industrial enterprises as well as banking and finance have been nationalized, and trends point toward further weakening of the private sector. In Ethiopia, for example, the industrial production share of the state sector has risen from 20 percent to 80 percent in five years.[30] The socialization process in the economy has been accompanied by the introduction of central planning methods and strategies of development. The long-term objective, as expressed in Mozambique's new development plan, seems to be "the radical restructuring of the socioeconomic structure through the establishment of a dominant socialist sector."[31]

Soviet efforts to steer its new clients among the developing countries toward a Marxist-Leninist socioeconomic and political system have been designed to improve Moscow's prospects for long-term influence. Yet the Soviets have not simply imposed their will and presence by unilateral military and political means. The success of the new Soviet course is due to the remarkable degree of congruence of interest between the Soviets and some indigenous but unrepresentative political elites. In all of the cases discussed in this study, the indigenous movements that acquired power in one way or another came to depend on Soviet support because of a narrow base and lack of popular support.[32] Apart from the major imperative of securing a reliable

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[29]Frank Weidnitzer, "Grundzuge der Entwicklung der Politish-Staatlichen Verhaltnisse in Revolutionaren Prozess der VDR Jemen," *Asien, Afrika, Latein Amerika*, No. 4, 1981, p. 996.

[30]Gromyko, *Dva Napravleniya*, p. 46.

[31]*Noticias*, October 7, 1981, cited in *Horizont*, No. 50, 1981, p. 26.

[32]In Angola, for instance, the MPLA support base and membership has from its founding consisted of mullatoes, the so-called *assimilados* (assimilated ones) and some whites in the urban areas, a stratum that was ranked just below the Portuguese in the colonial pecking order of privileges. As a result the movement had very little support among the majority of black rural Angolans, whose loyalties run along tribal lines. Even within its urban stronghold in the capital of Luanda, the party seems to have enjoyed but limited support, as demonstrated by the

external source of support, new Third World governments may be prone to embrace the Soviet model for two additional reasons. By opting for "scientific socialism," the fledgling regimes assure themselves the instant acclaim and active courting of the socialist bloc, which may impart to them a sense of international legitimacy in the eyes of their subjects. More important, an alliance with the Soviet Union offers these inherently unstable regimes a reliable and all-encompassing program for the political control of the population and the maintenance of internal security.[33]

Although the political dimension of the new Soviet quest for leverage has scored some conspicuous successes, it is not without problems and weaknesses that may prejudice its long-term chances of success. At the general level this strategy appears to offer promise only in the case of Soviet clients characterized by extreme levels of political and economic underdevelopment. Of the five countries in which Soviet involvement has been most pronounced since the mid-1970s Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and South Yemen were still at a near feudal stage of development, and Angola and Mozambique had just emerged from colonial rule. No comparable political penetration tactics have been deemed useful or promising by Moscow in client states with more established political structures such as, for example, Syria or Libya. Indeed, for an earlier example of similar Soviet strategies one would have to look not at the Third World but at Soviet policies in the Central Asian republics and Mongolia in the 1920s or the Eastern European satellites after World War II. In all of these cases, of course, the achievement of Soviet objectives was greatly facilitated by the decisive presence of the Red Army, a luxury the Kremlin generally does not enjoy in the Third World. This would indicate that the political aspect of this new Soviet strategy may be applicable with a reasonable expectation of success to relatively few potential Third World targets of Soviet expansionism.

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fact that the first communal elections after the emergence of the MPLA as the undisputed political power in June of 1976 were boycotted by 90 percent of the electorate. See *African Contemporary Record, 1976/1977, p. B452/453.*

[33]This point is elaborated on in Janke, *Marxist Statecraft in Africa*, p. 3.

In the countries where a Leninist transformation has been attempted there are also some serious internal obstacles to its ultimate success. Many of them stem from the lack of legitimacy and popular support of Moscow-beholden regimes as well as the enormous difficulties in imposing a system that is both alien and irrelevant to the prevailing socioeconomic realities and traditional life-styles of indigenous populations. One consequence has been the emergence of organized armed resistance movements in several Soviet client states. In some cases these have threatened the regime's survival. Apart from the well-documented struggle of the Afghan freedom fighters' war, increasingly serious challenges to pro-Moscow regimes have been mounted in Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia.[34]

In addition to the stiff armed resistance facing the pro-Soviet regimes, the prospects of a successful introduction of a functioning hegemonial political system may also be compromised by inter-elite power struggles and the potential for political deviations. There is already considerable evidence of serious infighting at the top in Angola and to a

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[34] In Angola the anti-MPLA guerrilla movement UNITA led by Jonas Savimbi controls more than half of the country's territory. It has been able to disrupt the vital Benguela railroad line almost at will, limit MPLA authority to the larger cities, and, in late 1982, was poised for an attack on Luanda itself. There is little doubt that the regime would not last long were it not for 20,000 Cuban troops. A resistance movement against the Marxist regime has come into being also in Mozambique. The RNM (Resistencia National Mocambicana), as it calls itself, is estimated to be some 15,000 strong and is made up of former Frelimo guerrillas, veterans of the "reeducation" camps and disaffected peasants. It is reported to be increasingly successful in various sabotage activities and to have denied effective government control over half of the countryside. The Frelimo regime, unable to control the resistance with its own forces, has been forced to call in foreign troops. At least 1,000 Tanzanians are said to be fighting the RNM. See *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, June 11, 1982; and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 28, 1982. For a detailed account, see "Mozambique: Havoc in the Bush," *African Confidential*, Vol. 23, #15, July 21, 1982, and Vol. 23, #16, August 4, 1982. In Ethiopia the Mengistu regime has not only been unable to defeat the EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Front) despite a massive offensive in early 1982, but because of its oppressive policies and discrimination against the non-Amharran nationalities, it is now facing determined resistance from two other rapidly growing guerrilla movements, the Tigre People's Liberation Front and the Oromo Liberation Front. See *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, October 23, 1982.

lesser extent in some of the other clients.[35] Although the political importance of such internecine bickering should not be exaggerated, it may be an indication that the Soviets are still a long way from establishing the kind of unchallenged control and domination over political elites in Third World client-states that they enjoy in Eastern Europe.

THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Soviet economic policies with regard to the Third World in the 1970s have also differed considerably from those pursued during the initial period of Third World penetration under Khrushchev. The major change has been the shift from the political utility of economic involvement to primarily economic considerations and profitability. To the extent that the Soviet Union moved away from politically motivated programs of economic aid and preferential treatment for developing countries and has proved unwilling to be their economic guarantor, the economic dimension of the Soviet quest for leverage entails a major potential vulnerability in Moscow's strategy.

Particularly indicative of the new priorities of economic policies is the steady decrease in the amounts of developmental aid disbursed by the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies in the Third World. According to the *1980 Yearbook* of the Committee for Developmental Aid of

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[35] In the power struggle within the MPLA top echelons, the conflict between two antagonistic factions is said to have been greatly exacerbated of late. One of the factions is said to consist of doctrinaire ideologues and hard-line pro-Soviet functionaries, mostly mestizo or white, and the other appears to be more nationalist and mostly black. In early January 1983, the doctrinaire faction reportedly was dealt a severe blow with the dismissal and arrest of some 30 of its top adherents. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 10, 1983. The situation is less clear in Mozambique, but there is considerable evidence of tensions and strife within the party. In late 1981, President and party boss Machel assailed unnamed enemies and saboteurs among the party cadres who had become "slaves of bourgeois capitalist ideology." *Radio Maputo*, October 9, 1981, translated in JPRS 79311, October 27, 1981. Several Frelimo officials, including the chief of the Mozambiquean security and intelligence service, defected in 1982. A further indication of problems in the ruling hierarchy was the second postponement of the IV party congress. A purge of six members of the presidium of COPWE at its recent congress testifies to continuing political infighting in Ethiopia as well. Two Ethiopian ministers also defected to the West recently. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 7, 1983.

the Organization for European Community Development (OECD), in 1970 the Soviet bloc provided $2545 million in aid; this amount fell to $2239 million in 1973 and to $2000 million in the second half of the 1970s. The last year for which figures are available, 1979, the figure had further shrunk to $1852 million.[36] In comparison, the Western industrial countries provided $22,377 million in aid during the same year. Although no detailed figures are published by the Soviets, their share of all economic aid is estimated at 4.8 percent. Even this low figure, however, is misleading, because it includes subsidies to countries in the communist bloc such as Cuba, Vietnam, and North Korea estimated at 2/3 of the whole amount.[37] As percentage of gross national product, Soviet developmental largesse represents an astoundingly low 0.03 percent, compared with 0.35 percent for the OECD group.[38] Even this limited amount of economic assistance is designed to enhance Soviet influence and produce economic and political benefits. With very few exceptions, Socialist aid consists of credits tied to deliveries of goods and experts from the donor and is usually intended for the state sector. In 1978 alone, there were some 100,000 civilian experts from the Socialist countries in the Third World--paid, as a rule, in convertible currencies and at rates much higher than those in their homelands.[39]

Military assistance also may be a quite lucrative source of profit and hard currency for the Soviets and their surrogates. For example, the Angolan government reportedly pays for Cuban assistance at the rate of $50 million per year.[40] If this is true, Cuban proxy activities are a

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[36]Cited in Hans-Christian Reichel, "Die RGW-Staaten und die Entwicklung's laender," *Ausenpolitik*, #4, 1981, p. 388.

[37]*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 22, 1981.

[38]Cited in Heinrich Machowski and Siegfried Schultz, "Die Beziehungen zwischen der sozialistischen Planwirtschaften und der Dritten Welt," *Deutschland Archiv*, No. 7, July 1981, p. 743.

[39]Ibid., p. 742. This practice appears to be an important source of hard currency for the socialist countries, since more than half of the specialists' salaries are transferred to the state. At least in some cases, wages paid to socialist experts are higher than those of their Western colleagues. Cuban medical personnel in Angola, for example, cost twice as much ($2000/month) as their West German colleagues. *Der Spiegel*, No. 40, September 28, 1981, p. 167.

[40]See *AAS-Milavnews*, #250, Vol. XXI, August 1982.

major source of income for Havana and a tremendous drain for the host countries, which adds a new dimension to the question of Soviet or proxy military presence in the Third World. Multilateral assistance, the kind preferred by developing countries because it is provided with no strings attached, is a very low priority for the Soviets. In 1979 the USSR contributed only $7 million to international development aid organizations. The multilateral share of total aid provided by all socialist countries for the same year was only 0.7 percent.[41]

As in the case of developmental aid, trade with the socialist bloc does not seem to bring particular benefits to the developing countries. Trade volume between the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA) and the Third World, to begin with, is rather modest. In 1979 it amounted to only 9 percent of CEMA volume.[42] Moreover, the character of this trade is less beneficial for the developing countries than trade with the West. The Soviet Union, for instance, exported twice as much as it imported from the Third World in 1979, while the West had a positive balance of 20 percent (which becomes an 8 percent trade deficit if oil imports are considered).[43] The Soviet bloc's share of Third World exports is only 3.2 percent of the total, as against 71.2 percent for the capitalist countries.[44] Because socialist countries refuse or are unable to trade in convertible currencies, most trade is conducted on a barter basis, which has negative consequences for the developing countries; as a rule these countries export raw materials and agricultural products and import manufactured goods that are often of lower quality than comparable Western products. Barter trade also tends to result in unilateral dependence and stymies the ability to compete on the world market. The Soviet Union and its allies appear also to profit from the so-called clearing agreements with the Third World.[45]

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[41]Reichel, *Die RGW Staaten*, p. 386.

[42]See *Statistical Yearbook of the Member Countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance,* 1980, p. 335.

[43]See UNCTAD, *Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics,* 1980, p. 444.

[44]Ibid.

[45]*Frankurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 22, 1981.

There are reasons to believe that the Soviet Union frequently engages in direct economic exploitation of Third World clients. One of the best known cases is a Soviet-Guinean agreement to jointly exploit Guinean bauxite. According to this agreement, in 1969 the Soviets were guaranteed bauxite deliveries for 30 years at $6/ton. In the meantime the world price has risen to $30/ton, but Guinean efforts to renegotiate the contract have been rejected, prompting the erstwhile Marxist and Soviet protege president, Sekou Toure, to proclaim, "The Russians are more capitalist than the capitalists."[46] A similar agreement reportedly has forced Angola to sell its coffee to the Soviets at dumping prices. In 1976 the price paid to the Angolans is said to have been 180 Escudos per bag, while the world price was between 467 and 472 Escudos.[47]

Perhaps the best example of inequitable economic arrangements benefiting the Soviets is provided by a number of fishing agreements the Soviets have signed with some of their clients. For instance, an agreement signed with Angola in 1977 granted Soviet trawlers unlimited rights to fish in Angolan territorial waters in exchange for technical aid and equipment for the Angola fishing industry. The results have been disastrous for the Angolans. During the last year of Portuguese rule Angola's fishing fleet caught 500,000 tons of fish and was able to export sizable quantities. Today the catch is 80,000 tons and Angola is forced to import fish from the Soviet Union. The Soviet catch in Angolan waters in the meantime has gone from 165,000 tons in 1975 to 750,000. The same thing has happened in Mozambique where a joint company called Mosopesca delivers almost all of its catch to the Soviet Union, which, in turn, sells canned fish to Mozambique.[48] These and many other Soviet economic practices in the Third World at present are strongly reminiscent of the brutal exploitation of Eastern European countries after World War II with the help of "joint stock" companies and other devices.[49]

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[46] *Der Spiegel*, No. 40, September 28, 1981, p. 162.

[47] Ibid., p. 165.

[48] See *Marches Tropicaux et Mediterraneens*, May 29, 1981, translated in JPRS 49847, #731, July 15, 1981.

[49] Soviet economic exploitation practices in Africa are analyzed in detail in Melchers, *Die Sowjetische Afrikapolitik*, pp. 128-187.

Soviet failure to provide any large amounts of economic aid and the severe economic disruptions resulting from the introduction of the Soviet political and economic model have combined to create a disastrous economic situation in most of the newly gained Soviet clients--a situation further aggravated by inordinately large military expenditures.[50] Paradoxically, these new self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist regimes, although violently anti-Western, have so far staved off economic collapse only through trade and economic assistance from the West. Angola receives some 80 percent of its foreign exchange earnings through oil concessions to Western companies, and Mozambique obtains more than 50 percent of its hard currency through economic ties with South Africa. The value of remittances in foreign exchange by South Yemeni workers in the oil-rich states represents 40 percent of PDRY gross domestic product and exceeds exports sixfold.[51] Direct economic assistance by Western governments and international organizations as well as private credits have also played a role.

Soviet experts continue to insist on the "selfless" nature of Soviet economic intercourse with the Third World, but they have become quite candid of late in admitting their inability to help even their closest clients to economic solvency. Soviet inability to prop up the teetering economies of its newly gained proteges among the developing countries and provide for a modicum of economic progress remains a major vulnerability of the Soviet quest for leverage.

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[50] In Angola the disruption of the once prosperous agricultural sector has been so grave that the country, once one of Africa's major food exporters, is now unable to feed its population; and malnutrition and near famine conditions prevail over large parts of the country. The regime has admitted the catastrophic economic conditions by scaling down its production plans for major agricultural and industrial commodities by 50 to 80 percent in 1982. See *Journal de Angola*, May 14, 1982.

[51] World Bank, *People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, A Review of Economic and Social Development*, Washington, D.C., 1979.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In the mid-1970s the Soviet Union began pursuing policies that were qualitatively different from those characterizing earlier periods. Among the prime determinants of this new strategy was the realization that previous policies had failed to secure long-lasting political gains; the achievement of strategic equality with the United States and a global Soviet power projection capability; the perceived unwillingness of the United States to challenge Soviet encroachment in areas not considered vital after the Vietnam debacle and the demonstrated Western vulnerability to a strategy of resource denial following the 1973 energy crisis. Soviet policies were designed to reflect a number of military and power-political shifts in the international arena, which in general favored greater Soviet assertiveness and seemed to open new opportunities for political expansionism at a low risk. The new strategy thus sought to exploit opportunities and preempt negative trends in the Third World in a much more aggressive way than had been the case before. The increased assertiveness of the new approach has been theoretically justified by an emphasis on the "international" obligations of the Soviet Union and assertions that the growing power of the socialist community has created conditions conducive to "direct revolutionary action" in the developing countries. In practical terms the main characteristic of the new strategy is Soviet willingness to engage in or sponsor direct, and if necessary massive, military involvement in the pursuit of Third World objectives. Soviet or proxy military involvement, usually accompanied by massive arms transfers and an influx of military advisors and instructors, has aimed to make the indigenous regime dependent on its patron for internal as well as external security and therefore ensure Soviet control and influence. The military dimension of the new strategy has some important military-strategic implications that could seriously affect Western interests. With the establishment of Soviet influence in the Third World, clients located in such vital strategic areas as Southern Africa, the Horn of Africa, and South-Central Asia, Soviet traditional problems of securing

strategic access are greatly alleviated; furthermore, their potential for further expansion in adjacent areas, interdiction of vital Western sea-lanes, and a strategy of resource denial is greatly enhanced. The Soviet practice of supplying clients with offensive weapons in quantities well beyond the capability of indigenous armies to use them may indicate a strategy of prepositioning stocks intended for use in a Soviet contingency.

The new Soviet strategy also differs markedly from previous policies in its political dimension. An overriding objective of political involvements is the prompt transformation of developing countries into socialist societies on the Marxist-Leninist model--a transformation thought essential for long-lasting Soviet presence. Toward this goal, the Soviets have encouraged the building of hegemonial "vanguard" parties, the setting up of internal security apparatuses loyal only to the party, and the socialization of industry and agriculture. Direct involvement in the restructuring of the political system by Soviet and surrogate operatives at all levels allows them to penetrate it from top to bottom and makes it less likely that they may lose their stake in the country simply on the caprice of a given leader, as has often been the case in the past.

Although Moscow has consistently steered its newly gained proteges toward the introduction of and reliance on socialist economic practices, it has failed to provide any great amount of aid. It has conducted economic intercourse primarily on the basis of profitability and may have even engaged in exploitative practices. The Soviet unwillingness to subsidize its Third World clients represents a major potential vulnerability of the new Soviet posture and a key point of exploitation.

It is as yet by no means certain that the new approach will guarantee the Soviets success in their efforts to expand their presence in the Third World. The strategy has inherent weaknesses, such as the intrinsic irrelevance of the communist system to the developmental imperatives of Third World countries and the inability of the socialist economic model to provide a promising developmental alternative may

seriously prejudice Soviet prospects in the long term. Nonetheless, the new Soviet strategy presents perhaps the most determined challenge to Western interests in the Third World to date and is likely to seriously affect the global military-political balance unless defused by a firm and coherent Western counterstrategy.