

Soviet Political Theory -- promoting the same bitter struggle... since World War II

James Cowin

May 1973

From *The Rising Tide*

Although many people in the west feel that, at long last~ Cold War differences between Communist and non-Communist nations can be settled, a scanning of well-known Communist political journals reveals a tone of hostility and mistrust toward the United States and her allies.

Many have felt that this hostility has arisen only as a result of actions by the Western nations against the Soviet Union and other Communist states, beginning with the Allied intervention in the 1917 Russian Revolution. Ample evidence exists to indicate that this is not true, and the Communists themselves provide the best source material.

The article below, "The Crisis of Imperialist Foreign Policy," by L. Vidyasova, was written in the January 1973 edition of *International Affairs*. Published in Moscow, this journal is probably the best known Soviet analysis of foreign affairs published for foreign readers.

Communists feel that capitalism is undergoing its final crisis before it is overcome by the socialist system, according to Miss Vidyasova, a Soviet journalist. Capitalist states find that this imperialist foreign policy has suffered heavily as a result, as "expansionist ambitions" have been thwarted. Miss Vidyasova explains how this has happened. She writes that imperialist foreign policy practiced mainly by the United States is built around "militarism" and "economic penetration," or "neo-colonialism."

Of greatest importance is the "role played by the armed forces and the war-industrial monopolies in mapping out long-term foreign policy." The imperialists, especially the United States, make use of armed might as a "Key" instrument in foreign policy as they "coerce" or "blackmail" other nations to do their will. She condemns this "diplomacy of violence."

The imperialists can no longer fight their aggressive wars with impunity, however. The Vietnam War enraged U.S. and world public opinion, caused a U.S. money crisis in the late 1960's and led to the "dissolution of bloc solidarity" among NATO nations. Since direct military action seems too dangerous, the imperialists have pursued a policy of economic penetration.

Imperialist economic policy has two aims: to tie together the Western bloc so that all are dependent upon the U.S. and to prevent newly independent Third World nations from breaking away from the capitalist system.

To accomplish their aims, imperialists seize key economic positions and work from within to keep new nations weak by playing on nationalist feelings and tribal differences. By being integrated economically, these nations would be tied to the imperialist bloc and could be prevented from receiving aid from socialist countries.

The author asserts that colonialism has also failed because of the growth of the national liberation movement. Spreading throughout the world, this movement takes the form of popular uprisings against the imperialist governments. With "moral and material support" from socialist nations, the movements have stood up to the U.S. and "imperialists" are unable to take effective countermeasures. The "abortive demonstration of strength by U.S. militarists against Bangladesh" serves as evidence.

The British imperialists have also been forced to leave the Arab states east of the Suez because of revolutionary activity. Since both cornerstones of foreign policy have failed, the capitalists have adapted to the new world situation in which socialism has taken the lead, and have "renounced their policy of direct confrontation." To Vidyasova, the transition from "balancing on the brink of war" to "an era of negotiation" is a "convincing indication of the change in the relationship of forces in favor of socialism." The "pioneering spirit" exhibited by the French in seeking closer relations with the Soviets and German Chancellor Brandt's Ostpolitik for indications that Western Europe sees the writing on the wall.

But the imperialists are to be guarded against, warns Miss Vidyasova, as they try to turn the socialist states away from their ideological orientation. They do so, she says, by maintaining that the Cold War is a battle of nations, which can be resolved by agreements, not of ideologies. She sees this as an attempt to "soften up" the socialist community with subversive propaganda created by the CIA. The policy of peaceful coexistence has also been the victim of an attempt to further imperialist ends; the imperialists have demanded ideological concessions as a condition for relaxation of tensions. For instance, Western political leaders maintain that an all-European conference should not deal with problems of security and cooperation but should "open the door to free ideological penetration into the socialist countries."

The West, however, has not completely abandoned its militaristic stance, according to the author. She asserts that "militarist ruling circles... and die-hard reactionary groups are trying to revive the Cold War." The arms race continues as the imperialists use their weapons as bargaining chips in negotiations. Secretary of Defense Laird is described as arguing that "the favorable outcome of the talks was due to the U.S.A. having acted from positions of strength," and that he "urged that this be the policy in all future talks."

The author also condemns the West for "crisis diplomacy" and for the policy of "selective peaceful coexistence" according to which Western leaders promote peaceful relations on one continent while pursuing war on another. Western relations with Communist China are condemned as a means of dividing the socialist bloc.

The socialist nations have been able to thwart imperialist moves because socialist foreign policy "coincides with the general course of historical development, while imperialist foreign policy upholds the interests of a society that has been doomed by history." Because imperialists have acknowledged the futility of their "frontal attacks," the Cold War is being transformed into an era of peaceful coexistence, "the only reasonable basis for relations between countries with differing social systems."

The policy of "peaceful coexistence," as explained by Gus Hall, Executive Secretary of the American Communist Party in *World Marxist Review*, October 1965, "has never been a policy based on the acceptance of the status quo in world relations. It has been and remains a weapon of struggle... With one hand, the aggressive forces of world imperialism and world war are held back (by the Soviet arsenal); with the other, full support is given to the forces fighting for national independence and... moving toward a socialist goal."

(This "support" includes such measures as the massive arms supply of the North Vietnamese army, training and arms for Arab terrorists, and rockets and guns for the Irish Republican Army in Belfast.)

The article ends with the acknowledgement of the "contribution of the Soviet Union in advancing toward the creation of favorable conditions for the construction of socialism and communism... and for ensuring a peaceful life to all peoples."

The tone of the article indicates the author's feeling of a gigantic struggle on a worldwide front in which arms, mass communications, trade, and high-powered diplomacy are weapons. The struggle sways back and forth in accordance with dialectic method; it is, however, undeniably headed in one direction toward victory for Communism. The capitalist tide is receding, as the capitalists are continually repulsed no matter what tactic they try, since they are less able to force other nations to do their bidding. Through force of arms or economic leverage, they have turned to trickery. But this approach is failing because the nations of the world easily recognize the moral and technical superiority of Communism over capitalism.

The author is confident of victory. The U.S. appears as an enemy whose strength is deteriorating, and, if left to fate, will automatically fall apart in the future. The author seems to regard the "imperialists" as powerful game caught in a trap. They remain dangerous until they have thrashed about and exhausted themselves. Then they can be captured very easily.

The author implies that the U.S. and other Western nations have been thrashing about against Communist bars for some time. They are exhausting themselves against the increasing military, economic, and ideological power of the "socialist" system. Eventually, the continued economic and military crises caused by the weaknesses of the capitalist system, magnified by pressure from the Soviet Union and other "socialist" states, should cause its surrender.

This pressure is the real "contribution" of the Soviet Union in "advancing toward the creation of favorable conditions..." The "peaceful life to all peoples" can come only with the overthrow of Western democracy. Although the words of the author call for peace, the real meaning behind the phrase is very militant.

Thus, the Soviets appear to be promoting the same bitter struggle which has characterized East-West relations since World War II. To use Communist terms, the Communists have "adapted to the changing world situation," but their aim is the same and poses as great a danger as ever for the West.