

AD-A051 214

RAND CORP SANTA MONICA CALIF  
THE PROJECTION OF SOVIET POWER, (U)  
AUG 77 W S THOMPSON  
RAND/P-5988

F/G 5/4

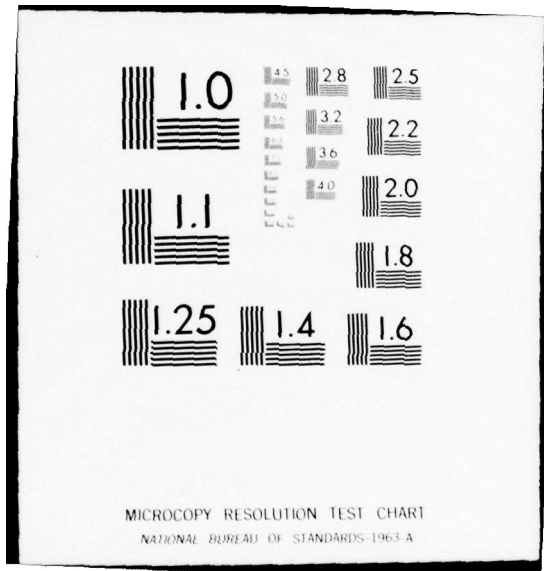
UNCLASSIFIED

NL

1 of 1  
AD  
A051214



END  
DATE  
FILMED  
4 -78  
DDC



AD A 051214

2

2  
THE PROJECTION OF SOVIET POWER

10  
W. Scott/Thompson

11  
August 1977

12  
47 p.

DDC  
MAR 15 1978  
RESISTANCE  
F

AD NO. [ ]  
DDC FILE COPY

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A  
Approved for public release;  
Distribution Unlimited

14  
RAND P-5988

296 600

JB

ii

The Rand Paper Series

Papers are issued by The Rand Corporation as a service to its professional Staff. Their purpose is to facilitate the exchange of ideas among those who share the author's research interests; Papers are not reports prepared in fulfillment of Rand's contracts or grants. Views expressed in a Paper are the author's own, and are not necessarily shared by Rand or its research sponsors.

The Rand Corporation  
Santa Monica, California 90406

PREFACE

✓ Over the past several years there have been a number of indications of increased Soviet interest in having a military capability to intervene in regions far removed from the Soviet homeland. This capability has taken many forms, from the presence of small military missions to the establishment of bases on the territory of distant powers. The present study examines what has happened. It includes some background material to give a feeling for trends, and some information on comparative American and Soviet capabilities to protect military power. It also explores what can be said about the intentions of the two superpowers. It makes hypotheses about future Soviet actions, and suggests possibilities for American actions. ↗

✓ A preliminary version of this paper was presented at a meeting of the European-American Workshop on "Non-NATO Contingencies and the Projection of Soviet Military Power," held at the Belmont Conference Center, Maryland, on 25-27 May 1977. It is one of several approaches which explore Soviet power projection. Other papers at the Workshop treated possible contingencies in regions removed from the NATO Central Front and identified military and strategic trends in those regions.

The present work has been coordinated with related work carried out by the offices of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Atomic Energy) and the Director of Net Assessment. This work, in general, deals with American options in the projection of power, both based on nuclear capability and based on substitutes for nuclear power. The author is grateful for the sponsorship of the Defense Nuclear Agency in supporting his participation in the Belmont conference.

ACCESSION for	White Section <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NTIS	Black Section	<input type="checkbox"/>
DOC	MANAGING OFFICER	
JUSTIFICATION		
BY	DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY CODES	
		SPECIAL
		A

CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	iii
Section	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
A Working Definition .....	1
Objectives of the Essay .....	2
II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET CAPABILITIES .....	4
III. THE SHIFT IN ALLIANCE PATTERNS .....	10
Projecting Power Through Allies .....	10
The Systemic Effect of Alliance Erosion .....	11
The New Soviet Alliance System .....	15
Patterns .....	16
IV. THE DETERIORATING MILIEU .....	19
Resource Scarcity .....	19
Resurgent Ethnicity and Communalism .....	20
Traditional Conflicts .....	21
Regional Conflicts .....	23
Terrorism .....	24
V. INTENTIONS .....	26
VI. AMERICAN RESPONSES .....	33

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A WORKING DEFINITION

In Western military writing, "power projection" traditionally denoted the use of naval firepower and tactical support for interventionary forces. Several changes in the international milieu have led to a broadening of the meaning of the term. In the first place, the breakup of the Western colonial empires and independence of the successor states have largely removed from the Western powers a long-existing international infrastructure of bases and other military assets under their control. Moreover, the growth of new norms as a result of the emergence of the Third World has meant that "gunboat diplomacy" and swift interventions, at least by the Western powers, are roundly condemned and generally precluded. As a result, the powers have had to develop substantial networks of economic and military aid and sales agreements,\* explicit and de facto alliances and the like for sustaining or developing their worldwide interests.

We will thus define power projection, at the first level, as the overall capability to develop an *infrastructure of influence*--ranging from "treaties of friendship" and cadre development in the Soviet catalogue to an active alliance system in the American case. The prepositioning of forces and equipment, the development of a worldwide naval support system, the development of reconnaissance capabilities, and command and control communications networks are part of such an infrastructure and interests more generally. Power projection at the second level denotes the capacity to *inject* appropriate instruments of influence and force over distances into rapidly changing violent (or potentially violent) situations in order to protect or further develop the power's infrastructure. These tend to be small conflicts which may increase rapidly in scope (like the 1960 Congo crisis or the successive Middle East wars), and they tend to be in (though they are not logically confined to) the Third World. On a spectrum of weaponry and organization, these capabilities start at the opposite end from the strategic pole--that is, from the nuclear arsenal and central

---

\* See Robert Harkavy, "The New Geopolitics: Arms Transfers and the Major Powers' Overseas Basing Network," for a convincing demonstration of the relationship between arms sales and military basing and access, particularly in the Soviet case. (Paper presented at the 1977 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association Chicago, April 21-23, 1977.)

war plans; they are also a distance from (though they do in part overlap) the conventional forces and weaponry that sit astride the internationally recognized lines of division in Europe and Korea.

Though in fact the ability to project power is analytically distinct from the other two levels, we will see in this essay that this ability is a function of several interrelated variables. Not the least of these are the relative balances at the strategic and conventional levels, but those balances are not the subject of this essay. Suffice it to say that this essay is written with a full appreciation of the substantial Soviet strategic buildup, including the introduction of several new missile systems, and the continued buildup and modernization on the central front in Europe.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE ESSAY

During the past two years, Soviet capabilities to project power have manifestly increased, as witnessed in the Cuban-Soviet intervention in the Angolan civil war and the appearance of Cuban soldiers bearing Soviet arms from Aden to Vientiane, and from Ethiopia to Mozambique. In the same period, America's allies lost their wars in Southeast Asia while the Defense Department closed down numerous military facilities throughout the globe. The contrasting trends in Soviet and American power projection resources and capabilities make a thorough examination of this subject--from an American point of view--pertinent and timely. In Section II we will briefly examine the background of Soviet power projectional capabilities and then compare roughly the respective American and Soviet projectional *capabilities* in terms of forces, equipment, and material.

As we have already noted, the ability to develop a *network of alliances*, whether explicit or *de facto*, is central to the ability to project power. Substantial changes have occurred in recent years in the American and Soviet alliance systems, and these shall be examined in Section III.

The *milieu* of the international system is changing rapidly, particularly in the Third World. As we have argued, it is there that many of the targets of both Soviet opportunity and long-range planning exist, given the endemic instability there. In Section IV we identify five trends conducing both toward violence and Soviet advantage.



Given these changes in capacity, alliance systems, and Third World milieu, what are the respective *intentions* of the superpowers? In Section V we examine the change in "will" in both American and the Soviet Union, and suggest some hypotheses about future Soviet actions.

What, if anything, is to be done on our part? In the concluding section we consider some options within the realm of possibility, given present political constraints in the United States.

## II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET CAPABILITIES

As a great strategic land mass, self-sufficient in its supply of energy resources and critical minerals and without allies across the seas, the Soviet Union traditionally had little need to develop the means of projecting military power beyond the periphery of its client European states.

Though the military integration of Eastern Europe with the Soviet Union has been in the process of consolidation throughout the post-war years (as illustrated by the efficiency of the August 1968 military intervention in Czechoslovakia), the ability to project power beyond Eastern Europe is a more recent development. Indeed as Geoffrey Jukes has argued, the deployment of Soviet forces beyond the periphery, from a naval point of view, could "in most cases be directly related to a specific combat requirement" --for example submarine forces to "plug gaps" in the North Sea, or to respond to the deployment of Polaris in the 1960's.\*

In the past few years Moscow's conception of the geographic extent of the area where its power and thus its influence could and should be effective has widened substantially, beyond mere tactical military needs. The sale of arms to Egypt through Czechoslovakia in 1955 is a first stage. It coincides with the development of new categories into which Soviet theorists could fit the potentially "progressive" ex-colonial states.

The construction of a blue-water navy meantime proceeded apace. What is important for our purposes are the bilateral agreements and the additional hardware for projecting influence and protecting friends abroad that followed closely behind. These intruded on areas that hitherto had either been Western preserves or neutral areas in which there had been little Soviet presence.

The late 1950's and early 1960's are something of a watershed. We know from Soviet writings that they saw the American capability to project power to be a central part of its capacity to maintain an international system suitable to its interests. The American intervention in Lebanon in 1958 is said to have had great impact on the Soviet leadership. At that time it did not have the capability to follow suit. It tried; in 1960 its airlift into Laos caused grave concern to the American leadership. But its intervention

---

\*Geoffrey Jukes, "Soviet Policy in the Indian Ocean," in Soviet Naval Policy - Objectives and Constraints, eds. Michael McCWire, Ken Booth and John McDonnell (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), p. 307.

in the Congo in the same year, where it gave Patrice Lumumba some lorries and 16 Ilyushin transport planes for moving his troops, without having provided logistical backup, was a total failure.

The Cuban missile crisis was clearly the event that motivated the Soviets to accelerate their power projection capability. After the 1962 crisis the buildup increased in pace, as the Soviet Union built a network of interlocking base, overflight and mutual support arrangements, and sharply accelerated the construction of instruments for projecting power, from large transport aircraft and ships to materiel for its growing naval infantry.

Between 1962 and 1975, for example, the Soviet ability to project a payload to a distance of 3000 miles increased by a factor greater than 10. The mobility and firepower of the seven airborne divisions were greatly increased. The Soviets began an extensive program to develop larger and more numerous transport planes: for example, the large Ilyushin 76 CANDIDS, which can take off from short, unprepared airstrips and transport forty tons of freight 3100 miles in less than six hours are being built at a rate of 18 a year. By 1980 they could easily have more than 100 of them.

The growth of their merchant marine fleet by a factor of three since the early 1960's is important also, given the integration of its alert frequencies into the Soviet military command and control system and its broader military capabilities, all in such contrast to the American merchant marine. Even their growing fishing fleet (of well over 4000 ships) plays a part in the communications and intelligence areas. The point, however, is less the growth of the building program than the substantial integration of military and civilian maritime resources, as Professor Erickson has argued.\*

Instead of moving toward a containerized fleet, which requires sophisticated ports and is highly unsuitable for moving military materiel in a power projection mode, the Soviets are buying "RoRo" ships--roll-on roll-off--many of which can be used in ports without special facilities and can unload in relatively little time. It is worth noting that in straight comparison of our total tonnage, the U. S. is ahead, but if oil tankers are excepted, the Soviets are greater in both number and tonnage.

---

\* See John Erickson, "Security and Resources in the Northern Seas: Soviet, Non-Soviet and SNP View," 1977 (mimeographed).

In 1967, following decisions made earlier that decade, the Soviets greatly enhanced their long-range aerial reconnaissance ability, with the introduction of the Tupolov 95 BEAR D. The staging privileges gained in Cuba, Somalia, Guinea, and to a lesser extent, South Yemen, thereafter extended the Soviet range to critical areas beyond the Central Atlantic to which they were previously confined. This enabled the Soviets to monitor American and Allied exercises and fleet movements in general, and to coordinate potential targets with missile launching systems, all with an accuracy theretofore denied them. Likewise with the Ilyushin 38 MAY ASW plane, which has operated from Somalia, Guinea, and Cuba: in the case of the west coast of Africa, for example, the geologic structure of the area had made it an ideal location for American submarines with a strategic mission. Though this plane is not highly competent, Soviet patrols now have circumscribed Western freedom of movement with it.

Recent developments may give the Soviets still more flexibility while constraining Western defense plans. In the spring of 1977, government sources revealed that ASW flights had been staged from Angola, and if Luanda became a regular basing position for the Soviets, its range would be further extended into the South Atlantic, as well as into a position that would alter Western options in Southern Africa if the crisis there broke into an internationally contested war. Moreover, it appears that the Soviets are building substantial airfields in Mali, whose function is not, at the time of writing, clear. They would, however, provide a backup for the facilities in Guinea (providing Guinea permitted overflights) and would also permit staging to any place on the African continent where the Soviets are engaged.

Despite the rapid growth of the Soviet projectional capability, there remains an overall American lead in every area and theater. Gross Soviet military capabilities immediately applicable to most of these do not remotely equal the gross capabilities the United States could potentially bring to bear. Thus at the present time, the United States could theoretically move a division more quickly even to the Persian Gulf than could the Soviets--unless one assumed that the Soviets had full access to Turkish or Iranian airspace (which they have had only sporadically in the past). They remain deficient, moreover, in naval infantry: they have only 12,000 men, compared to our three full marine divisions.

To be sure, we should not expect Moscow to develop forces for power projection that are a mirror-image of our own, given the difference in American and Soviet requirements. Static comparisons are thus of little utility unless they indicate goals and will as well, which we consider later.

A reconsideration of the American advantage turns up three problems. The first is that although the Russians have a gross inferiority to American capabilities in the projection of power, the trend is moving in the other direction, and moving very rapidly in some respects (as for example with amphibious ships of several classes). The increased Russian transport capacity is rapidly making the current net comparisons of the ability to project power into the Persian Gulf obsolete.

In ten years the naval-infantry assault forces have been doubled. Moreover, the proximity of the most important potential theaters of conflict to the Soviet Union (Europe and the Persian Gulf) makes ships equal to ours in size unnecessary in many cases--and raises the question of just what is the mission of the new Kiev class carrier.

Moreover, budgetary constraints and the growing threat in Europe have driven military and congressional attention farther away from contingencies outside the NATO context, with consequent effect on force structure, training, materiel acquisition, and so forth.

The second problem lies at our own "cutting edge." A cutting edge of power projection will inevitably be Special Forces and whatever other units are trained to undertake unconventional warfare activities, along with all the other related activities that can be used to probe adversaries or mount special operations where time is of the essence or where circumstances preclude a major intervention.

The Special Forces, along with the Marines, have been our main weapon in this area. But there have been substantial budgetary cutbacks in these forces--greater percentages than for the army as a whole--even though the total cost of unconventional warfare capabilities for all services is only about a tenth of one percent of the defense budget. The promotional structure of the Army, in a reaction to the Vietnamese war, is such that there is less incentive any longer to involve oneself in such an area. It is worth recalling how cost-effective unconventional operations can be: the World War II British raids behind the Italian-German lines in Libya destroyed more planes

and materiel than did the RAF bombardments. The Israeli raid on Entebbe was one of the most impressive and cost-effective military operations of all times.

The decline of American security assistance programs is a related area where our power projection capabilities are decreasing, at the same time as Soviet capabilities increase. The access of Military Assistance Program officers, Special Forces Mobile Training Teams and the like to Third World armed forces was always a major dimension of our power projection capability, particularly in geographically critical countries like Zaire, Ethiopia, or South Korea.

It must also be remembered that the CIA has traditionally played an important role in unconventional operations. And the restrictions which have now been imposed on its clandestine collections and operations abroad, following the furor over the role of the CIA, must be considered a significant shift in the relative ability of the two superpowers to project their influence at the lower end of the force spectrum.

Thirdly, Soviet doctrine as it seems to have developed, suggests that their inferiority is not wholly disadvantageous. Less emphasis is placed on gross capabilities; more is placed on reaching the area of conflict first. This is particularly pertinent if the United States has the capability to project greater power into the particular arena. The first power on the scene can establish a presence, possibly a legitimacy, which can then be dislodged only with the use of a great amount of force. This effectively deters the second power from intervening. Essentially this is what happened in Angola. The Soviets, moreover, work through surrogates, for reasons which we examine below. They also can interpose their fleet successfully, as they did during the Lebanese crisis, to make an American intervention prohibitively expensive.

The Soviet Union, it would appear, is capable of making a virtue of necessity, in developing doctrine suitable to its smaller capacity. Thus its willingness to increase the risk factor in its interventions is suggested by the Angolan operation. The speed with which the General Staff apparently organized the airlift, following on the declining fortunes of its MPLA allies, leads us to hypothesize that the Soviet Union will move swiftly to take advantage of situations where the United States is disinclined to intervene openly and where it has a reliable local ally. Moreover, the Soviet Union

will continue to build up its essential projectional capability through the development of, for example, more and better LPD ships, more large transport aircraft, and as we shall see in the next section, will continue to develop the *de facto* alliance structures essential to power projection in the late twentieth century.

To conclude, we see that American power projectional capabilities remain larger than those of the Soviet Union, an advantage increasingly vitiated by self-imposed restrictions and by the Soviet build-up in critical areas.

### III. THE SHIFT IN ALLIANCE PATTERNS

The advent of nuclear weapons and the change in the balance of forces have brought significant changes both in the balance of alliance systems worldwide and in their pattern. In this section we look at the evolution of alliance functions, then examine the erosion of the American system, the development of a quite different Soviet system, and how new patterns of using alliances are developing.

#### PROJECTING POWER THROUGH ALLIES

Throughout the nineteenth century and midway through the twentieth, the purpose of alliances was as much to *aggregate* power as to project it. With the advent of the nuclear era with its new hierarchy of superpowers and relatively less-powerful allies, a smaller partner could at best add only a trivial amount of military force to its ally's arsenal at the strategic level. The projection function (that is, the smaller power's willingness to lend facilities or to supply manpower to or in the interest of its greater ally) then came to assume a relatively greater role in the contribution the smaller power could make to the alliance. To take the extreme case, Cuba, by allowing Moscow to develop military bases so close to the United States, herself standing in for Moscow as the center of communist activity in the Western hemisphere, and by intervening in Third World conflicts where Moscow's presence might be self-defeating, advances Soviet interests by many orders of magnitude beyond what her own actual military force adds arithmetically to Soviet **capabilities** worldwide. The same proposition holds true for the sort of close relationships that stop short of formal alliance: an increasingly important category in a world where three-fourths of the states consider themselves nonaligned.

A great power's ability to project power through its allies or close friends is a function of its relative power position in the alliance, in the world system, and of its standing in the world system more generally. When a great power is seen to be strong, or when it is clearly in the ascendance, it can work through allies, summon them into coalition, and



use them as surrogates. This minimizes its own risks, spreads the costs of fighting the enemy, and optimizes war-fighting potential by buttressing and supplying the ally best able to wage a particular conflict. There are no pure cases--but always a mixture of motives on the part of ally and great power. The United States could, for example, "fight communism" in Indochina through the French between 1949 and 1954. Washington could muster the assistance of most of its allies in the Korean War. As long as the American position was strong and there was hope in the situation, Washington could persuade allies to fight in the Vietnamese war; as hope dwindled and the American position became more uncertain, it became increasingly difficult to keep allies in the fight.

In great crises it was possible to obtain cooperation even from nonaligned states; India sent "humanitarian" assistance to the United Nations forces in Korea, which was of symbolic significance. Throughout the first stage of the 1960 Congo crisis, the American stance drew wide support from the nonaligned. Washington coordinated its policy advantageously with such radical regimes as Ghana's in a fortuitous overlap of interests. It supplied the planes with which Ghana dispatched nearly its entire army to the Congo in hopes of stabilizing the deteriorating position there. In 1962, just prior to the missile crisis, it was possible for President Kennedy to persuade the most radical Marxist leader in Africa--~~Sékou~~ Touré--not to extend strategic staging facilities to the Soviets.

#### THE SYSTEMIC EFFECT OF ALLIANCE EROSION

In the 1970's all that changed. SEATO died as an organization in 1975 when the North Vietnamese army marched into Saigon. The Rio pact ceased to have any operational characteristics. Canada grew more truculent in its attitude toward the United States as its internal problems mounted. In Europe, though there was a growing realization of how serious the Western position was, little was done to remedy the situation. The rundown of British defense forces has gravely weakened Allied Forces North: Norway has become even more vulnerable, and the Soviet Union now underlines Norwegian vulnerability by testing missiles in the Barents Sea. In the

1973 war, Portugal was the only NATO ally to give assistance in our resupply to Israel. The fact that Europe's dependence on Arab oil put them on a cleft stick, making it difficult to do otherwise, only underlines the change in the Western security position. Turkey and Greece sharply and adversely redefined their relationship to both NATO and the U. S. Though from 1974 the Italian Communist Party conceded a role for Italy in NATO should it come to power, it called for a total reexamination of the Atlantic Pact. It remains hostile to much of the NATO doctrine that gives a semblance of stability to the European balance--particularly with regard to "first use" of nuclear weapons.\*

The only strengthening of the American alliance system that has occurred in the 1970's comes from Australia, thanks to the return of the Liberal-National Country Party to power. The new Australian leader is deeply concerned by the projection of Soviet power into the South Seas and other areas that bear on Australian security.

Consider also our military infrastructure around the globe. In the past decade, from Sangley in the Philippines to Cam Ranh Bay in South Vietnam, from Wheelus in Libya to Kagnaw in Ethiopia, the United States has closed bases for reasons ranging from "managerial efficiency"--because facilities could be duplicated or consolidated elsewhere--to surrender. The loss of no single base has been crucial, but every closure has removed an interconnecting link from an international system, the whole of which is greater than the sum of its parts. The function of interconnection is indeed often more important than the ostensible primary function of the base itself--which means that, in most cases, the argument that the presence of a base exacerbates bilateral relations is seldom *sufficient* reason for closing the base.

Consider the closure of the bases in Thailand. These had been maintained after the American withdrawal from Vietnam, primarily in order to have the ability to enforce the ceasefire agreement. Less well appreciated was the Pentagon's desire to sustain an American position far enough west

---

\* For an elaboration of this argument see W. Scott Thompson, "The PCI, NATO and European Security," Naval War College Review, Spring 1977.

for the projection of American power into the Middle East, in case the more logical eastern approach was closed. Almost wholly as a result of a badly orchestrated American position at the negotiating level and a collapse of will at the top, the Ford administration gave in to the overall not very strong Thai demands to withdraw, even from the highly important intelligence collection facility at Ramusun. Most of the *facilities* could be duplicated in the great base complex in the Philippines, though not the *forward position*.

Not surprisingly, the Philippine posture has stiffened in the renegotiations over base rights there, for the bases have become more of a liability as the Philippines becomes more isolated as an ally. It is easy to envisage a sharp change in Philippine willingness to sustain so close a working relationship with the United States in the near future.

The problem is not just base closure. Where we have maintained bases, our allies and friends have imposed a growing collection of restrictions on their use: what sort of weaponry can be stored, what sort of platforms can operate out of them, and for what purposes. Some officers have argued that these restrictions have done as much damage to our international network as have our base closures and losses.

Yet another dimension of base closure and alliance erosion has to do with *momentum*. When great powers have a declining purpose, declining function, and perceived declining need, then it is possible to justify the closure of any facility with the rhetorical question of what purpose the bases could possibly serve. This in fact was asked by American officials after the closure of the Thai bases, despite their advocacy of the American position prior to the collapse of negotiations.

Similarly, diplomats in the spirit of the era can propose further closedowns on the same logic. In this category is the message of Ambassador Francis Underhill, leaked to the Wall Street Journal. In it he proposed that Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base, both in the Philippines, be closed down. They aren't cost-effective, they exacerbate Philippine-Third World relations, they don't deter the Chinese or Soviets, he argued.\*

---

\* Peter Kann and Norman Pearlstine, "Closing of Two Huge U.S. Bases in Philippines Urged...", Wall Street Journal, March 10, 1977.

Decline, self-evidently, feeds on itself. The reverse is true for a rising power.

In relationships with unallied Third World states, American relations have, with a small number of highly important exceptions, eroded even more rapidly than with allies. As Third World leaderships look for foreign scapegoats in the face of their intractable problems at home, the United States becomes more and more a whipping boy. This is despite the anomaly that American local economic *interests* are generally much more substantial than those of the Soviet Union, for example in Nigeria.

Only in Egypt has there been a reversal, with Cairo and Washington more intimate than in a quarter century, while the Egyptian government plays an important role in thwarting Soviet designs in Africa. The ebb and flow of Egyptian relations with the Soviet Union over the past two decades suggest caution in predicting that the present situation is immutable, however, this is underlined by the riots in January 1977, by recent reports that Soviet arms are arriving in quantity via Syria (with, obviously, a Soviet blessing,\* and by President Sadat's memoirs, in which he now claims that the 1972 expulsion of Soviet advisers was "a strategic camouflage" so that an ensuing Egyptian military victory could not be attributed to the presence of the Soviets.\*\*

In Saudi Arabia and Iran, the United States has sustained close relationships of vast political importance, even if of no long-term help in holding down oil prices. Iran for its part has bought almost a billion dollars worth of Soviet weaponry (and is currently negotiating for more, as a signal to the American Congress). It also appears increasingly susceptible to Soviet pressure. In the summer of 1976 the Soviet Ambassador in Teheran, according to numerous Iranian sources, attempted to press the Shah into a downgrading of his relations with the United States and, in

---

\* John Bulloch, "Egyptian Army 'Better Now' Than in 1973, The Daily Telegraph, June 7, 1977. I am grateful to Professor Uri Ra'anani for bringing this and the ensuing reference to my attention.

\*\* The Ice Thaws Between Moscow and Cairo," 25th installment of President as-Sadat's memoirs, in October (Cairo), in FBIS-MEA-77-87, May 5, 1977, Vol. V, #87, p. D11.

general, attempted to intimidate him. Iranians claim that the Russian was unsuccessful, and that the Shah pointed to Soviet arms in Iraq and the Soviet Union's own vastly greater force nearby as the source of friction between Teheran and Moscow. But the record suggests that the Russian made his point. Not long after, Iran returned a Soviet pilot who had attempted to defect in Teheran. More significantly, for some time the Soviets had been attempting to expand their military overflight privileges across Iran. For a time the Soviets succeeded by claiming that these were civilian aircraft. The Iranians, who knew otherwise, finally called the bluff of the Soviets and the practice stopped. But in the autumn of 1976 the Iranians once again turned a blind eye to Soviet overflights, and the Soviets were able to project their power in the Western Indian Ocean at a new level of sophistication. They introduced Il-38 ASW patrols, like those operating out of Cuba and Guinea, to Somalia.

It is thus fair to say that in the Third World in general, the United States is on the defensive rather than defending; it is seldom able to elicit support on issues of import to it. Adverse votes in the U.N., nationalizations of American business, and indifference to the American democratic idea seem characteristic of Third World relations with the United States.

#### THE NEW SOVIET ALLIANCE SYSTEM

Moscow's situation is moving in the opposite direction. Explicit alignment with the Soviet Union--even by military treaty--does not exclude a Third World state from membership in the nonaligned movement as now constituted. At the most recent conference in Sri Lanka in August 1976, North Korea and Vietnam were admitted to membership; the independence of Puerto Rico was demanded, and there was the usual litany of anti-American slogans.

Consider also the Eastern European satellites: they may be as reluctant allies as ever, but the Soviets have integrated their own logistical and transport system with those of the satellites and increased their control of the military base network. This has gone

far in recent years to offset the possible reluctance of these states to support the Soviet Union in a war. The Soviets have recently undertaken the revision and expansion of their European allies' treaty relations so as to commit them to assist Moscow anywhere in time of war--not just in Europe.\*

The satellites are, for their part, further intertwined in alliance and quasi-alliance relationships with such Third World friends as Angola and Iraq, or clients of Moscow like Cuba. The area of explicit communist control by regimes hostile to the United States and bound to the Soviet Union by *de facto* alliance relationships has increased with Cuba, Vietnam, and Laos deeply intertwined in varying degrees in the Soviet system.

The Soviets have created what may be called an incipient international alliance system. Starting from the primary alliance system in Europe, they have constructed low-capability alliance systems in the Middle East and South Asia by signing treaties of friendship, by training forces, and by granting increasing amounts of economic and military aid. They have enlarged the amount of prepositioned materiel in such states as Iraq and Syria for use in a Middle Eastern war. Their friends, like Libya, have used such arsenals to resupply mutual friends--as Libya recently resupplied Algeria and Uganda, presumably with Soviet acquiescence. In Somalia the Soviets have greatly extended their direct lines of force projection: they have constructed a deep-water nuclear submarine facility and a two-mile-long runway for reconnaissance and ASW planes. It is, by every reasonable definition, a Soviet base, with extensive implications for the security of the Western lines of communication from the Persian Gulf to Europe. From the Cape Verde islands to Tonga the Soviets have investigated the possibility of building long runways and harbor facilities.

#### PATTERNS

More and more a pattern suggests itself, as the Soviet Union nourishes friends through the increasingly important stages of close diplomatic relations, economic and military aid, friendship treaties, strategic

---

\* See Avigdor Haselkorn, "The Evolution of the Soviet Collective Security System: 1965-1975," June 1976 (mimeographed), pp. 149-150.

access for the Soviet navy, and ultimately the capability to threaten Western interests directly.

In the Angolan conflict one sees the working of the new Soviet proto-alliance system. Overflight and staging rights granted by Algeria, Mali, Guinea, and Congo Brazzaville made the Soviet supply and resupply efficient and fast. Operating out of Conakry and Point Noire, a five-ship Soviet naval group could stand as a symbol of Soviet aid and protection. At the Cuban end a similar if smaller network operated, with Guyana acting as a principal staging post (and now becoming increasingly intimately drawn into relations with Moscow and Havana at sensitive levels). Africans may have cooperated with Moscow primarily because of South Africa's intervention in Angola: benefits to the Soviets have been no less for that. Angola and the Soviet Union have subsequently signed a Treaty of Friendship including obligations of mutual support that go beyond customary provisions and Moscow has apparently been granted important military basing rights.

Another pattern is the use of an ally for prepositioning materiel, as in Iraq and Syria, for use in a Middle Eastern war. Libya is used in a more systematic manner. Its stockpile of almost a billion dollars of Soviet arms has been used to resupply the arsenals of mutual friends--as Libya recently resupplied Algeria and Uganda, in the latter case after the Entebbe raid. John Cooley has reported, for example, that the Soviet Union "has begun to use Libya as a staging base for its military supply flights toward Ethiopia and as a testing ground for military hardware..."\* Though Libya has played this role for two years, the press have only now paid any attention.

What the Soviets have been seeking are multiple options for all operations in the power projection field. Thus the Soviets built up their ties with Mali, starting in the summer of 1976, far beyond the needs of the bilateral relationship. One objective clearly is to provide a hedge against a defection from the system by nearby Guinea, whose need of the Soviets has lessened recently. A proto-ally, like Egypt, can defect (at substantial measure), at great cost to Moscow, but benefits will have been

---

\* John K. Cooley, "Soviets Funnel Arms Through Libya," Christian Science Monitor, June 21, 1977.

garnered during the period of friendship (in the Egyptian case enormous benefits off and on for two decades). Other friends will be there to take its place (in this case, Libya, whose side the Soviets have taken in its recent conflict with Egypt). Likewise, as the Soviet Union's relations with Syria deteriorate, those with Iraq warm up, after a two-year chill. The Soviets, to be sure, have suffered serious reverses in the Middle East, and are now at a position well below their highpoint--but one still far higher than it had been a decade ago.

What explains the overall record of Soviet gains in the Third World? American policy in Vietnam, toward Israel or toward the white regimes in South Africa may be important, but those were not sufficient to cause the changes we have seen. The Soviets, despite their own bumbling diplomacy, have the Third World adherence to various colorations of Marxism-Leninism also working for them. A surprising proportion of the influential leaders within the Third World who have given it what unity it has and built organized movements that have met regularly have been radical socialists, Marxists-Leninists. It is the ideology of "scientific socialism" of Sékou Touré, Samora Miachel, or Augustino Neto, the Marxist rhetoric of the Ba'athists and of numerous other Arab regimes, and the derived radicalism elsewhere, that give to the Soviet Union many important opportunities for building its alliance system in the Third World.\* Such ideology is usually self-serving and impure by Moscow's standards, fashioned largely to provide a convenient justification for the harsh personal rule and economic centralism that suit Third World leaders, but this does not affect the result--a perceived overlap of interests with the Soviet Union.

---

\* Senator Moynihan's brilliant argument, published in Commentary (March 1975), pp. 31-44, traces Third World radicalism to Fabian influences. Fabian influence, however, has been on the decline for a generation and has slipped badly in recent years. The argument is thus increasingly unconvincing.



#### IV. THE DETERIORATING MILIEU

There has been a general increase in conflict in recent years in the Third World. This of itself would elicit superpower attention as one or the other's interests or ambitions got involved. But it coincides with the considerable increase in Soviet activity in this part of the world, raising the question of who will benefit and by how much. We will identify two basic trends in the Third World--resource scarcity, and resurgent ethnicity and "tribalism"--that seem to encourage conflict. We will also look at three sorts of conflict that appear to be on the increase, partly as a result of these basic trends--traditional state-to-state warfare, intractable regional conflicts like that in Southern Africa and in the Middle East, and terrorism.

Conflict in the Third World, to be sure, is hardly new. Indeed the notion of a "Third World" begins with India's independence, which was followed by probably the bloodiest struggle yet in the post-war Third World history. Yet in all, in the Fifties and up to the latter part of the so-called development decade of the Sixties, there was *relative* peace. The enthusiasms of independence, which came in 1960 for so many states and without bloodshed to most, muffled or eclipsed the underlying ethnic conflicts in many places. Substantial development aid funds helped bring relatively rapid growth, which helped further to smother unrest. A feeling of momentum attended Third World progress as states became independent and as institutions like UNCTAD were created to serve as mouthpieces for them. African states in particular discovered that the U.N. was a useful forum for venting their frustrations. There was at least the appearance of momentum in the Organization of African Unity and in the nonaligned movement.

#### RESOURCE SCARCITY

In the early 1970's, a new factor in the conflict potential of the Third World emerged--resource scarcity and resource competition. It is too soon after the great oil price rises of 1973-74 for the evidence to be conclusive, but there are scattered indications that the tighter economic conditions which have accompanied the oil price rise among energy-deficient developing countries have stimulated conflict--as indeed one would expect.

The Indian government attributed the growing internal conflict in 1974-75 to scarcities of oil-based fertilizers, food, and fuels, and this provided the occasion for the creation of Mrs. Gandhi's new order. The argument is self-serving but has considerable merit. The Indian case is not unique: the earlier oil price rises in 1970-71 were centrally involved in the Philippine power struggle that led to Ferdinand Marcos's martial law regime.\*

The other side of the coin is interstate conflict, and here Philippine-Vietnamese-Chinese disputes in the South China Sea, the Moroccan-Algerian conflict in the phosphate-rich Spanish Sahara, or the Indian-Bangla Desh water conflict come to mind. It will be surprising if some of these potential conflicts do not in due course lead to war--as seems most likely in the Magreb, where the Algerians have heavily armed the Polisario Front, and where the Moroccan army is primed to defend its new acquisition.

Is there a great power beneficiary? The Moroccan case might look favorable to the West, but the richer Algerians can rather cheaply tie down a sufficient Moroccan force to foment instability in the kingdom, in which case the Soviet Union, whose arms are involved, would benefit.

Conflict is seldom helpful to the status quo power, which the United States has been for some decades. The Soviet Union, being much less dependent on external sources of oil and minerals and the stability of the international political and economic system, can prosper amidst instability with increased chances of success. The extent to which the Soviet Union was willing to encourage the Middle Eastern states to war in 1973 has been a sober lesson. It would appear that the Soviets will encourage Third World states to use economic leverage against the West wherever they would also benefit, and will exploit competition for scarce resources to their own ends.

#### RESURGENT ETHNICITY AND COMMUNALISM

With the exception of Somalia, Lesotho, Botswana, and a few others, the new states are not homogeneous nations, and increasingly it looks as if the ethnic groups within are, if anything, in the process of consolidating

---

\* See. W. Scott Thompson, Unequal Partners: Philippine and Thai Relations with the United States 1965-75, (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath & Co. 1975).

their nationhood through the consciousness-raising effects of "political development." Communalism, "tribalism," and regionalism all appear to be on the rise throughout the Third World--from Malaysia to Ethiopia, or from Chad to Iraq. In most cases unity has been preserved, for example in Sudan, but in others, such as Pakistan, it has not. In every case there has been a high price. The Nigerian civil war, which began in 1967, was won very expensively, by the Federal Military Government, partly as a result of the Soviet arms supplied them--something Moscow, unlike Washington, was not inhibited from doing by domestic pressure groups. Despite substantial American economic involvement in Nigeria, that government became steadily more hostile to the U.S. in ensuing years, at the same time that its own stability once more comes into question.\* Ethnic tension--tribalism, as it is pejoratively called, is hardly something new. But the fortuitous conjunction of forces, as argued in this essay, works to exacerbate its effects. Consider the case of Katanga, which has been rent by ethnic fissures since independence, and whose own identity in relation to Zaire was an international question, as a result of ethnic pressures and local ambitions. The Katagan gendarmes have been in exile for a dozen years--but it was in 1977, at a time of general Western weakness and Zaire's economic disaster that the gendarmes, clearly with Angolan and Cuban blessings, invaded Katanga. They were defeated to be sure--but only at considerable cost and as a result of French and Moroccan assistance. Merely preventing the further upsetting of a favorable status quo from time to time hardly defines success. A possibly more explicit case of direct Soviet blessings to tribal dissidence may be occurring in Aghanistan, where according to some reports the Soviets are training dissident Pakistani Baluchi.

#### TRADITIONAL CONFLICTS

Prior to the 1970's there was a general Third World tendency, which had begun with Nehru, to assume that these new states had brought to the international system a new morality which precluded the resort to force in their affairs. It was a notion which proceeded from the lack

---

\* Interestingly, US-Nigerian trade is approximately \$4 billion compared with Soviet-Nigerian trade of \$150 million.

of arms in most cases. By the 1970's the arsenals of these states were increasingly well stocked, and the leaders could resort to the traditional means of resolving disputes. The recent dispute between Uganda and Kenya comes to mind, as does the Tanzanian-sponsored refugee attack on Uganda in 1973. The massive Libyan-sponsored coup attempt in the Sudan in the summer of 1976 and the third subcontinental war in 1971 which led to the creation of Bangla Desh, are further cases. The Syrian intervention in Lebanon, Iran's counter-insurgency assistance in Dhofar, and the Indonesian seizure of Timor in 1975 also illustrate the point.

In general there appears to be a new permissiveness toward the use of force in the Third World. This derives from a number of factors. There is the perceived American unwillingness to assert itself in the Third World, following the withdrawal of British, French, and Portuguese forces from Asia and Africa, and the American defeat in Vietnam. There is the growing arms supply, and most importantly there is the frustration on the part of the new leaders who are unable to deliver on their extravagant promises at home and seek diversions in external conflict.

Moreover, the demands of modernity and the failings of the political leaderships following independence or following the accession to power of a new, purportedly more vigorous leadership have resulted in numerous coups and great instability, which has generally favored the revolutionary great power. Ethiopia, the prime example, disintegrates daily at the present time. Less well known is the extent of Soviet involvement there from the daily and lengthy Amharic broadcasts to more clandestine meddling-- since the beginning of the crisis more than two years ago.

In all of these cases American interests are involved, and in very few conflicts of recent years has the United States been the beneficiary-- which is not surprising since America was the principal organizer of the present international system, and even, for a time, its principal military defender. With the erosion of that system American interests were bound to suffer.

REGIONAL CONFLICTS

The instability of Southern Africa, like that of the Middle East, can in part be seen as a unique and contained problem. Like the Middle East, it is likely to affect and be affected by the international system as a whole, however. As in the Middle East, though to a lesser degree, the United States has historic links with the local pariahs--in this case the white regimes, on which the Soviet Union has played with great success in recent years. American policy is now in a difficult position. It must hope for the miracle of agreement on an American-sponsored "breakthrough" if the growth in Zimbabwe and Namibia of the same sort of radical-Marxist governments that have come to power in Angola and in Mozambique is to be avoided.

It is often argued that the two former Portuguese colonies have found themselves perfectly capable of accommodating to reality in the region--and working with South Africa, as Mozambique does. Zimbabwe and Namibia could presumably follow suit. But working with Pretoria is hardly Mozambique's preference, and once South Africa looks vulnerable it would be prudent to anticipate that the Mozambique regime's truculent Marxist-Leninist ideology will have increasing relevance to policy. And, South Africa will ultimately be vulnerable once Rhodesia-Zimbabwe is in black nationalist hands. South Africa in the shorter run will also be made vulnerable by the thrust of American policy, wherein domestic political groups would hope to relive the civil rights triumphs in the American South of the 1960's, in the quite different South African territory of the 1970's. Thus strong voices now press for a complete severance of residual military and intelligence ties maintained between Washington and Pretoria. The more responsible of these would argue that only by helping now to drive out the racist regime can we have hope that a regime responsive to Western security needs will replace it. There remains a leap of faith there, with respect to ties of great importance to the American navy, at a time when the flow of oil around the Cape has increased by 3600% in a decade. It is not self-evident why a policy of continued pressure on Pretoria, to liberalize its loathsome internal policies, precludes the continued exchange of, for example, naval intelligence in these crucial waters.

A Soviet-assisted radicalization of Southern Africa, which in part has already occurred, will have serious consequences for the West, with no bases capable of protecting the Western sea lines of communication anywhere along the Eastern or Western littoral of Africa. It would be dangerous indeed for the Cape lines to be controlled by a regime, whatever its internal policy, that was unsolicitous of Western security interests.

#### TERRORISM

In 1967 after the Israeli victory in the Middle East, terrorist groups proliferated throughout that region. This is the last of the major changes in the Third World which have increased conflict and which have *tended* to benefit the Soviet Union.\* Palestinian terrorists not only learned from each other; via television, dissident groups from Pretoria to Belfast emulated and copied them. It did not take long for the Soviet Union to see its interests in this situation, given the intimate American connection to Israel. The Soviets were responsible for training and arming substantial members of the Palestinians with devastating effect, and they often put them through party schools, probably with less effect. The Chinese saw such techniques as an inexpensive way of competing with the Soviets and began the same game, arming "national liberation movements" in South Yemen, for example, as a way of forcing the Soviets to make more expensive outlays to revolutionary governments. Even the otherwise conservative Kuwaitis have been drawn into the net by harboring terrorists with important Soviet connections, and who are otherwise only welcome in Libya. Fronts, moreover, exist in the open--like the Curiel Apparatus in Paris, which aids terrorist groups with Soviet funds.

What can one hypothesize for Third World trends in the future? Many non-oil-exporting Third World states are finding that they are fighting a losing battle to modernize their countries. The easy gains of the 1960's are being negated by population growth and internal instability in the 1970's. Terrorism may decrease in the unlikely event that the Middle East and Southern African conflicts are "settled" in ways favorable to American interests. But the techniques of the terrorists will in the meantime have been exported worldwide.

---

\* See W. Scott Thompson, "Political Violence and the Correlation of Forces," in ORBIS (Winter 1976), pp. 1270-1288.

\* \* \*

There are a number of hopeful possibilities, in each of these areas which we have discussed in this section. Third World states may in fact simply have been passing through an unsettled phase before consolidating their previous gains and moving upward again. They might get their financial houses in order so as to become less vulnerable to high energy prices. The African states in particular might well be able to reinvigorate the old rule against the violation of colonial frontiers. Despite the extraordinary deterioration in the milieu of the Third World, leaders there might actually respond to President Carter's call for more respect for human rights. But hopes must be distinguished from trends.

V. INTENTIONS

The Soviets continue to prophesy that communism is the wave of all the world's future--largely a rhetorical position. What can be said in practice of Soviet moves and plans for the projection of its power, with relevance for today's problems? Clearly there is no evidence of a "master plan" unfolding on a preordained timetable. On the other hand, can one dismiss Soviet strategy merely as being a response to circumstance when "targets of opportunity" appear? That too is an extreme view. The Soviets began cultivating relations with Somalia in 1962 and built up its armed forces and waited for their opportunity. It came in 1969 with a *coup d'etat* which brought a regime to power favorable to its own view of the world--or at least willing to go along with Soviet desires. We know enough about Soviet decision-making, an orderly process and highly bureaucratized, to reject the pure and unanalytical thesis of "opportunism." What would be of interest would be to measure the degree of opportunism--given the presence of some degree of opportunism in all states.

Soviet policy has been and will obviously remain a mix--to project power throughout the world so as to be able in the first instance to prevent American interventions, secondly to protect and develop Soviet interests according to the opportunities available, and ultimately, one assumes, to threaten Western interests directly. The careful choosing of its friends for their geographic location--particularly near the Persian Gulf--bears out this hypothesis on Soviet strategy.

The growth of the Soviet willingness to project power can be charted by a look at the use of "gunboat diplomacy" in the last decade. In 1969 Soviet ships positioned themselves astride the harbor of Accra to intimidate the regime, which had seized a Russian trawler for fishing in illegal (and possibly troubled) waters. Russian ships positioned themselves near Mogadisciu, the capital of Somalia, and along the Libyan coast in the early 1970's to intimidate opponents of the regime in the former instance and to intimidate the regime in the latter. In the autumn of 1976, by which time Libya's relations with Moscow had vastly improved, Soviet ships stayed in the Gulf of Solum on the Egyptian-Libyan border beyond the time of the



Egyptian deadline for the withdrawal of all foreign vessels, with the obvious purpose of deterring the Egyptians from responding to clandestine Libyan attacks on Egypt and its friends in the region. On a different plane, the recent increases in Soviet military aid abroad (a rough doubling of commitments in 1976) also confirm a willingness to step up the pace in projecting power abroad.

At a much higher level is the most chilling example of all. If one follows Admiral Zumwalt's interpretation of the 1973 war, the Soviet alert of their airborne divisions and actual preparation for intervention were effective ways of compelling the United States to behave in a prescribed manner: in this case to force Washington to make Israel withdraw from its position surrounding the Third Egyptian Army.

The other dimension of Soviet projectional intentions which transcends speculation is its relation to American intentions and will; indeed, this may be the most potent variable in the Soviet calculus. The United States has, after all, been the possessor, the superpower *par excellence*, with the greatest international infrastructure of all time. American willingness to vacate its positions of leadership in the parts of the globe where it played an important role can thus be seen as a critical dimension of the Soviet calculus.

There are several aspects of the American position. First of all, the American will to act internationally and overtly is plainly at a post-war low right now. Polls in 1975 indicated a widespread American disinclination to aid even traditional allies were they to be invaded, though as is often pointed out they would probably change rapidly if such an attack in fact took place. But it is perceptions that matter: such an attack might not take place if the polls had not suggested an unwillingness to react. Moreover, as Kenneth Waltz has pointed out, public opinion often follows government policy and perceptions of priorities--if perhaps with some lag.\* If the government saw a threat, public opinion would presently get in line.

---

\* Kenneth N. Waltz, Man, the State and War (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1954), p. 179.

Secondly, it is important to note that the U.S. has changed the *definition* of the competition between the U.S. and the USSR because of how we on our side determine whether a given issue or territory is vital or important to us. It has been widely considered on our side that detente ended the cold war, and in many circles it was assumed that this meant an end to conflict between superpowers in the Third World. But following this the Soviets encouraged the Arab states to attack Israel in 1973. They increased the supply of arms to the North Vietnamese in 1974-75 as we wound our support down, and they intervened with the Cubans decisively in Angola on the side of a minority Marxist faction.

Nor have we on our side had any concept for countering the Soviet version of "detente" and their willingness to aid "national liberation movements"--that is, the factions on their side in civil conflicts. We accept that competition by the Soviet Union with us for the loyalties of Third World and allied states must continue and that the position is to be asymmetrical. We do not consider that it would be prudent or legitimate for us to support, even verbally, freedom for the once-independent Baltic states, much less for the peoples of Soviet and central Asia, who are so much farther along the path of nation-formation than almost any of the former European colonies were at independence. The notion that we *should* is generally viewed with horror by the American foreign policy elite.\*

---

\* See "State Department Summary of Remarks by Sonnenfeldt," New York Times, April 6, 1974, p. 14. Indeed, in a series of briefings by the American Secretary of State and his Counselor, in late 1975 and early 1976, the doctrine was officially promulgated that, for the admirable purpose of preventing nuclear war, we, the Americans, should assist the Soviets in developing "organic" ties between Moscow and its satellites in Eastern Europe. Although the so-called Sonnenfeldt Doctrine was widely discussed, and was officially repudiated by the President, the full measure of it was not really taken. Instead of standing for liberty in those states, the United States was to assist the Soviet Union in developing the sort of ties for Eastern Europe that would ease the tension between them and Moscow, so as to lower the risk of nuclear war: which, it was argued, could start from an uprising of an Eastern European regime against Moscow. All this was because Moscow is so little skilled in the art of implanting "organic" roots. Imagining the converse of the doctrine for Moscow (for example, if Moscow proposed to assist Washington in making the role of its international corporations more acceptable in Latin America) gives one the full measure of the asymmetries inherent in Soviet-American views of their bilateral relationship.

The pendulum has swung so far that no less than the Ambassador to the United Nations praised the Cubans for their role in "stabilizing" the Angolan civil war, and the President of the United States specifically backed him up.\*

It is also interesting to note the terms of the debate on power projection that have gone on since the Angolan intervention. In foreign policy community discussions, it is common to hear the (self-answering) argument that it is inappropriate to discuss the projection of Soviet power, given the rights the Soviets have, surely equal to our own, to acquire the bases or develop the friendships that the sustenance of a great world power position requires. The ample American precedent for Soviet action is often cited, and the fact that the Soviets have not intervened in civil wars as often or as actively as we have is noted.

The next line in the chain of reasoning in such discussions is that the Soviets, in projecting their power farther and farther afield, will overstretch themselves and suffer the same fate that we did in Vietnam. This is an argument which merits brief consideration. The Soviets have made innumerable mistakes, particularly at the level of personal diplomacy. The refusal of a Soviet base commander to grant President Sadat personal access to a Soviet base on Egyptian soil may be the extreme example, but there are other cases from Ghana to Indonesia.

Counting on Soviet mistakes fails to take into account the already demonstrated Soviet capacity for learning from both American mistakes in the development of its alliance system and from their own mistakes in early bursts of enthusiastic involvement in the Third World. The Soviets have been shrewd in minimizing the apparent size of the military forces they station abroad, relying as much as possible on merchant marine and fishing fleet capabilities for transport and intelligence functions, and simply by denying the existence or the import of the sort of military infrastructure they have built in Somalia and elsewhere. They moreover rely wherever possible on "floating bases" to minimize the negative repercussions of shore visits by sailors, replenishing from supply ships rather than from

---

\* See "Young Feels U.S. Is 'Paranoid' on Communist Activities in Africa," New York Times, April 12, 1977, p.1, and "Cuba Called Stabilizer in Angola: President Concurs with Statement by Ambassador Young," Washington Post, April 17, 1977. The logical question to ask, in view of Young's statement, was whether he also considered Soviet troops stationed in Hungary and Czechoslovakia to be equally stabilizing.

land facilities, as they did in Alexandria and more recently Latakia, Syria. They thus admit to no foreign bases, which is clever given the credibility that tends to accompany growing and self-confident power.

The Soviets laid much of this out in doctrinal terms earlier in the decade. V. M. Kulish, writing in 1972, argued that the "USSR is following a policy that is basically different from the American plan. It has its own historical, economic and geographic peculiarities which, distinct from those of the USA, will not allow it to or require it to maintain a military presence in remote regions of the world."\* The fact that the Soviets now have more troops outside their territory than the United States, as well as many thousands of military advisers, is not seen to contradict the doctrine, on which they still insist. Moreover, the Soviet executive is not constrained in its actions, like its American counterpart, by domestic pressures--certainly not to the same degree. The Soviets, where they have failed, can fall back, try again, persist, and ultimately hope to succeed.

A second thesis is that "pluralism" has so afflicted the camp of international communism as to render its threat to the Western-organized system nearly meaningless.\*\* Pluralism characterizes international communism, but it does not characterize the Soviet strategic threat--solely in Soviet hands--or the core of the conventional threat to Western military forces of political institutions.

With respect to the projection of Soviet power, "pluralism" in the communist world is not intrinsically disadvantageous to them; in projecting power the superpower does not require an identity of interests or ideological concerns with its ally or Third World friend. If interests overlap because both countries have the same enemy or the same regional objectives, or if the Third World state is sufficiently dependent (like Cuba) or enthusiastic enough about its Marxism-Leninism to permit the installation of a forward base (like Guinea), or to grant port and staging and military aircraft landing and take-off privileges (like Iraq), then Soviet interests are well-served, other things being equal. The allies in Eastern Europe,

---

\* V. M. Kulish, *Voennaya Sila i Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya* (Moscow 1972), pp. 135-137; JPRS translation No. 58947, May 8, 1973, pp. 102-105

\*\*See for example Seyom Brown, "Who's Afraid of the Big Red Bear," *New York Times*, August 26, 1976, p. 33, for this argument.

moreover, play their role at the nonstrategic level in helping the Soviet Union cement ties within, and they bring support to, the proto-alliance systems. In most radical Third World states there are many functions allotted to the East Germans, Czechs, Poles, or Hungarians--as well as hard chores left to the Cubans--in the division of labor within the camp of "peace and freedom."

What seems evident is that the Soviets will for the short term walk very cautiously so as not to disturb the highly favorable position that exists today: they are on the "right" side of the conflict looming in Southern Africa, Third World sympathies increasingly lie in their favor, and the majority view in the American foreign policy community is that Soviet advantages are to be discounted, particularly with respect to the Southern African theater. The Soviets were clever enough in manipulating American opinion, in the short term, during the Angolan intervention (e.g., holding out olive branches to be grasped by the American leadership) to make one hypothesis irresistible: the Soviets know it is possible to lead American governmental opinion, but they also know that popular and Congressional opinion can whip back suddenly, as happened when the full extent of the Cuban-Soviet fait accompli was finally appreciated in Washington.

It seems likely that the Soviets will thus not disturb the favorable situation for at least another few years, except of course through aid to the insurgents in Southern Africa, and through further development and consolidation of their infrastructures of influence worldwide. Thus they will press for extended facilities in Iraq and in West Africa. They will probably make a quiet diplomatic breakthrough--already well prepared--in Turkey (the recipient of the largest amount of Soviet aid last year). This might start with a treaty of friendship, military credits, in return calling for a closing down of certain American bases and, on the French precedent, a withdrawal from the NATO organization. It would eventually lead to a fundamental change in the balance of power in the Mediterranean.

It would be folly to expect this situation to be self-correcting; the Soviets are much less likely than in the past to awaken latent anti-Soviet feelings in the United States through a fit of bad manners, except where preeminent interests--as in the 'human rights' area--are concerned.

Indeed the opposite seems true. In some statements in the Soviet press, the Soviets early in 1977 eschewed mention of their commitment of support to wars of liberation in the Third World. In the absence of evidence of doctrinal debate, one was forced to conclude that this was for the benefit of the new administration in Washington, several of whose members seized this as a basis for a new level of trust in the Russians.

## VI. AMERICAN RESPONSES

As we have argued, the Western international system and American interests in particular -- from trade and investments to ties with fellow democratic governments, -- have undergone very basic attacks in recent years, owing to a partly fortuitous alignment of communist, communist-supplied, and radical states on a broad range of issues and conflict in the Third World. The problem, however, should not be exaggerated, for, as was also suggested, American capacities remain large enough for the moment to defend our interests.

The problem arises from the facts outlined in the preceding section: American "will" being so low. Will is a question of consensus in the first instance, and it is worth noting that this is the first time in at least several generations when a *fundamental* divergence of interests and views is emerging between the professional soldiers on the one hand and the political leadership on the other. It will no doubt worsen. What must therefore be sought are short-term and low-level moves which can be undertaken by those so disposed, with some chance of sufficient consensus, without a further decline ensuing in the American will to protect its allies and interests.

At the diplomatic end of the foreign policy spectrum, the United States can ironically now use nonalignment to its advantage. In the 1950's and 1960's when most Third World states were in one sense or the other tied to the West, it was Soviet strategy to stress the benefit of nonalignment as a first step in detaching these states from the Western security system. Their success was great, but it is not too late for us to play the same card now that the balance of nonalignment has tipped the other way.

It is important to realize that, despite the element of hypocrisy involved, Third World leaders really do value aspects of nonalignment which we should take into consideration. Without apparent consciousness of the contradiction, most Third World leaders are sincere in saying that they do not want entangling bases or to give strategic advantages to either superpower--meaning the Soviet Union. For example, India under Madame Gandhi, despite its wholly biased nonalignment and anti-Americanism in rhetoric and in votes at the U.N., did not make genuinely strategic concessions to Moscow.

However compromised India is in her declaratory policy by the language of her "Treaty of Friendship" with Moscow and by the web of interrelationships involving the Soviet Union into which it has been drawn, a clear line of demarcation has always existed. The Soviets have tried in numerous places to induce states to cross that line, but as yet only a handful have done so.

Enough remains of the *standard* of nonalignment for American diplomacy to make some headway through perseverance and a clear notion of the issue. The problem is an important one because, thanks to radicalism in the Third World and Soviet assiduousness in courting its leaders, a very large number of states are involved with the Soviets just short of that line of demarcation.

A clear lesson of pertinence comes from West Africa. In 1958 when Guinea opted out of the French community, bringing about a punitive withdrawal by the French, Moscow moved in and almost made an ally, in the manner of Cuba, of the Marxist-Leninist regime which still is in power in Conakry. An odd but warm friendship between Sékou Touré and President Kennedy, combined with Russian interference in the troubled domestic political scene led to the ousting of the Russian ambassador and denial to Moscow of staging privileges during the missile crisis, as we have already seen. Relations did not recover fully until a rag-tag Portuguese expedition nearly toppled the regime in 1970. The Soviets offered help, which was accepted, and back they came, this time with a small naval task force to protect Touré's government. In 1975, Conakry was a principal staging base for the Soviet Angolan operation.

In the summer of 1976, however, Touré once again became uneasy about his excessive identification with Moscow. His need for Soviet support had in the meantime declined with the independence of Guinea Bissau and the departure of the Portuguese whom he feared. Thus the possibility existed that a demarche by the United States, based on an appeal to Touré's nonalignment, might have a similar result to that 15 years ago. Were Touré to deny the Soviets the right to fly military reconnaissance and other flights out of Conakry, his nonalignment would be credible once again and that extension of Soviet power along the Western sea lines of communication would be withdrawn.

Doubtless the Soviets would then find other willing capitals--and we would have to start all over again. But time would be gained. By the same token, whether the Soviets can overfly Iran, Turkey, or Pakistan enroute to their base in Somalia has much to do with how long their ships, submarines,



and planes operating out of Somalia can stay on station. Indeed, until the Iranians looked the other way in late 1976 when they flew their surveillance planes to Somalia, it was unclear whether the Soviets would in fact attempt surveillance of the Indian Ocean from a forward base.

There are numerous other ways in which diplomacy could be used to the American advantage. One chosen by the Carter administration is the "human rights" campaign, whose origins are noble and high minded. No doubt the campaign will be successful if it is at all times remembered how substantially the milieu of the Third World has deteriorated, in which circumstances it would be a confusion of symptoms with diseases actually to expect such regimes to reform themselves; authoritarian governments will not cease to behave autocratically on a great power's verbal order, unbacked up by credible constraints. Were the campaign staged in the manner of Ambassador Moynihan's (as he then was) at the United Nations in 1975, it would act to draw attention to America's own ideals while keeping unfriendly regimes off their guard.

It is at the political-military level that the greatest remedy can be found. Measured signals of American readiness to stand by its friends and to defend its interests are needed in order to have an immediate effect at a time of perceived American weakness. These can often be inconspicuous to all but the target country. This would reverse the image of a declining West, its economies in disarray, its allies and friends routed on the battlefield in Southeast Asia and Southern Africa. Our economic interests in the Third World, so vastly greater than those of the Soviet Union, would be assets rather than hostages if United States diplomacy in the Third World were reinforced by its military capabilities.

Two minor examples where American decisiveness, in a low key, had an important effect are suggestive of what American policy should be. The call of two of our frigates during the summer of 1976 in the port of Tunis had the effect of buttressing President Bourguiba's regime at a time when its leaders feared that their bellicose neighbor Colonel Quaddafi, whose arsenals of Soviet weaponry are overflowing, was planning to make good on his threats to attack them militarily.

Still less stable is the Horn of Africa. In August 1976 Colonel Quaddafi attempted a coup on a large scale in the Sudan, further destabilizing the region. In those circumstances "Field Marshal" Amin of Uganda, with his rather primitive radicalism and ample Soviet arms, might well have hoped to

succeed in his threats to the security of neighboring Kenya with its far less sophisticated weaponry. It was surely not reckless of the United States to dispatch a destroyer to Mombasa and to use our P-3 Orions for surveillance in the area as a means of reassuring Nairobi and deterring Kampala--though Kenya's defense was in every real sense in its own hands.

In Ethiopia, in contrast, the United States has missed opportunity after opportunity to exercise diplomatic leverage to help steer the Dergue in more responsible directions. The revolution there now consumes its own children, while the Soviets maneuver themselves into a position where they can help divide up the spoils of a splintered Ethiopian empire. And with respect to neighboring Somalia the United States could still miss an extraordinary opportunity to try to replace the Soviets as an arms supplier. The Saudis are eager to wean their Somali neighbors of all Soviet involvement, and have made clear their willingness to "bankroll" any American arms supplies to Mogadisciu. But the United States, with a new policy of severe restrictions on the sales of arms abroad, has so far made a most restrained response: this with respect to a country sitting astride the Western supply lines while playing host to heavily armed Soviet bases.

There have been even more important opportunities that were missed. Angola seems to be at the intersection of Soviet and American capabilities to project power. Yet in point of fact a minor task force from the Sixth Fleet could easily and readily have interposed itself between Luanda and the highly effective Soviet flotilla, so much greater was the naval power available at that time to the United States. The psychological effect alone would have been enormous, the military benefits perhaps, though not necessarily, decisive.

Numerous other chances have been missed to increase the psychological benefits in the Third World from the projection of power. The Soviets gleaned enormous benefit from OKEAN 75; the United States has never undertaken so comprehensive an exercise, but those that it does undertake are complex and important; they simply are not publicized.

It is to the threats to the fabric of an international system, identified in this essay, that we might well try to address our policy on the projection of power, in coping with Soviet inroads on the declining balance in the Third World. The Soviets have their growing arsenal. They also have an ideology

which has proved surprisingly useful despite its own rigidities in easing their acceptance in the most influential Third World capitals. They have that important but hard to define factor, momentum, working in their favor.

Most of all they have a disinclination by the United States to compete. For the first time since the farthest reaches of the globe became subjectively involved in international politics, the United States does not have the relatively free hand that for so long characterized its opportunities. This happens at a time when, as this essay has laid out, a variety of changes in the international milieu coincide with growing Soviet capabilities.

Yet the United States has always thrived in the past on competition. There is no reason why it should not sustain its interests in the competition today if only, instead of being defensive, it defended; if instead of surreptitious or covert intervention it openly took a stand on the values which it will support and backed them up with whatever military or political measures were required.

President Carter, for his part, has indicated a wholesome willingness to compete with the Soviets--in Cuba, Iraq, Algeria, and in various other radical capitals.\* Although this in large measure runs counter to the thrust in much of the rest of American policy, it is a strand that should be encouraged and reinforced. As long as the President continues to make such statements, it is impossible to conclude that the United States has finally chosen--as some have suggested--a policy of full retreat. Moreover, American military and political assets, if they were used, and if no further rundown occurred, should be adequate to sustain Western interests throughout the world until the day, no doubt a long time off, when currently unstable Third World states have developed enough to value less authoritarian and radical traditions and value more their stake in a pluralistic world.

---

\* See "President Wants to Gain Friends in Soviet Sphere," New York Times, June 12, 1977, p. 1. Drew Middleton has made the instructive point, however, that such competition must be backed up militarily. See "Carter's Global Challenge to Soviets is Questioned by Some," New York Times, June 29, 1977, p. 10.