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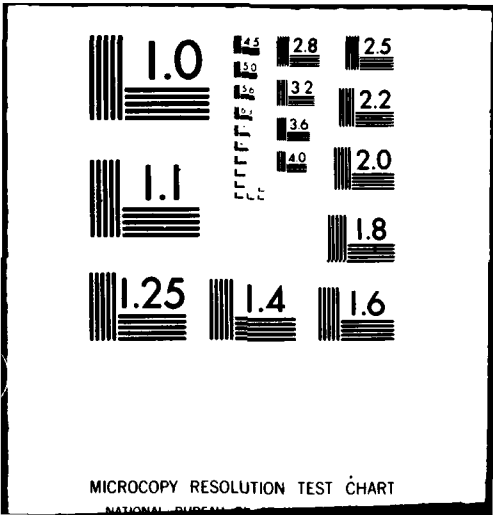
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**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE  
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**THE SOVIET UNION IN THE THIRD WORLD:  
SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES**

by

**Joseph L. Noguee**

**20 June 1980**

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Composition of this memorandum was accomplished by Mrs. Kathleen M. Preitz.

### FOREWORD

This memorandum evolved from the Military Policy Symposium on "The Soviet Union in the Third World: Success and Failure," which was hosted by the Strategic Studies Institute in the Fall of 1979. During the Symposium, academic and government experts discussed a number of issues concerning this area which will have a continuing impact on US strategy. This memorandum presents an overview of some of these issues.

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DR. JOSEPH L. NOGEE is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Russian Studies Program at the University of Houston. He is currently a visiting research professor with the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College. Previously he taught at New York University and Vanderbilt University. Dr. Noguee earned a bachelor's degree in foreign service from the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, a master's degree in history from the University of Chicago, and a doctorate in international relations from Yale University. He is the author of *Soviet Policy Toward International Control of Atomic Energy* (1961); co-author of *The Politics of Disarmament* (1962) and of *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II* (forthcoming); and editor of *Man, the State and Society in the Soviet Union* (1972). Dr. Noguee has served on the Council of the American Political Science Association and is currently on the Editorial Board of *The American Political Science Review*.

## **THE SOVIET UNION IN THE THIRD WORLD: SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES**

As the title of the 1979 Military Policy Symposium indicates, Soviet policy in the Third World has produced both successes and failures. What can we in conclusion say of Soviet efforts in the Third World? Have they on balance been more or less successful? Does the answer to this question depend upon region? Can we identify success with proximity to the Soviet Union, cultural environment, type of instruments used or degree of commitment made by Moscow? What have been the important instruments of Soviet policy in the Third World? Antecedent to all of these questions, of course, is the more fundamental question: What are Soviet objectives in the Third World? One cannot measure success unless one can identify the goal or purpose behind a particular effort. Finally, there is the issue of the implications of these findings for US policy. This essay, based upon the contents of the papers from the symposium, will address itself explicitly to these questions. It will summarize the findings of the contributing authors in order to identify those conclusions upon which there is a consensus and to note those where significant differences exist.



Before we consider those generalizations which might broadly apply to the Third World, we will first summarize the findings described above as they apply more specifically to the four geographical regions we have examined: Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

For Moscow, Latin America has held consistently the lowest priority among all the regions of the Third World. This neglect stems in part from the fact that the region is not in the Soviet Union's vital military and economic zone. It supplies the Soviet Union with no critical materials or important markets. Furthermore, Moscow appears to recognize the primacy of American interests and power in Latin America. American radio, cinema and literature negate Soviet influence culturally just as Western capital and technology undermine it economically.

Moscow's objectives in Latin America as summarized by Raymond Duncan are:

- To sharpen the economic conflict between Latin America and the United States;
- To deny strategic raw materials and markets to the United States while acquiring them for itself;
- To strengthen Latin American Communist parties; and
- To check Chinese influence in Latin America.

Another current objective is to maintain the USSR's special relationship with Cuba. Indeed, Cuba is the only Latin American country where all of the above objectives largely have been achieved already. But as Paul Sigmund notes, the Cuban experience may well have stimulated a reaction making unlikely any more "Cubas" in Latin America. For one thing, the existence of a Communist state in the Caribbean has stimulated the United States to resist the spread of communism. For another, Castro has been sufficiently expensive for Moscow to avoid taking on a similar burden elsewhere.

Is Cuba an example of Soviet success or failure? The two authors who directly assess this question agree that Cuba has been a Soviet success. Sigmund agrees that "the Cuban intervention in Africa which clearly turned the tide in Angola, and probably in Ethiopia as well, makes the Soviet expenditures of the last twenty years worthwhile." Gabriel Marcella and Daniel Papp point to the importance of Cuba as "the most successful indication to which the Kremlin may point as proof that Soviet Marxism-Leninism. . .has

relevance to the economic and social growth of developing nations." Regarding Cuba's role in Africa, the authors agree that Castro is not simply a surrogate or proxy for the Kremlin. Cuban involvement in Angola, for example, originated independently of Moscow. If there sometimes appears to be a puppet relationship, it is largely because Soviet and Cuban interests essentially converge. It is Marcella's and Papp's expectation that for the foreseeable future, Soviet-Cuban relations will remain close.

What about Chile? The overthrow of Allende notwithstanding, Sigmund does not consider Soviet policy there to have been a failure. The basic fact is that Moscow never had high expectations for Allende to begin with, and the Kremlin certainly made no solid commitment to him in terms of economic or any other kind of assistance. In Chile, Moscow was cautious. Indeed until now, the overall pattern of Soviet involvement in Latin America, says Sigmund, "is one of conservatism, caution and preference for gradual change."

By contrast, Soviet involvement in Africa, particularly following the collapse of Portuguese colonialism, has been activist if not adventurous. Before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, no single issue so undermined the carefully nurtured Soviet-American detente as the presence of Soviet and Cuban forces in Angola and the Horn of Africa. Direct Soviet military involvement in Africa is unprecedented, raising the question: Why is the Kremlin taking new risks in Africa? Arthur Klinghoffer, Daniel Papp and Richard Remnek describe a combination of offensive and defensive objectives of Soviet policy. They include:

- Reducing both Western and Chinese influence on the continent;
- Undermining the remaining white-dominated regimes in Southern Africa and, in particular, disrupting the dialogue South Africa was attempting to cultivate with some black African states;
- Obtaining leverage over the liberation movements in the region, notably the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO), the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), and the African National Congress (ANC);
- Enhancing Soviet relations with all the countries of Africa, particularly the "front-line" states of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia.
- Denying the United States strategic rights in Angola, including

access to ports, aircraft overflights and landing privileges; while seeking to obtain these privileges for the Soviet Union;

- Countering not only American but South African, Zairian and Zambian influence in Southern Africa and the support given by these pro-Western regimes to the front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA). For this, Klinghoffer contends that part of the Kremlin's motivation to support the Movement for the Popular Liberation of Angola (MPLA) with troops and arms was defensive;

- Denying the West the mineral resources of South Africa which include gold, diamonds, chromite, copper, antimony, platinum, cobalt and uranium; and,

- Gaining for the Soviet Union facilities in Africa to support their naval forces. Opinions differ regarding the purposes which these naval forces would serve. Papp hypothesizes that Moscow may wish to use facilities in Africa in order to threaten US and European oil supply lines. Remnek contends that the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean is best explained by a peacetime mission. Because the shortest sea route open year round between the Soviet European and Pacific ports runs through these waters, Moscow has a vital interest in keeping these sea lanes open.

The motives impelling the Soviet Union to intervene on behalf of Ethiopia against Somalia in the Ogaden War (1977-78) were both offensive and defensive. Mengistu's coup brought to power a Marxist regime in one of Africa's most populous countries. In ideological terms, the Soviets saw the struggle between the Dergue and its enemies as a confrontation between the forces of progress and reaction. By late 1976 or early 1977 when Moscow made its military commitment to Ethiopia, the country was threatened with disintegration and anarchy. Domestically, nationalization and land reform had created widespread instability. Ethiopia's failure to crush the Eritrean secessionists raised the specter of a breakup of the Ethiopian state and the possibility that, under Saudi leadership, an Arab coalition of Saudi Arabia, Eritrea and the Sudan might turn the Red Sea into an Arab anti-Soviet lake. To counter this potential coalition, Moscow proposed a federation of Marxist states which would have included Ethiopia, Somalia, South Yemen and Djibouti.

Clearly among all these objectives, considerations of national interest and Soviet power predominate. Nevertheless, Klinghoffer, Papp and Remnek are in agreement that, in both Angola and Ethiopia, ideological factors also played an important role. The

Marxist identification of the Neto and Mengistu regimes was significant. In the latter case even more important were the policies of the Dergue which were designed to uproot Ethiopia's feudal system. Moscow had suffered too many setbacks in Africa after giving extensive aid to non-Communist governments, and apparently it wanted the assurance that would come from an alliance based upon a common ideological perspective.

The assessments of Soviet success in Africa differ markedly from the popular view that recent Soviet activism has resulted in a substantial gain for the Soviet Union at the expense of the West. At best, the authors view Moscow's accomplishments as mixed. In no case has the Kremlin gained anything without paying a substantial cost. On balance, Papp says that "it cannot be argued that Soviet policy has been overly successful in achieving its objectives in Southern Africa." Relations between Moscow and the "front-line" states are "friendly and cordial," but not intimate. Clearly they are not subservient to the Kremlin. Nor is Angola, for all the Soviet investment there. Angola has chosen not to enmesh its economy with that of the Communist bloc nor to terminate its economic ties with the West. Perhaps most significant of all, not a single African country has permitted the Soviet Union to use its territory for a permanent military base. Klinghoffer describes some internal political developments in Angola after the MPLA victory which suggest that there existed elements in Neto's government opposed to strong ties with the Soviet Union. In 1977 there was an attempted coup against Neto which may have had the support of the Soviet Union.

Somalia was an obvious, though not necessarily irretrievable, Soviet loss. Moscow's support for Ethiopia led Mogadiscio on November 13, 1977, to abrogate its Friendship Treaty with Moscow and terminate Soviet access to extensive naval support facilities in Somalia. Remnek contends that the Soviet leadership miscalculated Mogadiscio's behavior because it assumed that common sense and state interest would keep Somalia from invading the Ogaden. However, he believes that even more serious than Moscow's losses in Somalia was the collapse of the Indian Ocean Naval Arms Limitation Talks which might have curbed naval activity of the nonlittoral states in the Indian Ocean.

To cite Moscow's frustrations in Africa is not to deny obvious gains. In the Horn of Africa the net Soviet position today is stronger than before. The loss of Berbera has been "more or less"

made up with access to support facilities in Ethiopia and South Yemen. Soviet assistance has to some extent stabilized Ethiopia. And, although the Russians have failed to bring about a federation of Marxist states, they have been able to frustrate the ambitions of the pro-Western Arab states to mobilize a bloc of conservative Arab states in the Horn. Finally, it should be noted that the Soviet Union has virtually displaced Chinese influence in Southern Africa.

The authors of the studies on the Middle East agree that the Soviet Union has pursued in recent years an offensive (rather than a defensive) policy. The overall goal of that policy has been to increase Soviet influence in the Middle East at the expense of the United States and other western powers. A concerted effort has been made to unite the Arab states of the Middle East into an "anti-imperialist" bloc of pro-Soviet states. To date this goal has eluded the Kremlin, in part, as Robert Freedman explains, because of the opposition of Iraq, ostensibly a Soviet ally. Iraqi xenophobia is as much a barrier to close relations with its Communist benefactor as with the so-called imperialist enemies. The Ba'athist regime has been no more tolerant of the Communist party than it has of any other opposition party. Notwithstanding the large quantity of military and economic aid given by the Soviet Union, Moscow has been unable to persuade Baghdad to accept the Iraqi Communist Party as a viable component of a "national front" government. Indeed, Iraqi persecution of its domestic Communists has been among the most vicious in the Middle East, resulting in the 1978 execution of a number of party members. Soviet-Iraqi relations appear to fluctuate with the degree of Iraqi dependence upon the Soviet Union. In 1973-74 that dependence was rather substantial; since then it has lessened and Soviet influence has waned. "All in all," says Freedman, "the course of Iraqi-Soviet relations in the 1968-79 period indicates the low level of Soviet influence over its client state which has given relatively little in the way of political obedience in return for a large amount of Soviet economic and military assistance."

Before the Islamic revolution, Iran was as pro-Western as Iraq was anti-Western. That did not prevent Moscow from maintaining surprisingly good relations with the Shah. As Robert Irani points out, if it could not incorporate Iran into its orbit, Moscow was determined at least to neutralize the country. During the 1960's and 1970's Soviet relations, if not close, were at least correct. Moscow

pursued a "reasonable, pragmatic, nonideological" policy toward Iran. Indeed, from the mid-1960's to the mid-1970's the Soviet Union became one of Iran's principal trading partners.

However satisfactory Soviet-Irani relations may have been in the 1970's, there is no doubt that the rise to power of the Ayatollah Khomeini in January 1979 was a major victory for the Soviet Union, if for no other reason than it was a colossal defeat for the United States. Edward Corcoran and Irani both agree that Moscow is the beneficiary of events in Tehran that were not its doing. Although there is some evidence of Soviet instigation during the upheaval leading to Khomeini's return in 1979, and Soviet propaganda has consistently supported the revolution, Moscow certainly did not engineer the overthrow of the Shah. It is possible that the espousal of Islamic fundamentalism in a neighboring country might even stimulate Muslims in the Soviet Union to demand greater religious freedoms for themselves.

The Moslem peoples of Soviet Central Asia offer the Soviet Union some leverage in its relations with Moslem countries throughout the world. Moscow has sought to use the peoples of Central Asia as a source of identification with the Moslem peoples as well as a developmental model for the entire Third World. In this endeavor, even before the invasion of Afghanistan, the Kremlin had only limited success. Corcoran points out that the influence relationship between Moslem communities flows in more than one direction. Because of its relations with the Third World, Moscow has been restrained in its handling of some of its internal problems of Moslem assertiveness. Indeed, the use of Soviet Moslem troops in Afghanistan creates unique linkages between Moslems on both sides of the Soviet border which may well have unpredictable and unsettling consequences for Soviet control in Central Asia.

One of the probable objectives of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 was to keep that country from establishing the kind of fundamentalist Islamic (in Soviet eyes "reactionary") republic that Iran and Pakistan have. Another may have been to move closer to a port on the Indian Ocean. As Corcoran points out, only Pakistani Baluchistan now separates the Soviet Union from its long sought after warm water port.

There were other factors behind the Soviet invasion. According to Shirin Tahir-Kheli, the Soviet Union, perceiving the United States to be weak and preoccupied with Iran, took advantage of an opportunity that could in time give Moscow its long desired warm

water port on the Indian Ocean. Apparently Soviet action was necessary, too, in order to reinvigorate Afghanistan's "faltering socialist experiment." Both Nur Muhammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin had attempted ruthlessly to implement radical land and educational reforms which stimulated large-scale popular opposition to their regimes.

On balance Tahir-Kheli considers Soviet policy in Afghanistan to be successful. The principal advantage to Moscow is that Afghanistan remains outside of the Western orbit and is available as a base to exert pressure against Pakistan. Still, the costs to the Kremlin have been substantial. Moscow is now under pressure to endorse a very unpopular regime; detente has been (at least temporarily) destroyed; and the Soviet Union has suffered severe propaganda defeats in the Third World and among Moslem nations in particular. And, finally, as Corcoran notes, a worsening of Soviet ties with the Moslem world could significantly complicate its future energy planning.

In Asia, Soviet objectives are described as follows:

- Establishing stable relationships with the countries in the region;
- Obtaining support for its policies generally and in particular to win Indian and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) endorsement of its China policies;
- Containing China and complicating China's security requirements;
- Reducing the influence in Asia of China, Japan and the United States; and,
- Bringing Vietnam into the Soviet economic and strategic orbit.

India is a particularly interesting case because it is the only democracy to have established a close relationship with the Soviet Union. Rajan Menon explains this relationship in terms of the mutuality of their national interests, a condition that continued even after the fall of the pro-Soviet Indira Gandhi in 1977. Since 1965, India has relied upon the Soviet Union for its military arms to meet a potential threat from either China or Pakistan. That dependence has produced a responsiveness to Soviet foreign policy interests, but only insofar as there is no contradiction with basic Indian national interests. Thus, for example, India refrained from openly criticizing Moscow's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, but it refused to endorse the Kremlin's support for an Asian collective security system or the Nonproliferation Treaty. Because a

rapprochement with China is important to India, the Indian Government refused to endorse the Vietnamese position in the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war or to back the enemies of China in Cambodia. In sum, says Menon, "the Soviet Union's success in utilizing arms supplies and security dependence to influence Indian behavior has, on the whole, been rather modest."

Douglas Pike's assessment of Soviet accomplishments in Asia is negative. He notes: "Nothing seems to work very well for the USSR in Asia and despite considerable input and energy over the years it has surprisingly little to show for its efforts. Vietnam at the moment is the promising exception. . . ." Vietnam's responsiveness is linked closely with its virtual total dependence upon the Soviet Union for both military and nonmilitary supplies. Today approximately 20 percent (possible 30 percent) of the rice consumption in Vietnam is supplied by the USSR. Even with this dependence, Vietnamese compliance comes grudgingly. Pike's analysis of Vietnamese national stereotypes of the Russians explains the basis for considerable animosity between both peoples. The Vietnamese see the Russians as alien, racist, barbarian and chauvinistic. They feel both suspicious of and superior to the Russians. Thus, during the Vietnam war, in spite of Hanoi's virtual dependence upon the Soviet Union for its war machine, Moscow had little influence upon Hanoi's war policies. Vietnam was able to exploit the Sino-Soviet conflict to its advantage, causing some Soviet leaders to look upon the Vietnamese as ingrates. Moscow's cause was not aided by its tendency to use heavy handed tactics toward an ostensible ally.

Until fairly recently the ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) ranked low on Moscow's priorities. When ASEAN was founded in 1967, Moscow had diplomatic relations only with Indonesia and Thailand. The Soviets now not only have diplomatic relations with each country but relatively extensive economic and cultural ties as well. The importance of the region to Moscow increased as a result of the 1979 Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the open conflicts between China and Vietnam. Thomas Wilborn concludes, however, "that there is no evidence of success" in current Soviet policy towards ASEAN. It may be true that US influence in recent years has declined, but that is not the result of Soviet activities. Nor has a decline of Western influence meant a corresponding increase in



Soviet influence. The Kremlin has sought in vain to win ASEAN over to its position in the political struggle with China. It has been particularly dissatisfied with ASEAN support for Pol Pot rather than Heng Samrin in Cambodia. Moscow was hurt by its sponsorship of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in 1979 and its failure to do anything to stem the flow of refugees from Vietnam, many of whom ended up in ASEAN countries.

The instruments of Soviet policy in the Third World are the traditional ones used by great powers in their relations with lesser powers: economic and military aid, technical assistance, trade, diplomacy, propaganda and, in a few rare instances, the use of military force. Of these, economic and military assistance have been particularly important. Soviet use of aid programs to influence the Third World began in the post-Stalin period. The construction of large, showy (and sometimes economically useless) projects in the underdeveloped countries was a hallmark of Khrushchev's foreign policy. Brezhnev brought more economic rationality to Soviet aid programs, replacing the show projects with ones better designed to bring economic benefits to the Soviet Union as well as to the recipients.

"Mutual economic benefit," notes Roger Kanet, became one of the central purposes behind Moscow's program of economic assistance during the 1970's. Other objectives of the Soviet program of economic assistance are: to support "progressive" or anti-Western regimes; to reduce the dependence of Third World countries on the United States; and to obtain influence in countries that are strategically located. Kanet stresses the interrelationship between Soviet economic aid and trade. A substantial portion of Soviet exports now consists of machinery and equipment for projects which have been developed with Soviet aid, and some imports come from projects originally financed by Soviet assistance. Third World trade is also important as a source of hard currency for Moscow. Soviet sales of manufactured goods, military equipment and petroleum are an important source of income for the purchase of needed raw materials such as bauxite and phosphates. In the future one can expect, according to Kanet, "pragmatic developments in Soviet foreign economic policy . . . to become a permanent factor in overall Soviet policy toward the developing countries."

During the past decade there has been an important shift in

emphasis away from economic assistance to a far greater reliance upon military aid as a means of ties with the Third World. The objectives of Soviet military aid are to undermine and supplant Western influence, to contain Chinese influence, to establish military bases to project Soviet power, and to gain economically. With regard to the last mentioned goal—economic gain—the transfer of arms has been an important source of hard currency for the Kremlin. In 1977 for example, the Soviet Union reportedly acquired an estimated \$1.5 billion in hard currency through arms sales alone. On the negative side, however, it needs to be noted that a substantial portion of Soviet military aid is simply never repaid.

How successful has the Soviet military program been? Roger Pajak describes a mixture of successes and failures, though on balance his assessment is, from the Soviet perspective, more positive than negative. "Military assistance," notes Pajak, "... has proven to be one of Moscow's most effective, flexible, and enduring instruments for establishing a position of influence in the nonaligned countries." Today several strategically located countries—notably Afghanistan, Algeria, Iraq, Libya and Syria—have military forces largely equipped with Soviet arms and are thus dependent upon Moscow for parts, supplies and servicing.

Still, there is a serious question of how extensive or durable the influence achieved by the military connection really is. Robert Donaldson argues that the Soviets have found it very difficult to sustain their influence or to prop up client regimes exclusively by military means. The Kremlin's greatest success to date has been in the Arab world, and this was a consequence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, a situation it did not create. Moscow cannot determine the domestic or foreign policy of any of its clients, and, as Pajak points out, many of the largest recipients of Soviet arms have in recent years opposed Moscow on very important issues.

With all of its limitations, military arms still constitute the single best instrument for influence available to the Kremlin. Certainly nothing else has been shown to be more effective. As a possible model for development for the Third World the Soviet Union has been a conspicuous failure. By its own choice, the Soviet Union is not a major factor in the economic development of the Third World, and as Donaldson comments, its "limited international economic capabilities" undermine its "expanding political ambitions in the Third World." Soviet trade is a marginal part of the

total international trade of the Third World, comprising only about 1/15 of the amount of trade conducted between the developed capitalist countries and the developing nations. Nor is Soviet economic aid any more substantial. The USSR's average annual aid contribution amounts to about .05 percent of its GNP compared to about .33 percent for the Western countries.

During the 1970's the Third World pressed vigorously for the creation of what they call a New International Economic Order (NIEO) which was intended to lead to a new distribution of resources and wealth between the developing and the developed economies of the world. Though itself a developed economy, the USSR has refused to participate in the dialogue leading to the NIEO. Moscow has attempted to harness the economic plight of the world's poorer countries onto its political contest with the West. The Soviet Union's argument is that the West, not the East, is responsible for Third World poverty and that its responsibility is limited to restraining "imperialism." That stance, plus the generally hard bargains driven by Moscow in its trade relations, encounters increasing resentment among Third World leaders. As Donaldson concludes: "Moscow's economic policies. . . may have reached a point of diminishing returns."

Finally, what are the implications of Soviet involvement in the Third World for US foreign defense policies? Among the authors represented here, only Keith Dunn addressed himself directly to this question, though the findings of all of them are relevant to American foreign policy.

To begin with, it is clear that Soviet involvement in the Third World is antagonistic to Western interests in general and to US interests in particular. There is a consensus represented here that an underlying purpose of Soviet activity in Asia, Africa, and Middle East and Latin America is to undermine US influence in favor of the Soviet Union. Thus, in this arena the cold war continues. Agreement breaks down, however, over the question as to how effective an adversary the Soviet Union has been.

Part of the problem lies in the elusiveness of the concept of influence. The authors represented here generally use the concept in a manner similar to that developed by Alvin Rubinstein: "influence is manifested when A (the Soviet leadership) affects, through non-military means, directly or indirectly, the behavior of B. . . so that it rebounds to the policy advantages of A." As Rubinstein

demonstrates in his classic study of Soviet-Egyptian relations, the concept of influence is difficult to operationalize or measure. Thus while one can easily demonstrate a greater Soviet presence in the Third World at the beginning of the 1980's than a decade ago, one cannot equate that presence with influence.

The evidence adduced in these studies is that Soviet influence in the Third World remains limited. Where a country heavily mortgages its military establishment to the Soviet Union as Cuba and Vietnam have done, the fact of Soviet influence is undeniable. But otherwise Moscow has rarely been able to compel a Third World government to adopt a policy that it was not inclined to pursue anyway. In those instances where one did—the issue was marginal to the complying party. On an important issue, such as admitting Communists into Third World governments, the Soviet Union has been notably unsuccessful. Even governments heavily indebted to Moscow have been able to maintain a wide margin for maneuver by balancing other major power influence against that of the Soviet Union. Iraq, for example, was able to balance French power against that of the USSR, and Vietnam balanced China against the Soviet Union during the period of the Vietnam War.

Many of Moscow's biggest victories have resulted from events over which it had no control. The collapse of Portuguese rule in Africa led to the formation of anti-Western regimes which automatically looked to the Soviet Union for support. The Islamic revolution in Iran led to the downfall of one of the staunchest pro-American governments in the Middle East. Even some US policies calculated to stabilize Third World politics such as the Camp David agreement between Egypt and Israel produced side effects beneficial to the Kremlin. There is a tendency, which Dunn cautions against, to assume that every defeat suffered by the United States in the Third World is the result of Soviet cunning and planning. In fact, like the West, the Soviet Union sometimes comes out looking good in spite of what it did.

The prescriptions for American policy of these findings are largely implicit and, of necessity, general. They suggest that the focus of American policy should be more on the internal conditions of the Third World and less on the Soviet connection. There are serious limits on the ability of either side to influence, let alone control, what happens in these countries. The United States might learn from Soviet failures the limits of great power capabilities.

Short of outright military intervention, which can be undertaken only under very limited circumstances, the use of military instruments is less effective than the use of economic measures. Though it is a powerful nation, the United States is subject to more political restraints on the use of force than is the Soviet Union. It should, therefore, give priority to the use of economic instruments over military measures in the Third World. However unlikely the prospects, particularly since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the United States should make an effort to enlist the cooperation of the Soviet Union to promote the economic development of the developing countries. If performance counts for more than rhetoric, in the long run the United States is in a better position than the Soviet Union to influence the outcome of events in the Third World.

**ENDNOTE**

1. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-Egyptian Influence Relationship Since the June War*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977, p. xiv.

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER ACN 80040	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO. AD-A090959	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) THE SOVIET UNION IN THE THIRD WORLD: SUCCESSES AND FAILURES	5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Strategic Issues Research	6. AUTHORING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
7. AUTHOR(s) Dr. Joseph L. Noguee	8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)	
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Strategic Studies Institute US Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA	10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, SUBJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS	
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS	12. REPORT DATE 20 June 1980	13. NUMBER OF PAGES 19
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)	15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED	16. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		
18. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
19. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
20. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Soviet foreign policy; Third World		
21. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This memorandum, based upon the contents of the papers presented at the 1979 Military Policy Symposium on the Soviet Union in the Third World, identifies those conclusions upon which there is a consensus and notes those where significant differences exist concerning the successes and failures of Soviet policy in the Third World. From his analysis of the papers the author concludes that in the long run the United States is in a better position than the Soviet Union to influence the outcome of events in the Third World.		

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