

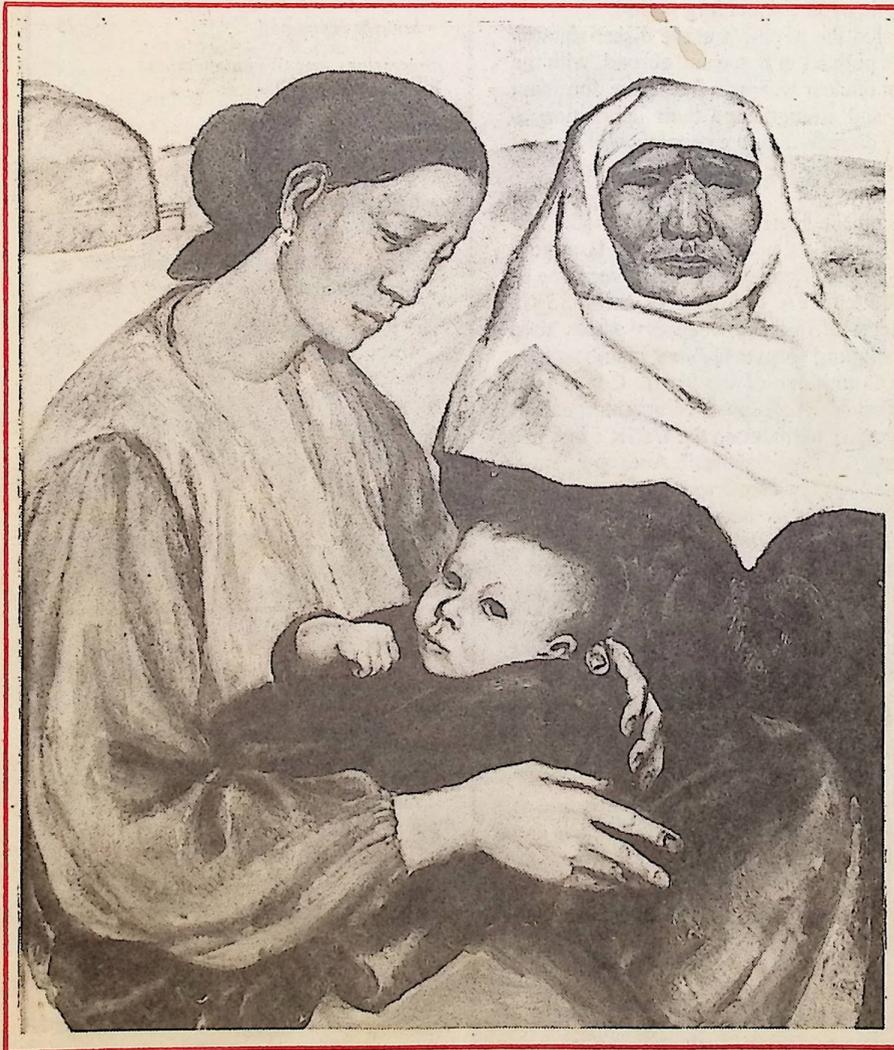
\$1.00 (\$1.25 outside USA)

Jim

**“Special Issue—  
60 Years of the USSR”**

# NEW WORLD REVIEW

November-December 1982 Vol. 50, No. 6



**Achieving Equality  
in the Soviet Union**  
*John Pittman*

**Nationality  
and Internationalism**  
*Howard Parsons*

**Afghanistan**  
*Marilyn Bechtel*

**—Remembering  
Leonid Brezhnev**  
*The Editors*

**Also: William Howard Melish, Miriam Morton. Book Reviews by Peter Bower, Arthur Westing  
and Marilyn Bechtel**

# Transitions

The close of the year 1982 embraces three anniversaries which commemorate events of vital importance for the future of humanity. Sixty-five years ago on November 7 the October Revolution swept away the exploitation and oppression of the old tsarist Russian empire. Forty-nine years ago on November 16, diplomatic relations were established between the US and USSR. Sixty years ago on December 30, the USSR was founded as the world's first state specifically intended, through constitutional law and through practice, to build a multinational community of peoples.

This is also a time of transition. As the Soviet people mourn the loss of Leonid Brezhnev and honor the great legacy of his leadership for peace, social justice and economic progress, his successor makes clear that the same style of collective leadership, the same principles of peace through mutual security, support for liberation struggles, and scientific construction of mature socialism as the basis for communism will characterize the USSR's policies in the coming period.

In the United States, an election has revealed the people's grave dissatisfaction with all aspects of the Reagan administration's policies at home and abroad, with the overwhelming support for a mutual US-Soviet nuclear weapons freeze the dominant note. The Catholic Bishops have deepened and strengthened their opposition to nuclear weapons. The US president, flagrantly disregarding the people's will, makes it clear that he intends to "stay" a course disastrous for the people of our country and potentially so for the entire world.

The two leaders presented major speeches on the same day, November 22. The contrast was immense. Claiming that the US used its post-World War II atomic weapon monopoly not to bully but to rebuild, Ronald Reagan reiterated every one of his administration's claims, from the discredited CIA estimates of the USSR's military spending through allegations of Soviet superiority in weaponry which have been repeatedly challenged by US experts including former Cabinet members.

Speaking before a meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, its newly elected general secretary, Yuri V. Andropov, commented extensively on international affairs. Despite the necessity to maintain the USSR's defense capability imposed by "the aggressive designs of imperialism," Andropov said, "The ideal of socialism is a world without arms," and he characterized detente as the policy of the future. He rejected linking progress in arms talks with concessions in other fields and maintained the necessity of reciprocity and equality in agreements.

Andropov reiterated the proposal that "the two sides should, as the first step on the way to a future agreement, freeze their arsenals and thus create more favorable conditions for the continuation of talks on the mutual reduction of these weapons."

The people have come to the forefront of history as never before," he said. "They have gained the right to have their say, and their voice will not be muffled by anyone. They are capable of removing, by vigorous and purposeful actions, the threat of nuclear war, safeguarding peace and hence life on this planet. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Soviet state, will do everything possible that this should be so."

An area of common ground is growing between proposals made by US people of public stature who are not part of the Reagan administration, and proposals made and supported by the USSR, including nuclear freeze, no first use of nuclear weapons, ratification of SALT II and conclusion of a complete nuclear test ban treaty.

A major struggle is also going on in the Congress over funds for the MX missile and other highly dangerous and destabilizing first-strike weapons. These issues are vitally linked to the transfer of funds from military to social programs, essential to reverse the escalating deterioration of all aspects of American life.

The balance is shifting in this country toward disarmament agreements with the USSR. The Soviets say they are ready. The people can tip the scale. Now is the time to act for arms agreements, against first-strike weapons, and for a massive shift of military funds to human needs.

M.B., December 1982

Front cover: *Mother and Child*, by Tatyana Nazarenko

Nov.-Dec. 1982 Vol. 50, No. 6

Leonid Brezhnev, 1906-1982 <i>The Editors</i>	3
Sixtieth Anniversary of the USSR Sixty Years of the Soviet Multinational State <i>John Pittman</i>	9
Nations, Nationality, Internationalism and Peace: The Soviet Position <i>Howard L. Parsons</i>	15
Afghanistan: Transforming Tradition <i>Marilyn Bechtel</i>	19
<i>Doves Over the Volga</i> A Cruise for Peace <i>William Howard Melish</i>	23
Dialogue on the Volga <i>Miriam Morton</i>	25
<i>Impressions and Communications</i> Red-Baiting and Racism <i>Lee Lorch</i>	27
<i>Book Reviews</i> Yellow Rain and "Anti-Red" Scholarship <i>Peter Bower</i>	28
Roots of the Afghan Revolution <i>Marilyn Bechtel</i>	29
The Real Chemical War <i>Arthur H. Westing</i>	30



MARILYN BECHTEL, *Editor*  
 JESSICA SMITH, *Editor Emeritus*  
 DAVID LAIBMAN, *Editorial Associate*  
 DANIEL ROSENBERG, *Assistant Editor*  
 GEORGE B. MURPHY, JR., *Editorial Consultant*  
 LOURDES RODRIGUEZ, *Administrative Secretary*  
 STEVEN BIRMINGHAM, *Circulation*

Design: THREE TO MAKE READY GRAPHICS

Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Subscription \$5.00 per year. \$1.00 a copy. Outside USA \$6.00 a year. Draw money orders or checks payable in New York. Published bi-monthly by N.W.R. Publications Inc., 3rd fl., 162 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. NWR articles are indexed in the Index of American Periodical Service; covered in the Bulletin of the Public Affairs Information Service; and screened by the Library of Congress Slavic and Central European Division. International Standard Serial Number ISSN 0028-7067. Cable address: NEWORLDREVU. Phone: 212-696-4765. Printed in U.S.A.

---

---

# Leonid I. Brezhnev, 1906-1982

*All along the roads of war we saw weeping mothers, inconsolable widows and hungry orphans. If I were asked today what is the main conclusion I drew from the war which I went through from beginning to end, I would say: There must be no more war. Never again must there be any war.*

*Leonid I. Brezhnev, Little Land*

Leonid Brezhnev's life embraced a significant new period in human history: the moment when unprecedented millions took direct action to free themselves from exploitation, racism and war. As general secretary of the Communist Party and president of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev witnessed and aided this process.

Brezhnev's whole life was bound up with the growth of his country. His forebears were peasants, his grandfather, uncles and father were steelworkers, and Brezhnev, too, became a steelworker. To the working class "I belonged by birth," he said. "I am attached to it, one might say, by blood ties." His home town of Kamenskoye (now Dnieprodzerzhinsk) pulsed to the sound of the factory hooter which "called everyone to work on the shift, but also united the workers," and promoted the "feeling of cohesion, of common interests." The older workers in the mill taught him his trade and "the difficult art of living." He wrote, "Such universities are not soon forgotten."

Later he worked as a surveyor, helping to set up the first collective farms. He knew working-class and peasant life

first-hand, directly experiencing the new socialist changes. He recalled that the first tractor at one farm "roused no less and perhaps even more enthusiasm than the first sputnik. It was not just a machine . . . it was an instrument, a tool for the social transformation of the countryside." He epitomized the unity of worker and farmer so essential to the development of the Soviet Union.

But above all, Leonid Brezhnev will forever be associated with another, perhaps the key, component of Soviet socialism: the struggle for peace and liberation and the building of a movement of the world majority toward that end. In Brezhnev's time a desperate imperialism threatened to bring history itself to an end. Here, Brezhnev emerged as the foremost spokesman for peace and civilization, expressing on behalf of the Soviet government, Communist Party and people the most far-reaching, flexible, realistic and substantial proposals for disarmament. These received recognition and support all over the world. How many anti-Soviet fabrications were proclaimed while Brezhnev was the Soviet Union's leading representative! Yet the peace and liberation



TASS from SOVFOTO

movement grew in size and saw that the real threat to peace was at the Pentagon, in the White House, on Wall Street. Indeed, it was this movement, together with the Soviet Union's internationalist assistance, that aided the Vietnamese people to force US aggression to its knees in Viet Nam.

The proposals Leonid Brezhnev advocated are now the demands of today's peace and freedom movement. He first suggested *an agreement for non-first-use of nuclear weapons in 1966*. In 1971 he put forth the Soviet Union's *Peace Program, which called for a European Security Conference, mutual dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization, a world disarmament conference, and the international isolation of racist apartheid*. As the Soviet Union amplified these initiatives, Brezhnev introduced in November 1977 a new concept: *a nuclear freeze*. He declared: "We are proposing a radical step: that agreement be reached on a simultaneous halt in the production of nuclear weapons by all states."

Calling in 1981 for a moratorium on deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe, Brezhnev went on the following March to announce an actual freeze in Soviet deployment of these weapons. In May 1982, he put the world peace majority's main demand, a comprehensive arms freeze, squarely on the nuclear negotiating table by *proposing an immediate nuclear freeze*. And in June of this year, he capped his efforts with the USSR's historic promise "not to be the first to use nuclear weapons."

During his period of leadership, a vast improvement took place in US-Soviet relations. Trade, cultural, scientific and technological, sports and academic exchanges, the Apollo-Soyuz joint space effort, and the signing of SALT I, which codified peaceful coexistence, parity and mutual security, and the SALT II agreement (as yet unratified by the US Senate) — all testify to Brezhnev's active concern for better US-Soviet ties.

With good reason, therefore, countless millions mourn his passing. The *New York Amsterdam News*, a leading Black newspaper, editorially invoked his contributions to peace to express its sense of loss. Moreover, it said, Brezhnev was "a friend of Africa and African people, . . . an outspoken opponent of apartheid and racism" (November 20).

**W**orld peace in the Brezhnev years became even more closely tied to international solidarity with Viet Nam, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Chile, Cuba, Grenada, Namibia, South Africa, Nicaragua, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Kampuchea, Laos, Afghanistan, Ethiopia.

In October 1976 he told Angolan leader Agostinho Neto that "a free people cannot but wish freedom to other people, and cannot but support fighters for freedom." And the Soviet people's solidarity increased as they advanced socialist democracy in their own country. The new Soviet Constitution, spearheaded by Brezhnev, involved 140 million men and women in the drafting and amending process before its adoption in October 1977; 400,000 proposals for amendments and revisions were made. The Constitution expanded the right to work to include the people's right to choose their profession; it made universal ten-year education compulsory; it shortened the work week and broadened health protection to include the right to a clean environment and job safety; it

ensured special measures for women's equality and the people's right to low-cost housing.

The contrast between socialist and capitalist society became greater during Brezhnev's time. Real income rose, prices remained stable and economic insecurity became only a distant memory. By 1980, the USSR led the world in production of oil, steel, iron ore, pig iron, locomotives, tractors, cement, wool, shoes and butter.

Leonid Brezhnev assisted in developing a new agrarian program which projected large-scale, long-term and comprehensive steps for improving agricultural planning, investments, increasing the economic independence of state and collective farms and maintenance of sound and stable prices. The mid-1970s measures to develop the non-black-earth zone of the Russian Republic and the significant new comprehensive food program adopted last May also owe much to his leadership.

Economic reform embodied a changing approach to the quality of life itself. The difficult times, when people had to accept privations and be content with bare essentials are now over, said Brezhnev in 1971: "That which was explicable and natural in the past, when other tasks, other undertakings stood in the forefront, is unacceptable in the present conditions."

At the 26th Congress of his party he observed, "What we are discussing — food products, other goods, and services — are part of the everyday life of millions of people. People go to shops, canteens, laundries, and cleaners every day. What can they buy? How are they welcomed? How are they spoken to? How much time do they spend on all sorts of household chores? It is on the strength of how these problems are solved that people largely judge our work. They judge it strictly, exactly. And this should be remembered, comrades."

Innovation, initiative in planning by managers, trade unions and public organizations, added new dimensions to the Soviet economy. Yet Brezhnev was ever the constructive critic, never content with citing improvements, always representing the higher expectations and consequent impatience of working people and their organizations with bureaucratic and irresponsible approaches.

Respect for people was the overriding theme in his life. It was with love and respect that Brezhnev remembered his working-class family upbringing. He particularly recalled the sacrifices borne by his mother, the "hard, inconspicuous, endless and noble work" which helped shape his outlook and made him understand the contributions of working-class women to life and struggle. "Any man with no love for the mother who gave him life, who fed and brought him up, strikes me personally as suspect." During World War II, he later asserted, women shared "all the hardships of war with our men. I see embodied in them the greatness of Soviet woman."

He recalled a hopeful, expectant childhood and youth, not nostalgically but in the warm personal tones of an activist: growing up by the Dnieper, playing along its slopes; or gazing "from behind the railings of the municipal park" at the tsarist super-rich of the "Upper Colony," the "clean folk" promenading to and fro to the sound of a brass band."

Brezhnev was part of the Soviet young generation that "dug foundation ditches with picks and shovels in bitter frost, and evened concrete with their feet." His generation of youth "dreamed of a bright future for all humankind, we

shouted, argued, tell in love, read eagerly and wrote our own poems." He cherished the impact of hearing Mayakovsky in person, whose poems brought "our highest concepts" to life. Brezhnev knew how vital the youth were to society.

Brezhnev once observed, "Tens of millions of workers and peasants built socialism. Tens of millions made the history of our epoch." Those who defeated the Nazis, he noted in his war memoir, *Little Land*, were "yesterday's steel workers, fitters, miners, farmers, harvester combine operators, builders and carpenters." When, after his experience in the successful development of Kazakhstan's Virgin Lands, he was asked who had "fathered" that idea, he answered, "This question is wrong in itself . . . it implies an attempt to attribute an outstanding achievement of our Party and people to the 'vision' and will of one man."

Late in 1981, Brezhnev emphasized that "unity, cohesion and teamwork" really characterized the work of the Central Committee and Political Bureau. "There is genuine mutual understanding in the leadership, unity of opinion on the aims of our home and foreign policy . . ." The leaders had "sincere respect for each other" and "good human friendship."

Because of that unity among the Soviet people and their representatives, the Soviet Union will go on to develop a more advanced socialist society. The Soviet Union's work for peace, disarmament and national liberation will continue. That is the nature and policy of the Soviet Union, and the socialist society from which Leonid Brezhnev came forward.

THE EDITORS

## Nuclear Freeze: Cold War Antidote

During the recent election campaign the Administration energetically red-baited the broadening movement for a nuclear freeze. President Reagan found the movement to be "inspired . . . not by the sincere, honest people who want peace, but by some who want the weakening of America and so are manipulating honest and sincere people" (*The New York Times*, October 5). The Soviet Union, he reported, "saw an advantage in a peace movement built around the idea of a nuclear freeze. . . . There is no question about foreign agents that were sent to help create and keep such a movement going" (*The Times*, November 12).

Later, the White House cited two *Readers Digest* articles, surely models of integrity and scholarly character, and State Department reports to back up these assertions. (*The Washington Post*, November 13). How best to frighten away tens of millions from supporting the same freeze proposal that the Soviet Union supports has become an increasingly difficult task for the Administration.

Evidently, the national wave of nuclear freeze initiatives leading up to the mammoth June 12 demonstrations was no one-shot deal. For, having summoned millions to action throughout the year, the freeze proposal continued to motivate still greater numbers in the recent elections. It now concerns a growing majority of the population. Defying Reagan's red-baiting and arguments that the freeze would give the Soviets an advantage, voters in Wisconsin last September and in the following states on November 2 approved nuclear freeze propositions: California, Massachusetts, Oregon, Rhode Island, New Jersey, North, Michigan, Montana and the District of Columbia. Only Arizona rejected the proposition. Voters passed nuclear freeze referenda in 26 of 29 cities, including New Haven, Philadelphia, Reno, Chicago and Miami, Florida.

With major unions—Communications Workers, Machinists, AFS-CME, Textile Workers, United Electrical Workers, Food and Commercial Workers, National Education Association, Newspaper Guild, and others—adding support to the freeze demand, the freeze won handily in all victorious locations except California, where it succeeded by 53 to 47 per cent, following intense, focused pressure from the Reagan administration. The creation of an arms freeze coalition (Citizens Against Nuclear War) embracing 26 national organizations totaling 20 million members, contributed to the election victories, enhancing their over-all anti-Reagan character. Also joining

several of the above-mentioned unions in forming the coalition were organizations including the National Council of Negro Women, United Presbyterian Church, YWCA, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, US Student Association, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, League of United Latin American Citizens, American Public Health Association and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. (*The New York Times*, October 17).

Neither casual nor "duped" thinking can account for a movement like this. Deteriorating living conditions amidst soaring military spending make the freeze demand increasingly social and relevant. All signs indicate that the freeze movement is not about to disappear or pay heed to Reagan's born-again McCarthyism.

D.R.



## Guest Editorial

JOHN CHERVENY

# US-USSR Sister Cities: A New Peace Front

In the summer of 1979 Detroit's Mayor Coleman A. Young welcomed a distinguished delegation of Soviet mayors headed by Michael Plesniak, deputy chairman of the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. In the delegation was the mayor of Minsk, Byelorussia. Mayor Young invited reporters to join a friendly reception in his office.

Discussion turned to the great joint efforts which defeated the fascist powers in World War II. Mayor Lukashovich of Minsk lost his arm in that struggle. Mayor Young overcame rampant Air Force racism to become an officer-bombardier and establish a heroic record with the all-Black Tuscaloosa Air Squadron.

During the war Detroit turned out thousands of union-made tanks and planes, earning the title, "Arsenal of Democracy." Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia, was less fortunate. The city was leveled and its population murdered in cold blood by the Nazis.

Today the Hero City of Minsk, risen from the ashes, bears the title of "Motor City" of Byelorussia, and exports the world-famed Belarus tractor to sixty countries. Detroit, too, is called the "Motor City," exporting trucks and cars around the world. The two cities, both strong union towns, have about the same population. Both boast important cultural centers.

It was natural, therefore, that their mayors explore a Sister City affiliation.

Last year Soviet representatives hand-delivered a special invitation to visit Minsk, addressed to Mayor Young and to Erma Henderson and Maryann Mahaffey, president and president pro tem of the Detroit City Council. Following her visit, Ms. Mahaffey described her warm reception and the Soviets' desire for world peace. "Such people-to-people contacts are necessary if we are to have peace without massive armaments," she said.

In August of this year, Mayor Young issued the proclamation which officially designated the two communities as sister cities



Soviet delegates Vadim Gorin of Moscow and Professor Askarov of Tashkent receive "Distinguished Service Medals" from Mayor Coleman Young as City Council officials Maryann Mahaffey and Erma Henderson look on.

and stated that "It is the intent of Detroit and Minsk to build a strong and lasting friendship through the exchange of cultural and educational ideas, and to promote better understanding and peace throughout the world."

Seattle, Washington and Tashkent, Uzbekistan formalized their sister relationship in 1975. Seattle's resolution stated "That the City of Seattle does hereby adopt as her Sister-City Tashkent, Uzbekistan SSR, and does extend to the Mayor, the City Council, and all the people of Tashkent and Uzbekistan the open hand of friendship, and pledges to support that friendship in any way possible." Tashkent, in reply, declared that "both Seattle and Tashkent would gain useful knowledge of common problems, and a major stride towards international understanding and a valuable contribution by our cities towards world peace."

Other US cities and their Soviet "sisters" are Houston, Texas and Baku, Azerbaidzhan; Jacksonville, Florida and Murmansk, RSFSR; Oakland, California and Nakhodka, RSFSR; Baltimore, Maryland and Odessa, Ukraine.

The same upsurge of determination for peace which brought about the one-million-strong demonstration in New York's Central Park last June, and the overwhelming pro-freeze vote in the recent election, has sparked interest in affiliation with Soviet communities by cities and towns around the country. In size and geography these requests pose a real challenge. Among them: Rowayton, Hartford, New Haven and South Windsor, Connecticut; Boyertown and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Denver, Telluride and Boulder, Colorado; Mobile, Alabama; Juneau, Alaska; Garrett Park, Maryland; Cottage Grove, Oregon; Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and Gainesville, Florida.

Pivotal to all this activity is Sister Cities International, which sponsors relationships between some 717 US cities and 990 cities in 78 foreign countries. Sister Cities International describes its purpose as "to carry out projects of mutual exchange in a variety of areas—cultural, professional and technical, trade and commerce, municipal, educational and youth. Through these exchanges, a sister cities program fosters world peace by furthering international communications and understanding through exchanges at the person-to-person level."

Also vigorously engaged in promoting relationships between communities in different countries is the US Conference of Mayors, of which Coleman Young is currently the president.

At its meeting in September, the Executive Committee of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship urged its 21 affiliated societies across the country to give wholehearted support to development of US-USSR sister cities, and to help to initiate relationships or strengthen existing ones.

Some city officials have put forth interesting new ideas. Is it practical, some ask, to declare sister-city affiliates, East and West, as nuclear-free zones, thus depriving Dr. Strangelove of city targets? Others suggest "international free-trade zones" in all sister-cities, thus defying the US official policy of trade discrimination against the USSR. Detroit has just such a zone to accommodate the Big Three auto-makers as they receive truck and car components from around the world.

Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko rightly observed at a recent news conference that wherever bridges and normal contacts

JOHN CHERVENY is vice chairman, National Council of American-Soviet Friendship and chairman, Greater Detroit American-Soviet Friendship Society. He and Mayor Young have been lifelong friends, and jointly appeared before the House Committee on Un-American Activities as unfriendly witnesses in 1952.

exist between the USSR and USA, the current administration "throws a bomb" at them. Experience shows that to be true on the national level. But such contacts between public organizations and cities continue to grow. As the citizens of New Haven wrote to the people of Novorossiisk, "Today, we stand together as cities, and as peoples of the world facing a threat in common far more dangerous and ominous than the fascist domination which we jointly opposed forty years ago. . . . Our two cities, our two countries, in fact, our common world are all targeted for destruction."

Direct citizen contacts, be they initiated in the West of the East, by public organization or community, are a positive answer to the Pentagon's "first strike" mania.



## Correction

Jessica Smith's article, "The First Fifty Years: Highlights from the History of SRT and NWR," which appeared in the September-October 1982 issue, contained an error in the last full paragraph on page 9. The sentence should have read: "But not until June 22, 1941 when Hitler's Wehrmacht and planes crossed the Soviet border, and December 7, 1941 when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor did World War II really begin."

We regret the error.

# The Russians are Coming! The Russians are Coming!

Following are portions of a sermon delivered by Philip Zwerling, minister of the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles on March 14, 1982. An edited version of the sermon appeared in the Supplement to the Unitarian Universalist World of September 15, which was sent to us by a reader.

Once upon a time, Paul Revere rode his horse from Cambridge to Concord, crying, "The British are coming, the British are coming." And John Hancock and Sam Adams and others of the revolutionary leaders had to go into hiding. Militia men reached for their weapons and assembled at Lexington Green and Concord Bridge. The alarm was real, the British *were* coming. The battles that followed led directly to war. Today, we have another rider on horseback, galloping from his ranch in Santa Barbara to Washington, D.C., telling us, "The Russians are coming, the Russians are coming." The alarm is raised, but instead of muskets, the new arms that we reach for are thousands of nuclear-tipped missiles poised in underground silos, missiles which are aptly named, "Minute Men." The alarm is raised that we face traitors within, new Benedict Arnolds, whom today the CIA and FBI must be allowed to investigate, whose phones must be tapped, whose mail must be opened, whose meetings must be monitored — even as this church was under surveillance in years past.

For, if the Russians are coming, not only must we be armed with all of these missiles, but we must also be united before such a threat, and any of those who question government policy, or any aspect of the status quo, give aid and comfort to the enemy. This time, the cry is raised, the alarm is given, and nothing happens. No foreign troops invade our land. No shots are fired. And people ask, "Where is the enemy?"

And then we must ask, "Who has turned in this false alarm?" Who has frightened us into surrendering our freedom? Who has endangered our lives with ever bigger stockpiles of nuclear weapons?

"The Russians are coming, the Russians are coming!" we were told, and so we invaded Russia in 1919, to fulfill Winston Churchill's words that "the baby Bolshevism must be strangled in its crib," and 7,000 US troops joined troops from Japan, Britain, France, and ten other countries in landings in the Baltic and in Siberia in an effort to tip the balance against the Communists in the Russian Civil War. I think it is interesting in retrospect, to see that the countries that are identified today as our enemies — Russia, China and Cuba — are countries that have never invaded the United States, but have in fact, each in their time, been invaded and occupied by the United States: Russia in 1919, China in 1900, Cuba in 1898 and again in 1961.

For sixty years we have been told that the Russians were coming. For sixty years Americans have died in places like Korea and Vietnam, and for sixty years we have been told to be quiet and to sacrifice. For sixty years the alarm has been spread, and now it is finally time to say, "Enough!" to say that we see no Russian troops on Wilshire Boulevard; to say that we are more afraid of the nuclear madness of those who say they are defending us than we fear peace; to say that it is finally time to talk about changes from Wall Street in New York to the Skid Rows that exist in every city in this country. It's time, finally, to see how our fears and our patriotism have been manipulated by scoundrels. It's time to see how absurd and desperate these machinations have become; to see how every ill in our society is blamed on our supposed Soviet enemy.

Is the economy bad? Are inflation and unemployment rising? Are people's savings being wiped out? Then we can take solace in this full page ad in the *Los Angeles Times*, paid for by the Glendale Federal Bank, telling us that no matter how bad things may be, we are still lucky not to live under the "Hammer and Sickle." A notion that I am sure will warm the hearts of those on Skid Row!

"The Russians are coming!" The worst part of this alarm is, of course, that it is an excuse for incredible expenditures for so-called defense, and an excuse for the very real possibility of global war. Today we are seeing the resurrection of civil defense systems, air raid shelters, evacuation plans, and talk of a limited nuclear war, because peace is unpatriotic when "the Russians are coming."

Who are the demons who fill us with fear? The 270 million people of the USSR are not the warlike barbarian hordes pictured in media caricatures. They are people and people who, quite unlike people in the United States, have seen firsthand, in their own country, the horrors of war, with the Nazi invasion of World War II. Just think of these figures which come from a book by Sidney Lens, entitled, *The Forging of American Empire*. Consider these statistics, and what happened to the Soviet Union during the Nazi invasion: 20 million people dead, fifteen major cities destroyed, 1,700 towns destroyed, 70,000 villages destroyed, six million buildings demolished, 10,000 power plants destroyed. It was the devastation of a people and of a country that we cannot even imagine occurring in the United States.

Who are the demons? Let us ask questions. Who built and used the first atomic weapon? Who built the first hydrogen bomb? The answer, we did. Ask who, today, feels surrounded by 365 hostile military bases along its borders? The answer must be the Soviet Union. Ask which country deploys most of its armed forces along its own borders, and the answer is the Soviet Union. Then ask which country deploys its arms and its soldiers in 2,000 bases around the world. The answer is *we* do.

The first part of any ceremony of exorcism is to name the demons. And today we must name them. They are Imperialism, and they are Capitalism. And *their day is done*. Let us not be distracted any more by theories of foreign devils. Let us say, "Let the Russians come, let the Mexicans come, let the Salvadorans come, and let us live in peace together." Let us look not at the Soviet Union, but at Skid Row; not at El Salvador, but at County Hospital. Let us look at what we must do; let us raise a new cry. Let us say that *we* are coming, that change is coming.

Let us say, quoting that subversive Rabbi from Nazareth, "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first."

Let us say that our enemies are poverty and hunger and unemployment, and let us say, as did the Disciples Peter and John, that we wish to live in a society where, "There was not a needy person among them, and distribution was made to each as any had need."

One of the most moving letters in the New Testament was the Apostle Paul's letter to the churches at Galatia, in which he wrote, "There is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither slave nor free. There is neither male nor female. You are all one."

And we add that there is neither Russian nor American, for all are one. "All are Abraham's offspring. All are heirs, according to the promise." □

JOHN PITTMAN

# Sixty Years of the Soviet Multinational State

*For the 60th anniversary of the founding of the USSR*

*The following is an abridged version of a chapter from the book, Nations and Peoples: The Soviet Experience, forthcoming in 1983 from N.W.R. Publications, Inc.*

Sixty years ago, on December 30, 1922, an historically new type of state came into existence. For the first time ever, a state's structural principle was consciously adopted to end national and racial oppression and to achieve the planned actual equality of races, nations and nationalities. The use of this state's power to draw heretofore oppressed and deprived races and nationalities into the process of forming their own states and joining as equals in building a new civilization was altogether unprecedented. Such was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The USSR took shape as the biggest state of its time, occupying one-sixth of the world's land mass. It arose phoenix-like from the carnage and chaos of the first world war, and amidst the devastation of a civil war cruelly protracted by the intervention of 14 capitalist states.

The revolutionary movement in old Russia developed through sacrificial and bloody struggles against enormous obstacles. At the pinnacle of these was an absolutist monarchy buttressed by remnants of medieval semi-serf institutions, estates, and an enormous parasitical bureaucracy. Institutions constituting privileges arbitrarily conceived and forcibly imposed decades and even centuries before perpetuated national and racial inequality and oppression, and continuously generated animosity and strife.

As intolerable as was the lot of the Great-Russian workers and peasants, that of the non-Russian peoples was indescribably worse. Although constituting the majority of the population they were denied all rights. They suffered innumerable persecutions, humiliations and insults.

Many peoples were forbidden to teach their children, or to publish newspapers and books, in their native language. In the East the population was totally illiterate.

The entire tsarist state and bureaucracy, with its enormous army of police, jailers, tax-collectors and other petty officials robbed and tortured the non-Russian peoples. The autocracy officially branded the non-Russians as "aliens" of allegedly "inferior races," and fomented antagonism and discord among them, inciting one people against another, whipping up anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish pogroms, provoking Armenians and Azerbaizhanians to massacre each other.

This ruthless oppression of the non-Russian masses, perpet-

JOHN PITTMAN grew up in the Black ghetto of Atlanta, Georgia, was educated at Morehouse College in Atlanta and the University of California at Berkeley. He has been a journalist all his life, mainly for the Black and workingclass press. Formerly co-editor of *The Daily World* and U.S. representative to the editorial board of *World Marxist Review*, he is a member of the Political Bureau and Central Committee of the Communist Party, U.S.A.



An Uzbek reads the Koran at the Moslem Board library in Tashkent.

rated and intensified by the survival and power of outmoded institutions, slowed and deformed the development of capitalism. The backwardness imposed on Russia by capitalism's slow development was manifested particularly in regard to the national question. The process of awakening national movements which capitalism in its developing stage engenders, drawing millions of people into mass struggles to clear feudal barriers to the formation of national states and bringing the national question to the fore, ended in continental Western Europe decades before it began in the tsarist empire at the turn of the century.

In consequence of this uneven historical development, the tasks of formulating and elaborating principles for erecting the political-legal superstructure of a socialist society and the principles for resolving the national question emerged concurrently in the socialist revolutionary movement of Russia. Beginning in 1870 when Russian exiles living in Geneva formed the Russian section of the International Working Men's Association (First International), the followers of Marx and Engels began to ad-

dress these tasks. The organization of Marxist study groups and circles during the 1880s and 1890s spread the teachings of Marx and Engels among the workers. On March 13, 1898, the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP) was founded in Minsk. Significantly, at its birth the founders of this antecedent of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union named it the *Rossiiskaya* party, thereby designating it as a party of both Russian and non-Russian peoples, rather than *Russkaya*, a party of the Russians, the dominant and oppressor nation among the peoples.

The 19th century gave way to the 20th amidst tumult and turmoil. In its imperialist stage capitalism increased the oppression and exploitation of working people, particularly the people of non-Russian nations and nationalities. Imperialism created a configuration of the world in which a handful of powers subjected and oppressed other nations, bringing to the fore the fundamental principle of internationalism and socialism, namely, that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations. This fact gave special meaning to the struggle for the right of nations to self-determination. Without such a struggle it would not be possible to fulfill the most difficult and most important task of uniting the class struggle of the workers of the oppressor nation with that of the workers of the oppressed nations. However, with the help of the genius and leadership of Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin), Marxism's most brilliant exponent and continuator, the working classes of Russians and non-Russians proved able to accomplish that task.

**A**s early as 1903 the Bolsheviks had settled on the basic content of the state they would form and policies they would pursue for solving the national question. The first and supreme overall consideration was the indispensable and mandatory necessity of uniting the foremost workers, regardless of nationality, race, sex or religion, for capturing state power and abolishing the autocracy and its institutions. This would make way for the proletarian struggle against capitalism and the replacement of a bourgeois regime by proletarian rule.

The second basic premise underlying the determination of principles for forming the proletarian state and solving the national question was the need for complete, consistent and genuine democratization. Lenin considered this obligatory not only for effecting the transition from capitalism to socialism, and for building socialism and communism, but also for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

Such a state would involve masses of the population not only in the creation and establishment of the proletarian state, but also in the tasks of administering the affairs of society. Such a state would be a higher type of democracy than previously existed.

The right of nations to self-determination was the underlying principle upon which Lenin and the Bolsheviks developed their solution of the national question. Its implementation required the adoption of federation as the structural principle of the proletarian state. At the April, 1917 All-Russian Conference of the Bolsheviks, Lenin emphasized that only recognition of the right of all nations freely to secede and to form independent states would ensure solidarity of the workers of the various nations concerned. His resolution distinguished the right to secession from its expediency and advisability. It was like the right to divorce, which did not make separation mandatory. Whether or not a nation seceded would depend on the decision

of the Party in each particular case, as well as on the interests of the proletariat's struggle for socialism.

The right of nations to self-determination, Lenin said, was the most basic of the democratic measures against national oppression and inequality. There could not be greater freedom than the freedom to secede, the freedom to form an independent national state. For that reason he emphasized that no compulsion or coercion whatever was permissible in the implementation of this right. His "Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Program" on May 20, 1917 called for Section 9 to be amended to read:

The right of all member nations of the state freely to secede and form independent states. The Republic of the Russian nation must attract other nations or nationalities not by force, but exclusively by voluntary agreement on the question of forming a common state. The unity and fraternal alliance of the workers of all countries are incompatible with the use of force, direct or indirect, against other nationalities. (V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works* (in 12 volumes), International Publishers, 1943, Vol. 6, p. 108.)

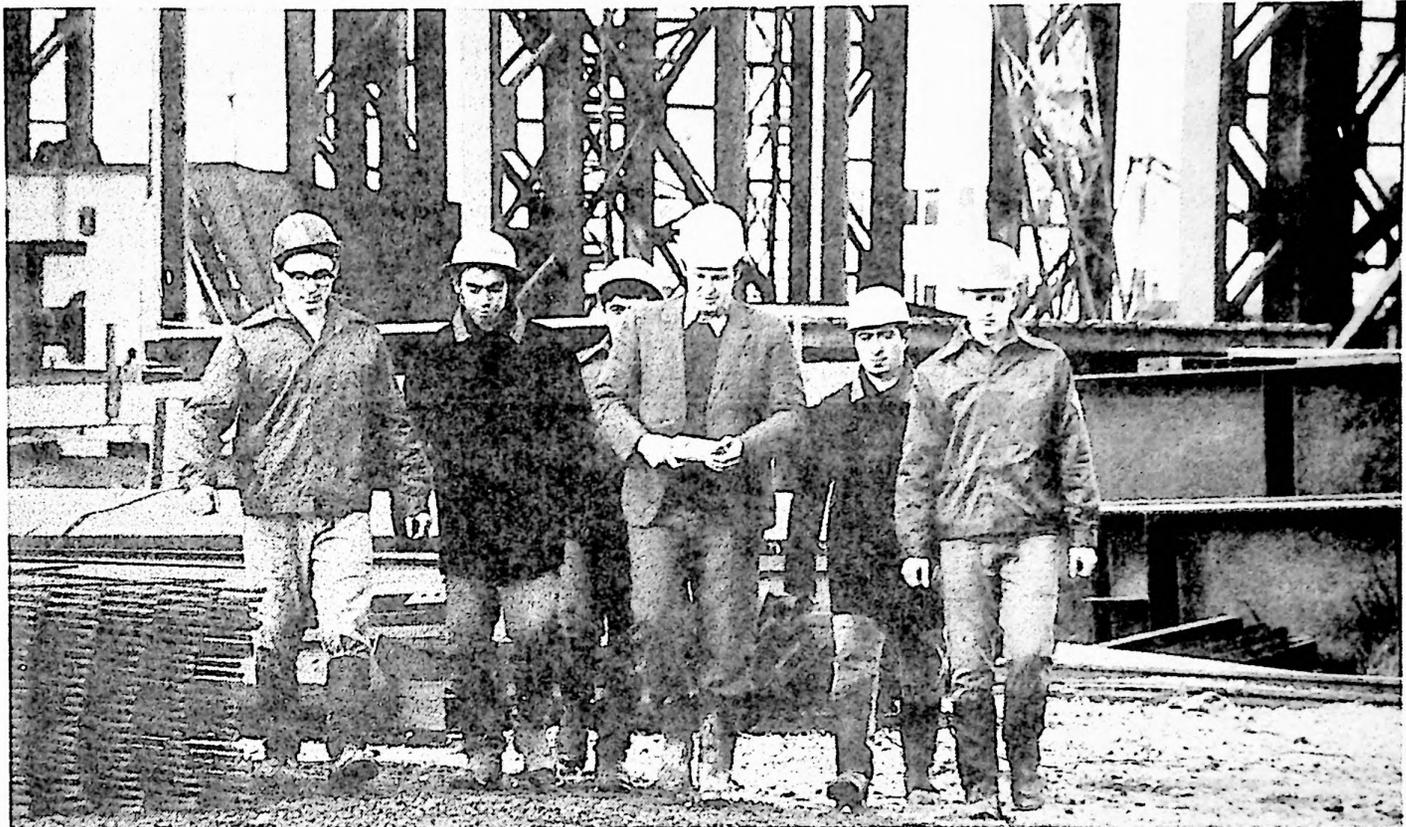
Soon after there began the events which culminated in the October Socialist Revolution. On October 25 (November 7), 1917, the uprisings of workers, peasants and soldiers achieved victory. The following day, the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets accepted state power from the Revolutionary Military Committee. This signified that the Soviets, the organs of power created by the revolutionary masses of Russia, would form the political foundation of the new state of proletarian rule.

Immediately on taking power the Congress adopted measures of far-reaching importance for progress in implementing Lenin's principles for a democratic solution of the national question. The Decree on Peace declared the new state's intention of immediately concluding a peace without annexations or indemnities. Its very wording signaled to all peoples of the world that a new power had emerged on the side of the oppressed and weak nations and the right of all nationalities to peace and freedom.

The Decree on Land crucially affected the interests of the mainly peasant populations of the oppressed nations and nationalities. It confiscated all the landlords' land without compensation and transferred all the land to the ownership of the state; more than 360 million acres passed to the people.

Before ending its session the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets announced a complete break with the policies of national oppression. It guaranteed the right of self-determination to all nations inhabiting Russia, and established a Commissariat of Nationalities, headed by Stalin. On November 15, 1917, the Council of People's Commissars, the government of the Soviet state, issued the "Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia." The Declaration proclaimed the equality of the peoples of Russia, their right to free self-determination up to and including secession and the formation of independent states, the abolition of all national and national-religious disabilities and privileges, and the free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups.

In an "Appeal to All Moslem Laborers of Russia and the East," the Soviet government on November 20, 1917 announced that henceforth the beliefs and customs and the national and cultural institutions of these peoples were free and inviolable. It declared the Soviet state had torn up the secret treaties of the tsarist government and the Provisional government legitimizing the seizure of Constantinople and the partition of Turkey and Persia.



Togliatti: Multinational city in a multinational country.

Events signifying steps toward liberation of non-Russian subject nations and nationalities rapidly multiplied. The Russian protectorates of the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva became autonomous entities, free of all obligations imposed by the tsarist regime. The state independence of Finland and the right of self-determination of the peoples of "Turkish Armenia" were recognized. The right of Poland to self-determination and an independent existence was recognized for the first time.

**W**orking people of the non-Russian nationalities overcame their national bourgeoisie and landowners and installed Soviet power. This happened in October 1917 in Byelorussia, and shortly afterward in Estonia and Latvia. From November 1917 through January 1918, workers and peasants established Soviet power in eastern Moldavia, in the Crimea and the North Caucasus. Three months after the October Revolution, Soviet power had been established throughout the country, and moreover, mainly by peaceful means. Armed conflict occurred in only 15 of 85 provincial capitals and other major cities. (*History of the USSR* (in three parts). Progress Publishers, 1977. Part three, p. 54.)

In session January 10-18, 1918, the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies adopted the "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People." This declaration announced the formation of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and proclaimed the basic principles of the nationalities policy of the Soviet state. It recorded that "the Soviet Russian Republic is founded on the basis of the free union of nations, as a federation

of Soviet national republics."

Basic principles of Soviet federation were established. There were to be independent and autonomous republics, autonomous national regions and national areas, and two transitional forms: the People's Soviet Republics, and Communes. These forms corresponded to legal categories of nations, nationalities, tribes and ethnic, ethnographic and national groups, in conformity with the different stages of economic, political and cultural development of the country's multinational, multiracial population.

Federation was to develop along three main lines; first, on the basis of autonomy, as occurred, for example, in the RSFSR with its many autonomous republics and regions, which became a model for other multinational and multiracial union republics; second, along the line of forming independent national republics linked to the RSFSR by federal ties formalized by bilateral treaties of alliance, as exemplified by the Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Azerbaïdzhanian, Armenian and Georgian Soviet Socialist Republics; third, an intermediate form of federation, such as the relationship between the RSFSR and the Byelorussian SSR or the Turkestan Autonomous SSR.

In July, 1918 the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets adopted the Constitution of the RSFSR, which generalized the experience of forming autonomous republics and their federal union with the Russian Federation. Later Constitutions, those of 1924 and 1936, established principles for demarcating jurisdiction between central, regional and local organs of the Federation.

The RSFSR was the prototype of the USSR. Its development within a few months convinced Lenin of the importance of federalism. Preparing his draft for revising the program of the

Party early in 1918, he designated among tasks of the Party:

Consolidating and further developing the federative republic of the Soviets, as an immeasurably higher and more progressive form of democracy than bourgeois parliamentarianism and as the only type of state which corresponds, on the basis of the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and the experience of the Russian Revolutions of 1905 and 1917-18, to the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, i. e. to the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat. (V.I. Lenin, "Rough Draft of a Program." *Selected Works* (in 12 volumes), vol. 8, p. 330.)

Lenin's contention that the proletarian democracy embodied in the RSFSR was "an immeasurably higher and more progressive form of democracy" than that of capitalist democracies was fully substantiated by facts, particularly in the sphere of national relations. During the years 1918-1921 Soviet multinational, multiracial state development progressed through the extension of federal ties. The RSFSR, Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Transcaucasian Soviet Republics concluded treaties with one another. Progress was made despite formidable obstacles. Disregarding the Soviet government's unilateral withdrawal from the war, and rejecting Soviet proposals for peace, the German-Austrian forces advanced on Petrograd and Moscow. To avoid disaster, the Soviet government on March 3, 1918, signed the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk, under which vast expanses of territory were torn from the country and Soviet Russia was required to pay enormous reparations.

Before the ink had dried on the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the Entente powers, having conspired to dismember Russia and crush the Soviets, launched aggressions under cover of "protecting" the Soviets from the Germans. The intervention of foreign military forces activated all the counterrevolutionary forces, the long-time foes of the Bolsheviks, the nationalist groups among the subject peoples, the kulaks and bands of former tsarist troops. Incredible deprivation and hardships, resulting from the imperialist blockade, the hoarding and withholding of food by the kulaks, sabotage and general dislocation beset the young state.

**A**mid these difficulties, Lenin had to contend with opposition to his views on the national question within the Party. This was not a new development. Lenin's defense and development of Marxist principles regarding the national question, as in the case also of other Marxist tenets derived from the experience of the international working class revolutionary movement, encountered intransigent opposition not only from the tsarist establishment and its bourgeois-democratic successor, but also from many individuals and groups that aspired to lead the masses of Russia. Since their expulsion from the RSDLP at the Prague Conference in January 1912, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries had opposed applying the right of self-determination to the subject peoples of Russia. The Mensheviks supported their fellow opportunists of the Second International in attempts to justify the annexation of colonies and the exploitation of the colonial peoples of Africa and Asia.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries continued to follow the path of bourgeois nationalism and racism before and after the February 1917 Revolution, and after the October 1917 Revolution. This path brought them increasingly to collaboration with the tsarist White Guards and bourgeois parties. It led eventually to their defection from every semblance of association with the Communists—the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries

fought against the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and even organized an armed revolt in Moscow against the Soviet Republic—and finally to active participation in the counterrevolutionary and interventionist forces. They thereby left the Communists as the sole party guiding the proletarian state's revolutionary transformation of Russia.

The desertion of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries to the side of the counterrevolution, the Whites and foreign aggressors, was profoundly disappointing to Lenin and the Bolshevik. Lenin welcomed members of these parties who joined the Communists in defense of the revolution.

The Tenth Congress of the RCP(B) in March, 1921, discussing how to involve all the peoples of the Soviet Republic in building socialism, emphasized the necessity for realizing the factual (de facto) as well as the legal (de jure) equality of the peoples. It was necessary to eliminate existing inequality, the legacy of decades and even centuries of tsarist oppression, and expressed in economic, political and cultural backwardness. This Congress, on Lenin's urging, was the one which decided on a massive and systematic program of positive activities to eliminate national and racial inequality. Such activities were to include industrial development in regions inhabited by the former subject peoples, the development of their Soviet statehood, development of culture in their native languages, and the training of a native workforce and intelligentsia. The Great-Russian working class, in accordance with the principles of proletarian internationalism, was obligated to extend assistance to the predominantly peasant populations of the formerly oppressed peoples. These decisions were to have far-reaching consequences well beyond the borders of the Soviet Republic, establishing principles not only for achieving equality of the nationalities and races of that country, but also showing the way to bring less developed peoples to socialism while bypassing the capitalist stage of development.

The Tenth Party Congress also adopted a resolution stressing the need for uniting the Soviet republics in a close state union. Efforts to cope with this need had been manifest in the formation of a military-political alliance during the civil war and intervention, in the treaty relations between the RSFSR and the union republics. By mid-1922, a number of objective conditions had increased the urgency of unification. Lenin and the People's Commissariat of Nationalities favored a closer union. The hour was favorable for a structural form of federation which would facilitate the cooperation of all nations, nationalities and races in the defense of the revolution's gains against the capitalist encirclement and the development of the economy in all areas of the country.

However, before this project could be realized, Lenin found it necessary to emphasize again the basic principles for achieving a closer unification of the Soviet republics and for realizing the equality in fact of the many nations, nationalities and races at different levels of development. The occasion arose in September, 1922 when a Central Committee commission of the RCP(B), set up to work out proposals for further relations between the RSFSR, the Ukrainian Republic, the Byelorussian Republic and the Transcaucasian Federation, adopted Stalin's draft resolution on such relations. On September 26, Lenin, although seriously ill and unable to participate actively in the Central Committee meetings, criticized Stalin's draft and proposed a totally different solution.

Stalin's draft, known as the "plan for autonomization," disregarded the necessity of emphasizing the sovereignty and

equality of the fraternal republics during the process of unification. It called for entrance of the republics into the Russian Federation with rights of autonomous republics, according to which the supreme organs of power of the RSFSR would have become the supreme organs of power for the entire Union.

In a letter to members of the Political Bureau on September 26, Lenin proposed to create a voluntary union of all the Soviet Republics with each retaining full sovereignty, including the RSFSR, in a new state entity, the USSR. "We recognize ourselves equal with the Ukrainian Republic and the others," he wrote, "and join the new union, the new federation, 'a Union of Soviet Republics' . . . together with them and on an equal footing." (V.I. Lenin, "On the Establishment of the USSR." *Selected Works* (in three volumes), vol. 3, p. 64.) He described "autonomization" as Great-Power policy and a deviation from principles of proletarian internationalism.

In notes dictated to his secretary on December 30-31, 1922, Lenin stated basic principles for solving problems of national inequality. He stressed that a distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of a small oppressed nation. Members of oppressor nations have nearly always been guilty of violence against oppressed nations. Thus, internationalism on the part of oppressor nations must consist not only in observance of the formal equality of nations, but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice.

In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and insults to which the government of the "dominant" nation subjected them in the past. . . .

. . . for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; "offended" nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest—to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency toward the national minorities. . . . (V.I. Lenin, "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation,' " *Selected Works* (in three volumes), vol. 3, p. 752.)

In October, 1922 the Central Committee plenum approved Lenin's proposals and began preparatory work on the formation of the USSR. During its opening session on December 30, 1922, the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR ratified the Declaration and Treaty on the Formation of the USSR, embodying Lenin's draft. In April 1923, the 12th Congress of the RCP(B) adopted a resolution on the national question based on Lenin's notes.

Formation of the USSR, and its implementation of Lenin's principles for realizing national equality, accelerated the process of state formation among the nations and nationalities of the country. By the end of 1922 there were six independent and 10 autonomous Soviet Republics, two People's Soviet Republics and 15 autonomous national regions. In 1924 there were four Union Republics, 13 Autonomous Republics, and 13 Autonomous Regions. At the end of 1936 there were 11 Union Republics, 22 Autonomous Republics, nine Autonomous Regions and eight National Areas. Today there are 15 Union Republics, 20 Autonomous Republics, eight Autonomous Regions and 10 Autonomous Areas. From one unitary state dominated by one



Studying art in Soviet Kazakhstan.

nation, the Great-Russians, and inhabited by nearly 200 subject nations, nationalities, ethnic and ethnographic groups before the Russian Revolution of October 1917, by the end of the 1950s a total of 53 national states or national administrative units had taken shape in the USSR.

The rapid development of this process resulted in part from structural changes conforming to Lenin's principles of voluntary union on a basis of complete equality, sovereignty, equal rights and duties including the right freely to secede from the Union. Among the major innovations on the basis of these principles were the formation of two equal chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the highest body of state authority. Both chambers have an equal number of deputies. But the Soviet of the Union is elected by constituencies with an equal population, while the Soviet of Nationalities is elected without regard to the size of population, so as to ensure representation of each republic, autonomous region and area. Thus, each union republic is represented by 32 deputies, each autonomous republic by 11, each autonomous region by five, and each autonomous area by one deputy, resulting in a total of 750 deputies. This structure of the highest state organ facilitated the active participation of the workers of all nations and nationalities in building socialism and conducting the affairs of the USSR.

National-territorial demarcation and the reunification into independent republics of national territories which had been fragmented in the past was another significant policy for devel-



oping the multinational, multiracial Soviet state. Under this policy of territorial-national autonomy, conforming to a crucial natural geographic condition for the development of nations, many nations and nationalities obtained independent statehood in accord with their national interests for the first time in history.

**S**ocialist industrialization and its accompanying cultural revolution accelerated the economic, social, political and cultural development of the formerly oppressed and deprived non-Russian peoples. Economic planning and the federal budget facilitated the relatively more rapid development of the former backward areas than of more highly developed zones. The all-Union budget subsidized development of the formerly oppressed and deprived non-Russian peoples. Economic planning and the federal budget facilitated the relatively more rapid development of the former backward areas than of more highly developed zones. The all-Union budget subsidized development in the less developed regions.

Consequently, the rate of economic growth in these areas exceeded that of the central area, and this accelerated growth of the national republics has been maintained throughout the USSR's existence. According to an authoritative source, in the period between 1922 and 1981, industrial output had grown more than 900 times in Kazakhstan and Moldavia, over 1,000 times in Armenia, 874 times in Tadzhikistan, 690 times in Kirghizia, 699 times in Byelorussia, 514 times in the Russian Federation, 415 times in Uzbekistan, 276 times in the Ukraine, 292 times in Georgia, 206 times in Turkmenia, and 138 times in Azerbaidzhan. In the period 1940-1981, industrial output in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia increased 46 to 61 times (N. Tarasenko and L. Umansky, "In a Family of Sister Nations: Facts and Figures," *Pravda*, May 24, 1982).

Moreover, the Eleventh Five-Year Plan projects an industrial output growth for the Soviet Union as a whole of 26-28 per cent, while specifying for Azerbaidzhan and Armenia 29-32 per cent, for Byelorussia 26-29 per cent, Kazakhstan 22-25 per cent, Tadzhikistan 24-27 per cent, and 30-33 per cent for Moldavia.

("Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for 1981-1985 and for the Period Ending in 1990," *Pravda*, March 5, 1982.)

Besides such structural changes projected by the Communist Party and implemented by the Soviet state, other objective forces spurred the process of multinational, multiracial state formation. The Civil War and foreign intervention had contradictory effects. They caused serious loss of life, dislocation and devastation, hardship and delays in clearing the way to building socialism. On the other hand, the ravages of the white-guard forces, the aggressions and annexationist aims of the intervention by 14 capitalist states, and the counter-revolutionary "fifth column" collaboration with the intervention among the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and nationalist leaders among the former subject-nationalities, made a military and political alliance of the Russian and non-Russian nations essential for their survival.

Further, by abolishing private ownership of the means of production and their conversion into public property, the Soviet republic had established the equality of all its citizens in relation to the means of production. This made income earned by labor the sole means of livelihood, thereby outlawing exploitation and universalizing both the right and the obligation to work. These principles were the basis for the multilateral development and flourishing of nations and the drawing together of socialist nations through relations of cooperation and friendship.

This year the USSR observes its 60th year as a form of state association of Soviet nations and nationalities, designed for the entire historic period of the gradual development of socialist statehood until it is succeeded by the next stage, Communist public self-government. Multinational and multiracial in its composition, internationalist in its policy and ideology, its organizational structure and mass organizations, the USSR constitutes a victory of the practical implementation of proletarian internationalism, of the science of solving the national question and realizing the equality of nations and nationalities, as discovered and elaborated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and their followers. □

HOWARD L. PARSONS

## Nations, Nationality, Internationalism and Peace: The Soviet Position

*For the 60th anniversary of the founding of the USSR*

*The following is an abridged version of a chapter from the book, Nations and Peoples: The Soviet Experience, forthcoming in 1983 from N.W.R. Publications, Inc.*

In class societies, particularly capitalist ones, "nationalism" has meant devotion of a specific people with a common territory, economy, language, culture, political order and society to their own "nation." It has also meant excessive and exclusive patriotism, prejudices of national chauvinism, mistrust, rivalry and destructive competition between national groups within a society and between different national states, domination and exploitation of one national group by another, the dependency of some nations on others, infringement on the independence of nations, violation of the sovereignty of nations, treatment of some nations as unequal and inferior, the subjugation of ethnic minorities within national states, interference in the internal affairs of some nations by others, racism, and even attempted genocide of some national peoples.

The national state in the modern sense and the nationalism that grows out of it are creations of the economic and political transformation that produced capitalism out of feudalism. The creation of nations has been a progressive step; it has drawn people out of the slumber of rural feudalism and has helped to actualize their individual and social potentialities. At the same time, capitalism has created barriers within and between nations in this world market, barriers that have continuously frustrated and spoiled the possibilities of nations and peoples it had brought into being. Slavery and devastating international wars are only two examples of this contradiction inherent in the international order raised up in the history of capitalism.

The proliferation of so many nations in the last forty years has led some to see the conflict between nations as the basic one in the world—east vs. west, north vs. south, nations of the countryside vs. nations of the cities, developing nations vs. developed nations, poor vs. rich, colored vs. white. Some even see the basic struggle in the world as one between the two nuclear "superpowers" or between the non-nuclear powers and the nuclear powers.

But nationality (national feeling, custom, state organization) is not the prime moving force of history. Economy is. The material forces of production, the relations of classes in production, the class struggle—these are the main shapers of human living. Economies may (or may not) have a national form; but economy is always there, while the national form is transient and is not necessary.

The modern nation is a phenomenon growing out of the early

HOWARD L. PARSONS, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Philosophy, University of Bridgeport, is a long-time activist in the peace movement and a frequent contributor to NWR. He is a member of the National Board of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship.

revolt of the bourgeoisie against feudalism (as in the first European monarchical nation-states) and out of the later revolt of colonial peoples against oppressive capitalist nations compelled "to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station" to which they felt entitled (as in the American revolution against the British and in the Vietnamese revolution against the French, Japanese and Americans). The first nations in the full sense were capitalist by historical necessity; bourgeois commerce, as Lenin pointed out, needed control of the home market, a unified political territory, and a common language. (V.I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," *Collected Works*, vol. XX. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964, p. 396.)

While the strongest nations today are the capitalist US and the socialist USSR, with corresponding nations clustered around them and the non-aligned nations standing as a third force, the basic conflict between them is not national but economic (and consequently military). It is this class conflict that mainly determines the course of the world and explains the policies and actions of each side and their relations to one another. True, the spread of nuclear war would be self-contradictory for both sides. The human alternative is the arrest and reversal of the arms race and peaceful coexistence of opposed social systems, whether capitalist, socialist, or non-aligned. This alternative will not erase class conflict from history but will make it possible for it to continue in a peaceful way between established nations; and it facilitates the struggles of peoples for progress within both bourgeois democracies and repressive regimes.

Nations, national boundaries and traditions, and national psychology and loyalties provide people with a sense of social identity and historical direction. The problem now is not to get rid of national sentiment and tradition but to transform it into a creative, constructive, cooperative activity that sustains the human values of each national group and at the same time builds an inter-national order of mutual respect and cooperation of independent and equal ethnic groups and national states.

History shows that the principal obstruction to achieve this order is the oppression and predation built into class societies, especially capitalism. Capitalist nations as a whole are ruled by a class impelled by the principles of exploitation, private acquisition and accumulation, and maximum profits. "Nationalism" for such a class cannot mean democracy, tolerance, universal freedom and equality of individuals or nations, and mutual respect for all ethnic groups, races, and nations. It must mean, rather, the use of any and all natural resources, machinery, workers, peasants, people, ethnic and racial groups, and nations for that class' interest and advantage. Within its own national borders, the capitalist class makes use of ethnic inequality and prejudice by driving down the wages of ethnic minorities, cultivating dissension among ethnic groups, and reinforcing the

institutions and ideas that support ethnic prejudice and racism. Abroad, the capitalist class appropriates the natural resources of native peoples and brings the working people into the orbit of its subjection, doing all in the name of its superior "way of life." Insofar as it has any interest in its nation, capitalism twists the nation's interest so that it appears as identical with its own. As Charles E. Wilson put it, "What is good for the United States is good for the General Motors Corporation and vice versa."

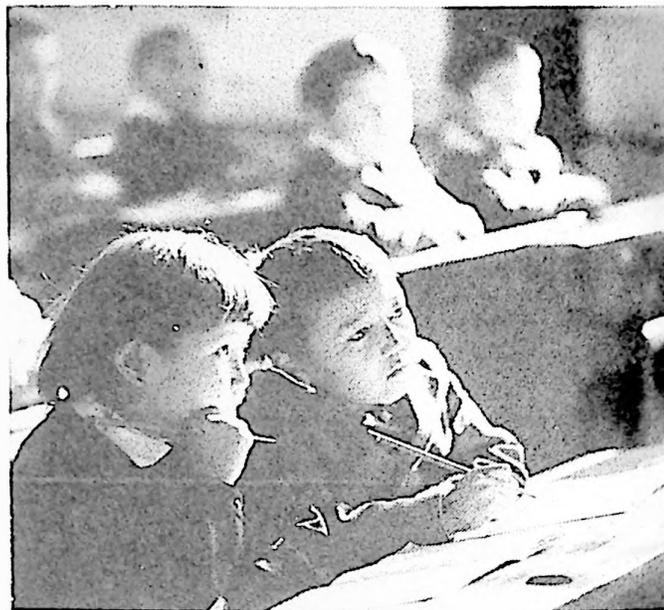
**F**or the people of an imperialist nation, such deformed nationality means that they are deprived of the best in their national tradition, are denied full access to the wealth of their country and the products of their labor, are barred from acquisition and use of the tools of democracy — literacy, knowledge, education, vocational training — are deceived and mystified by lies and myths about their true national history, are divided against each other by ethnic and racist prejudices, and are misled by distorted ideas about the nature and history of peoples and nations abroad whom their leaders have subjugated to their class interests or are endeavoring to subjugate. For the imperialists the "foreign" includes not only indigenous peoples, ethnic and racial minorities, and various immigrant groups at home, but also colonized, dependent, conquered, and resistant peoples abroad, and even peoples of other imperialist countries that have turned against the would-be hegemonic imperialist power.

Is there an alternative to such deformed nationality? Yes—it is the national policy of socialist societies, in the first instance the USSR, that conceives and pursues a position of genuine respect for the needs and interests of peoples, both its own and those abroad.

The first socialist state, the USSR, dismantled the class structure of the old capitalist society and established a society built on the rule of the workers and peasants. It thus removed the primary historical cause of deformed nationality and put into place the foundation for a humanistic national policy both within the *Union* of the different republics of the new society and in the relations of the Union to other peoples and nations struggling for their liberation and independence from colonial and imperialist domination.

Under socialism, nationalism means self-determination; under capitalism, it means oppression and dependency. In 1914 Lenin summarized the position of the Russian Marxists' Program: "Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the unity of the workers of all nations. . . ." (V.I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, p. 454). Long before the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin and the other Bolsheviks were aware of the history of old Russia as "the prisonhouse of nations" and of the oppressive weight of Great-Russian nationalism. The free and equal development of nationalities requires bringing the economies and cultures of backward peoples up to the level of the more advanced. It requires fraternity, unity and cooperation of the peoples. These tasks have been accomplished in the creation of the single multinational community of the USSR. In this, the Russian Federation set the pace; itself a multinational state, it rendered generous assistance to other peoples of the new country.

A socialist nation, particularly the first one, cannot confine its energies to its own development and let the rest of the world pass by. It must be concerned about the working people of the whole world and about the worldwide class struggle going on within



Bi-lingualism begins early: a Russian language class in the Kirghiz Republic.

nations, in nation-to-nation relations, and in movements that cut across nations and transcend them. Capitalist nations are isolated from the main tendencies of historical development and are aggressively anti-progressive, exporting counterrevolution. Socialist nations cannot remain isolated, nor can they export revolutions; they are committed by the necessity of human need and history to aid the world revolutionary process whenever and wherever they can. This is not terrorism or war-making. It is simply support of the forces in the world making for liberation from repression, for justice, democracy, peace, and social progress.

The record of Soviet aid to developing countries is a record of assistance based on mutual advantage and voluntary cooperation in the absence of special indebtedness. In the 1920s the USSR helped Mongolia build enterprises, and in the 1930s it assisted Turkey and Afghanistan in constructing textile mills and Iran in making rice-hulling mills. In 1955 the USSR had economic and technical agreements with two developing countries, but by 1979 there were 64 such agreements—21 in Asia, 33 in Africa and 10 in Latin America. More than 600 projects have been constructed in these developing countries with the help of Soviet agencies, and nearly as many are now under construction or in process of design.

The cooperative agreements are carried out within the state sectors—in contrast to aid from capitalist countries, which concentrates on assisting private capital. In addition, almost three-fourths of the economic and technical assistance is put into industries, chiefly the heavy industries of metallurgy, engineering, and mining, as well as the power industry. For example, the metallurgical mill at Bhilai in India, built with Soviet-Indian cooperation, has for two decades been India's biggest and most efficient plant in ferrous metallurgy. Likewise, in Asia and Africa the plants built with Soviet aid turned out, in 1977, more than 40 per cent of pig iron and about 30 per cent of the steel in all of the developing countries in those continents. The Aswan High Dam in Egypt, built with Soviet aid, generated in 1977 more than half of the country's total electrical output. Several large power plants have been constructed in Afghanistan, and

similar plants are under construction in Iraq, Iran and other countries. Bauxite in Guinea, oil fields in Iraq, Syria, India and Algeria, oil in India, Turkey, Egypt and Ethiopia, oil-products pipelines in Nigeria and Iraq, agriculture in Afghanistan, Guinea and Mali—all have been developed through joint agreements and cooperation.

Trained workers — engineers, technicians, skilled workers — are needed as well as extracted natural resources, and the Soviet Union has trained nearly 550,000 specialists in developing countries, most of them in the course of construction and operation of the joint projects. In addition, there are some 20,000 students from developing countries enrolled at higher schools in the USSR, the best known being the Lumumba Peoples' Friendship University in Moscow. The USSR also has helped or is now helping to build 150 schools in those countries.

The USSR offers long-term credit (up to 15 years) to developing nations, making possible planning for stable development. Pay-back in products enhances their export resources and capacity to pay. Soviet interest rates are 2.5 to 3 per cent per year, as compared with most capitalist loans of 5 to 7 per cent and higher. (Most of the preceding data on USSR aid to developing countries comes from "Effective and Mutually Advantageous," *World Marxist Review*, vol. 22, no. 7, July 1979, pp. 70-72.)

Frances Moore Lappe, Joseph Collins and David Kinley (*Aid as Obstacle: Twenty Questions about our Foreign Aid and the Hungry*, Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1980) show in great detail how US aid—through the Agency for International Development (AID), Aid Program, Commodity Credit Corporation, International Monetary Fund, World Bank Group, etc.—is flagrantly ineffective in dealing with poverty in developing countries and often deepens the poverty. Aid is concentrated not on the poorest countries, but on those of strategic economic and military importance; economic aid is supplemented with military aid to repressive regimes sharing common interests with multinational corporations. Only 20 per cent of the food aid goes to the rural poor, because the governments which receive it (most of them repressive) distribute it to the military, police and civil services, employees of large enterprises and cash-holding middle-class people who can buy it.

**A**id programs are based on 1) the false premise that the poor must be brought into the development process—whereas that process is controlled by and for the rich at home and abroad—and 2) the false premise that backwardness must be overcome by "material incentives and benevolent prods"—whereas true development must be social and democratic in the ownership and control of land, agriculture, industry and other productive power.

In the international struggle of capitalism against socialism, the US military-industrial-political complex, still guided by sixteenth century piratical standards, has refused to accept in practice the principles of international law now formulated in the UN Charter: the equality of all nations in international affairs, noninterference and refrainment from domination or hegemony, recognition of the sovereignty of each nation over its natural resources, and support of efforts to eliminate colonialism, racism and apartheid. The USSR has subscribed to these norms. The US by contrast has objected to Soviet aid to developing countries on the alleged grounds of the evils of communism (cheating, lying, totalitarianism), the superiority of



Women burn the veil in Soviet Central Asia, 1927.

the American way of life, the Soviet military threat, Haig's association of Soviet "international terrorism" with "so-called national liberation," etc. (According to *The New York Times*, February 9, 1981, the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the State Department said they could not document Haig's charges of Soviet terrorism.) The US ruling group arrogates to itself the authority (over the business community in the US and allied nations) to make normal relations of diplomacy, trade and arms negotiations with the USSR contingent on Soviet actions toward the developing nations and indeed on any set of circumstances it chooses.

The doctrine of "linkage," of course, is not new. Even during the period of detente in the 1970s, the US involved the concept of linkage to try to block Soviet aid to liberation struggles and developing nations such as Angola and Ethiopia. But the proletarian internationalism of the USSR has stood firm; and the objective fact is that more and more nations are breaking away from the rule of imperialism. These nations are not fully socialist, but with their sense of national identity they have broken away from the sway of foreign nations and are finding their own way to democratic decisions about the form and destiny of their societies. The USSR is ready and willing to aid them in that process. Of course such aid is in the interest of the USSR, because all help to democracy, development, and good-neighborly relations among nations is help to their own cause. US capitalism's self-interest cannot tolerate the interest of the developing countries in independence and progress.



The development process, however, is threatened by the arms race and the possibility of nuclear war and omnicide. Hence the question of peace—halting and reversing the arms race and establishing peaceful coexistence—is inseparably linked with the question of national liberation and developing countries. How?

1) In an atmosphere of relaxation of tensions, when militarism and reaction are reduced in power, it is to that extent easier for working people and oppressed peoples generally to assert their democratic rights.

2) The arms race takes a great toll in wealth, wasting the people's resources that might under peaceful conditions be used for their economic and social development. African countries now spend on military needs an amount 50 per cent greater than that spent on education. (Victor Saprykov, *Peaceful Coexistence*, Moscow: Novosti Press Agency, 1979, p. 43.)

3) The arms race increases the possibility of war not only among the big nuclear powers but also among the poorer nations which, driven into deeper poverty and insecurity, are apt to turn to arms as a way out.

4) Detente and peaceful coexistence bring trade between countries of opposed social systems, cultural and scientific exchange, travel and greater communication between systems.

5) Peaceful coexistence contains and limits the dangers of nuclear war and preserves the very life of peoples and societies without which "development" and "progress" would be meaningless.

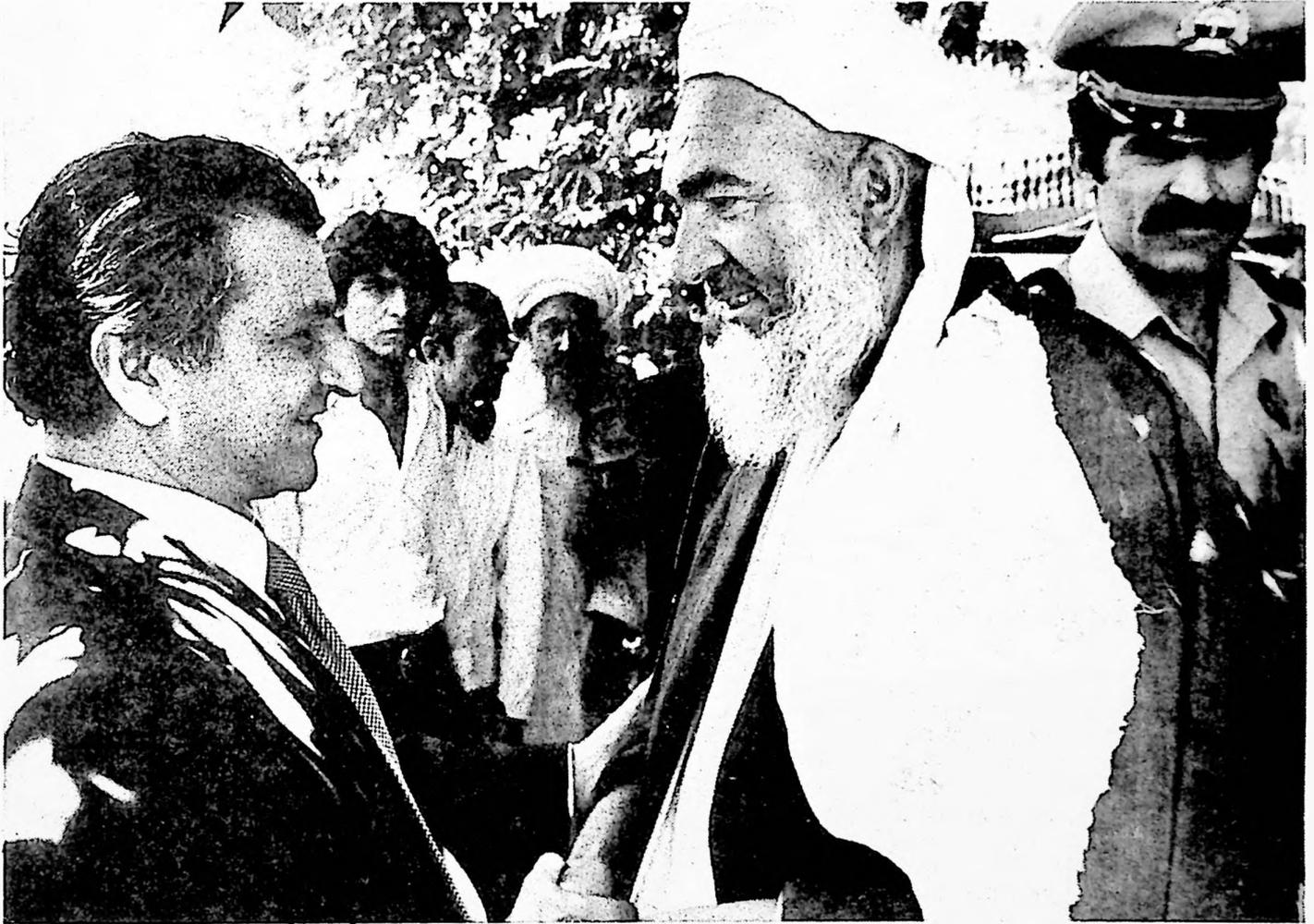
The USSR has long recognized this interconnection between peace and development. The Soviet Union's initiatives for disarmament, now numbering well over 100, have paralleled and complemented the Soviet position in support of national independence. Genuine peace between nations requires mutual respect for the rights of independence, self-determination, equality and development. These rights in turn require peaceful and not armed methods in the relations between nations. The term "peaceful coexistence" brings together both the concept of peace and that of independence for all nations.

We must work our collective will, all peoples of the world, to save all nations—to create a world of peace and democracy, of friendship and happiness for humanity now and ever after. □



MARILYN BECHTEL

## Afghanistan: Transforming Tradition



Prime Minister Babrak Karmal greets a Moslem leader in Kabul.

*NWR editor Marilyn Bechtel visited Afghanistan twice, in October 1980 and May 1981, and conducted extensive interviews with officials of the government and the People's Democratic Party as well as with ordinary people in various walks of life. She is one of the few Western journalists to have done so in the recent period.*

*Detailed accounts of those visits appeared in issues of NWR during 1981.*

Three years after the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, which served as the pretext for a variety of anti-Soviet measures on the part of the Carter administration, developments in that country continue to share top billing with the situation in Poland, among the excuses President Reagan and his colleagues continuously recycle as they attempt to sidetrack arms talks and spike a revival of US-Soviet trade and exchanges.

The Reagan administration has also continued to use its

leverage in the United Nations to return the "Afghanistan question" to the agenda of the General Assembly for the fourth time since the beginning of 1980.

Recent developments in that country, however, show that while the situation remains complex and difficult in many ways, the Afghan people and their government, with the help they have requested from the USSR and other countries, including India, are making steady progress in normalizing and improving their life.

While Afghanistan's Foreign Minister, Shah Mohammad Dost, was in New York during the General Assembly's general debate earlier this fall, I asked him what he thought about some concepts commonly discussed in US newspapers: that Afghanistan is "Russia's Viet Nam," with the Soviets "hopelessly bogged down" and looking for a way out through a compromise which would "Finlandize" the country. Dost reminded me that

the Soviet troops are there in the first place only because the Afghan government, perceiving an overwhelming foreign-supported counterrevolutionary threat from across its borders, invited them under the friendship agreement the two countries signed in December 1978.

"We have repeatedly said that as soon as there is no more reason for them to be there, we will ask them to leave and they will do so," he emphasized. "Unfortunately, there are no signs yet that the infiltration from abroad has ceased."

Dost indicated the Afghan government was not made more comfortable by the passage on September 30 of Senate Concurrent Resolution 126, with House agreement, which says it should be US policy to encourage and support Afghan anti-government forces and to provide them with "material assistance" at their request.

"Finlandization" is nonsense as a concept, he said. "Afghanistan has been nonaligned and will remain so. We do not need others to suggest to us what status Afghanistan should adopt. We have already decided our own course, and will not let anyone else tell us what we should do."

Since the April 1978 revolution and especially since the new phase which began three years ago under the leadership of Babrak Karmal, the United Nations has been most important in Afghan foreign policy, Dost observed. "We have repeatedly stated that we wish to live in peace and to have normal, good relations with all countries including the United States," he said. "We feel our efforts for peace and normalization have been one-sided, and we are still waiting for a positive response to our proposals."

These proposals, introduced in May 1980 and augmented in August 1981, call for cessation of hostilities and interference across the borders with Pakistan and Iran, for normalization of relations, talks on matters of contention, and guarantees by the US and USSR that border incursions will not resume. It is on this basis that Afghanistan has approached the talks which brought Javier Perez de Cuellar into "shuttle diplomacy" between Kabul and Islamabad as special representative of the UN Secretary-General. Following Perez de Cuellar's accession to the post of Secretary-General, his special representative, Diego Cordovez, traveled to Geneva last June to conduct "proximity talks" between delegations of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"We have welcomed the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General," Dost said. "We believe the talks in Geneva were a step forward. We were able to understand each other's position in clear terms. We showed flexibility, and we saw some from the other side as well." The biggest positive result so far, he indicated, is that talks are to continue, perhaps even taking the form of a direct meeting with representatives of Pakistan. "We cannot yet say there is a clear change in their position," he noted, "but they do wish to continue the process."

To date there has been no progress in normalizing relations with Iran, Dost said, despite repeated assurances of Afghanistan's friendly intentions.

**E**ver since Babrak Karmal became president three years ago, reports in *Kabul New Times*, Afghanistan's English-language daily newspaper, have referred frequently to groups of Afghan refugees returning home to warm welcomes. The statement recently broadcast by President Karmal reiterating the Revolutionary Council's decree of amnesty for Afghans abroad who wish to return, has been welcomed by Afghans living in

neighboring countries, Dost said. Though they face some hindrances from Pakistani authorities, the number returning from Pakistan has increased greatly since the broadcast, he indicated.

According to *Kabul New Times*, people on the Pakistani side of the border have given the process a boost by distributing literature featuring the amnesty proclamation. Students at Bajawar College gave out newspapers containing the proclamation at refugee camps in their area, and then held a demonstration inside the camps, asking the refugees why they didn't go home. Afghan anti-government leaders tried unsuccessfully to get the commissioner of Bajawar City to stop the activity, and ended up by having to close their own office (*Kabul New Times*, September 9, 1982).

*Kabul New Times* also reported on October 11 that Afridi tribesmen, members of one of the Pashtoon tribes living on both sides of the border, had gotten together to warn the Pakistani political agent in the Khyber Pass area to stop arresting tribal elders, to stop preventing tribesmen from using the "great road" to Torkham, on the Afghan side, and to urge that Afghan anti-government forces be withdrawn from the area so they would not disrupt the security of the people of the region.

Within the country, Dost told me, the military situation is generally good, and moving toward further normalization. The People's Democratic Party has intensified its emphasis on discussing government programs with people throughout the country. People are participating in building their own future, through the National Fatherland Front, a coalition of some 15 organizations including trade union, religious, farmers', women's, youth and cultural groups founded in June 1981 and now active in most areas of the country.

Dost noted that communities are increasingly forming their own armed patrols, called Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. Counterrevolutionaries are themselves surrendering in increasing numbers, he said, and many make the switch complete by joining the defense committees.

Such a group is active around Paghman, the town not far from Kabul which has been the scene of many attacks by anti-government forces, and where the Afghan Army scored substantial successes last summer. Darman Shirzad, a leader of the Paghman Defenders of the Revolution, in an interview with *Kabul New Times* (September 15, 1982) described the group's work as a combination of political discussions with the people during the day and guard duty at night. Recently the group routed bands which had set fire to a local hotel, a secondary school, a girls' school and a place where Islamic holy books were stored, and killed or wounded a number of the intruders. Shirzad emphasized the importance of the political discussions in bringing people together and achieving a secure situation in the town.

A member of another Defenders group, Mohammad Del of Butkhak village, indicated he joined the group because he had personally suffered from the actions of the anti-government forces, and had experienced the "oppressions, injustice and torture" of the prerevolutionary regime. "As a patriot, I say to those who have joined the counterrevolutionaries that their ugly and inhuman actions will eventually cause their own downfall," he said. "They are going the wrong way, away from reality and from Islam. The next generation will heap curses on them." (*Kabul New Times*, August 29, 1982)

Such committees are also formed at factories. Hazrat Atai, a worker at the Afghan Fruit Processing Company in Kabul, said he joined because the rebels were destroying factories, roads,



A newly-built day care center in the capital city.

bridges and schools. He works at his job of cleaning raisins during the day, and helps protect his workplace and neighborhood at night. He also spent five months in Wardak Province and two months protecting the thermal power station in Pule Charkhi. Atai said he was illiterate before the revolution. "Involvement of illiterate workers in literacy courses is urgent," he said, "because workers cannot take part in developing the society and the country without acquiring literacy and learning" (*Kabul New Times*, October 14, 1982).

Captured rebels are often featured at press conferences in Kabul. Novosti Press Agency correspondent Alexander Sukhoparov recently reported such a conference with Abdul Rashid Khan, member of the Jamiate-Islami gang, who had been a top aide to the leader of counterrevolutionaries in the now-pacified Panjshir Valley. Abdul Rashid Khan described his work as a "judge," condemning to torture and death the government officials, teachers and doctors sent to help the people of the area.

Responding to my question about Western allegations of heavy civilian casualties inflicted by Soviet and Afghan soldiers, Shah Mohammad Dost said such reports were a distorted version of the routing of counterrevolutionary bands. "How could the revolutionary government be against the people's interests?" he asked. "Because of our concern for the lives of civilians, the Afghan Army warned them in advance so they

could leave. It would have been easier not to bother about the ordinary people, but the Army and the government are there to serve them."

Dost also emphasized that Soviet forces are not in Afghanistan to fight the counterrevolutionaries; but as a reserve against the threat from across the borders. "Soviet forces don't fight unless they themselves are attacked," he said. "Our forces have shown they are strong enough to deal with the situation." It is hard to quantify the amount of infiltration into the country over the last year, he indicated. But from the numbers of weapons captured and other observations, it appears to be about the same as in the recent past.

The Foreign Minister's assertion that the economic situation in his country is improving is borne out by an article in *Izvestia* (October 21, 1982) by Abdul Majid Sarbiland, deputy prime minister. "Afghanistan's state budget for the 1981-82 fiscal year showed no deficit for the first time in Afghan history," Sarbiland wrote. "The national income rose by 4.4 per cent, while gross agricultural production increased by 3.5 per cent. In 1981 exports grew by 119.1 per cent while imports grew by 35.3 per cent."

The Council of Ministers reported that in the first quarter of 1361 (March 1982 - June 1982), production of cement had risen 45 per cent, textiles were up by 14.4 per cent, electricity by 10.6 per cent and coal by 17.2 per cent over the comparable period

the previous year (*Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kabul, August 15, 1982). The Council also noted improvements in transportation, higher education and health, but indicated that because of counterrevolutionary disruption and "a certain apathy and negligence" on the part of some responsible people, some levels specified in the development plan were not being reached.

**N**onetheless, improvements are steadily being felt in the lives of ordinary people. Earnings of workers have risen an average of 26 per cent and those of the lowest paid have gone up by 40 to 50 per cent. *Kabul New Times* (October 9, 1982) reported on the efforts of Kabul's municipal government to ensure sufficient wood for the city's people at subsidized rates — very important since much wood is used for home heating in winter, and Afghanistan is one of the world's most timber-deficient countries after centuries of over-use.

Women workers have gained enormously in recent times. Habiba Zafari, now a forewoman at the Samoon Fruit Company, told a *Kabul New Times* interviewer that since the revolution, the workers at her factory, mostly women, receive work clothes free of charge, get three months' salary as a bonus each year, have transportation to and from work, and medical treatment. "In general," she said, "the life of our workers has improved a great deal compared with past conditions, and because of the government's attention, we have all the necessary facilities." Another woman, Alia, a worker at the Majidi Raisin Factory, observed that before the revolution, "nobody paid the least attention to us. Our monthly salaries did not even buy bread. Our overtime work was not paid, and we were dismissed at the will of the boss." All that is past, she said: "Now I have a monthly salary of 3,000 afghanis (about 42 afghanis equal \$1.00), and am satisfied with the working conditions and treatment of my fellow workers" (*Kabul New Times*, October 12, 1982).

Efforts to increase industrial production and improve housing necessitate increased availability of construction materials. The Kabul House-Building Plant, which makes prefabricated panels for a variety of buildings, is now greatly increasing its capacity with the help of the Soviets, who built the original facility in the 1960s. The Bulgarians have recently signed an agreement to aid in reconstructing and expanding the Bagrami Brick Works.

In a country where four-fifths of the people earn their living from agriculture, and much manufacturing is based on agricultural products, farming receives great attention. The Program of Action adopted at the First National Conference of the People's Democratic Party, held in March 1982, emphasized the necessity of continuing to work for a democratic solution to the land question, with participation of the working peasants, assuring them enough land to earn a decent living and help in increasing production. In the first phase of land reform, about 300,000 peasants received land, but in some cases ownership was not registered and deeds were not issued. This is now being rectified. In a recent article in the Soviet magazine *New Times* (42, 1982), Yuri Tissovsky noted that in addition to land, peasants are being provided with credits, seeds, fertilizer and farming advice. Where machine and tractor stations have been established, peasants can request their help with tilling the land. Cooperative supply centers assist not only their members but others as well. Peasants are increasingly represented on land and water reform committees, which helps prevent abuses and dis-



TASS from SOVPHOTO

tortions. Advances are being slowed, however, by continuing counterrevolutionary activity, which is estimated to have caused 1.5 billion afghanis worth of damage.

**G**overnment policies continue to receive a high degree of support from the Islamic clergy. Putting into practice the People's Democratic Party's statements in its Program about freedom for Islam and other religions, and support to Islamic institutions, the government provided 26 million afghanis in the last fiscal year for assistance to Islamic institutions, and 51 million afghanis to repair mosques damaged by anti-government forces, and to build new mosques. In a speech to the PDPA Central Committee last July, Babrak Karmal said this assistance will continue. The Supreme Council of Ulemas and Clergy recently called on Moslems around the world to help the Afghan people and to work for an end to anti-government activity, on the basis that the government's progressive socioeconomic changes benefit the overwhelming majority of the people, according to a report by Novosti Press Agency commentator K. Gevorkyan.

Efforts to increase the participation of the people in decision-making include, in addition to building the Fatherland Front, the holding of *jirgahs* or traditional tribal assemblies in various parts of the country. In addition, officials of the government and of the People's Democratic Party travel frequently to various regions. Speaking to representatives of the Madakhail tribe, President Karmal said, "We attach great respect to the convocation of traditional national *jirgahs* . . . and we desire in future to establish our local government through national *jirgahs*" (*Kabul New Times*, September 9, 1982). The paper has also reported many positive responses from tribal leaders, among them the remarks of Haji Kandahari, a leader of the Jaji tribes of Paktia Province. Kandahari noted that "Now we can discuss our demands and difficulties with the government. It is a matter of great pleasure that whatever our revolutionary state has promised its people, it has put into practice." This honesty has increased the people's confidence, he said. As a result, people who had fled are coming home, and more people are joining the Defenders of the Revolution. His colleague, Amanullah, representing the Tota Khail tribal troupe from the same province, noted further that since the defense groups were formed in his region, anti-government forces have not been able to mount attacks even in the most remote locations (*Kabul New Times*, September 21, 1982).

(con't p. 30)

---

# Doves Over the Volga

---

Last summer the Connecticut organization, *Promoting Enduring Peace*, proposed to charter the Soviet passenger liner "Alexander Pushkin" for a Peace Cruise on the Volga river, August 5-21. The response was massive, and five other organizations agreed to be co-sponsors: the Fellowship of Reconciliation, The Nation, the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and World Fellowship.

Demand for places was so great that a second, earlier, cruise was arranged, July 16 to August 6. Reports on both sections of the Volga Peace Cruise, 1982, follow. Miriam Morton, co-leader of the first cruise, is a well-known writer on the Soviet Union and a specialist in children's literature, as well as a long-time participant in the movement for peace. The Rev. William Howard Melish, former chairperson of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, has compiled an admirable record of participation, over several decades, in all phases of the work of building understanding between the US and Soviet peoples, and laying popular foundations for peace and disarmament. Both of our reporters are frequent contributors to NWR.

## A Cruise for Peace

WILLIAM HOWARD MELISH

Many of the 165 members of our group were seeing Moscow for the first time. They were surprised to find a vast city of eight million people, organized in districts reaching out in all directions, with broad avenues and innumerable areas of greenery, rather than the concentrated and sky-ward overcrowding of Manhattan and the centers of many American cities. The miles along the way from Sheremetyevo Airport to the impressive, new, built for the Olympics, Kosmos Hotel, opposite the grounds of the All-Union Exposition of Economic Achievements, made an impact, as did the sight of hundreds of tourists in the hotel lobby from every corner of the world: Eastern Europeans, Sudanese, Nigerians, Latins, Vietnamese, Indians, Chinese and Japanese. After checking in and having supper, many crossed the square to a brand-new Metro station where for five kopeks (eight cents) they rode downtown to see Red Square, the Kremlin and St. Basil's Cathedral illuminated at night. For New Yorkers, harassed by dirty, crowded, graffiti-marred subways, the Moscow Metro that serves millions daily, where the trains come every two to four minutes, and each station an artistic masterpiece, provides a visceral shock.

Saturday there were visits to the Kremlin with its historic cathedrals, Red Square and the Lenin Mausoleum, and in the afternoon a city tour that culminated in front of Moscow University in the Lenin Hills, where scores of beribboned automobiles were bringing brides and grooms from various wedding palaces to the magnificent promenade overlooking the Moscow River, where they could pay their respects to their beloved city and use up a little time before going to catered wedding banquets at hotels or family apartments that have become traditional. Just a block away a crowd nearly filled the avenue in front of an Orthodox Church where a bearded Metropolitan was arriving for a festival service, the church jammed with worshipers and pungent with clouds of incense. That evening we all had tickets for the famous Tchaikovski Concert Hall where young dancers from the Bolshoi put on a surprising performance of Igor Stravinski's "Rite of Spring" that brought out the barbaric primitivism of this famous Russian score. Sunday morning the group divided, half going to the Baptist Church where they were deeply moved by the fervor of the evangelical worship and the congregational and choral singing, and half visiting the Novodevechi Monastery where there is a working Orthodox

Church. In brief, 36 hours had dispelled many of the myths and accepted cliches concerning Soviet people and their life in their capital. Our anticipation for exciting things to come had been whetted as we boarded a plane for Rostov-on-Don.

Let me confess that I had approached this trip with some apprehension lest ten days on a river boat might be boring. I could not have been more mistaken. Each day on the ship there were seminars with Soviet authorities and American peace-activists to lead the discussion, with Russell Johnson of the American Friends' Service Committee as the over-all moderator. The entire group would meet in plenary session on the upper deck and then divide into four sections of approximately forty each, moving to the social rooms in various parts of the ship. One of the Soviet specialists and one of the Americans sat in with each section in turn, so that everyone had an opportunity to hear and question all the speakers.

The Soviet spokesmen were Prof. Zalman Litvin, a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations in Moscow; Victor Linik, an international commentator and columnist for *Pravda*; Igor Maleshenko from the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada; and Gennadi Kotov, also from the Institute of World Economy. In addition, there was on board a correspondent for *Soviet Life*, Mrs. Ariadne Nikolenko, and her daughter, Valerie. All spoke and understood English.

The American discussion leaders included Michael Clark from the Riverside Church Disarmament Program; Carl Casebolt from Oakland, California, and chairman of a Peace Task Force of the United Church of Christ; John Masson, a business man from Daly City, California, who has made a study of the literature on the Cold War and its origins; and Eleanor Otterness from Minneapolis, representing the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. A television crew from a CBS affiliate in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area covered the entire trip with a view to making a documentary for showing in the fall.

The Soviet speakers made themselves available at all times and the opportunity to talk informally with them on deck or in the public rooms or over a drink at the bar proved invaluable but most important was what I would call the developing interplay between our discussions on shipboard and the striking encounters we were experiencing with the cities and people along the way.

The Volga River proved a surprise. Because of two huge hydroelectric power dams just above Volgograd and at Kuibyshev, the river widens into vast and long reservoirs and then again becomes a river with visible banks and sometimes lovely bluffs. The heavy river traffic, consisting of tourist liners, hydrofoils, self-propelling and tug-propelled barges laden with all kinds of goods, was fascinating, and it was interesting to see automobile campers setting up their tents and lighting their camp-fires on the shore, to find that some had boats and out-board motors, and at Togliatti there was a boat club and marina where people could obtain the use of sail-boats and even racing shells.

The greatest product of this experience was that it helped to humanize a country and a people that we are constantly taught to de-humanize. Here we were seeing and talking with people, whose land was devastated and their cities destroyed by the Nazis, yet who have not only rebuilt them but created entirely new industrial communities designed to serve their entire country. As we reflected on what we were seeing, we began to understand a little better the resentment that several of the Soviet speakers expressed at President Reagan's cold-war posture, and their view that until Washington abandons it, serious negotiation becomes difficult if not impossible.

The Soviet participants made their country's position clear: nuclear warfare would mean universal disaster; there is a rough equivalence in existing destructive capability, which must never be used; the USSR has made a pledge not to be the first to employ nuclear weapons, challenging the United States to do the same, which Washington is refusing to do. Although they did not say so, it was clear that they hoped the growing American peace movement could alter or at least influence the American political scene for the better.

When the question was asked: Is there a comparable peace movement in the Soviet Union to that in our country?, they replied in this vein: "You in the United States are opposing an administration that is bound by a 'cold war ideology' and is against disarmament. We have a government that wants to reduce the nuclear threat, and has made innumerable overtures to your government. You have not been told in your press or on the media of the hundreds of peace meetings throughout the Soviet Union, or that 93,000,000 of our people have signed petitions calling for a Nuclear Freeze. Our people would welcome an end to the present tension and the re-deployment of what we are spending on armaments back to the satisfaction of our many civilian needs."

Our Soviet informants seemed quite free to acknowledge and discuss many grave unsolved problems in their country, and mistakes that have been made. But, though we saw much to criticize and perhaps dislike, we were seeing with our own eyes something quite different from President Reagan's jaundiced and perhaps ignorant view — since he has never been to the Soviet Union. That it is a markedly different culture and system from our own is apparent but to brand it casually as something aberrant and an economic failure on the point of disintegration is to buck the historic realities. This can only lead to continuing confrontation and ultimate catastrophe for all of us.

Members of the cruise did not accept this picture of Soviet policy as fundamentally non-militaristic and socially constructive without some sharp challenges: why did the Soviets attempt to send missiles to Cuba, why the use of surrogate troops in Angola, why the massive export business in Soviet weaponry,

the suppression of uprisings in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, the military intervention in Afghanistan, the support of the Vietnamese attack on Kampuchea and the military government of Jaruzelski in Poland, unless the Soviet Union is expansionist, as Washington asserts? Not every one was satisfied by the answers given, which implied that the motivation for most of these actions was essentially defensive and not expansionist; and the point was emphasized that the Soviet Union, instead of sending troops into Poland had at considerable cost to its people continued to provide oil, natural gas and food to help the country work its way out of its economic collapse; and the Soviet Union had not involved itself in the Persian Gulf situation but was seeking an end to the Iraqi-Iranian conflict; it had not challenged the naval presence of the United States in the Mediterranean, in spite of the Israeli attack on Lebanon; and the Soviet Union was presently proposing better relations with both China and the United States.

In the smaller groups all kinds of questions were put to the Soviet speakers, many of them concerning wages and salaries, elections, the nature and role of the Communist Party, religious freedom, civil liberties, the Helsinki Accords and the right of emigration, and the status of Jews. The answers were not always satisfying but usually informative in that they helped us grasp the fact that people see many of these questions in the different context of a society attempting to organize itself on a group or collective principle with the ultimate aim of creating a communist society in which all genuine human needs and aspirations can be met.

The interesting thing to me was the fact that throughout the sharpest discussion and difference of opinion, all the members of our cruise, without exception, seemed to be asking: "When we get home, what can we do to further the understanding of our people concerning both our likenesses and our differences in such a way as will contribute to mutual survival and world peace?" There was also some interest expressed in the problem of confronting cold-war opposition back home, including the possibility of an at least partial return to the repressiveness of the McCarthy era. I thus wound up leading a special plenary session of the entire group on "The Peace Movement and Political Repression," which, while sobering and a bit frightening, turned out to be quite salutary.

The culmination of the cruise was a meeting at Ulyanovsk, the birthplace of Lenin, where there was a gathering in the Hall of the Institute that trains pilots, air controllers and service personnel for Aeroflot and other airlines which use Soviet passenger aircraft produced in this industrial city. At that final gathering, 92-year-old veteran of the Peace Movement Elizabeth Moos spoke for us all, and her words are perhaps the best way to conclude this report: "We have seen, heard, and felt the Soviet people's deep desire for peace. We know that this is born out of your terrible suffering and knowledge of war. Of course, there are problems and differences between us — ideology, history, economic and social systems, and culture. But there are no problems that can be solved by war, no differences that cannot be negotiated, none that should prevent friendly cooperation between us. We must win this struggle for the future of our children — yours and mine." □

# Dialogue on the Volga

MIRIAM MORTON

The July cruise had 163 passengers, with about 60 of the group having joined merely for the sight-seeing. Nevertheless, the several peace discussions on board ship drew an attendance of 140, with each session having a larger attendance than the previous one. It seemed that only a very small number absented themselves, evidently considering that they were above (or somewhere) the battle for peace.

With so large a participation in the peace discussions, representing quite a variety of political and social points of view, it was necessary to focus the proceedings. As coordinator of the discussions and moderator, I offered the following definition of the program's central purpose: "The Greek playwright, Aeschylus, observed that 'Truth is war's first casualty.' All of us present here have also observed that truth is surely a casualty of the Cold War! We have therefore come this long, long way from home to be among the Soviet people, together to give truth a chance. The Irish poet, W.B. Yeats, defined poetry as 'Truth sung in passion.' May our passion for peace, which we share with our Soviet brothers and sisters, may this passion be foremost in our hearts and minds, guiding us in search for truth in our discussions, and may all of us come away with more knowledge, deeper understanding, a lasting feeling of trust and good fellowship, and high hopes that through our joint efforts with the Soviet people, peace *will* prevail." These words received warm approval from the participants — the attending tour members, their American discussion leaders, and the Soviet spokesmen.

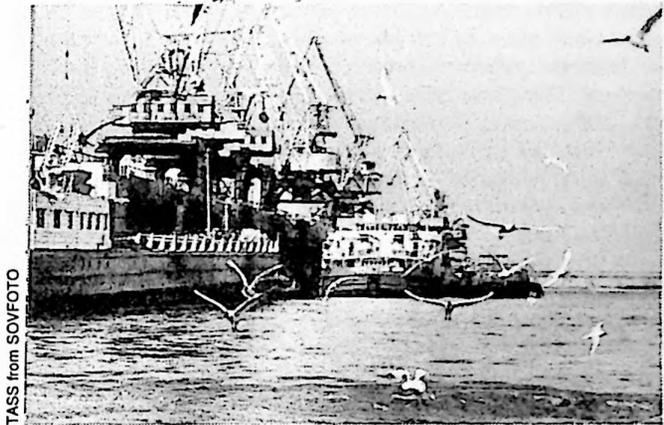
The atmosphere during the sessions as well as in the general mingling of the Americans with each other and with the Soviet representatives on board, reflected, on the whole, a friendly eagerness to learn and to understand. There were doubts and disagreements but not more than one verbal confrontation. The latter was staged by a fellow who seemed to be one of those Americans who becomes frantic whenever the Soviet Union is praised for anything at all. But even he was noticeably more friendly by the end of the tour.

The 163 tour members came from 19 of our states, a sizable number from New York and Los Angeles, but the rest from small communities in the Middle West and in other regions. The youngest member was 14 and the oldest 89. (This marked generational gap did not discourage either from doing a lively dance for the Amateur Show on board. They also paired up to lay a wreath in Ulyanovsk at a memorial to those who fell in the revolutionary struggle.)

The American discussion leaders were Terry Provence, for the past nine years the director of the Disarmament Program of the American Friends Service Committee and Rev. Robert Moore, Jr., former director of the Mobilization for Survival and for the past year the coordinator of the Princeton Coalition for Disarmament. The Soviet spokesmen were: Professor Arkady Gregorian, Department of Philosophy and Sociology, Moscow University, as well as Lecturer, since 1962, for the *Znanie* (Knowledge) Society, an organization which provides experts for meetings with foreign visitors; Dr. Zalman Litvin, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, of the USSR Academy of Sciences; Elena Knorre, Member of the Soviet Women's Committee; Alexei Popov,

Section Head at the Institute for USA and Canadian Studies, Moscow.

Each of our five sessions lasted two hours and we dealt with the themes of USA-USSR relations, the peace movements in the USA and the USSR, respectively, women and peace, and the deeper philosophical and social implications of the world peace movement. In the session on USA-USSR relations, the presentations by the American and Soviet discussion leaders traced the historical record and dealt with the current cold-war stance of the administration in Washington, and its methods of trying to convince Americans and West Europeans of the Soviet "threat," justifying the acceleration of the arms race. The



The port of Gorky on the banks of the Volga.

Soviet spokesmen stressed the Soviet leadership's persistent efforts to sustain detente and enumerated past and most recent disarmament proposals.

Once more reflecting their respective expertise, the discussion leaders' presentations on the peace movements in the USA and the USSR offered an overview of the goals and strategies of the movements and guidelines for the thrust for peace activities in the immediate future. The Soviet representatives gave us both the ideological background and the concrete aspects of the remarkable popular dimensions of the peace movement in the USSR — theory and facts of which most of us Americans have been kept ignorant. The question following both sets of presentations showed that the sessions were useful in giving knowledge, guidance, and inspiration to the tour participants.

A separate session was given over to questions and answers on a broad range of subjects regarding the two societies. Regrettably, there was time only for 39 of the 63 submitted questions. To calm the several discordant voices with us, their most provoking questions, usually addressed to the Soviet representatives, were included. Such questions were asked mostly by a small group of young participants who never removed the sharpest chips from their shoulders, being obviously determined to leave the USSR with the same baggage of mistrust and misconceptions with which they arrived. Interestingly, it was the more mature Americans on board who challenged their hostility most vigorously, with the Soviet spokesmen keeping their cool in their answers.

**V**isits to Ulyanovsk and to Volgograd gave our discussions added dimensions. There were many unforgettable experiences. The Volgograd War Memorial spoke to our hearts about the thousands who fell in the defense of that historic city and in defense of the whole world against fascist enslavement. Art Jenkins, a middle-aged, middle American, veteran of World War II, resident of a small town in North Dakota, said to me that day, his voice breaking and his eyes misted with tears: "I have seen many war memorials but never anything like this one . . ." and he was too moved to say more. Ulyanovsk, the city of Lenin, had its own message about Soviet history and the nation's great leader, born here. The reception we were given by the workers of a large plant was exceptional for the mutual warmth of feeling and craving for peace expressed by the Americans and their Soviet hosts. As a souvenir we conceived a "cornucopia," to be filled with greetings, statements of appreciation of their country's efforts for world peace, and promises of greater efforts in the American peace movement. Within an hour and a half after the announcement had been made over the public address system on board, I had in my hands 69 such expressions. The cornucopia was made from an American peace poster and the messages enclosed. We received assurances from our hosts that this valued gift would be displayed in the trophy room of these workers' House of Culture, together with the poster board full of American peace buttons which we also presented to them.

Again our thoughts honored the dead of the Battle of Stalingrad when we were in Ulyanovsk and later in the city of Kazan, further north along the Volga. For here we realized that no Nazi boot had stomped over these Soviet cities, the back of the German army having been forever broken at Stalingrad.

Most of us took the extended tour to Kiev and Leningrad. We were in Kiev in time to greet and join the Peace Demonstration and march with the Scandinavian marchers and the thousands of Kievites. It would surely take a separate article to do justice to the spirit of that demonstration, to what it meant to us Americans as we marched, sang, arm-in-arm with the others, what we felt as weeping Soviet women joined the procession, embracing us, the Americans, with words of remembered grief, bereavements in the last war, and with expressed hopes for an end of all wars. The march released an avalanche of emotions in us, too.

In Leningrad we met with that city's Friendship Society. Soviet journalists, youth leaders, peace educators, and a trade union member of the board of the Leningrad Peace Committee joined us. To most of us the account of the peace activities of Soviet trade unions was particularly revealing and inspiring. The journalist, Boris Feld, himself a victim of the Leningrad siege — he lost his wife and children in the famine — spoke to us about the city's ordeal, leaving indelible marks on our conscience and on our commitment to work for peace.

We were, most of us, mainstream Americans, for the first time in the USSR. We took leave of each other at the end of this remarkable journey, with good feelings that many of us will return home with new energies for the peace struggle which lies ahead. I have since received letters and clippings (unsolicited) from a number of my fellow peace cruise tourists.

The Osborns, long-time residents of a very small city of Idaho, write: "We have so far had three opportunities to speak on the need for a less belligerent attitude toward the Soviet Union and the good things we saw and the friendship we felt for the Soviet people." The letter came with clippings of a long

interview and a half-page picture of the Kiev peace march, both in the local newspaper. From the Bradleys in a small community in the state of Washington, came the following: "Mary and I found the trip to be a truly enlightening one in all respects. Our conceptions of the people of the USSR were strengthened in a positive way that will give impetus to our support of the peace movement. In a lengthy interview, published in a local newspaper in Wisconsin, the Reverend Dale Jennings said: "Using the word 'communism' to cast aspersions on the entire Soviet way of life is a cop-out. Communism is an American scapegoat. We either talk together or die together under a nuclear holocaust." And Mrs. Jennings added, in the course of the interview: "Ever so many people on our trip are going to write to their congressmen. We may be misunderstood, but someone should bring back a different picture (of the USSR). You'd think all they were doing over there, in Russia, was making bombs. There is only one avenue in war and there are so many avenues to peace."

**D**espite the heavy program of discussions and sightseeing, we did a good deal of mingling with average Soviet citizens. A small group of young Russians boarded the ship in Togliatti while some of us were at the city's circus. They represented the local Soviet-American Friendship Society. We sat around and talked. They told us of their jobs, hobbies, families and about their feelings in regard to the danger of nuclear war. Their club was formed to help them learn English and to practice speaking it, and we conversed in this language. After a while one of the Soviet youths picked up his guitar and sang some Russian folk songs, followed by some Americans ones. We all sang along.

Then he began singing "We Shall Overcome." So we all linked hands in the traditional fashion, and joined in the singing. Here we were, on the Volga in the Soviet Union (the so-called enemy), holding hands with these young Russians and singing in unison of voices and with a common vision of world peace!

The Volga is waiting to welcome many other Americans who might come with a message of peace and to enjoy its beauty. □



On August 5th, toward noon, as the participants of the first Volga Cruise were changing planes at de Gaulle airport in Paris for their return flight from Moscow, the people in the second cruise were there, about to enplane on an Aeroflot flight to the Soviet capitol. The two groups recognized each other, to everyone's surprise and delight. We greeted one another warmly, some with handshakes, others with hugs and kisses. Quickly, breathlessly, the first group told the others about the success of the peace program just completed. The report obviously enhanced the second group's anticipation of a similarly rewarding experience and their general high spirits. This unexpected meeting, the good feelings stirred in us by our common mission for peace was an added bonus to all.

## IMPRESSIONS & COMMUNICATIONS



## Red-Baiting and Racism

To the Editors:

**D**aniel Rosenberg's article, "Paul Robeson in the Era of Reaganism" (NWR, July-August 1982) is both excellent and timely. Paul Robeson's precious memory cannot be turned over to Martin Duberman as "authorized biographer." This would be a travesty on a giant among giants—in character, emotion, talent and courage.

Each point the Rosenberg article makes is correct, deserving of support and emphasis. Each suffices to show that we must unite to place in genuinely perceptive and loving hands the honor of being the authorized biographer of Paul Robeson. Each from his own experience can contribute additional evidence or added emphasis to Mr. Rosenberg's clear and correct analysis, so rich is the heritage we are discussing, although Rosenberg has made the case conclusively. With one aspect I have a special connection and so would like to fortify my expression of support for his position by recording my views on this point.

This issue clarifies in itself why the professional historian Duberman of Princeton and City University of New York, trained in all the historian's research techniques, is simply not qualified to be Paul Robeson's biographer. Duberman suppressed, contrary to widely publicized and accessible documents, the fact that Grace Lorch, my late wife, rescued one of the heroic "Little Rock Nine" from Governor Faubus's mob at Central High School in the historic struggle which captured the world's headlines 25 years ago. Below I shall explain why this suppression arises from an issue (that of red-baiting as the systematic tool of racism) so central to any portrayal of Paul Robeson, and indeed of other giants such as Dr. W.E.B. DuBois and Dr. Martin Luther King, who shared such experiences, that it would suffice to disqualify Duberman from the task now (temporarily I hope) entrusted to him.

As Mr. Rosenberg indicates, this suppression occurred in Duberman's "documentary play" *In White America* (1964), where incidentally there is no mention whatever of Paul Robeson, apparently then not worth Duberman's

notice. Duberman distorted the actual rescue of the young girl being harassed by a mob, makes no mention of Grace's support for her, of Grace taking her on to the bus and protecting her. Instead, all this is slid over and a white man is represented as having comforted her until the bus came and she got on, apparently unaided, if one is to believe Duberman's "documentary play." The true story is well-known, as Rosenberg points out.

Why the suppression? To answer this question it would be well to follow the story further, to ask what happened to Grace Lorch and her family immediately afterwards and how this is all related to fundamental issues in the life of Paul Robeson, and in the lives of Dr. DuBois and Dr. King, issues which exhibit the systematic use of red-baiting (anti-communism) as a main weapon in support of racism.

When Duberman "refrained" from mentioning Grace as the rescuer, he absolved himself, and those who might take their cue from him, from studying how the vast apparatus of racist-inspired and racism-serving red-baiting was summoned into well-coordinated battle.

Only a few days before the Little Rock city elections, Sen. Eastland of Mississippi and his Republican sidekick, Sen. Jenner of Indiana, issued a last-minute subpoena to Grace for their "Internal Security Subcommittee," where they inflicted their standard bullying in a widely publicized "hearing" which was simultaneously utilized by the White Citizens Council in their barely frustrated bid to capture administrative control of the city government. Had the WCC succeeded, tragedy would have befallen the bitter landmark struggle then being conducted in Little Rock against school segregation. Soon, Gov. Faubus made frequent headlines through related anti-communist crusades, as did the precursors of the "Moral Majority." Arkansas Attorney General Bruce Bennett, not to be outdone, interrupted his own birthday party to announce plans to prosecute Grace and me for not registering as communists under the Arkansas witchhunting legislation. And so it went. At the end of the school year, Drew Pearson's nationally syndicated column, "Washington Merry-Go-Round," reported in detail (cf. *The Washington Post*, June 8, 1958) that Eastland was planning to help Faubus in the primaries by subpoenaing both

## Grace Lorch's "Revolution"

agair  
Matt  
form  
labal  
Chur  
Preat  
By  
catio  
the r  
closed  
the f  
faces  
"docu  
he con  
cealed.

alleys, street corners, river banks and  
ues."  
ght to read by his father, the young  
r followed a brief stint as a tailor's ap  
ce with attendance at primary school.  
tually hungry and ragged, he and his  
s practiced all the survival techniques  
to Kabul street pushing, including ste  
closed the door, insofar as he could, in the  
faces of those readers and viewers of his  
"documentary play" who would naturally  
have been curious to learn what happened to  
the heroic woman whose existence he con

*His followers would be foreclosed, so he sought, from learning the role of red-baiting as a main weapon of racism. This issue, however, is central to any understanding of how the Reagans of that day sought to isolate, silence and destroy Paul Robeson. And not only Robeson: This weapon was leveled against all targets of racists. Dr. DuBois was arrested, handcuffed, fingerprinted on his 83rd birthday and pursued relentlessly in other ways. Dr. King became a special target of the most systematic witchhunter of them all: J. Edgar Hoover. Anne and Carl Braden were persecuted similarly as whites who had helped Blacks buy a house in Louisville. The Southern Conference for Human Welfare, once a promising democratic force uniting progressive whites with Blacks, was destroyed precisely in this way. Countless other tales could be told.*

Many, like Paul Robeson, were pilloried by the House Un-American Committee which some are trying to resurrect. This Committee was an alliance of Dixiecrats and northern Republicans early designed to frustrate any efforts toward enacting legislation which might lighten the heavy burdens of the depression poor, white or Black, but especially Black. It later served as a tool to generate hysteria in which to promote the cold war and intimidate opposition to anti-labor and racist policies. Parallel senate committees, mimicked also in many states, joined the hue and cry, competing for profits, blood and headlines.

Duberman, by his distortion of the Little Rock events, has shown that he would like to make un-persons of the victims of such predators. This he does in the guise of a "documentary play"—a play in which no word appears about Paul Robeson, the giant whose reputation and significance he now seeks to claim for his hands, the giant who was one of the most prominent of the victims of the very forces he protected in his play, the giant who had other giants as fellow victims of the same forces.

Paul Robeson cannot be delivered into such hands. I thank NWR for trying to prevent this from happening.

LEE LORCH



alleged "yellow rain" is produced naturally by certain molds. These researchers cite evidence showing that these molds do live in areas from which the alleged samples originate.

Though Seagrave does not discuss any of this information, he does provide long, detailed descriptions of the activities of secret agents of foreign powers, assassinations, and cloak and dagger espionage in which the cape and knife are exchanged for the pinprick or dart and exotic poison. *CAIB*, on the other hand, examines these questions in detail, providing credible evidence to support its analysis. *CAIB* underlines the significance of the "yellow rain" issue by stating that: "The US takes the position that it is manufacturing and stockpiling chemical weapons because it is against chemical weapons. They are needed, it is said, to deter others. But in justifying this deterrence argument it is necessary to argue that others are in fact using chemical and biological warfare. Thus arises the US obsession with 'yellow rain' and allegations of chemical warfare in Laos, Kampuchea and Afghanistan, all by the Soviet Union supplying its allies. It is too convenient that the 'evidence' of Soviet chemical and biological warfare arises just as the US chemical weapons lobby moves into high gear."

*CAIB* notes further, "The scourge of nuclear weapons undoubtedly presents the starkest threat known to the survival of humanity. But chemical and biological warfare runs a very close second, both in vast numbers of people who can be affected indiscriminately and in the long-lasting effects on future generations and on the earth's environment."

In this context Seagrave's book constitutes war propaganda and contributes to the further escalation of the arms race. As for the real perpetrators of "yellow rain," *CAIB* provides substantial evidence that CIA covert operations is behind this fraud. Seagrave's role in all this remains unclear. "Yellow rain" may in fact be the dangerous fluid excreted from the kidneys of the CIA and their State Department and Pentagon cohorts. In the form of a book like *Yellow Rain*, this fluid is then sprayed onto the US public. It is dangerous to the mind because it is Big-Lie, Goebbels-like disinformation.

PETER BOWER

DR. PETER BOWER, peace activist and geochemist, teaches at Lehman College in New York City.



## Roots of the Afghan Revolution

*Memories of Afghanistan*, by M.H. Anwar. Carlton Press, 1981. 240 pp., \$8.95.

The US State Department and the mass media have made every effort to portray the Afghan revolution of April 1978, and especially the developments of the last three years, as the work of a small elite out of touch with the sentiments of the people of the country. The governing People's Democratic Party is depicted as an artificial creation — undoubtedly conceived in Moscow — and without roots in Afghan history.

Dr. M.H. Anwar's fascinating memoir of his childhood and youth, and his brief return to his homeland following study in the US, demonstrates the falseness of this picture. The author vividly depicts the grueling poverty of the great masses of the Afghan people, as he himself experienced it in the first half of this century. He recounts the hopes raised during the brief period of progressive development under King Amanullah, who reigned from 1919 to 1929, and describes the overwhelmingly repressive character of the feudal/tribal forces which, aided by British imperialism, removed Amanullah and returned Afghanistan to stagnation and despair. In each episode he conveys the ferment of protest and struggle which gripped Afghan society in those years.

Born of a father with Arab ancestry and a Tadjik mother, and brought up in the minority Shiite Moslem sect, Anwar observed first-hand the special oppression visited by the Pushtoon ruling class on peoples belonging to minority nationalities.

In his moving description of his mother, a highly intelligent and warmly loving woman, Anwar demonstrates graphically the suffering of the ordinary Afghan woman, deprived of education, economic independence or any degree of control over her life, condemned to watch child after child die before the age of five, and often dying herself at a young age.

Dr. Anwar was born into the family of a poverty-stricken Kabul shopkeeper in 1914. Among his early memories is the bombing of Kabul by the British after King Amanullah proclaimed the unconditional independence of Afghanistan. The boy early observed the misery of those even poorer than himself: "Poverty induced an unimaginable vicious cycle of events on a good many of the poor and destitute in Kabul. They were the beggars, who were usually young and of small stature and often malformed as a result of exposure to the elements, constant hunger and disease. Those who were fortunate died early, although some managed to live to be twenty or thirty years old. Their emaciated bodies were wrapped in whatever pieces of cloth they could find, coughing, spitting and shuffling, one hand was always extended to snatch a penny or a crumb of food. They inhabited the

dark alleys, street corners, river banks and mosques."

Taught to read by his father, the young Anwar followed a brief stint as a tailor's apprentice with attendance at primary school. Perpetually hungry and ragged, he and his friends practiced all the survival techniques known to Kabul street urchins, including stealing and fencing stolen goods.

As the author introduces the people who influenced his life, the forerunners of those who finally achieved the national-democratic revolution of 1978 begin to emerge. There is Abdul Raheem Khan, primary school history teacher, who believed history should deal less with kings and more with "the mass of people, their modes of living, their aspirations, beliefs and economic pursuits." There is Amir Khan, the high school religion teacher, who refused to use corporal punishment and encouraged his students to debate fundamental moral questions, and whom the boy later saw stoned to death for heresy. There is boyhood friend Jamile, who was shot to death as he and Anwar participated in a futile attempt to keep Amanullah in power.

Most important of all is Hadji Zaman, the self-taught, wise adult friend, who began the boy's political education by introducing him to the writings of Thomas Paine. "The night is dark and long," says Hadji Zaman at one point. "Our resources are meager and untested. Our adversaries, both foreign and domestic, possess most of the trump cards. But let me tell you this. History is on our side. Imperialism is dying, causing dislocations in the very fiber of the world's political, economic and social structures. We must try to fill the gap in our limited way, giving meaning to the space of time left to us." When asked if he is advocating revolution, Zaman replies, "Yes." Zaman, too, was eventually tortured and killed.

Following the removal of Amanullah, the family came to power which ruled Afghanistan until the 1978 revolution. King Nadir was followed by King Zahir, who was ousted in 1973 by his cousin, Mohammad Daud, in a move which eliminated the monarchy but did not break the power of the ruling feudal and tribal elements. The young Anwar thus was witness to the beginning of an era ended only a few years ago, and his observations detail the corruption and despotism, the cruelty, terror, blood feuds and assassinations which characterized the actions of Afghanistan's ruling circles.

Again, he was directly affected by events, as first a close high school friend's older brother and then the friend himself were arrested for political activity, tortured and driven to suicide.

As he and another high school friend visited the governor of Kandahar Province, the cries of tortured prisoners formed the background for philosophical conversations and games of chess.

After Anwar graduated from high school he spent eight years in the US, earning bachelor's and master's degrees in education at Columbia University and a Ph.D. in biochemistry at Johns Hopkins. He returned to Kabul in the summer of 1941. The second part of his book describes his efforts, as a staff member of the Ministry of Education, to modernize the educational establishments for which he became responsible, the teachers' training schools in Kabul and Paghman. His struggles to improve the miserable lot of his students and democratize their education, to ward off gross injustice to colleagues, and to

keep his America wife, Phyllis, from having to wear the *chaderi*, or head-to-toe veil, were dogged at every step by a network of medieval intrigue, and brought him into direct conflict with the ruling circles.

A final dramatic clash with Prime Minister Hashim Khan, half-brother of King Nadir, followed by the arrest of a colleague and close friend for political activity, convinced Dr. Anwar that he, too, would be imprisoned and tortured to death if he continued his work to improve the conditions and increase the degree of freedom of his people. After two and a half years in his native land, he and his wife fled for their lives.

*Memories of Afghanistan* is worth reading not only for the insights it provides into the revolutionary ferment among intellectuals and working people during the first half of this

century, but also for its many warm and vivid portraits of individuals, and for the moments of joy and of pleasure, the friendships and the achievements, which Dr. Anwar recounts.

Nowhere is there direct reference to the October Revolution or the subsequent events in Afghanistan's neighbor to the north, but the fresh breeze they brought throughout Asia can be felt throughout the book. Nor does the author refer to the present situation in Afghanistan. One has the feeling, however, that he is undoubtedly watching with friendly interest as its people cast off their feudal fetters, one by one.

M.B.

## The Real Chemical War

*US Chemical Warfare and Its Consequences*, by Ton That Tung et al. Vietnam Courier, 1980. 178 pp. (Available from the US Peace Council, New York, N.Y., in return for a contribution to USPC's Medical Aid to Vietnam Fund.)

During the Second Indochina War (our Vietnam Conflict) the United States subjected large portions of rural South Viet Nam to chemical warfare attacks of enormous magnitude. Although spread out over the years 1961-71, the major portion of the assaults occurred during 1967, 1968 and 1969. We employed primarily the following four formulations, the first three anti-plant (herbicidal) chemical warfare agents and the last a so-called harassing anti-personnel chemical warfare agent: 46 million kilograms of Agent Orange (a 1:1 mixture of 2,4,5-trichlorophenoxyacetic acid or 2,4,5-T and 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid or 2,4-D; six million kilograms of Agent White (a 4:1

mixture of 2,4-D and 4-amino-3,5,6-trichloropicolinic acid or picloram); three million kilograms of Agent Blue (dimethyl arsinic or cacodylic acid); and nine million kilograms of Agent CS (o-chlorobenzalmalononitrile). Moreover, the 2,4,5-T portion of the now notorious Agent Orange contained as an impurity an estimated total of 150 kilograms of dioxin (2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin). Dioxin, which has a half-life in the environment of perhaps three years, is now known to be an extraordinarily toxic and teratogenic (birth defect causing) substance with some mutagenic and carcinogenic properties as well.

The long-term medical effects on the people exposed during the war to this potpourri of noxious chemicals have begun to emerge in Viet Nam and, more slowly, among our own veterans here. *US Chemical Warfare and Its Consequences* has brought together eight relevant reports, four of them authored or co-authored by Dr. Ton That

Tung, an internationally prominent researcher in the field. The first, fourth and fifth are current (1980) documents, whereas the remaining five are documents originally published between 1970 and 1972 and not now readily available. The last one (by Dr. Jean Lavorel, a French plant physiologist) summarizes the overall effects of an herbicidal attack in eastern Cambodia (Kampuchea). This book thus provides us with an important anthology of preliminary reports on the pathological sequelae of our counterinsurgency techniques, compiled largely by scientists of the recipient nation.

ARTHUR H. WESTING

DR. ARTHUR H. WESTING, a botanist, is Professor of Ecology and Dean of the School of Natural Science at Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts. He is the author of the book, *Ecological Consequences of the Second Indochina War*.

---

### Afghanistan, (con't. from page 22)

Other tribal leaders from Nangarhar Province characterized the grand *jirgah* of representatives of different tribes of Nangarhar, Farah, Paktia, Helmand and Zabul provinces held recently in Kabul as "the best example of fruitful cooperation and contacts between the tribes and the government" (*Kabul New Times*, September 20, 1982).

"The most important and pressing task of the Party and of the revolutionary power is to complete the crushing of the armed counterrevolution, to establish and reliably consolidate revolutionary power in areas where the undeclared war of reactionary forces is still continuing, and to ensure a durable civil peace in the country," Babrak Karmal told the delegates of the

People's Democratic Party at their conference. "The concept of a durable civil peace . . . means, above all, the ensuring of normal, peaceful and tranquil conditions for common discussion and solution of problems we face. It is this that will open the way to the materialization of the whole complex of social and economic transformations set out in the Program of Action."

As we concluded our talk, Shah Mohammad Dost expressed a similar thought: "We have sufficient natural and human resources that if we are freed from outside interference, in a short time the whole face of Afghanistan will be transformed. The key to such progress is that the interference must be stopped." □

*Nothing is censored, cut, emphasized or de-emphasized in*

# Reprints From the Soviet Press

*A magazine of record • every two weeks • indexed*

Current documents, reports, communiqués, articles and speeches, translated word for word from Soviet newspapers and magazines. Covers economics, politics, foreign affairs, agriculture, industry, labor, science, law—and more.

## Recent Articles:

Communique of Special Central Committee Plenary Meeting  
In Memoriam: Leonid Brezhnev  
Election of Yuri V. Andropov  
November Central Committee Plenum: State Plan for 1982-83  
as Compared with the 26th Congress Guidelines/Y. Andropov  
State Plan for 1983 and Implementation of 1982 Plan/N.K. Baibakov

*A cumulative source of significant material, authentic, complete, in a form convenient for permanent filing.*

One year \$40 — Two Years \$75 — Three Years \$105

Subscription for Personal Use \$25

**COMPASS PUBLICATIONS, Inc.**

115 East 87th Street, Box 12F, New York, N.Y. 10028

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation (Reprinted by 39 U.S.C. 3685).

1. Title of Publication: New World Review.
2. Date of Filing: Sept. 28, 1982.
3. Frequency of Issue: Bimonthly.
4. Location of known office of publication: 162 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.
5. Location of the headquarters or general business offices of the publisher: 162 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.
6. Names and complete addresses of publisher, editor and managing editor:  
Publisher (Name and address): NWR Publications, Inc., 162 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.  
Editor (Name and address): Marilyn Bechtel, 162 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.
7. Owner (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and almost immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a

corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given.)

NWR Publications, Inc., 162 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Jessica Smith, 162 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

8. Known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities (If there are none, so state)

None.

9. Not applicable.

10. Extent and nature of circulation:

Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Single Issue Nearest To Filing Date
4,033	4,000

A. Total no. copies printed (net press run)

4,033

4,000

B. Paid circulation

1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales
  2. mail subscriptions
  - C. Total paid circulation
  - D. Free distribution, by mail, carrier or other means. Sample, complimentary and other free copies
  - E. Total distribution (Sum C and D)
  - F. 1. Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing
  2. Returns from news-agents
  - G. Total Sum of E&F—should equal net press run (shown in A)
  11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.  
(Signature of editor, publisher, business manager, or owner) MARILYN BECHTEL, Editor.
- |       |       |
|-------|-------|
| 530   | 550   |
| 3,165 | 3,266 |
| 3,695 | 3,816 |
| 121   | 75    |
| 3,816 | 3,891 |
| 162   | 69    |
| 55    | 40    |
| 4,033 | 4,000 |

# MAKE A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION!

## Catch Up With World Events in New World Review!

*Stay on top of the nuclear freeze movement, US-Soviet relations, The Soviet Union after Brezhnev, the Middle East, South Africa, and the swiftly changing world around us.*

*Start the year with NEW WORLD REVIEW in your hands, and let your friends in on a good thing!*

### SEND IN YOUR SUBSCRIPTION NOW!



209

#### NEW WORLD REVIEW NEW YEAR SUBSCRIPTION BLANK

New World Review  
162 Madison Ave., 3rd Floor  
New York, N.Y. 10016

Rates: single copies \$1.00 (\$1.25 outside US); one year \$5.00 (\$6.00 outside US); two years \$8.50 (\$10.50 outside US); three years \$11.50 (14.50 outside US). Issued bimonthly.

Enclosed please find \$\_\_\_\_\_ for a ( ) one year; ( ) two years; ( ) three year gift subscription for:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \*

MY NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MY ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_