

THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S REPORT ON RUSSIA IN THE UN

BY NEAL STANFORD

IN THE three years that United States officials have worked side by side with Soviet representatives in the United Nations' council and committee meetings, they have had an opportunity to study some questions about the USSR's foreign policy. Their answers to these questions appear in the following privately-circulated analysis of the Soviet record in the UN, which may be taken as an official interpretation of Moscow's motives and acts. It discloses what the American government thinks of the USSR's strategy in the UN.

THE importance of the United Nations as an instrument to promote international security and friendly relations has received abundant lip service from Soviet spokesmen.

Stalin and Molotov have repeatedly expressed belief in the importance of the UN. On September 18, 1947, Andrei Vishinsky stated that "as far as the Soviet Union is concerned, its policy with regard to the UN organization is a policy of strengthening the organization, it is a policy of

broadening and strengthening of international cooperation, a policy of a steady, consistent observance of the Charter and of fulfillment of its principles."

In the same speech, Vishinsky affirmed the duty of each member of the UN "to perform its obligations in an unprejudiced manner and with consciousness of its high responsibility in this matter which requires complete clarity, objectiveness and respect of truth, which must be placed above all."

A look at the record of the USSR in the UN discloses a startling non-conformity between the Soviet words of respect for the UN and the Soviet deeds of non-respect in the UN.

The USSR has pursued a policy of hamstringing activities of the Security Council and the General Assembly. It has treated with an indifference verging on contempt those decisions of the General Assembly of which the USSR did not approve, even though accepted by the overwhelming majority of nations.

NEAL STANFORD is a State Department correspondent and foreign affairs specialist for the Washington bureau of the Christian Science Monitor. His last previous contribution to the MERCURY was "Report on Russian Imperialism," which appeared in the issue of December 1947.

By refusing or neglecting to take part in the work of many UN-affiliated organs, such as Balkan and Korean Commissions, Interim Committee, etc., the Soviet Union weakened the authority of those organs as world assemblies.

Within the UN organs, the Soviet delegations have frequently pursued a policy of aggrandizing Soviet influence while doing nothing to secure effective action. Although the most eminent leaders of the USSR — Stalin, Molotov, Zhdanov and Vishinsky — have reiterated in postwar days the statements that the “capitalist” and “socialist” spheres could co-exist peacefully, Soviet representatives have frequently used UN assemblies for wordy assaults on the Western powers and prominent leaders of Western society.

This has been consistent with the Marxian philosophy of the struggle and inevitable final armed conflict between the two worlds of capitalism and socialism, but hardly conducive to the maintenance of international good relations or to the abatement of fear of war.

THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The Security Council is in some respects the favorite organ of the Soviet representatives among all the UN agencies. In 1947, when the UN budget was under consideration, the Soviet delegation proposed a reduction in the budget for all the UN organs except the Security Council.

This favoritism is due, of course, to the fact that the most important acts of the Security Council require the support of all the permanent members of the Council, which gives the Soviet Union the power to veto any act not to its liking, subject to the special waiver of the veto power under Article 27-3 of the Charter.

Of the permanent members, only the USSR has used the veto extensively (France has used the veto twice), the twenty-eighth Soviet veto having been cast on October 25, 1948.

(1) *Membership Applications Vetoed.*

The veto has been used most often to prevent the entry into the UN of new members. States which have been blocked from UN membership as a result of Soviet vetoes include Transjordan, Eire, Portugal, Italy, Finland, Austria and Ceylon.

The vetoes on Italy and Finland were especially notorious because the USSR representatives conceded that these states were qualified for membership, but refused to approve them because the application of the other ex-enemy states (Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria) could not command the support of a Security Council majority.

Propos of this, the representative of the U. S. (Mr. Austin) remarked that “horse-trading is recognized as entirely proper and appropriate at a country fair, but it is not appropriate in the Security Council.”

The Soviet representatives base

their opposition to the admission of the above-mentioned countries on their poor war record, their lack of relations with the USSR, or their alleged subservience to another power (Transjordan, Ceylon).

The obvious motivation, however, was fear that these countries would be unlikely to add strength in UN organs to the Soviet-satellite bloc. No support can be found in the Charter of the UN for the conditions introduced by the Soviet delegation.

In an advisory opinion of May 28, 1948, the International Court of Justice ruled that a member could not make its consent to admission of another state dependent on conditions not specified in the Charter, which requires simply that states be peace-loving and that they accept the obligations of the Charter and be able and willing to carry out these obligations.

Furthermore, the Court stated that a member could not make its affirmative vote for the admission of any state subject to the admission of other states. This applied specifically to the Soviet behavior regarding Italy and Finland.

(2) *Membership Applications Promoted.*

The Soviet Union has displayed no scruples about promoting the membership applications of countries dependent, completely or largely, on the USSR. Thus, Soviet representatives have urged the acceptance as UN members of Soviet Balkan satellites and the Mongolian People's

Republic, none of which can pursue a policy independent of the USSR.

An even more striking instance is the Soviet sponsorship of UN membership for the member states of the USSR, the Union republics.

Soviet representatives attempted in 1944 to secure admittance to the future world peace organization for all sixteen of the Union republics which collectively form the USSR. This demand was dropped in the course of negotiations, the USSR insisting only on the admittance of the Ukrainian and Belorussian Republics, a condition finally accepted by the other powers.

The Soviet argument for these two states was that they had played an important part in the war. There was no suggestion that these states were more "sovereign" than the other fourteen Union republics.

The Soviet Union has also sought, unsuccessfully, the admission of the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian republics to the Universal Postal Union and the International Telecommunications Union.

As independent republics, these Baltic states had been members of both organizations until 1940. After annexing these countries in 1940, the USSR wrote to the ITU that their membership should be considered to have ceased.

In 1946, the USSR revoked the 1940 notification, citing as a basis the 1944 amendments to the Constitution of the USSR (which gave the Union republics the right to carry on foreign

relations and to establish their own armies).

Considerations of expediency have discouraged Soviet representatives from pressing their claims for other republics in addition to the five mentioned, but they can always pull such claims out of the hat, since in Soviet constitutional theory all of the Union republics are on an equal basis. Actually, these "sovereign" republics do not manage their own finances, have no control over the heavy industry within their borders, are subject to the Five-Year plans of the USSR, and must gear their agriculture to all-USSR programs.

Every department head in every Union republic is responsible, directly or indirectly, to some authority in Moscow. Often he is summoned to Moscow to account for acts of omission or commission. Even mayors (chairmen of Executive committees of City Soviets) are called before USSR organs to get "guidance" and directives on the management of their city affairs. Transjordan and Ceylon may well ask: "If this be sovereignty, what is suzerainty?"

(3) *Veto: Now and Then.*

Apart from membership applications, the Soviet representatives employed the veto against resolutions concerning the "Spanish question," the "Greek question," the "Indonesian question," the withdrawal of troops from Syria and Lebanon, the responsibility of Albania for the Corfu channel incident, the question of Soviet interference in Czechoslo-

vakia, the report of the Atomic Energy Commission, and the proposal for settling the four-power dispute over Berlin.

The present Soviet insistence on the veto is in sharp contrast to the Soviet proposal of 1936 for bettering the League of Nations by elimination of the unanimity rule in the Council. The proposal, submitted on August 22, 1936 by the USSR People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs (Litvinov), urged that decisions on the application of military or economic sanctions to aggressor nations should require only a three-fourths majority in the Council, rather than the unanimous consent specified in the Covenant of the League.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(1) *Contempt for UN Commissions.*

Because the General Assembly is not hindered in its operation by veto rights, it has been able to function more effectively in some respects than the Security Council. The USSR has not been able to block the passage of measures desired by the entire non-Soviet world.

This flexibility has been offset, however, by elements of impotence caused by the General Assembly's lack of power to implement decisions which the Soviet Union chooses to defy or ignore.

The UN Special Commission on the Balkans was established to investigate the dangerous situation of internecine civil war in Northern

Greece and the rôle of Greece's northern neighbors in relationship to that struggle. The USSR opposed the establishment of this commission and supported the position of Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria in refusing to cooperate with the Commission or to allow the Commission to enter the satellites' territory. (Bulgaria finally allowed a subcommission to enter briefly in 1948.)

When the General Assembly created a UN Temporary Committee on Korea, the USSR again refused to have anything to do with its operations. The Ukrainian delegate, completely subservient to the USSR, was appointed to the Committee, but refused to serve. As the occupying power in Korea north of the thirty eighth degree of latitude, the USSR would not allow the committee to operate in its occupation zone, and refused to allow the people of North Korea to participate in the elections held under committee supervision.

(2) *The "War-mongering" Campaign.*

In the General Assembly, the Soviet representatives have repeatedly produced diversions of the kind typified by the Soviet campaign against "war-mongering," begun in the fall of 1947. This campaign was characterized by much invective, but resulted in little save a disturbance of the normal ratio of talk to action.

The use of this international forum as a sounding board for propaganda casting sharp aspersions on the charac-

ter of non-Soviet society has degraded the General Assembly and made more difficult the creation of mutual trust.

A resolution condemning "war-mongering" was passed by the General Assembly on November 3, 1947, which imposed an obligation on member states of the UN to take steps "within constitutional limits" to promote "by means of publicity and propaganda" friendly relations among nations and to encourage the dissemination of information designed to give expression to popular desires for peace.

This resolution had little effect on the problem at which it was aimed, while the charges regarding "war-mongering" before and after passage of the resolution have done much to increase mutual hostility.

Certainly the resolution seems to have had no effect on Soviet propaganda. In September 1947, the month in which Vishinsky opened the "war-mongering" campaign, the Soviet *Literary Gazette* published an article on President Harry Truman by Boris Gorbатов which was hardly likely to promote amity.

The article was so violent in tone and "wantonly libelous" in character that it called forth a strong protest on the part of the American Ambassador in Moscow. The Ambassador said that Goebbels had never "stooped to greater ridicule and vituperation against the head of an enemy country than has Mr. Gorbатов against the Chief Executive of a friendly and allied state."

A sampling of other Soviet propaganda, post-resolution variety, indicates no increase, but a decrease, in propaganda promoting friendly relations among nations. The November 6, 1947, speech by Molotov on the anniversary of the revolution contained not one single word which could have been designed to promote friendly relations between East and West.

On the contrary, almost every other sentence bristled with disparaging phrases directed toward the Western States — “hostile capitalist encirclement,” “capitalist bondage,” “bestial anti-Soviet enmity,” “aggressive military and political plans of American imperialism,” “creation of military bases as preparation for aggression,” “so-called western freedom of the press,” “expansionist circles in the USA,” “the British and American frank imperialism.”

Discussing World War II, Molotov ignored the contribution of all the other countries to the victory and praised only the Soviet Union's rôle. Similarly, with the January 21, 1948, speech of M. A. Suslov, at the Lenin anniversary meeting, which was attended by Stalin, Molotov and the most prominent politicians of the Soviet Union, Suslov, then head of the Propaganda Administration of the Communist Party, excoriated Western democracy as “hypocritical and false,” a “democracy for the minority, the wealthy classes and the rich only.” Suslov described “the imperialists of the U. S.” as “laying

claim to the rôle of world gendarme strangler of the freedom and independence of people.”

Suslov's sharp attack on people in the Soviet Union who “bow down before foreign culture” recalls the long-continuing series of conferences called to castigate Soviet intellectuals for their sins. One of the mortal sins denounced in the “cultural campaign” was respect for Western Culture. Writers and artists accused of displaying traces of friendliness for Western culture were pointedly advised to eradicate such survivals of capitalist ideology.

This has resulted in a kind of competition in which each intellectual tries to show that he can be more anti-Western than his fellows. Many of those who got into trouble on this score suffered administrative penalties as well as public denunciation.

Thus George F. Aleksandrov was removed as head of the Party's propaganda apparatus following criticism of his *History of Western European Philosophy*. After intense fire had been centered on Eugene Varga, he lost his directorship of an Institute of the Academy of Sciences (the Institute was summarily abolished) and lost his editorship of the journal, *World Economy and World Politics*, through its suspension.

OTHER UN ORGANS

(1) *Interim Committee of the General Assembly.*

When the General Assembly proceeded to establish its Interim Com-

mittee (popularly called the "Little Assembly") to operate between the Second and Third Sessions of the General Assembly, the USSR served notice that it would have nothing to do with this body.

The Soviet representatives absented themselves, despite the fact that the Interim Committee was intended to be broadly representative of all nations who were members of the UN. The Soviet Delegation carried in its wake the delegations of the satellites.

(2) *ILO.*

The Soviet Union has never rejoined the International Labor Organization, to which it once belonged, despite the fact that the ILO had always interested itself in improving labor standards, an ideal to which Soviet representatives always pay lip service.

(3) *International Bank and Monetary Fund.*

After initial flirtation with the international financial organs, the USSR adopted an attitude of indifference. It is not a member of either the International Monetary Fund or the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

This manifestation of indifference did not prevent the USSR from participating actively in UN discussions of the relationship between the UN and these auxiliary agencies. The USSR attempted, unsuccessfully, to secure more UN control over operations of both agencies, a measure which would have enabled the Soviet

Union to influence activities without assuming the rights and duties of participation.

(4) *UNESCO.*

In view of the Soviet tendency to keep a closed Soviet Union shop regarding cultural exchange, it is not surprising that the USSR has kept out of UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The entire purpose of UNESCO centers on international intellectual cooperation and exchange, whereas the dominant philosophy of the Soviet régime insists that the only worthwhile exchange is the exchange of other systems of thought and behavior for the type of Marxism embodied in the Soviet system.

(5) *Specialized Agencies.*

As mentioned before, the USSR participates in the Universal Postal Union and the International Telecommunications Union. Of the remaining UN auxiliaries, the Soviet Union participates in the World Health Organization (to which it has not sent certain required data on health conditions in the USSR), but declines to participate in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Refugee Organization (IRO), the International Trade Organization (ITO), and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

In the latter case, Soviet representatives participated in the preliminary work of organization of FAO, and Soviet cooperation was especially sought because agricultural conditions

in the USSR can seriously affect world agriculture.

(6) *Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).*

The Soviet Union's avoidance of participation in some auxiliary agencies is nicely balanced by an eagerness to participate in other agencies, despite the opposition of members, who felt that the Soviet representatives would use the agency for purely propagandistic purposes.

Of the Regional Economic Commissions formed under the Economic and Social Council the USSR was accorded membership on the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). At a session in 1947 the USSR tried without success to have ECE operate with a two-thirds rule, which would have given the Soviet satellites a veto power.

Both ECE and ECAFE have been used by Soviet representatives for development of propaganda themes having little bearing on any work of the Commissions, with the emphasis in ECE on anti-Marshall Plan propaganda and in ECAFE on anti-imperialism.

The USSR presented a request (subsequently rejected) for membership in the Economic Commission for the Middle East (ECME), based on the claim of contiguity with the area. The claim was opposed by the Middle Eastern countries. It was pointed out that even the United Kingdom was not to be represented

on ECME, despite the UK's responsibility for administration of dependent Middle Eastern areas.

The USSR also attempted, again without success, to secure a place on the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), basing its claim on the "important rôle" played by the USSR in "settling international economic problems."

In the Economic and Social Council, the Soviet representatives have been chary of offering solid facts regarding the USSR economic picture. When the UN Secretariat published in 1948 a 350-page *Economic Report: Salient Features of the World Economic Situation, 1945-47*, it was compelled, because of the lack of data, to omit the USSR from its survey.

Professor Arutyunyan, the Soviet representative, noted this omission in a speech of February 24, 1948, to ECOSOC. The speech was filled, however, with the usual type of Soviet statistics: production figures mixed plans with achievements, and they were all stated as percentage increases over an unknown prior figure.

(7) *Trusteeship Council.*

The USSR ended a long boycott of the Trusteeship Council (in which it was automatically entitled to representation in virtue of its permanent membership on the Security Council) in April 1948 when it named a representative.

The Soviet delegation apparently decided that it was overlooking a

good opportunity to give wider circulation to propaganda about "colonialism" and "imperialism." Subsequently Soviet representatives entered dissents to most of the reports of the Trusteeship Council on the administration of dependent areas.

(8) *Armament and Atomic Agencies.*

Despite its promotion of various disarmament proposals in the General Assembly and elsewhere, the USSR has occupied a distinctly minority position on the question of means of bringing about control or reduction of armed forces and armament.

Both the Atomic Energy Commission and the Committee on Conventional Armaments have come to a standstill because of the intransigence of the Soviet-satellite minority in opposing all measures agreed to by the rest of the world.

Thus the Committee on Conventional Armaments reported on August 17, 1948, that it was impossible to resolve the differences over non-atomic disarmament in view of East-West distrust. Earlier, in May 1948, at its two hundred and twenty-second meeting the Atomic Energy Commission voted to suspend operations after two years of meetings. It adopted by 9-2 vote (USSR, Ukrainian SSR against) a report summarizing its recommendations.

(9) *Military Staff Committee.*

The Military Staff Committee of the Security Council has been doing preparatory work on the establishment of a UN military force. For a

long time after the British, French, American, and Chinese estimates had been submitted, Soviet representatives continued to insist on an agreement on principles prior to discussion of actual forces.

The Soviet representatives preferred a formula stressing "equality of contribution" (as against the formula of "comparability of contributions" urged by the four other powers). Under the equality proposal the contributions of any of the great powers would, in any category of armaments, be limited to the amount that the weakest of the big powers could contribute.

The Soviet Union was apparently motivated by the desire to minimize the utilization of instruments of combat not in Soviet employ. The estimates tardily submitted by the USSR were consistent with this Soviet bias, because they would have provided smaller UN forces than would have been organized under any of the alternative proposals submitted to the Military Staff Committee.

When the Soviet proposal is viewed in the light of the corollary proposal of Soviet representatives that the UN forces should be located within the frontier of the states supplying the forces, it becomes clear that the USSR was attempting to minimize the potential influence of UN armed forces.

CONCLUSION

Thus the record shows that despite Soviet protestations of interest in a

viable international organization, the USSR participation in the UN has been characterized by obstructive tactics, refusal to cooperate in UN activities to which the USSR was hostile or indifferent, use of UN organs as forums for propaganda assaults on the West, and a general derogation of the effectiveness of the UN.

COOL BELL

BY ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

Suddenly, two thousand miles
From home and boyhood was this sound
Of a bell he would have known
Over half the world around.

A cool, cool bell from balsam hills
Here in the palm-trees' flat hot home;
The last he followed it, he drove
Cows home by the Maine coast foam.

But now the bell came into sight,
And it was under a horse's chin,
Behind it coolness came on wheels
After the bronze bell's frosty din.

An old man vending ice-cream came,
A dozen bare blond boys in tow,
And this Texan handsomeness
Joined that of the long ago.

Cool milk, sweet milk still could draw
The little hot boys home from play;
The man was safe in boyhood still
Though miles and many years away.