

# “Catching Up and Outstripping”: An Appraisal

By Imogene Erro

NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV has repeatedly boasted that the USSR will not only demonstrate to the world Soviet superiority in science, in heavy industrial output, missile capabilities, and space exploration, but will also show that the Soviet economic system can surpass that of the United States in the production of consumer goods. Before the Supreme Soviet in May 1960, Premier Khrushchev said:

We are setting the following task: after implementation of the Seven-Year Plan (1959-65), to catch up within five years, and then to outstrip, the United States in per capita consumption of consumer commodities including textiles and footwear.

I want to stress once more that in the production of all consumer goods, *all that man really needs*, we shall in the immediate future reach the production and consumption level of the United States, the wealthiest country of the capitalist world, which is the standard of capitalist prosperity. . . . And then we will enter the open sea in which no comparisons with capitalism will anchor us.<sup>1</sup> (Italics added.)

The propaganda value of such Soviet statements both at home and in many countries abroad cannot be minimized. The world image of the United States as the land of consumer plenty and the birthplace of the affluent society is well-established. That the Soviet Union may overtake the United States in consumer goods within a relatively short time cannot fail therefore to make a deep impression on the underdeveloped countries, as well as on some of the more mature Western nations whose consumption standards remain far below those of the United States.

Khrushchev's blatant challenge profits from the fact that it is possible, by comparing carefully selected sta-

tistics, to give his claims an air of authenticity; this authenticity turns out to be spurious, however, if one takes into account quality considerations, consumer preferences, and differing statistical measures, some of which make comparisons between consumer patterns in the Soviet Union and the United States either difficult or meaningless—or both. A better understanding of the Soviet challenge—its magnitude and likelihood of success—can be obtained if Soviet and American outputs of a number of basic consumer goods are compared by applying statistical measures which have been carefully evaluated. Although quality factors cannot be measured in a statistical output series, enough is known about the average quality and character of various Soviet consumer goods to put the statistical comparisons in better perspective. This article will compare Soviet and US production of textiles, clothing, footwear, and selected consumer durables,<sup>2</sup> calling attention to various factors which have a bearing on comparability. But first, a few general aspects of the problem may be considered.

## Trends and Definitions

That the Soviet consumer is better off today than he was in 1950 or even 1955 is open to little doubt. Although consumer prices are still high, the price trend has been downward, while production has registered

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*, May 6, 1960.

*Mrs. Erro is an American student of the Soviet economy. This is her first contribution to Problems of Communism.*

<sup>2</sup> Soviet production data used in this article are officially announced figures as published in the press and in handbooks. Production figures for 1960 appeared in *Pravda*, January 26, 1961. Definitional information is from *Tovarovedeniye promyshlennyykh i prodovolstvennykh tovarov* (Science of Staple Commodities as Applied to Industrial Goods and Foodstuffs), Moscow, 1955; and from *Promyshlennost SSSR* (Industry USSR), Moscow, 1957. Data for the United States are from publications of the US Department of Commerce: *Survey of Current Business*, January, 1961; *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1959; and *Facts for Industry*, M22T, 1958, 59.

annual increases. Nor is there any doubt that the gap between Soviet and American outputs of consumer goods has narrowed. There is little likelihood, however, that the gap will be closed by 1970 as Khrushchev has pledged—even for a minimum number of basic commodities. Indeed, neither past Soviet performance nor the production targets of the Seven-Year Plan support Khrushchev's optimism. Even if the increases called for by the plan are achieved, Soviet per capita outputs of consumer goods in 1965 will on the whole remain far below even the present US production levels for goods of comparable quality. Probably, in a few instances, the Soviet Union will be able to claim that it has surpassed the United States in total production, if not in production per capita. In wool fabrics, for example, the Soviet Union claims to have surpassed the United States already (though the Soviet production figure includes fabrics not classed as wool in the US). But in the vast majority of basic consumer goods the United States will continue to outproduce its Soviet competitor.

In setting up consumption standards for textiles, clothing, and footwear, Soviet planners have based their norms on "complete satisfaction of need," taking into account regional differences of climate. But the list of commodities considered "really necessary" is extremely limited by comparison with the wide range of goods available, for example, in the average American department store. Although the Soviet norms approach US consumption levels for food items, they are generally lower for textiles and clothing. The following data for 1958 (when the norms were announced) compare the norms for these latter items with actual Soviet consumption and with US consumption of the same commodities, on a per capita basis:

	<i>Consumption</i>		<i>Soviet Norms</i>
	USSR	US	
Textiles (sq. meters)	28.3	66.5	58.1
Leather footwear (pairs)	1.8	3.4	3.5
Knit underwear (pieces)	1.9	8.3*	6.6
Knit outerwear (pieces)	0.5	2.9*	1.6

\* 1959

Khrushchev has pointed out that "satisfaction of need" means meeting all "the healthy requirements of a culturally developed man" but does not include catering to individual whims and desires for luxuries, a definition which severely limits the Soviet consumption pattern. The Soviet government thus visualizes the citizen as a culturally developed person (or expects him to become one), clinically prescribes his requirements for consumption, and seeks to stimulate production in consumer industries so as to supply these narrowly-

defined needs by 1970, or sooner if possible. But the norms require more goods than are planned for 1965, and to achieve the required levels even by 1970 would necessitate a sharp step-up of present rates of growth in consumer industries.

## Limited Consumer Satisfaction

In textiles, clothing, and footwear, the Soviets aim in general at emulating American consumption standards. In other commodities, however, such as home furnishings, appliances, and automobiles, they are developing consumption patterns peculiarly their own. For example, the cramped living space typical of Soviet housing (less than 400 square feet in the average urban apartment) restricts both the number and types of furniture and household appliances which can be utilized within the family unit. As for automobiles, Khrushchev has made it clear that the Soviet Union does not intend to emulate the "excessively wasteful" American pattern.

It is far more economical and ideologically correct, says Khrushchev, to provide public service facilities (such as taxi "pools") for transportation, rental centers for home appliances, and communal services for laundry, rather than attempt to supply each family with its own automobile, washing machine, and vacuum cleaner. In addition, the regime is encouraging the use of restaurants and public facilities providing carry-out food in order to restrict the need for kitchen appliances and equipment in the home. Thus, while Soviet officials speak on the one hand in terms of catching up with US production levels in basic consumer goods, they denounce American consumption practices on the other as grossly wasteful and extravagant.

Certain problems inherent in a planned economy directly affect consumer purchases. Without the stimulus of competition, Soviet consumer goods production lags behind not only in quantity but even more in design, quality, and range of commodities, all of which limits consumer selection. Retail outlets are ancient in methods and approach; sales personnel are uninterested in customers' desires; and only recently has installment buying been introduced even on a limited scale. Furthermore the system of production quotas gives rise to serious imbalances in consumer goods. For example, where the quotas are fixed in units, as for shoes, the number of models produced tends to narrow because the quotas are more easily met with fewer models; where they are fixed by value, as for overcoats, the tendency is to concentrate production in the more expensive styles; and where fixed by weight, as for cooking utensils, heavier items often are favored at the expense of the lighter.

TABLE 1

## Soviet and US Textile Production, 1960

	Cotton	Wool	Silk*	Linen
Total production:	(in million sq. meters)			
Soviet Union **	4,800	439	675	516
United States	9,335	417	2,782	(a)
Production per capita:	(in sq. meters)			
Soviet Union	22.4	2.1	3.2	2.4
United States	51.7	2.3	15.4	(a)

\* Also includes rayon and synthetic fabrics.

\*\* In 1959 the Soviet Union changed from linear to sq. meters in reporting textile outputs; hence, comparison of pre-1959 with later figures requires conversion of the former into sq. meters by multiplying by the following width factors (derived from 1959 data): cotton, 0.75; wool, 1.27; silk, 0.82; linen, 0.91.

(a) Negligible.

Resort to such expedients by production managers often results in the accumulation on retailers' shelves of goods for which there are no buyers, either because they are in excess of demand or because they are luxury items too expensive for most consumers to afford. Some of the devices that have been adopted in order to resolve these retailing problems—such as price-cutting, advertising, and limited installment buying—appear remarkably close to capitalistic retailing methods but are nevertheless becoming accepted procedures in the Soviet distribution system.

So much for the broader aspects of the problem. The following sections will be devoted to a closer examination of relative Soviet and US performance in the basic areas of consumer goods production.

## Textile Production

In both quantity and quality, the Soviet Union still has far to go to catch up with the United States in this category of consumer goods. Total Soviet production of textiles in square meters is only about half the American volume—a level that is far from adequate to supply, at anything approaching the consumption standards of most Western countries, the needs of a population about 20 percent larger than that of the United States. Where the two countries stand in relation to each other in total and per capita production of the major types of textiles is shown in Table 1.

Besides the volume of production, certain aspects of quality must also be considered since they affect both

appearance and utility. Quality in textile products is related principally to the technical efficiency of the various processes of manufacture—spinning, weaving, dyeing, and finishing—and to the characteristics of the raw fiber used. Although comparisons of this nature between Soviet and American textiles are seldom possible, the shabby appearance of Soviet wearing apparel and household fabrics, as reported by foreign travellers to the USSR, is at least *prima facie* evidence of the relatively low technological efficiency of the Soviet textile industry.

As shown in Table 1, cotton fabric is the basic textile in both the Soviet Union and the United States. Soviet production per capita is less than half the US figure, and the ratio is approximately the same for the per capita supply available for domestic consumption since it is not appreciably altered by imports and exports. However, Soviet prospects of catching up with the United States in cotton fabrics are enhanced by the fact that US production has tended to level off during the last ten years—even declining in some years—in response to a moderation of consumer demand. In this period the American industry has concentrated on research and development aiming at special improvements in fabric characteristics, such as increased wrinkle-resistance, the "drip-dry" finish, and interesting new textures in yarns and weaves. The development of improved fabrics made from synthetic fibers or from blends of natural and synthetic fibers has contributed to the slackening of demand for cotton fabrics, and this in turn has been reflected in a marked shift from natural to synthetic fibers in mill consumption. As more new kinds of synthetic fiber with improved characteristics are developed, this gradual trend may be expected to continue. In spite of the leveling-off of US production and the planned expansion of Soviet output of cotton fabrics, however, the Soviet target for 1965 production, as shown in Table 2, is only 61 percent of US output in 1960.

Soviet interest meanwhile has centered largely on boosting total production of cotton fabrics to meet expanding consumer needs. Improvements in quality and surface characteristics have received relatively little attention, and cotton-like synthetic fibers are not yet available in appreciable quantities.

Several factors relating to measurement and quality are of basic importance in comparing US and Soviet production and consumption data. American-made cotton fabrics are both wider and heavier than their Soviet equivalents, having increased in average width by about 9 percent in the past 20 years, with the largest proportionate increase in fine-quality fabrics. In the Soviet

Union, the average width and weight of cotton fabrics have tended to remain fairly constant, suggesting that Soviet mill managers dislike width increases which reduce linear output.

IN THE PRODUCTION of wool fabrics, the Soviet Union boasts that it already surpassed the United States in 1957. This claim is true only if such important factors as fiber content, quality, and consumer preference are completely disregarded, and the propaganda implication that the Soviet consumer actually fares better in wool textiles than his American counterpart is definitely false. At present, the United States still leads in both production and consumption of wool fabrics per capita, even without taking into account quality factors and consumer preferences for wool substitutes. Moreover, although Table 2 suggests that the Soviet Union may outproduce the United States in wool fabrics by 1965, an important qualification is how the term "wool fabric" is defined.

Some fabrics statistically reported as "woolen" in the USSR are not so classified in the United States. Wool fabric by Soviet definition includes anything containing at least 30 percent wool as compared to a US minimum of 50 percent wool, although the most common blend in the Soviet industry appears to be about half wool and half cotton or rayon. Moreover, pure wool fabric

accounts for less than 10 percent of the total Soviet production, suggesting one reason why good-quality suits and coats for both men and women are scarce and extremely expensive. The Soviet practice of blending in non-wool fibers is mainly designed to augment production, whereas US blending is more often directed toward achieving a specific type or quality of fabric.

The claimed Soviet gains in wool fabric production as compared to the United States have been significantly aided by the fact that US production of these fabrics has been continuously declining since 1947 as a result of the development of synthetic substitutes such as Orlon, Dacron, and Acrilan. Although the Soviet Union is now making plans for the large-scale production of these synthetics, it presently does not produce any wool-like synthetic yarns or fabrics in substantial quantities and remains dependent on wool-based fabrics for its warm clothing.

American-made wool fabrics are wider, but of lighter weight, than those made in the USSR. The heavier weight of the Soviet fabrics may be attributed in part to the use of coarser wool, which has a greater fleece weight than fine wool; to the use of heavier substitute fibers in wool blends than are used in the United States (e.g., cotton is generally heavier than synthetic fibers); and to the fact that the colder Soviet climate requires heavier fabrics. The predominance of part-wool fabrics in Soviet production reflects inadequate domestic supplies

TABLE 2

Soviet 1965 Production Targets for Consumer Goods  
Compared with 1960 US Production

Commodity	USSR 1965		US 1960	
	Total	Per capita	Total	Per capita
Textile fabrics <sup>a</sup>				
Cotton	5,700	24.7	9,335	51.7
Wool *	635	2.7	417	2.3
Rayon, synthetic fiber, and silk	1,218	5.3	2,782	15.4
Linen	578	2.5	(negligible)	
Hosiery <sup>b</sup>	1,250	5.4	1,814	10.0
Leather footwear <sup>b</sup>	515	2.2	604	3.3
Refrigerators <sup>c</sup>	1,450	6	3,750 <sup>d</sup>	21
Washing machines <sup>c</sup>	2,570	11	4,210 <sup>d</sup>	23
Radios <sup>c</sup>	6,000	26	11,090 <sup>d</sup>	61
Television sets <sup>c</sup>	3,300	14	5,716	32

<sup>a</sup> Total production in million sq. meters; per capita, sq. m.

<sup>b</sup> Total production in million pairs; per capita, pairs.

<sup>c</sup> Total production in thousand units; per capita columns show units per 1,000 of population.

<sup>d</sup> 1959 figures.

\* Soviet figures include wool-like fabrics of synthetic fiber; US figures do not.



of raw wool and a preference for making up the deficit by blending with non-wool materials rather than by raw wool imports.

IN SOVIET USAGE, "silk fabrics" include all fabrics that are silk-like in appearance, whether woven from natural silk or from rayon and other synthetic fibers. Heavy consumer demand for clothing and household furnishings made of rayon and other silk-like synthetics has stimulated the development of these industries in the USSR, but the Soviet rayon industry still remains far behind its American counterpart, while the production of most other synthetic fibers is not yet past the experimental stage. Total Soviet production of "silk fabrics" is at present about one-fourth the US output (Table 1) and is scheduled, by 1965, to reach a planned level equal to only 44 percent of 1960 US production (Table 2).

Nevertheless, if the presently planned expansion of these industries is continued, chances are that Soviet consumers will eventually enjoy an abundance of rayon and other silk-like synthetic fabrics. The raw materials (cellulose for rayon; coal, petroleum, and natural gas for synthetics) are cheap and plentiful in the Soviet Union, and the necessary machinery, processes, and technology are available from abroad, mainly the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. Although the Soviet Union has already begun producing *kapron* (nylon 6) and, on a smaller scale, two other types of nylon (*anid* and *enant*), *nitron* (Orlon), and *lausan* (Dacron), much

of this production is presently going into military and industrial items and very little into fabrics for consumer use.

Whereas in the United States linen is usually an expensive luxury fabric imported from abroad for use in the manufacture of quality dresses and table linens, in the Soviet Union it is a more commonplace fabric devoted to utilitarian rather than luxury uses. This is no doubt related to the fact that the Soviet Union has a centuries-old linen industry producing rather ordinary grades of cloth, while the United States has none. Seventy percent of Soviet linen production is for industrial purposes, mainly packaging material, the rest going into clothing and household fabrics for consumer use.

### Clothing, Hosiery and Footwear

Soviet-made clothing, as a rule, is notoriously shoddy, ill-fitting, and unattractive, reflecting both the poor quality of the textile fabrics used and the inexperience and lack of fashion-consciousness of the so-called "fashion" designers. Its low quality, lack of durability, and poor appearance have evoked widespread complaints from the buying public, and defective merchandise reaching the retail market has resulted in a high rate of factory returns. Though not accustomed to fine quality in personal apparel, Soviet consumers have become keenly aware of the plainness of their attire as a result of the increasing flow of Western visitors to the USSR. They also are sensitive about the high prices they have to pay for clothing, and in return they expect at least a modest response to consumer taste and a reasonable measure of durability, if not fine quality and style. Since Khrushchev himself has recently criticized the backwardness of the clothing and related industries, Soviet consumers can probably look forward to some increase in the availability of wearing apparel and possibly some improvement in quality.

Soviet clothing factories are equipped with machinery which, though not of the most modern design, is adequate for the fairly uncomplicated methods in use by the sewing industry. Production, however, is geared to volume rather than quality, and certainly not to fashion, the same models being duplicated monotonously year after year. A large part of the Soviet clothing supply comes from producers' cooperatives, which are soon to be integrated into the state industrial system, and from private tailors—one of the very few groups of private entrepreneurs still permitted to function.

Hosiery is mostly a cheap cotton product lacking in durability and unattractive in appearance, comparable to American-made hosiery of 30 or 40 years ago. Of the



Above: In a store everyone is equally attentive. Below: I can't for the life of me understand which are the mannequins, and which are the sales-girls! . . . (Sign reads "Ready-made dresses.")

—From *Krokodil* (Moscow), March 20, 1960.

total Soviet output in 1955, 79 percent was of cotton, and the remainder of rayon, nylon, or wool. By contrast, 67 percent of US hosiery production in 1958 was of nylon, and elasticized yarns are widely used, whereas these are still in the experimental stage in the Soviet Union. If the target fixed by the Seven-Year Plan is met, total Soviet output of hosiery by 1965 will still be only about two-thirds of US production in 1959.

Turning to leather footwear, not only is Soviet production still inadequate to meet consumption needs, but lack of durability and poor selection of styles and sizes are constant sources of consumer complaint. Shoes of quality materials and good construction are available but so excessively priced as to be inaccessible except to the upper income groups. Pig and goat leathers, relatively less durable than other kinds of real leather, are widely used, especially for children's shoes; and artificial suede and other simulated leathers, which are extensively used as substitute materials, are far less durable, although the composition soles in common use appear to be an acceptable substitute. Poor durability also results in part from fabrication methods that are often either outmoded or geared to achieving maximum output rather than quality. Many Soviet shoe factories are poorly equipped; some are consolidations of small handicraft enterprises using extensive hand labor.

Even disregarding quality factors, the per capita supply of footwear available to the Soviet consumer is not much over half that available to the American buyer. Production of leather footwear in the two countries in 1960 was as follows:

	<i>Soviet Union</i>	<i>United States</i>
Total production (in million pairs)	418	604
Production per capita (in pairs)	1.9	3.3

Planned Soviet production of leather footwear by 1965 is scheduled to reach 85 percent of US production in 1960 (Table 2). While this may narrow the quantitative gap, there is little question that catching up with the United States in per capita production of leather footwear of equal quality is still a distant goal for the Soviet Union.

## Durable Consumer Goods

Soviet preoccupation with building the country's industrial base and expanding its scientific frontiers is reflected nowhere more strongly than in the scarcity of consumer durables such as refrigerators and household

laundry equipment. The low priority of such items is evidenced by the fact that they have largely been produced as side-line products of automobile, aircraft, and other heavy industrial plants. Soviet officials recently admitted that there is not a single plant in the Soviet Union specializing in the manufacture of refrigerators, and this situation is typical of the production of most major appliances.

Although supplies of most consumer durables in the USSR have increased somewhat since 1950, these commodities are still scarce and expensive. Radios and television receivers, because of their value as means of propaganda dissemination, enjoy a relatively favored place in consumer goods production and can be bought fairly cheaply. On the other hand, such household appliances as refrigerators and washing machines remain in the luxury class, and many others that are common in the United States—*e.g.*, freezers, dishwashers, and clothes dryers—are still virtually unknown to the Soviet public. Shortages also exist in supplies of ordinary household furniture and have been accentuated by the increasing availability of apartment housing.

A comparison of 1960 Soviet production of major electrical appliances with the latest available US production (or sales) figures (1959) is given in the following table:

	USSR	US
	<i>(in thousands of units)</i>	
Refrigerators	529	3,750*
Washing machines	953	4,210*
Radios	4,200	11,090
Television sets	1,700	6,270

\* Sales

The lead held by the United States is even greater when these figures are translated into ratios of output to population. Thus, for each 1,000 of population, the United States produced 11 times as many refrigerators, 7 times as many washing machines, 3 times as many radios, and 6 times as many television sets, as the Soviet Union. (It should be noted also that these large production differentials are only a partial indication of the over-all difference in the volume of appliances in actual consumer use as they ignore appliances already installed and operating.) As shown in Table 2, the planned Soviet output goals for these consumer items by 1965 are still far below the actual US production levels of 1959.

While admitting the shortages of durable household goods, Soviet officials have tried to twist them to propaganda advantage by claiming that the growing public

*demand* for durable goods is itself evidence of a rapidly rising standard of living. As one such statement put it,

. . . the desires of the working people today radically differ from those of yesterday. They [the workers] say . . . that it is still difficult to buy a television set, a household refrigerator, good furniture, an upright piano. Undoubtedly this . . . shortcoming serves at the same time as a striking illustration of the rising standards and higher requirements of the Soviet people.<sup>3</sup>

To outside observers this statement, on its face, is ridiculous and only serves to underline the sacrifices of personal comfort, well-being and freedom of choice that are still demanded of Soviet citizens.

IN CONCLUSION, although each year is bringing some improvement in the lot of Soviet consumers, the Soviet Union will not—in spite of Khrushchev's boasts—surpass the United States in *per capita production* of consumer goods by 1970. Even assuming successful fulfill-

ment of the Seven-Year Plan targets, Soviet production of most major consumer goods in 1965 will still remain far below the US production levels.

While the Soviet leadership has committed itself to providing a more adequate supply of basic consumer items such as textiles, clothing, and footwear, it clearly does not intend to emulate Western consumption standards in the broader range of consumer goods. In a few commodities of the Soviet planners' choosing, the USSR may possibly surpass the United States in over-all production (for example, in wool fabrics), but such gains will not be impressive on a per capita basis because of the expected increase in population. Moreover, quality improvements are not likely to be commensurate with production increases, and most consumer items will probably remain well below the quality levels of these goods in the United States. As for the hitherto grossly-neglected area of consumer durables, there will undoubtedly be a substantial increase in the availability of some household appliances, but Soviet consumption standards will continue to be far below those of the United States even in this narrowly circumscribed sector.

<sup>3</sup> *Komsomolskaia pravda*, October 7, 1960.

## Personal Property — A Bourgeois Prejudice

Sometimes one hears the opinion that Communist abundance of goods will be attained by means of increasing the personal wealth of working people. But . . . do such proprietors, covered with a heap of their own belongings, correspond to our picture of future man? He has his own summer house, his own car, his own cultural and everyday appliances; in brief, he has a lot of everything and all of it is his own! Such a person is more like a prosperous bourgeois than a toiler of Communist society. The future man, who will be active, keen, drawn to creative toil, art, and sports, will hardly agree to waste time and effort on such an abundant personal household.

If you look attentively you will notice that already serious contradictions are arising between certain elements of private property and the requirements of public development, of the interest and the morality of Soviet people. Our very life and reality eliminate and weed out such private property as turns man into a slave of things, deprives him of free time, of a cultured recreation and rest, and diverts him from matters of public interest. The Soviet people are opposed to private property which gives birth to loitering and revives private ownership trends.

Naturally, all this must not be understood as a negation of private property. Some of its elements, for example clothes, footwear, some utensils for daily life, and so on, will undoubtedly be retained under communism. But it is quite clear that personal property cannot be the basic form of satisfying the requirements of the people under the conditions of Communist abundance.

—From "On the Roads to the Sources of Plenty," by Academician S. G. Strumilin, *Red Star* (Moscow), March 31, 1961.

# Hostile Coexistence

*By G. F. Hudson*

"MARXISM-LENINISM," writes Wladyslaw W. Kulski in the opening sentence of his book, *Peaceful Co-existence: An Analysis of Soviet Foreign Policy*, "is as important a key to the understanding of the Soviet Union and its foreign and domestic policies as Christianity is for the comprehension of medieval Europe, or Islam for that of the Arab Caliphate and the Ottoman Empire." It is just as well to begin a work of 600 pages on Soviet foreign policy with such a statement, for it is precisely this claim that is most challenging to what are still the basic—though usually unconscious—assumptions of a very large part of popular thinking about the Soviet Union.

Ever since the early days of the Bolshevik regime, there has been the expectation abroad that it was just about to settle down, discard its fantastic ideas of world revolution, and revert to the normal habits and usages of a national sovereign state in its international relations. First it was the New Economic Policy that was going to bring Russia back to normality; then it was "socialism in one country" and the repudiation of Trotsky; then, the entry of the USSR into the League of Nations and the various European non-aggression pacts which preceded the one with Nazi Germany. After that, it was the non-ideological nationalism of the "Great Patriotic War" and the public language of the Soviet ally at Teheran, Yalta, and San Francisco; and most recently it has been "peaceful co-existence" as proclaimed by Khrushchev. Yet, every time the world has become convinced that the original creed of Lenin no longer governed Soviet actions and that the policies of the Soviet Union could be interpreted simply in terms of national interest and security, like the policies of non-Communist states, events have provided fresh evidence

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that the ultimate aim of the rulers of Russia continued to be the destruction of all "bourgeois" governments.

The crucial question today is, indeed, what significance is to be attached to Khrushchev's famous remark, "We will bury you." Is it merely a prediction of an inevitable historical process of which the Communist Party of the Soviet Union will be the foreknowing but inactive spectator, or does it mean that the energies and resources of the Soviet state and its allies will be devoted to the task of *making* it come true? And if it means the latter, what basis is there—even if a general shooting war can be avoided—for the friendly relations and relaxation of tensions which Khrushchev professes to desire? For two men may quarrel bitterly on particular issues and still hope for a reconciliation, but it is hard to see what kind of amity is possible between them if one regards it as a matter of duty to kill the other whenever he can expediently do so.

ALL THE BOOKS mentioned in this essay [see box on p. 32] deal in one way or another with the concept of peaceful co-existence and the Soviet interpretation of it. The one that presents this interpretation in the most favorable light is—as might be expected—the study by Isaac Deutscher, which embodies the Dafoe Foundation Lectures given by him in Canada in the autumn of 1959. Deutscher believes that there really has been a fundamental transformation of Soviet politics and society since the death of Stalin—whom he tends to blame for everything that he admits was bad in Russia in the recent past—and that the Soviet policy of peaceful co-existence reflects not merely fear of the consequences of nuclear war, but an aspiration to achieve a level of economic development and social welfare that will soon render violence superfluous. He holds that the contest between East and West really has now become one of fair and peaceful competition to convince mankind, and particularly the underdeveloped countries, that one