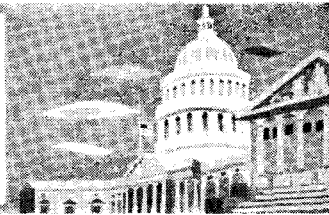


State of Affairs



The Communist Schism

ONE of the much-debated questions behind the scenes in Washington is the problem of how to deal with the Communist Chinese threat. Four months ago when I was in Moscow I found this to be a gravely nagging issue there, too. Even to the casual visitor it was obvious that the subject preoccupied the Russian mind more than almost any other. And no wonder, for China has now become a very serious threat to Soviet interests. A small insight into how seriously this threat is taken is reflected in the fact that broadcasts from China are now being jammed in the Soviet Union, while those from the West go undisturbed.

If you look at the world from Moscow, Western Europe seems like a relatively calm sea. It is stable and static. The United States is far away, engaged in an election campaign. The situation in Asia and Africa, on the other hand, is a sea of troubles.

In Asia, although it is American interests that are openly challenged, the Chinese have succeeded in greatly weakening Soviet influence. And among African Communist parties, China is aggressively forcing the pace to wrest control from Moscow. The Kremlin is fighting a desperate rear-guard action in Asia, but in Africa, in the noted words of George Canning, the British statesman, it is straining to call on the new African Communist world "to redress the balance of the old." In addition, China is creating a great uneasiness along the almost endless Sino-Soviet border, so much so that several Soviet divisions have been shifted from the Western to the Eastern front. Essentially, though, the quarrel between Moscow and Peking is not an East-West-conflict but a North-South one—between a more developed and an underdeveloped country.

Thus China has become the great incubus in the Soviet Union. The ordinary Russian, it soon became quite obvious to me, has developed a deep distrust of his erstwhile ally. He reveals a hatred that combines a deep disappointment usually expressed in the phrase "... after all the help we have given them ..."; a racial bias that comes to the surface in remarks like "... they make us aware that we are Europeans ..."; and an underlying fear that these "barbarians" may sooner or later

become the real enemy—a genuine threat to Soviet security.

"Tell us," a Russian writer said to me almost immediately after my arrival in Moscow, "why aren't we doing something more drastic about Mao?" The question took me by surprise, and I answered, "Well, that's one of the things I came here to find out."

Mr. Khrushchev has, in fact, been trying to read China out of the Communist world for some months. He has been hoping to organize a world conference of Communist Party leaders to prove that he is the Number One Communist leader. When I asked a well-informed Russian personality how Mr. Khrushchev is most likely to meet the Chinese challenge, he answered by using a simple metaphor: "When you are married to a woman but you don't live with her, you divorce her." When later I got to Budapest, after Mr. Khrushchev's "campaign" there, and asked the same question, a good Hungarian authority by coincidence used the very same metaphor but with a significantly different twist, "When you have been married to a woman for a long time," he said, "you will think twice before divorcing her; for it means deciding who should get the children, how to divide the bank account, who should get the furniture, and so forth."

Mr. Khrushchev's dilemma is obvious.

The question "Why aren't we doing something more drastic about the Chinese?" is also frequently asked in the United States, particularly as the situation in Vietnam and Laos continues to deteriorate. There is little doubt now that Communist China cannot rely on getting help from the Soviet Union, should it provoke the United States into a direct challenge. Yuri Zhukov, the authoritative commentator of *Pravda*, recently put Peking on notice not to expect China's anti-Soviet campaign to be rewarded with help. But it has been clear for some time now that the Soviet Union no longer considers binding its mutual assistance treaty with China. Nor

has Peking seemed to have any illusions about it since the Soviet Union refrained from giving her even so much as political and diplomatic support during the attack on India. On the contrary, Peking could not have failed to notice that India was and is getting industrial and military aid from the Soviet Union, now denied to themselves.

In Laos, therefore, the Russians find themselves in an awkward and embarrassing situation. They are a party to an agreement for the neutralization of this strategic country, yet they have been unable to persuade either the government of North Vietnam in Hanoi or that of Peking to use moderation. In South Vietnam they have assumed a different attitude. The guerrilla war to them is one of those "wars of liberation" that is part of the trend of a world in revolution, in which Mr. Khrushchev firmly believes. They therefore continue to give lip service—and possibly a certain amount of arms aid—to the guerrillas.

Ho Chi Minh, the aging head of the North Vietnamese state, used to lean toward the Russians rather than the Chinese. But it is doubtful now how much influence he still exerts within his own party. All available evidence shows that the Communist Party in North Vietnam is now decidedly on the side of Peking. It supports the Chinese in their opposition to the conference of world Communist leaders that Mr. Khrushchev is seeking; it also favors China's militant ideology. Under these circumstances it is wrong to assume, as some experts believe, that North Vietnam might want to go its own third route, similar to Tito's.

China's manpower reserves are virtually inexhaustible, but her military equipment, especially that of the air force, is obsolete and could not stand up against American military planes. This was very likely one reason why the Chinese relented in their attack against India as soon as the United States got ready to bring its own planes into action to protect Indian fighting forces. The Chinese, it is certain, have no nuclear weapons yet and won't have any effective weapons for some years, even though they may detonate an atomic device fairly soon. Internally, China has recovered from the economic crisis of two years ago, but the situation is still precarious.

And yet, despite these obvious weaknesses, both the Soviet Union and the United States treat China with great caution. The North Vietnamese and the Chinese, on the other hand, believing in the superiority of their aggressive ideology, continue their provocative activities in Laos and South Vietnam.

The Kremlin is proceeding warily in its strategy to isolate China because it needs the support of the majority of





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world Communist Parties and because it must prove that its policy of advancing the goals of Communism by negotiation rather than by force is more successful. Mr. Khrushchev recently complained to a Western statesman that it is so much easier for the Chinese to explain their policy to Asians and Africans—namely, to slit the enemy's throat—than it is for him to advance his own, which is so much more sophisticated. Once upon a time I heard this sort of exasperated complaint, especially in the corridors of the United Nations, from American diplomats who at the time found it difficult to promote American policy against the oversimplification of Soviet policy.

Perhaps the chief reason for President Johnson's caution with the Chinese is his wish to avoid committing American ground forces in Southeast Asia after the experience in Korea. A further point is the desire to make no move that could throw the Russians back into the arms of the Chinese. And in a more remote way there is, of course, the lurking matter of future American-Chinese relations.

This question nowadays is rarely brought to the public platform. Surprisingly, it was Mrs. Clare Luce, once a bitter foe of Communist China, who in a recent commencement address advocated that the United States should seek a relaxation of tension not only with Moscow but also with Peking. In short, she was trying to remind Americans that the old British strategy of the "balance of power," which helped to stave off any major wars in Europe in the nineteenth century (though it did not succeed in the twentieth), should now be adopted by the United States against the Communist world. This is an eccentric view these days for a Republican. But it has caused no reaction from the old "China lobby," and therefore one wonders whether the lobby still exists.

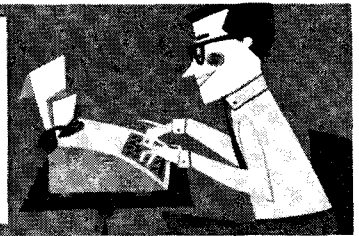
President Johnson, in contrast with most Republican leaders, feels that a relaxation of tension is what most American want. But he has indicated that if a more forceful intervention in Southeast Asia becomes necessary—though clearly he would rather avoid it—he would take the risk. It will become one of the major issues in the election campaign.

Whatever the future brings, the Sino-Soviet conflict is one of the major political events of this generation. Not only is it an advantage to the West because of the division of Communist power it has created, but it may in the end even further reduce the chance of a full-scale war.

The West has two choices: to follow Mrs. Luce's advice, or to make something close to a common cause with the Soviet Union in order to isolate or at least weaken the influence of Communist China.

—HENRY BRANDON.

Top of My Head



The Art of Hypochondria—Part 3

NO SOONER had last week's edition of SR hit the stands than a letter came from a friend complaining that in these medical symposiums I have been treating doctors irreverently. It's an objective opinion. He just happens to be a doctor. This doctor friend happens to be the same doctor I saw at the club playing pinochle one night. He was playing with another doctor. The bidding was furious. My doctor bid 300, the other doctor said 330, my doctor responded with 340, and the other one with 350. My doctor studied his hand more closely than he does an X-ray, I can tell you. Finally, in disgust, he looked across the table at the other doctor and said: "I hope all your patients get well!"

Actually my intent is not to treat doctors irreverently in these pieces. I only say, as kindly as I can, that when it comes to treating hypochondria they don't know what the hell they're talking about. I know because I went through twelve years of it and more doctors than you can shake a thermometer at, and I'm better qualified to diagnose and prescribe for hypochondria than any of them. And that includes Drs. Kildare and Casey. And you can throw in Raymond Massey.

My first meeting with one of my early doctors during my hypochondrial period was at 2 A.M. in a hotel. He arrived from his suite in the hotel disheveled and wearing a costly silk robe. He listened to my complaint—the rapid heartbeat, the feeling of breathlessness—and offered me a sleeping pill. I said I don't use sleeping pills. He told me to go to sleep. Then he asked for a glass of water, swallowed the pill, and went back up to his suite.

As I indicated, I'm not a sleeping pill man myself. Over a year I probably take six or seven. Singly, of course. Although I had at one low point thought of taking them all at once. I finally settled on slashing my wrists. That didn't work either. Those electric razors

are just no good. But it did get me some attention, which, after all, is only what every first-class hypochondriac is looking for.

For instance, even now, when I'm able to feel all these mystic aches, pains, and discomfitures with some equanimity, I still walk into my doctor's office for a verbal checkup. The other day he asked me how I was feeling and I said not too well and I went on to describe my problems from head to toe. It was a brilliant organ recital, sprinkled with clinical terms—syndromes, edemas, habit-forming—all the things I've picked up from the back of patent medicine bottles. When I had finished he said, "Have you been to the fair?"

Which is not conducive to a complete recovery or even to a comfortable convalescence. And if I were still the hypochondriac I once was I would have gone back to my old devices. One of these included listening raptly to all medical commercials on radio and television and choosing the appropriate medicines for my symptoms. Now that I don't panic I'm able to listen to these commercials objectively. For instance, the headache tablet that cautions you not to shout at Billy because he left his bike in the driveway. This is so wrong! The thing to do is shout at Billy and get it off your chest. Otherwise this inner turmoil builds and you wind up with ulcers. It's only later you discover they also make something for ulcers.

And speaking of headaches recalls the time my mother came to New York on a visit—a gentle, soft-spoken, white-haired lady of eighty. She confided to me that she was being bothered by constant headaches. I examined her. My diagnosis was that what was causing the headaches was her eyes and what was indicated was a change of glasses. So I took her to one of my many doctors, a specialist in that area.

I thought he treated my diagnosis rather offhandedly because he ushered her into his private office and asked me to have a seat in the waiting room. According to the story my mother told me later, he looked into her eyes, her nose, her ears, and came up with the announcement that all her teeth would have to come out. She took out her upper and lower plates and handed them to him.

—GOODMAN ACE.

