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THE SOVIET DOCTRINE OF WAR AND EUROCOMMUNISM

INTRODUCTION

The Soviet government, despite contrary assertions by some experts and despite widespread indifference on the part of the U.S. public, is making a tremendous effort to create the most powerful armed force in the world--nuclear as well as conventional. At the same time it is trying to imbue Soviet military personnel, and especially the officer cadres, with the mission of the Soviet state, i.e., to promote the building a socialist-communist society on a worldwide scale. In recent documents reflecting their view of the correlation of forces the Soviets indicate a particular interest in possibly exploiting the growing political influence of communist parties in Western Europe. This paper examines the new emphasis of Soviet war doctrine that could foreshadow potential Soviet intervention in Western Europe on behalf of the interests of the communist parties within Western democracies. The growth of Soviet military power in communist dominated Eastern Europe, coupled with their apparent willingness to support "the proletarian struggle for social liberation" in the rest of Europe, could have profound consequences for the NATO alliance system and the future of democracy in Europe

THE SOVIET MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT

The role of the Soviet military establishment as a revolutionary force under the complete control of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) can only be understood in terms of the Soviet worldview--the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. An intensive effort is being made by the Chief Political Administration of the

Soviet Army and Navy, a department of the CPSU Central Committee, to indoctrinate all military personnel with this conflict-oriented, revolutionary theory.

In addition to his military-technical training, every Soviet officer attending an institution of higher military education receives instruction in "military aspects of scientific communism." One of the textbooks written specifically for Soviet military-political academies gives the following Marxist-Leninist justification of the use of military armed force:

Marxist-Leninist theory and its historical application have irrefutably proven the emergence and development of the new communist formation will not occur without violent resistance on the part of the exploiting classes. This means that the toilers and oppressed peoples must always be ready to suppress their class enemies by military force. V. I. Lenin wrote not without logic: 'An exploited class which does not strive to have weapons and which is not capable of using them and mastering the military art would be a servile class.' (Complete Collected Works, Vol. 49, p. 104.)¹

A Soviet colonel, who for patriotic reasons in the late 1950s cooperated with Western intelligence and paid with his life for it, tried without much success to impress on Western intelligence the significance of the impact of the Marxist-Leninist outlook on the Soviet armed forces and its military doctrine.

One thing must be clearly understood. If someone were to hand to an American general, an English general, and a Soviet general the same set of objective facts and scientific data, with instructions that these facts and data must be accepted as unimpeachable, and an analysis made and conclusions drawn on the basis of them, it is possible that the American and the Englishman would reach similar conclusions--I don't know. But the Soviet general would arrive at conclusions which would be radically different from the other two. This is because, first of all, he begins from a completely different set of basic premises and preconceived ideas, namely, the Marxian concepts of society's structure and the course of history. Second, the logical process in his mind is

1. Fundamentals of Scientific Communism (in Russian) (Moscow: Military Publishing House of the Ministry of Defense), 1968. Textbook of the V. I. Lenin Military-Political Academy.

totally unlike that of his Western counterparts, because he uses Marxist dialectics, whereas they will use some form of deductive reasoning. Third, a different set of moral laws governs and restricts the Soviet behavior. Fourth, the Soviet general's aims will be radically different from those of the American and the Englishman.²

Perusal of voluminous Soviet literature clearly confirms Pen'kovskiy's warning. Relying heavily on Lenin's writings, the Soviet military scientists base their analysis of the essence of war on the materialistic, class-oriented interpretation of policy.

Marxist dialectics applied to wars proceed from the premise that 'war is simply a continuation of policy by other (namely, violent) means.' (V. I. Lenin, Complete Collected Works, Vol. 26, p. 224.)³

THE SOVIET DOCTRINE OF WAR

Proceeding from this basic Leninist tenet concerning the essence of war, Soviet military-social scientists have elaborated a Marxist-Leninist doctrine on war and on the army which they define as "a theory called upon to solve sociological problems of the origin, course and outcome of wars throughout world history, with special emphasis on the present era. The Marxist-Leninist teaching about war and army investigates war as a sociopolitical phenomenon, reveals the economic dependence of wars and armies upon political, economic and other social conditions, and discloses their role in the life and development of human society."⁴

This doctrine includes a classification method which groups wars into specific categories and types according to their social

2. Oleg Vladimirovich Pen'kovskiy, The Penkovskiy Papers (New York, 1965), pp. 252-253.

3. See Army General A. A. Yepishev, Head of the Chief Political Administration of the Soviet Army and Navy, Ideological Struggle in Military Questions (in Russian) (Moscow: 1974), p. 16.

4. Marxism-Leninism on War and Army (in Russian) (Moscow: 1968), p. 4. This monograph was prepared "for officers, generals, and admirals, studying Marxist-Leninist theory of war and army." Virtually all the participating authors are military-social scientists, who are high-ranking officers with a graduate degree in social science.

(class) character. First, it divides contemporary wars into just and unjust, depending upon whether they are waged in the interest of the proletarian or the capitalist (imperialist) class.

The social character of every war in the present era must be determined on the basis of the interests of the socialist revolution of the proletariat and national liberation revolutions of the oppressed peoples; it must be evaluated from the positions of principal motive forces of social progress, i.e., from the standpoint of the world socialist system, the international workers' movement and the national liberation movement of peoples.⁵

Marxism-Leninism equates the historical development of society with the interests of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and of its struggle against capitalism. These interests and this struggle are the basic criteria of the Marxist evaluation of all international events, including wars.

Lenin is often quoted in support of the thesis that any war in which the U.S.S.R. might be involved would be by definition a just war. "If war is waged by the proletariat once victorious over the bourgeoisie in his own country in the interest of consolidating and developing socialism, then that war is legitimate and holy."⁶

The question arises whether a thermo-nuclear conflict could be classified by Marxist-Leninist war doctrine as a just war.

The Marxist-Leninist military doctrine deals extensively with the problem of how the so-called military-technical revolution affects the nature and character of modern war. By military-technical revolution is meant, of course, the introduction of new weapons of mass destruction into the arsenal of modern armies. In the West there exists a widespread opinion that atomic weapons have made war obsolete as an instrument of policy, since no one will risk unleashing a war resulting in the destruction of both warring parties. In other words, a nuclear missile war cannot be considered "just" under any circumstances. However, Soviet military-social scientists, after some hesitation in the 1960s now undeviatingly claim that

the premise of Marxism-Leninism on war as a continuation of policy by military means remains true in an atmosphere of fundamental changes in military matters.

5. Ibidem, p. 81.

6. V. I. Lenin, Complete Collected Works (in Russian), Vol. 36, p. 292.

The attempts of certain bourgeois ideologists to prove that nuclear missile weapons place war outside the framework of policy and that nuclear war is beyond political control, ceases to be an instrument of policy and cannot constitute its continuation is theoretically false and politically reactionary."⁷

Using the same class criterion, one may conclude that any war waged by the capitalist (imperialist) class-state against the interest of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and its struggle against capitalism is ipso facto an unjust, reactionary and aggressive war. This is precisely what the communists are claiming.

In addition to the two basic categories of war, Soviet military doctrine distinguishes several types of war, which "are determined by the basic characteristics of each historical epoch... Every epoch is marked by specific contradictions, differing as to their social content."

Consequently, "a classification of wars takes into account the main contradictions or those aspects which generate military conflicts, as well as the social forces clashing in the armed struggle."⁸

SOCIAL STRUGGLE AND WAR

The main antagonistic contradictions of our epoch leading to armed conflicts represent the whole spectrum of social struggle. The principal trends of that struggle that determine the types of wars in our time are:

1. the struggle between the two world social systems-- socialism and capitalism;
2. the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie;
3. the general democratic struggle of the popular masses against monopolistic corporations;
4. the national-liberation struggle of peoples against the colonialists;

7. Marxism-Leninism on War and Army, p. 81.

8. Ibidem, p. 85.

5. the struggle among capitalist countries for the consolidation of positions of the monopoly capital.

It is the contention of Soviet military-social scientists that all the above trends of social struggle are the result of deep antagonistic contradictions, which the imperialists are trying to solve by means of armed struggle.

The corresponding principal types of wars in the contemporary era are:

1. wars between the two antagonistic social systems (systemic wars);
2. civil wars between the proletariat and bourgeoisie;
3. civil wars between the popular masses and the forces of reaction supported by the imperialists of other countries;
4. wars between the colonialists and peoples fighting for their independence (wars of national liberation);
5. wars among capitalist countries.⁹

In recent years Soviet military-social scientists have shown a growing interest in the various types of war listed above and the possible role in them of the Soviet armed forces, as we can see from the number of articles by high-ranking Soviet officer-social scientists that have appeared in the authoritative review, Communist of the Armed Forces, a bi-monthly of the Central Committee's Chief Administration of the Soviet Army and Navy.

Discussing the development of the Soviet armed forces, "under the conditions of mature socialism," Col. A. Timorin, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, claims them to be "monofunctional," i.e., fulfilling a purely foreign political function in contrast to bourgeois (capitalist) armies, "which even now still fulfill two functions--domestic and foreign. The domestic function consists of oppressing the working masses, keeping them subjugated to the exploiting minority."¹⁰

The foreign tasks of the Soviet armed forces include primarily, the defense of the socialist fatherland and the entire

9. Ibidem, p. 86.

10. See his article, "The Armed Forces of a Mature Socialist Society: Characteristics and Basic Trends of Their Development," Communist of the Armed Forces (in Russian), October 3, 1975, pp. 18-26.

socialist system. Secondly, they include military aid to the national-liberation wars by proxy (e.g., through Communist Cuba) or by direct aid (Soviet advisors), which has been openly acknowledged and justified by authoritative Soviet spokesmen as part of the internationalist duties of the Soviet government, as in Brezhnev's report to the XXV Party Congress.¹¹

CIVIL WARS IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

Recently, Soviet military-social scientists have been showing preoccupation with another type of just war, namely, the revolutionary civil war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in capitalist countries.

A number of articles have appeared since 1974, singling out this particular type of war and its possible eruption under the "ever-deepening general crisis of capitalism."¹²

Moreover, the Soviet preoccupation with "wars conducted by the working class to liberate themselves from the domination of the bourgeoisie" has been confirmed in unmistakable terms by the highest CPSU authority. The XXIV Party Congress emphasized: "our people will continue to steadfastly support other peoples's struggle for democracy, national liberation, and socialism."¹³

In similar but even stronger terms the CPSU XXV-Party Congress called for an international revolutionary offensive against "imperialism," i.e., the remaining democratic countries. In the

11. See earlier Backgrounder by author on "Export of Revolution: Communist Reality or Capitalist Slander?" (The Heritage Foundation, 1977).

12. See Communist of the Armed Forces (in Russian), No. 11, 1974, pp. 17-26 (Col. T. Kondratkov, Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, "Problems of Classification of War and Its Impact on Ideological Struggle"); No. 6, 1975, pp. 67-75 (Col. V. Izmaylov, Candidate of Historical Sciences, "Nature and Features of Modern War"); No. 13, pp. 9-17, 1975, (Col. A. Dmitriyev, Docent, Candidate of Philosophical Sciences, "Marxist-Leninist Doctrine of War and the Army is an Important Element of the Scientific World Outlook of Military Cadres"); No. 22, 1975, pp. 9-6 (Col. S. Tyushkevich, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor, "Development of the Doctrine of War and the Army on the Basis of Experience in the Great Patriotic War").

13. Materials of the XXIV Congress of the CPSU (in Russian) (Politizdat: Moscow, 1974), p. 31.

light of this announced policy, we should give careful attention to an explicit statement of a Soviet military-social scientist about the foreign functions of the Soviet armed forces:

The historical mission of our armed forces presently consists in the following tasks:

1. to effectively guarantee the security of the Soviet state and the creative labor of our people who are the first to tread the road of communism;
2. together with the fraternal armies of the socialist countries to guarantee the security of the whole socialist community;
3. to offer mighty support to the peoples who have turned to revolution (civil war of liberation) and to the liberation struggle against foreign intruders (war of national liberation) in their fight against the intervention of the imperialists;
4. to be the steady bulwark of peace and security of the entire world.¹⁴

Tasks 3 and 4 of the Soviet armed forces are clearly of an offensive character and reflect the attribute which many Soviet military-social scientists bestow upon them:

...the Soviet armed forces always were and are still a liberation army ready to come to the assistance of peoples who have become victims of imperialist aggression...Consequently, the Soviet armed forces must be organized in such a way as to fully live up to their international liberation mission."¹⁵

As one of the tasks of the Soviet Armed Forces, this international liberation mission is taken seriously by the Soviet government. "Unmistakably, the theme of the three-hour parade that

14. See Col. V. Khalipov, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, "The Present Era and Its Basic Contradictions," Communist of the Armed Forces (in Russian), No. 9, 1975, pp. 81-89.

15. See Col. Ye. Sulimov, "Fundamental Principles of Soviet Military Construction During the Period of Transition from Socialism to Communism," Communist of the Armed Forces (in Russian), No. 4, 1975, pp. 9-17.

marked last week's 60th anniversary of the Soviet Revolution was brute strength,"¹⁶ commented Western military observers at the recent celebration in the Red Square.

Of course, by definition, "mighty support to the peoples who have turned to revolution (civil war of liberation)" in any eventuality will always represent Soviet fraternal assistance to those who rise to defend themselves against the "intervention of the imperialists."

EUROCOMMUNISM AND SOVIET WARFARE DOCTRINE

Since a revolutionary civil war of social liberation can erupt only in a "developed capitalist country," Soviet writers obviously refer to the possibility of social upheaval in one of the West European industrialized countries, and the Soviet scenario for this runs as follows: military support by a NATO Member to an allied West European democratic government hard-pressed by internal political disorders would be an act of aggression in violation of the Helsinki Agreement and would justify Soviet counter-intervention:

Strict observation of the principles agreed upon in Helsinki which guide mutual relations among states is of vital necessity, precisely on an all-European scale, particularly in view of the fact that under the pretext of strengthening 'Western solidarity' or 'defense against the Soviet aggression,' practical measures are often devised to suppress the desire of peoples for a better life and social progress. Was this not illustrated by Western interference in the affairs of the Portuguese people? Are not the planned NATO maneuvers proof of it? According to the scenario of these exercises, the armed forces of that bloc will have to deal with situation caused by the approaching collapse of the capitalist economy, food riots, inability of bourgeois governments to fulfill their public security obligations and to uphold law and order in general. Also with the situations resulting from the accession to power by the communists in Portugal, and later in Italy and France.¹⁷

16. Time Magazine, November 21, 1977, p. 48.

17. V. K. Sobakin, "After Important Gains Have Been Made. Interpretation by Bourgeois Propaganda of the Results of the All-European Conference," Communist (in Russian), November, 1975, No. 17, pp. 104-13.

In view of the political situation in the European countries mentioned, what is now called a scenario, may well become reality in the foreseeable future.

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