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SOVIET RETURN TO THE UN



By returning to the UN, the USSR is seeking to re-establish maximum diplomatic and propaganda maneuverability and perhaps to lay the groundwork for a negotiated settlement in Korea if the turn of events there convinces the Kremlin of the need for such a settlement. The Soviet Union may also hope to gain support in Asia by attacking the highly vulnerable US position on Taiwan.

The Soviet boycott was proving more and more disadvantageous to the USSR. Purely aside from failing to accomplish its avowed purpose--seating the Chinese Communist representative--the boycott denied the USSR the use of the UN either as a medium through which it could obstruct world action in support of South Korea or as a sounding board for Soviet propaganda. Moreover, the Kremlin probably reasoned that by boycotting the UN it was contributing both to the potentialities of the UN to marshal non-Communist world opinion and to the growing determination of the Western world to mobilize against Soviet aggression.

The vitriolic and obstructionist attitude of the USSR in the first three days following its return to the SC does not preclude a later Soviet effort to negotiate a settlement in Korea. By initially concentrating on the Chinese representation issue and procedural maneuvers, the USSR is attempting to confuse the questions of Korea and China as well as to save face by demonstrating that it has not abandoned the issue which precipitated the boycott and is therefore not returning to the UN out of weakness. Moreover, the USSR is under no immediate compulsion to seek a settlement of the Korean issue while UN forces are still suffering reverses in Korea. For the present, therefore, the Kremlin can be

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expected to make every effort to prevent the UN from focussing its attention exclusively on North Korean aggression. In such an effort, the USSR will concentrate its attacks where it considers the US to be most vulnerable--namely, the question of Chinese representation in the UN and the US stand regarding Formosa.

In the longer run, however, the USSR probably believes that it must offer some form of negotiated settlement in Korea if it is to counter the effect the Korean war has had in stimulating Western military preparations and to protect its position in North Korea. While North Korean successes continue, any Soviet peace offer would probably not go beyond proposals for the withdrawal of UN military forces and the holding of all-Korean elections possibly with some nominal international supervision. The USSR would exploit some such formula to portray the Soviet Union as a disinterested party concerned only with the restoration and maintenance of peace. It would also be designed to capitalize on North Korean victories by attempting a negotiated settlement on favorable terms before an eventual UN counter-offensive might carry across the 38th Parallel and culminate in the unification of Korea under UN auspices. Even if mediation on terms acceptable to the USSR is not feasible, the Soviet Union can seek to achieve more limited objectives by attempting to shift the blame for continued hostilities to the US and to block any UN-approved move to cross the 38th Parallel.

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