

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Senior Research Staff on International Communism

Article in Foreign Affairs by Nikita Khrushchev

Pressure of time only permits a brief and hasty footnote:

A point about the seemingly conflicting statements by the Communist leaders on the inevitability of war and Khrushchev's present stress on peaceful coexistence which seems to deserve greater emphasis is the fact that there is actually nothing contradictory or new in these statements.

Marx and Lenin are on record as having declared wars between capitalist states inevitable, but as for wars or clashes between the capitalist and the Communist systems, what the Communist leaders always had in mind was the inevitability of war as the result of armed attacks by the capitalist states. On the one hand, they could not believe that the capitalist states would remain with arms folded while Communist states were developing their power and their concomitant resources for internal subversion, and on the other hand, they would obviously not publicly announce warlike intentions, even if they had them. On the contrary, would-be aggressors have always been most vehement in their professions of pacificism.

When, therefore, Khrushchev says that wars are no longer inevitable, all he means is that the Communist camp is now so powerful that the capitalists will no longer dare attack it, even if nuclear weapons are outlawed de jure or de facto. It follows that the "aggressive" capitalists, monopolists, and imperialists should give up their vain dreams of crushing the Communist camp and implicitly Communism by force, and reconcile themselves to the necessity of peaceful coexistence, which means disarmament, abandonment of military bases, and recognition of the status quo in Eastern and Central Europe. Communism, now as always, will rely on its intrinsic superiority - economic and moral - to triumph in the rest of the world, even violent revolution as distinct from "parliamentary revolution" being soft-pedalled if not formally disavowed.




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To sum up: The Soviet state has never threatened war, for obvious reasons, and cannot renounce something it has never announced. True, when attacked, it argues that all its armed forces did was to create "favorable conditions" for Communist takeovers in the countries they occupied. The Communist International (or the CPSU), for equally obvious reasons, has not and cannot threaten with war. There is, therefore, nothing new in "peaceful coexistence." Superficially, it merely means an invitation to the West to return to a peace footing, and fundamentally it does not guarantee peace any more than countless similar solemn declarations to renounce war have in the past.

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