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U S S R

TRANSLATIONS ON USSR POLITICAL  
AND SOCIOLOGICAL AFFAIRS  
(FOUO 3/79)



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INTERNATIONAL

DETENTE'S CONTRADICTIONS, ISSUES IMPEDING ITS PROGRESS VIEWED

Moscow RABOCHIY KLASS I SOVREMENNYI MIR in Russian No 1, Jan-Feb 79  
signed to press 28 Dec 78 pp 17-32 LD

[Article by V. M. Kulish: "Detente and the Threat of War--Alternative Trends"]

[Text] In the second half of the seventies the process of international detente is manifesting itself increasingly noticeably, albeit in a somewhat contradictory fashion. On the one hand its influence on international relations is increasing, the number of states actively supporting it is growing and the positions of political and social forces fighting for detente are strengthening. On the other hand, the criticism of detente by rightwing, conservative forces in Western countries, particularly in the United States, is intensifying. These circles are receiving active support from the present PRC leadership. This criticism from both directions is turning into direct attacks on detente and open slander of its supporters. In several cases it contains the demand for a return practically to the cold war and appeals to prepare for world war. In his time former U.S. President Gerald Ford also joined in the "antidetente" campaign, publicly refusing to use the term "detente." Then and now, many people try to give their own interpretation of the detente process and on that basis to criticize and reject the phenomenon itself. Certain influential groups, and sometimes even governments, in Western countries act more cautiously: They verbally support detente but in fact exert considerable efforts to retard the process of its development and prevent it from spreading to the military sphere.

Thus detente is the subject of a bitter political and ideological struggle which has drawn into its orbit all states and governments and political and social forces in the world, without exception. This struggle has embraced all spheres of international relations and is exerting considerable influence on the behavior of both governments and sociopolitical forces.

In this connection the Soviet theory of international relations is faced with the task of devoting even more attention to studying the factors which

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determined the emergence and development of the detente process, revealing its motive forces and contradictions and seeking ways and means of peacefully resolving these contradictions in the interests of further developing the entire process.

The article here offered to the reader pursues the goal of giving a general characterization of international detente and examining the problems without whose resolution it cannot be deepened.

Changes in the Correlation and Distribution of Forces in the World--The Most Important Preconditions of Detente

International detente is the necessary result of the development of political, economic and social processes and the successes of science and technology, which led to a substantial change in the correlation and distribution of forces both internationally and within many states. "As a result the distribution of forces in the world arena has changed completely," L. I. Brezhnev noted in the report "On the Draft USSR Constitution" at the CPSU Central Committee 24 May 1977 Plenum. "The real possibility has appeared of averting a new world war, and the threat of the emergence of such a war has already receded, although we still have much work to do in this sphere and a stubborn struggle still lies ahead"[1].

A simplistic interpretation of the question of the change in the correlation of forces and the substitution of the question of the correlation of military forces is often encountered in the Western press, particularly the American press. Of course, military strength as yet remains one of the most obvious and dangerous indicators of the might of this or that state, although it does not reflect its real might in full. But even if preference is given to military strength, a detailed impression of the real strength of states and of the potential for its foreign political realization can be obtained if this strength is assessed within the system of international relations which determine the correlation and distribution of forces in the world and its regions. This is of exceptionally great significance for an understanding of the essence of international detente and for revealing its methods of influencing states' foreign policy and their potential for realizing the foreign policy resources at their disposal, particularly such extremely dangerous resources as military strength and war.

The most important condition predetermining international detente was the consolidation of the international positions of world socialism. It is known that socialism as a teaching rejects war as a rational policy means, except in the case of a just war for independence and national and social liberation. The idea of peace is directly connected in this teaching with the ideas of national, social, economic and political progress. With the formation of first one socialist state and then a system of such states the task of excluding war from mankind's life becomes the aim not only of progressive social forces but also of a state policy based on economic, moral, political and military might, and also on the international prestige of socialist states.

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The governments of socialist countries have proceeded and proceed in their proposals from the basis of the now generally acknowledged fact that not only fundamental contradictions but also spheres of common interest exist between socialist and capitalist countries. The peoples of all the world's countries have an interest in averting world war, in disarmament, reducing military expenditure, the effective exploitation of the advantages of the international division of labor, the exploitation of the riches of the world's oceans and environmental conservation, resolving the problems of energy resources and raw materials and eliminating mass hunger and dangerous diseases. The existence of such common or coinciding interests among states and peoples and the ever-growing demand for them to be acted on is a convincing argument for the policy of peaceful coexistence and international detente.

The international communist and workers movement is a significant force capable of restricting and stopping the actions of the aggressive forces of imperialism. And although these forces are seeking by every available means to weaken the resistance of the communist and workers movement via the forces of militarism and aggression, these efforts are not bringing the desired result. Communist parties have become an important component in the distribution of forces in capitalist countries. In some countries they have taken the lead in the working people's mass political struggle and become a nationwide political force (in France and Italy, for instance), and in others the process of communist parties emerging into the arena of national activity is under way. In a third group of countries the communist parties' role in political life is becoming increasingly noticeable.[2] Energetic actions by communist parties jointly with other leftwing and anti-war forces in capitalist countries are promoting to a significant extent the change in the correlation of forces in favor of international detente and peace.

The socialist community states and communist and workers parties of most countries of the world build their policy in the struggle to maintain peace and international detente with consideration for the trends in international relations determined by the development of world processes. Such an approach made it possible as early as 1956 for the 20th CPSU Congress to formulate a conclusion on the absence of the fatal inevitability of wars in modern conditions. Some 5 years later the CPSU program adopted by the 22d Party Congress stated that "peaceful coexistence between socialist and capitalist states is an objective necessity of the development of human society. War cannot and must not serve as a means of resolving international disputes." [3] This formulation of the question of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems has been supported by the world communist and workers movement. [4]

The peace program adopted in 1971 by the 24th CPSU Congress sets out the Soviet Union's concrete tasks in insuring peace and friendship among peoples. Their practical implementation promoted a significant acceleration



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in the development of the processes of relaxation of tension and establishment of cooperation between the USSR and capitalist countries. The 25th CPSU Congress adopted the "program of further struggle for peace and international cooperation and for the freedom and independence of the peoples," which included concrete Soviet proposals on questions of peace and insuring international security. These aim at resolving urgent tasks in strengthening the relaxation of tension and making it irreversible.

By joint efforts, the socialist community states have elaborated a realistic program for restructuring the system of international relations so as to preclude the possibility of the emergence of a situation in which political, economic and ideological contradictions and conflicts between capitalist and socialist states, accumulating, expanding and becoming exacerbated, would go so far as to be transformed into armed struggle, into war. In a series of joint declarations and appeals to Western states they have proposed the resolution of the problem of emerging from the cold war and eliminating its consequences, creating international stability in Europe and subsequently in other regions by developing mutually advantageous economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation, eliminating the most dangerous elements in the present-day international structure (for instance, military confrontation, military conflicts and military-political blocs) and disarmament.

Exceptionally great significance for the development of the process of international detente is attached to the elimination of the colonial system of imperialism, the profound social transformations taking place in countries freed from colonial dependence, the formation of new states and the increase in their international political prestige. All these phenomena substantially reduce the reserves and restrict the sphere of operations of imperialism and its main means--militarism. Most of the Asian, African and Latin American countries liberated from colonial dependence have chosen nonalignment as the basis of their foreign policy. Their proclamation of neutrality with respect to the military-political blocs does not mean they are indifferent to such international questions as those of peace and war, imperialism and colonialism. Having an interest in cooperating with other countries in the sphere of the economy, science and technology, culture and health care, so as to accelerate their countries' development, break out of the backwardness to which colonialism condemned them in the shortest possible time and achieve full national independence, economic independence and social progress, the liberated countries come out as active supporters of detente and opponents of everything associated with the policy of cold war and military confrontation in international relations. They wage an active struggle against militarism and the threat of nuclear missile war, with which they associate the danger of the restoration of foreign exploitation and political oppression.

The emergence and strengthening of international solidarity among Asian, African and Latin American countries on the basis of the nonalignment policy has promoted a significant change in the correlation of forces in favor of maintaining peace and insuring international security. This is also

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reflected in the change in the distribution of forces in the United Nations, whose members now number 150. An absolute majority in the United Nations is made up of socialist states and states liberated from colonial dependence.

Changes have also taken place in western states' governments. In a number of countries the parties, groups and politicians attaching most importance in their policy to military strength have lost some of their influence on governments' foreign policy, while parties, groups within them and people capable of implementing a more realistic foreign policy have strengthened their positions in the leadership of the states. And although, as is known, western states' ruling circles have still not renounced their former attitude toward the "position of strength" policy or their habit of thinking in terms of military strength, they have begun to implement a more realistic policy. As a rule supporters of a tough policy with respect to socialist states form the opposition in their countries' parliaments: The conservatives in Britain, the Christian Democrats in the FRG, and rightwing, conservative republicans and democrats in the United States. Such a position has arisen in most of the developed capitalist states.

The changes in the correlation and distribution of forces in the world have influenced the "position of strength" policy and the attitude toward its main means--military strength. On this question, American researcher Col Amos A. Jordan Jr wrote: "A paradoxical situation has arisen: In recent decades the gulf between the military potentials of strong and weak states has increased, but the ability of the strong to impose their will on the weak has seemingly lessened. It seems that the traditional role of military strength as supreme ruler of interstate relations has changed to some extent."<sup>[5]</sup> At approximately the same time another American researcher, J. Clark, wrote this: "Of course, nations can exert moral, political, economic and other influence on one another. However, inasmuch as the ultimate, supreme arbiter of international disputes is war, the military factor acquires a higher degree of significance in political calculations. Any symptoms of weakness or unpreparedness on the part of a great power is immediately reflected in its political status."<sup>[6]</sup> Such an argument on questions of international politics, set out in the pages of a military journal at the beginning of the period of detente, could be put down to the military author's limited thinking. But later, other similar statements appeared, made by politicians. In March 1976, for instance, U.S. Secretary of State H. Kissinger stated: "Without reliable military strength in all arms categories no diplomacy, however skillful, can help us. That is why I have resolutely supported a strong national defense in all weapons categories."<sup>[7]</sup>

It is traditional for capitalism to make the role of military strength absolute. As V. I. Lenin pointed out, "Under capitalism any basis for distributing spheres of influence, interests, colonies and so forth other than that of considering the /strength/ [word in italics--FBIS] of those participating in the shareout--general economic, financial and military strength, and so forth--is inconceivable,"<sup>[8]</sup> and military strength is

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allotted the decisive place, the role of "supreme ruler of international relations." It is this which determines the desire on the part of imperialist state, above all the United States, to possess military superiority over socialism, which could insure their domination in the world. Their policy in the forties and fifties aimed at achieving this goal, when the governments of those states considered that the solid economic, scientific and technical potential of the North American countries, the West European countries restored since the war and Japan will make it possible for them to create and constantly maintain their military might at a level which would be unattainable for any other state or group of states, particularly the Soviet Union and other socialist states, which suffered enormous losses during World War II.

The western states, despite their desire, tremendous material expenditure and efforts, did not succeed in achieving overall military superiority over the USSR and all the socialist community countries. They have had to settle for relative strategic equilibrium. For instance, in central Europe a more or less identical level of Warsaw Pact and NATO armed forces has been established now for many years, despite differences in their organizational structures and training which are determined by social, political, economic and national features, historical traditions and military doctrines. A relative equilibrium has also become established between USSR and U.S. Strategic Nuclear Missile Forces. The maintenance of the relative equilibrium of forces in these key areas in the military structures of states of the two social systems virtually means that an overall strategic equilibrium of military forces is insured.

Maintaining such equilibrium demands the expenditure of tremendous efforts and material resources on the part of the Soviet Union and all the socialist community countries, but they are obliged to act in that way. The successful implementation of this task has made it possible for the socialist countries to insure reliable defense and has prevented the imperialist states effectively realizing a situation of the constant danger of war in their own interests, although such attempts have more than once brought Europe to the brink of all-out war. It has made it possible to restrain the aggressive forces and preserve peace in Europe for more than 30 years. It has made it possible for the Soviet Union and other socialist community states to place on a practicable footing the resolution of the questions of disarmament and averting war.

The relative equilibrium of military forces has influenced the official views of the U.S. Government on the role of military strength as a foreign policy means. In his annual report to Congress, U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown writes that in its foreign policy the United States must not rely mainly on military strength, but must also make use of wherever possible of other means--economic, industrial and agricultural potentials, level of technology and so forth<sup>[9]</sup>. Nonetheless he allots the decisive role to military strength. "It is true," he goes on to write, "that

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international disputes are rarely resolved constructively by military means. But it is equally true that in this troubled world we can rarely resolve international disputes by peaceful means unless these are based on military potential". [10]

The process of "recognition" of the fact of the change in the correlation of forces in the world and of the establishment of a relative equilibrium of military forces between the socialist and capitalist state systems on the part of leaders of western states is far from corresponding to the real state of affairs. Prejudice attempts to pass off what is desired as the reality, in short, various kinds of confusions, errors and miscalculations have prevented them from gaining a realistic impression of the real correlation of forces and correctly assessing its international political significance. The illusion of military superiority and the associated confidence in military impunity have created and maintained among them the opinion that the only language in which they could "successfully" carry out a dialog with the USSR, other socialist states and peoples which have been and are being liberated from colonial dependence is the language of force.

The numerous failures of foreign policy plans and actions undertaken "from a position of strength" with respect to the socialist countries and defeats in wars against National Liberation Forces, particularly such striking defeats as in the wars in Korea, Indochina, Algeria and Angola, have each had a more sobering effect on the ardent supporters and creators of the "position of strength" policy and made them consider to a greater extent the real correlation and distribution of forces in the world. Approximately since the midsixties statements have appeared with increasing frequency in the American and West European press on the equilibrium or parity of forces between East and West, above all the strategic forces of the USSR and the United States, and attempts have been made to clarify the effect of this phenomenon on relations between states with different social systems. Only in the seventies was the existence of such an equilibrium acknowledged by U.S. official circles.

It is hard to overestimate the significance of the parity of forces, and still more of its acknowledgement by official circles in the United States and its allies, for the development of the process of international detente. First, this helped to seriously restrict the potential of imperialist "position of strength" policy, to develop peaceful relations among states and to increase the international prestige of the policy of peaceful coexistence. Speaking at Notre Dame University 22 June 1977, U.S. President J. Carter said: "We can no longer count on the other 150 countries submitting to the diktat of those who hold might in their hands; we must have faith in ourselves and strive to inspire, convince and lead other countries." Second, they were the direct preconditions for the turn in the policy of the United States and other western states away from confrontation and nuclear blackmail to talks with socialist states. Third, this acknowledgement, reflecting the real correlation of forces between the USSR and

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the United States, between the socialist community states and capitalist countries, made it possible for governments on both sides to choose the principles of "equal security" and "not prejudicing the security of any countries" as the basis for holding further talks on limiting strategic nuclear missile weapons, reducing arms forces and armaments in central Europe, and disarmament. Finally, the western states' acknowledgement of the overall parity of military forces between the two world systems of states could act as a precedent for the resolution of problems of reducing armed forces and armaments and of disarmament in respect of individual regions of the world.

In the most general terms the establishment of a relative equilibrium of military forces and its recognition by the major imperialist powers, together with the strengthening trend toward a change in the overall correlation of forces in the world in favor of socialism, national liberation and progress, create favorable conditions for the further development and the deepening of the process of international detente.

The Contradictory Nature of the Detente Process, the Preservation of the Danger of War

Other forces and opposite trends leading to an exacerbation of international tension, the continuation of the arms race and to war are still active in the world and exert a considerable influence. First, the conditions which gave rise to the cold war persist, and extreme conservative forces seeking to insure that the contradictions between capitalism and socialism, between states with different social systems are resolved by means of force and violence have not lost their influence on the policy of western states. Second, colonialism and neocolonialism have still not been fully eradicated, and are constantly engendering international crises and military conflicts in Asia, Africa and Latin America which to a greater or lesser degree objectively help to preserve international tension and are often used by reactionary, conservative forces to maintain such tension. Third, the system of military confrontation created in the cold war years remains--the bloc structure of international relations, developed military organizations of blocs and states, a level of countries' mobilized preparations and of the combat readiness of the sides' armed forces which is excessively high for peacetime, and military bases and armed forces on other countries' territories. Fourth, the arms race is continuing even more intensively. Fifth, the military expenditure of an absolute majority of countries is increasing from year to year.

Thus international detente is a concrete historical state of international relations in which alternative trends are operating simultaneously and exerting a substantial influence on the most important events--trends toward preserving peace and strengthening international security, toward developing all-round cooperation between countries, and on the other hand toward exacerbating the international situation, stepping up tension and increasing

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the danger of war. By virtue of this, as the participants in the Berlin conference of European Communist and Workers Parties noted, universal peace is still not guaranteed, detente "has not yet become lasting" and "serious obstacles still remain along the path to reliable security and cooperation." [11]

International detente is a process of developing the entire system of international relations from a cold war situation to a status insuring the reliability of peaceful relations among states, above all among states with different social systems, and to businesslike and equal cooperation among them, a process distinguished by exceptional dynamism and by its contradictory nature, as determined by the actions of the opposing trends in the international situation.

International detente is also that type of states' foreign policy aimed at preserving peace and insuring all-round cooperation among states and peoples, averting international conflicts and wars and implementing effective measures to curb the arms race, reduce armed forces and armaments and bring about disarmament.

International detente is connected in the most direct way with the change in the forms of confrontation between the two world systems, in the forms of resolving the contradictions inherent in the world system of states. The establishment of a relative equilibrium of military forces on the two sides introduces serious changes into the system of the struggle to possess military superiority, a struggle which has always been characteristic of exploitative societies and their states. In our time this goal is only pursued by one of the two main systems of states--the imperialist system. The socialist community states are consistent supporters of preserving a stable equilibrium of military forces and military potentials between states with different social systems, of ending the arms race and of disarmament.

In order to resolve the problems associated with social transformations and socialist and communist building, and to reliably defend themselves and their interests, they need a stable equilibrium of military forces, and not military superiority. The Soviet Government, like the governments of other socialist community countries, has declared this repeatedly. In an interview for the West German Newspaper VORWAERTS L. I. Brezhnev said that "the Soviet Union believes for its part that approximate equality and parity are sufficient for defense needs. We do not set ourselves the goal of achieving military superiority. We also know that this very concept loses its meaning in view of the existence of the present huge arsenals of nuclear weapons and delivery means already stockpiled". [12]

The fact that the Soviet Union has not sought and is not seeking military superiority is attested by the entire experience of military competition between the USSR and the United States and between states with different social systems throughout the postwar period. As a rule, it is the United States and the other western powers which have created new weapons or

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military systems and thereby challenged the Soviet Union and the other socialist community states. The socialist countries have been forced to accept the challenge and to respond to it with specific measures to strengthen their defense and protect their interests by equalizing the sides' military might or neutralizing the western countries' military advantages. This has been and remains a specific manifestation of the struggle between the aforementioned two opposing trends in contemporary international relations. The socialist community states and the working class have succeeded in imposing on their class opponents both peaceful competition in the spheres of the economy, science and technology, and culture, and relations between states with different social systems based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, and in achieving international detente.

As noted above, international detente, which has to a considerable extent developed under the influence of the change in the world disposition of forces, the establishment of relative equilibrium between the military forces of the two world systems of states and the realization by western powers' ruling circles of the international political importance of this equilibrium, contributes in its turn to maintaining this equilibrium and determines the need for states to seek forms of foreign policy activity which are adequate for it. At the same time the maintenance of the military equilibrium at a high level is not only exceptionally burdensome and gnuinous for the peoples but also dangerous from the military viewpoint--something which determines the urgent need to lower this level. This is also prompted by the fact that the military equilibrium of forces is dynamic in nature and is constantly developing. It is connected with the arms race, and the latter in its turn contributes to maintaining--and, in periods when it is intensifying, also to strengthening--international tension and to preserving universal suspicion and mistrust in the world. Moreover, any equilibrium, especially an equilibrium of military forces--and a high level at that--causes a dangerous trend towards attempts to disrupt it. For instance, the desire of the United States and its allies for military technological and therefore to some extent strategic superiority over the Soviet Union and the other socialist community countries has been and remains the main source of the arms race and war danger. In particular, the American policy of constantly stepping up military expenditure is fraught with a disruption of the established equilibrium between U.S. and USSR military forces. In an August 1978 interview with BUSINESS WEEK Magazine, U.S. President J. Carter declared: "I foresee defense expenditure rising steadily for the remainder of my presidency--I can see no prospect of significantly reducing military expenditure--even if the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement is successfully concluded. We must maintain our defense potential. That is a necessary and good investment".[13] For its part the U.S. Department of Defense is without any reservations planning the constant buildup of the military budget. The latest report by U.S. Defense Secretary Harold Brown plans an increase in spending from \$116.8 billion in 1978 to \$172.7 billion in 1983.[14]

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As a rule, partial and temporary discrepancies and inequalities in individual elements making up the general equilibrium of military forces arise in the process of the arms race and the sides' military preparations. In themselves these discrepancies and inequalities may not represent serious military advantages for one side over the other and may not create a threat or military danger for other states and peoples. But insofar as there are forces which are not interested in international detente, these disproportions may be utilized by them in order to fuel international tension and to kindle crisis and conflicts. Advantages in the most important elements of armed forces while there is an overall equilibrium between the sides' forces maintained at a high level may create in the most aggressively minded groups in government circles the illusory certainty that they possess strategic superiority and may tempt them to utilize these advantages for their foreign policy aims. There are many examples of this use of partial strategic advantages. The most indicative of them are the intervention by the western powers and primarily the United States in Korea in 1950-1953, the American intervention in Indochina, the attempts by the United States and NATO to exert military pressure on the Soviet Union and other countries of the world and, finally, the Israeli armed forces' acts of sabotage against Uganda and Lebanon and the acts of military sabotage by the Rhodesian racist regime's army against neighboring states. It is also appropriate to recall the fact that Hitlerite Germany unleashed World War II in the expectation that its advantages in tank forces and aviation and also the political contradictions between its enemies would guarantee it military victory despite the fact that it not only had no overall military superiority over them but was considerably inferior to their combined strength.

With a view to fueling international tension the western countries make wide use of the vagueness of the concept of "equilibrium" or "balance of forces"--something which creates a certain freedom not only of interpretation but also of practical actions for the foreign policy utilization of military force. For instance, relative equality now exists in Europe between the military forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The socialist community countries are proposing to the western states that this be accepted as the starting point for the elaboration of an agreement and the adoption of specific measures to reduce armed forces and armaments and to decrease the level of military confrontation between the sides in central Europe.

The representatives of the NATO countries deny the existence of this equality of forces in central Europe. Judging by certain of their remarks, the western states would be suited by an "equilibrium of forces" in this region which ruled out the possibility of the socialist community states influencing international events outside their own borders. In their proposals at the talks on reducing armed forces and armaments in central Europe they proceed from the principle which they have formulated of an asymmetrical or unequal reduction in the sides' forces. Acceptance of these proposals by the socialist states would be equivalent to acknowledging the right of the NATO western powers to have substantial military advantages in Europe. Judging by western press commentaries, the western powers'



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representatives at the talks in Vienna are utilizing as justification for their position data on differences between the structures of the sides' armed forces and the numerical strength of certain branches of them. But here they disregard the overall strategic correlation between the sides forces which incorporates all the component parts of the armed forces-- ground forces, air forces, strategic and tactical nuclear forces and others. Another fact which is disregarded is that the present equilibrium between military forces in Europe took shape in the process of protracted military competition between the sides in which one side's advantages in a particular branch of the armed forces have been counterbalanced by the other side with advantages in other branches of the armed forces and armaments.

The constant repetitions by the western countries' mass media of the thesis of the Warsaw Pact's supposed "superiority" of strength over NATO are utilized to justify the constant buildup of NATO's armed forces and military potential and the western states' position at the Vienna talks and are also aimed at convincing the western public of the existence of a military "threat from the East." This propaganda contributes to maintaining in the western country mistrust of the socialist states and to maintaining in Europe and throughout the world an atmosphere favorable to the "position-of-strength" policy.

International detente cannot fail to exert a substantial influence on the potential for and forms of states' foreign policy utilization of military force. Governments or statesmen are free to recognize it or not, to use the term "detente" or not and to attach their own meaning to it or not, but they are forced to reckon with the situation reflected by the term.

In the last few years the opinion that under contemporary conditions world nuclear war would be so destructive and devastating that it loses all political point has become predominant. Recognition of the political irrationality of world nuclear war, however, does not mean--so long as there exist stockpiles of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles for them, special military organizations for their employment and political forces championing the buildup of strategic nuclear forces and their utilization as an instrument of foreign policy--that the danger of it is automatically eliminated.

The danger of world nuclear war which persists even under the conditions of international detente exerts a serious influence on every aspect of contemporary international relations. It has an impact on the foreign policy of all states and pressures the public of all the world's countries. It contributes to preserving the mutual mistrust between capitalist and socialist countries, fuels universal suspicion and maintains constant tension in the world. It is precisely these properties of the danger of world war which are intensively exploited by the western states and primarily the United States in the interests of their foreign policy. The ways in which it is utilized are extremely diverse. They cover the wide range from

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nuclear blackmail and the threat of nuclear attack to the dissemination of information about the development of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles--ballistic and cruise missiles and aircraft--discussions of possible ways of utilizing these weapons in a war and so forth.

International detente seriously restricts the possibility of rationally utilizing a regional conflict as an instrument of the "position-of-strength" policy. The failure of the American military intervention in Indochina is cogent confirmation of this. Touching on this question, U.S. President J. Carter said at a press conference 3 May 1977: "I believe that the sad experience which we have had in Vietnam has deeply and I hope forever proved to the American people the dangerousness of such cases where our country resorts to utilizing military means in some remote region of the earth under conditions where our own security is not threatened, with the exception of circumstances where this is connected with ratified treaties...as is the case, for instance, with Japan and NATO." It follows from this statement that it is still impossible to rule out the possibility of new military adventures by imperialism in Europe, Asia and other regions of the world. Nor are there any guarantees that local conflicts of the type of the Cyprus, Zaire and southern African conflicts will not arise. And although none of the conflicts of this kind has automatically developed into a large war, they have influenced and continue to influence international relations, complicating the development of the detente process.

However, it must be noted that under the conditions of the relative equilibrium between the military forces of states with different social systems and the anticolonialist and anti-imperialist activeness of the young, liberated African and Asian countries, the imperialist states have begun to display a more cautious approach to deciding the question of directly employing military force and military intervention against the socialist and developing countries. For instance, even such an extreme measure by the Arab states as the oil embargo did not evoke from the western powers their usual reaction in the past--a military incursion of "gunboat diplomacy." The imperialist powers' struggle for markets and sources of raw materials, particularly energy--a struggle which has exacerbated in the last few years under the influence of the economic crisis--is also conducted by the present chiefly by peaceful means and is only rarely accompanied by new military conflicts such as the conflict in Zaire, for instance. It may also be recalled that the U.S. Congress did not support the initiative by President Ford's administration to undertake armed intervention in Angola.

The conditions of international detente limit to a certain extent but do not rule out the possibility of the foreign policy utilization of military force to pressure the policy of other states in indirect ways--that is, in ways below the level of a threat to employ military forces. These include all types of military show of strength such as maneuvers, "showing the flag," the arms race, the reorganization and redeployment of armed forces,

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the publication of data about these actions, official information or the dissemination of rumors about the revision of strategic plans and about the elaboration and adoption of programs for the creation of new armaments, data about weapons tests and others. It is perfectly clear that the war danger connected with these possibilities of the foreign policy utilization of military forces also persists. International detente has also made its mark on the western powers' policy in the sphere of the arms race. During the cold war period their ruling circles usually openly proclaimed their desire to insure military superiority over the socialist countries and did not conceal their anger that they were unable to achieve the planned aim. Nowadays similar statements are usually made by the rightwing extreme conservative opposition. Taking into account the peoples' love of peace and the mass public protests at the arms race, military preparations and local wars, official circles make considerable efforts to conceal their intentions in this sphere. They continue the arms race while camouflaging it with statements that this is being done in the interests of preserving peace and insuring military equality with the socialist community countries, under the influence of scientific and technological progress and so forth.

Thus the relaxation of international tension has restricted the sphere of the use of and the freedom to use military force as the most effective instrument of foreign policy and is thereby contributing to the development of relations between states with different social systems on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence. But the fact that it has not yet been possible to lower the level of military confrontation between them and to eliminate the danger of war seriously restricts the potential for developing comprehensive cooperation between states and peoples and hampers the further development of the process of international detente.

**Military Detente is a Necessary Condition of Eliminating the Danger of War**

Military detente in its most general form constitutes part of the general process of alleviating international tension which is implemented by means of measures to lower the levels of military confrontation, primarily between states with different social systems, to eliminate military conflicts and to remove hotbeds of war danger in the world and individual regions. Under contemporary conditions where the process of international detente has made somewhat greater headway in the political sphere than it has in the military sphere and where the profound restructuring of international relations on the basis of the principles of peaceful coexistence has already begun, the questions of military detente assume particular topicality.

The common task of states and the peoples in the sphere of military detente boils down to insuring the creation of a system of relations among all states and primarily between states with different social systems which rules out the possibility of relying on the military resolution of the problems and disputes which exist or may spring up between them. The solution of the practical tasks of military detente is possibly through

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mainly political means along with the solution of the problems of general detente, but it is complicated by the necessity of political intrusion into a specific military sphere directly connected with the national security of states and peoples. In the correlation of the political and military aspects of the relaxation of international tension the political aspect certainly takes priority, but in view of the complexity and particular delicacy of the problems of military detente, the latter acquires a relative independence. For the same reasons it is impossible to solve the tasks of military detente by some kind of on-off action, even an extremely significant one. That requires tremendous efforts, persistence and patience, principledness and flexibility, understanding and optimum consideration of the interests of the coexisting states and their systems, no prejudice to their security, the comprehensive assessment of prospects and the observance of consistency.

The initiative in the struggle for general and military detente belongs entirely to the socialist community countries and the communist and workers parties. It is precisely they who have elaborated the fullest and most realistic action programs in this sphere and who are persistently seeking to implement them. The 25th CPSU Congress adopted a program of further struggle for peace and international cooperation which is a development and continuation of the peace program put forward by the 24th CPSU Congress. This program has been supported by the fraternal communist and workers parties of the socialist countries. By unanimously adopting a final document the conference of European Communist and Workers Parties (June 1976) gave the working class and the broad working people's masses a clear orientation which contributes to intensifying their struggle for the termination of the arms race, disarmament and the strengthening of peace and international security. The declarations adopted by the conferences of the Warsaw Pact States' Political Consultative Committee (November 1976 and November 1978) show the successes in the struggle for international detente and the obstacles standing in the way of its further development and outline specific actions according with the interests of all peoples. At the U.N. General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament (May 1978) the Soviet Union submitted proposals "on practical ways to end the arms race" which noted the results already achieved in this sphere and outline the specific problems whose solution may insure a resolute breakthrough in the struggle to end the arms race.[15]

The most important problems of military detente are eliminating the threat of world war, ending the arms race--primarily the nuclear missile arms race--and implementing disarmament. The Warsaw Pact states' declaration adopted 23 November 1978 points out: "A resolute shift in ending the arms race is possible. Every effort must be made to insure that it becomes a reality"[16]

The inclusion of the principle of the renunciation of force or the threat of force in the U.N. Charter and in the international documents signed by

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the socialist and capitalist states in the last decade, including the All-European Conference final act, is of extremely great importance for the adoption of measures for military detente in that it contributes to strengthening mutual trust among the states and opens up great potential for cooperation between them. But recognition alone is not enough to insure that the principle becomes an indisputable law of international life. It is also necessary to take serious practical measures to insure that the renunciation of the use of force or the threat of force forms the basis of the practice of interstate relations and to reduce still more the threat of world war. In this plane the Soviet proposal for the conclusion of a World Treaty on the Nonuse of Force in International Relations assumed exceptionally great importance. The conclusion of such a treaty would mean a transition from broad recognition of a principle to the adoption by all states of the world of a treaty commitment not to use force and to resolve disputes among themselves by peaceful means in such a way as not to threaten international peace and security. It would be an exceptionally major action bringing the world nearer to a state in which it would be possible to finally eradicate war and aggression.

The elimination of the danger of nuclear war demands the adoption of a number of special measures which would include, along with commitments to refrain from employing nuclear weapons and from using them as a threat, specific actions to end production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reduce stockpiles of them until they have been totally eliminated, to totally ban tests of them, to end the development and production of all other types of weapons of mass destruction and also to end the creation of conventional armaments of great destructive power.

It is also necessary to strengthen the regime of the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons under conditions whereby all states have access without any discrimination to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under effective international control and in accordance with international atomic energy agency standards. In addition, it is necessary to implement measures such as withdrawing nuclear armaments from the territory of foreign states and creating nuclear free zones.

The Soviet Union's statement that "it will never use nuclear weapons against states which renounce the production and acquisition of nuclear weapons and do not have nuclear weapons on their territory" and also its expression of readiness to conclude special agreements with any of these nonnuclear states are of exceptionally great importance for strengthening the regime of the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

In the final analysis the destruction of stockpiles of all types of nuclear weapons, the outlawing of them and the ending of production of them would be a reliable guarantee against the unleashing of nuclear war and would totally eliminate the danger of it. But on the road toward this supreme result great importance attaches to the successful conclusion of the

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Soviet-American Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. The immediate aim of these talks is to prevent the opening of a new channel of the strategic arms race--something which would nullify the limitations already achieved in the sphere of this race. A second important task is to prevent the development, start of production and deployment of a new type of nuclear weapons--neutron weapons.

Guided by their desire to take another effective step to eliminate the threat of nuclear war the Warsaw Pact states propose to all the states which signed the final act that they conclude a treaty on not being the first to use nuclear weapons against one another. Moreover, the question of convening a conference of the nuclear powers--the USSR, United States, PRC, France and Britain--is acquiring increasing international topicality.

The tendency toward relative stability in the strategic or military equilibrium of the sides' forces--a tendency which has been revealed in the process of the military competition between the states of the two world systems--can be regarded as a serious precondition for the mutual stabilization of the established equilibrium of forces in the most important areas of the world and primarily in Europe and for the adoption of measures to reduce its level. Agreement between the East and West European states to freeze the balance of military forces in Europe at the present level would be a most important condition of consolidating the success of the incipient turn away from military confrontation toward the policy of resolving international disputes through negotiation and an important step toward creating a security system in that region on a collective basis.

The problem of reducing armed forces and armaments in central Europe--that is, the problem of reducing military tension in an area where it is particularly great and where the confrontation between the armed forces of the two military-political alliances is particularly dangerous--occupies a central place in military detente. Talks about this have been going on in Vienna for almost 5 years now and the number of plenary sessions is inexorably nearing 200, while the number of unofficial meetings between the participants is incalculable; nevertheless, there are still no practical results. The reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe is connected with the solution of questions such as the reduction of national armed forces, the withdrawal of foreign troops and armaments from other countries' territory and the disbandment of the withdrawn units, the elimination of foreign military bases, the renunciation of any show of strength, the elaboration of measures preventing the accidental occurrence of incidents and preventing them from developing into military crises and the reduction of all countries' military budgets.

The proposals which the socialist countries--the USSR, GDR, Poland and the CSSR--submitted 8 June 1978 are another substantial contribution by them to the struggle for international detente. Their acceptance by the western powers would result in a lowering of the level of military confrontation in central Europe and at the same time the preservation of the

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established proportions between the national armed forces and the overall equilibrium of NATO and Warsaw Pact forces.

The interests of further normalizing international relations and the interests of military detente require that the division of the world into opposing military blocs be overcome. The Warsaw Pact states have repeatedly put forward a proposal for the simultaneous disbandment of the North Atlantic and Warsaw Pact organizations or, as a preliminary step, for the elimination of their military organizations. At the same time they urge all states not to take any action which might result in the expansion of existing or the creation of new military-political groupings.

These measures would make it possible gradually to restrict and then to reduce the material base of the confrontation which now exists and also to eliminate the situation of war danger in the world. Their successful implementation would bring the world nearer to general and complete disarmament which, as is widely recognized, could radically resolve the problem of peace and international security.

In the contemporary era which is characterized by alternative trends such as the further development of the detente process and the intensification of the danger of war, the implementation of measures of military detente is a necessary condition of mankind's social, material and scientific and technical progress and of insuring the sovereign rights of the peoples and states. In their 23 November declaration the Warsaw Pact states stated that there is no type of armaments which they "would not be prepared to restrict or reduce on the basis of strict observance of the principle of not prejudicing the security of any country". [17]

FOOTNOTES

1. L. T. Brezhnev, "Along Lenin's Course", Vol 6 Moscow 1978 p 376.
2. See A. I. Sobolev, "Problems of the World Revolutionary Process," RABOCHIY KLASS I SOVREMENNY MIR No 6, 1977 pp 12-13.
3. CPSU Program, Moscow 1961 p 59.
4. For instance, the 1969 International Conference of Communist and Workers Parties unanimously expressed the opinion that "the defense of peace is inextricably linked with the struggle to impose on the imperialists peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems, which requires observance of the principles of sovereignty, equality, the territorial inviolability of every state, big or small, noninterference in other countries' internal affairs, respect for the right of all peoples freely to choose their socio-economic and political system and the settlement of unresolved international issues by political means, through talks" (the International Conference of Communist and Workers Parties, Moscow 1969, Prague 1969 p 33).

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5. Issues of National Security in the 1970s. Edited by Col Amos A. Jordan Jr., New York 1967 p 36.
6. U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings. March 1969 p 61.
7. U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, 5 March 1976 p 27.
8. V. I. Lenin, "Complete Collected Works," Vol 27 p 417.
9. Department of Defense, Annual Report. By 1979, Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense, 2 February 1978 p 22.
10. Op. cit., p 32.
11. Conference of European Communist and Workers Parties. Berlin 29-30 June 1976. Moscow 1977 p 16.
12. PRAVDA, 4 May 1978.
13. BUSINESS WEEK 21 August 1978.
14. In Comparable Prices, Department of Defense, Annual Report. Fiscal Year 1979, Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense, 2 February 1978 p 12.
15. PRAVDA, 31 May 1978.
16. PRAVDA, 24 November 1978.
17. PRAVDA, 24 November 1978.

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INTERNATIONAL

MEDVEDEV INTERVIEW ON SOVIET-CHINESE RELATIONS

Turin LA STAMPA in Italian 27 Dec 78 p 1

[Interview with Roy Medvedev by Livio Zanotti: "The Russians Have Ancient Feelings for China (from Love to Hate) but They Do not Know It"]

[Text] Moscow. Roy Medvedev has followed Chinese affairs for years. He explains, "[I started] immediately at the university when our relations with Peking were still good." Before he was converted into an historian, now the most eminent of the "dissenters" to explore the USSR planet, he was a pedagog and party activist. He knows the Russian people, their soul, better than others. That is why I ask him what feelings he believes the Russian people have today toward the neighboring, but different, protagonists of the other "real socialism," the Chinese.

[Answer] You know the man in the street is a statistical image. And I have never carried out, nor do I know of, demoscopic studies conducted by others on this subject.

[Question] But you are a careful observer....

[Answer] This is true. But the Russians' attitude regarding the Chinese has changed several times over the past 100 years. This is also true of the Japanese. At the beginning of the Century, we did not understand their culture, their great traditions. Czarism saw China merely as a land of conquest. In 1900 it occupied part of Manchuria and Korea, in competition with Japanese expansionism. The Czar went to war against them, convinced they would gain an easy victory. Instead, Russia was defeated.

[Question] What was the effect of the defeat on the population?

[Answer] The monster of the "yellow peril" was born then. It had the face of all Eastern peoples. After 1917, instead, the Bolsheviks sympathized with Sun Yat-sen and many Russians considered China a potential ally in the world revolution. Among other things, this was the thesis of the Comintern. Still in the 1930's, the Kuomintang as well as the communists were presented as friends of the Soviets.

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[Question] But how was this propaganda received by the man in the street?

[Answer] I recall, when I was a child, that I learned a poem in school: It told the story of a hungry shark, Japan, and of a peaceful whale, China, which was majestic but weak. My schoolmate cried over its fate, bloody, dismembered.

[Question] Didn't you know anything about the difference between the Third Internationale and Mao Tse-tung?

[Answer] Absolutely nothing. On the level of the people, no one knew about Stalin's concern about Mao's triumphs and still less about those of the Chinese leader about the Soviet pressures.

[Question] When did the feelings of the people begin to change?

[Answer] Between 1954 and 1959, be it as it may, the USSR gave China considerable help. The people, however, were perplexed about the necessary sacrifices. Life was already very harsh, and further sacrifices were demanded in the name of solidarity with China. The simple people did not understand. At that time I was a propagandist in a CPSU area committee and I often made speeches about China. The students were enthusiastic, but the workers and the farmers asked me questions which indicated their dissatisfaction. They would have preferred to eat a little better, rather than also suffer for the Chinese. A few years later, sympathy had decreased even among the students. At the Youth Festival in 1957, the Africans were given warmer receptions than the Chinese.

[Question] But hadn't the regime yet revealed the conflicts that opposed it to Communist China even to members of the party?

[Answer] No, they did it in the early 1960's. The press began to report existing ideological differences. But the times were different than when the rupture with Yugoslavia took place. There could be no talk of anti-Chinese furor. The rupture seemed evident and deep to everyone only at the time of the "Cultural Revolution." Khrushchev's decision to blow up all or almost all the fortifications along the frontier in sign of friendship went for naught. The people, who perhaps had not even agreed with that action, became very distrustful. And with the first bloody incidents in 1969, that distrust became hostility.

[Question] What do the Russians know about China, what do they know about the Chinese: Only what they learned through propaganda?

[Answer] Certainly, there is the propaganda that has considerable influence and generates negative feelings. But not only that of the state, but also the propaganda of a certain nationalism: Solzhenitsyn very effectively expressed this fear of Chinese expansionism and probably in time

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made proselytes. Then, many youths who did military service on the Chinese frontier returned to their families and talked about the army that is on the other side.

[Question] Then, there is no sympathy for the Chinese in the USSR?

[Answer] It seems significant to me that the Radio Peking transmissions directed to our country are not jammed. Our leaders know that no one listens to them, contrary to the experience with Western broadcasts. The programs carry primitive propaganda, and, aside from any other consideration, they are ineffective. I know only one case of a dissident who wanted to go to China. He was a Kharkov worker, a communist. He succeeded in getting into the Chinese Embassy here in Moscow. I want to go to China; you fight the bureaucrats and build socialism, he said. They threw him out. And the Soviet authorities did nothing to him, showing how unconcerned they are.

[Question] For once, then, Soviet propaganda achieves unanimity?

[Answer] It is not this. There is lack of credibility also regarding the regime's propaganda concerning China. In fact, the Russians know very little about the Chinese reality; their judgments are often more emotional than rational. The average Soviet citizen imagines two kinds of Chinese: the fanatic Maoist, capable of anything, and all the others, who make the Russians ask how they can be so patient. Thus with the former obsessed, the latter submissive, when the order comes to attack the USSR, no one will draw back.

[Question] And who do the Russians think would win the war?

[Answer] A very bitter story says: Our regime is powerful but if we were to be invaded by a billion Chinese how could they build enough concentration camps to hold them all?

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NATIONAL

ROY MEDVEDEV CHARGES DISTORTION OF HIS POSITION

Turin LA STAMPA in Italian 26 Jan 79 p 3 LD

[Open letter from dissident Soviet historian Roy Medvedev: "I, The Dissident in the USSR Today"]

[Text] Dear editor, some weeks ago the American magazine NEWSWEEK published a distorted version of my article "Khrushchev in Retirement," written 2 months previously for LA STAMPA. However, not only does NEWSWEEK fail to make any reference to your paper, but it claims to have come into possession of an unpublished SAMIZDAT document, circulating clandestinely in Moscow. In the editorial comment it adds, moreover, that the article was written on the basis of conversations with members of Khrushchev's family. Those were not my sources: I am not acquainted with the Khrushchev family.

My relations with foreign correspondents in Moscow are in general good. However, it often happens to many journalists that they "forget." This also happens with certain Western editors. I have just received from France a few copies of my book, "The October Revolution." The flyleaf states that the author was held in a psychiatric hospital for 2 years as a punishment for his dissident activity and that his first work, "Stalinism," appeared thanks to material in the Kremlin's secret archives. Unfortunately I do not have access to the Kremlin and it was my brother, Zhores, subsequently deprived of his Soviet citizenship and now living in exile in London, who was held in an asylum.

In 1972 an editor of the American edition of "Stalinism" went one better: He said that I managed to write it thanks to the influence which I enjoy through "two or three" Politburo members." It is a pity that he did not name them. I would have approached them immediately, seeing as it was precisely on account of that book that I was expelled from the party, in which I was told by everyone that I was totally alien to the CPSU line.

Whom do I represent in my country? I am often asked this question by fellow countrymen and foreigners, sometimes politely and sometimes not.

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Solzhenitsyn has said a number of times that I am the spokesman for a small group of old Bolsheviks. He is partly correct. When I started to work in the social sciences it was a group of party veterans who liked to call themselves "old Bolsheviks" who acquainted me with their recollections and their records. There are few of them left now. Later I was helped by literary and scientific intellectuals who do not think in the same way as that Russian emigre, who wrote: "Our government is mediocre, like the people. The majority of people do not need anything. Television, vodka, a few diversions and they are happy. They do not need any democratization" [NOVOYE RUSSKOYE SLOVO 15-18 May 1974].

Even someone like Aleksandr Tvardovskiy was of a different opinion. And although some militant dissidents both at home and in emigration accused him of opportunism in some cases, I am convinced that both as poet and as NOVYY MIR editor he did more for the development of social awareness in the Soviet Union than several Grigorenkos. This does not imply denying that our intellectuals have any faults, but recognizing that only the best of them can extricate the country from its cultural and economic stagnation.

Some party leaders assigned to ideological problems have been insisting with particular determination for some time that an end be put to my activity, which is allegedly destroying the image of "developed socialism" created by propaganda. But I do not believe that there is any real "model" in our country.

That is not enough for Solzhenitsyn, however: He is indignant that Roy Medvedev defends the very idea of socialism, because, according to him and his old friend A. Shafaryevich, there are no acceptable "models" and nor can there be a socialism "with a human face." Solzhenitsyn, who shows that he has the same idea of the term "dissident" as he does of the titles "Artist of the Soviet people" or "Hero of Socialist Labor," believes that I run no personal risks. The poet Naum Korzhavin does not agree, insofar as he writes that, through my claim to be a more socialist socialist than the regime, I am automatically aspiring to take its place.

I do not know whom of the two to heed: Until 1975 I was persecuted with threats of arrest and other methods, charges were laid against me, people came to question me, I was summoned to KGB and prosecuting attorney interrogations. Then the repression diminished, but was stepped up again last year. As a result Solzhenitsyn does not criticize me any more. Now he attacks the Western system of life, its "unlimited" freedoms, with greater aggressiveness than Soviet propaganda. Thus he has become a double dissident, both Soviet and American.

Some dissidents consider me immoral. Indeed, during the sixties I did criticize historian Petr Yakir and former general Grigorenko; I also publicly expressed my disagreement with certain articles by Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn. Even the regime regards me as immoral, inasmuch as I have criticized not only Stalin and Khrushchev but also sometimes Lenin and Brezhnev.

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In general dissidents believe that they cannot be criticized because they are under pressure from the regime. But the regime also believes that it in turn cannot be criticized, because it is under pressure from imperialism. In both cases, whoever fails to follow their logic is in fact colluding with the enemy: In the dissidents' case, the regime and in the regime's case, the dissidents.

Among the People

Obviously under such conditions it is difficult to retain one's independence of assessment and judgment.

On my military document I am registered with the rank of senior lieutenant [tenente maggiore] in the reserves. But for some reason some dissidents or semidissidents say that I am at least a KGB colonel. On the birthday of the author: N. some Leningrad writers and scientists took me to a quiet house. Then they asked me to talk to top KGB chief Yuriy Andropov to obtain better prison treatment for their friends M. Maramzin and M. (Jeyfits) [name as published--FBIS]. In exchange they undertook not to raise any protest about the case. I replied that I had never met with Andropov in my life and that it should have been clear to anyone that I would not have the slightest chance of submitting any petition to him, they did not believe me. Immediately after this conversation (Jeyfits) received a tough sentence, Maramzin was released on probation and went to France, where he edits a new emigree magazine, ECO [name as published--FBIS]. I think Maramzin is fully aware that he never needed my protection.

A not inconsiderable number of misunderstandings stem precisely from the casual nature of certain reporting. I have a very common Russian surname: In Italian I would be called Orsi [Bears--FBIS]. My Christian name, on the other hand, is rather unusual. But if articles appear in the press signed just with the surname Medvedev they can be wrongly attributed. I have just been told that Polish dissidents were filled with indignation when they heard an article by "Medvedev," which approved of the Warsaw Pact troops' invasion of Czechoslovakia, broadcast by Radio Free Europe. Obviously the article was not by me. As later became clear, it was written by a NOVOSTI editor with the same surname as I. I could mention several similar cases.

I decided to devote my life to social sciences and politics when I was 16 and I have never changed my mind. I qualified for university teaching in philosophy, but I worked for a long time as an elementary school teacher and headmaster. This made it possible for me to come to know people close to.

Now, just as when I was not a dissident, I receive visits from many people. I am pleased when I can offer them some help or advice, albeit limited to my small resources. Despite this, some people arrive with strange ideas of what I can do.

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An engineer from Odessa asked me to help him regain title over two important shipbuilding patents. A geologist did the same. They prompted me to study unpublished theories on schizophrenia. I had to confess my impotence and ignorance with respect to such problems.

A young lady teacher from Vologda asked me to introduce her to a foreigner so she could marry him and thus go abroad with him. She wants to go to the West without, however, resorting to marrying a Jew, as her sister did. Unfortunately, all the foreigners I know are already married and I would not like to jeopardize their family unity.

On her departure for the United States an elderly lady asked me to accompany her in search of furs and jewels to take away with her. She had large quantities of Soviet cash available and knew that rubles are worthless in the United States. It took me some time to make her understand that I know nothing about commerce.

A leading scientist suggested to me one day that I organize a clandestine printing works. He said that the necessary materials were already available in his institute. All that was missing were the manuscripts for printing. I rejected his proposal. I also rejected a proposal from three officials of the NKVD, the political police of the Stalin period, then retired. They offered to print thousands of copies of my Samizdat writings, to be distributed throughout Moscow via paper bombs [bombe-carta] installed on the roofs of central buildings. They left as disappointed as the two fellows who sought my cooperation in kidnaping the secretary of the local party committee and to secure in exchange for his release the release of several jailed dissidents.

The Soviet Union is big and complex. And it can create special problems for one such as myself, apart from the expected problems.

Some years ago a fairly famous poet called Naum Korzhavin emigrated from the USSR. In general, we liked his poems. While still in his homeland Korzhavin underwent a complex political evolution. He himself recounted how he would consult with the NKVD. Then, still in Stalin's lifetime, he wrote an anti-Stalinist poem and ended up in exile. As soon as he was rehabilitated the poet did not restrict himself to backing the resolutions of the 20th and 22d CPSU Congresses: He also tried to reassess our past and his own personal past. The only book of his poetry published officially in Moscow included one called "Commissars of the Twenties." It was a romantic image of the Bolshevik commissars of the twenties, who "descended into the shadow of the thirties."

"The commissars of the twenties: /I remember them from the thirties./  
You guided me, you people of steel, you repelled every evil...."

They are modest verses, but for me they had a personal value. My father was one of those commissars. At the end of the twenties he held the rank of regimental commissar. In 1938 he was arrested; he died in a Kolyma concentration camp.

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The Revolution

Now Korzhavin is no longer a romantic. In the article "Roy Medvedev's pluralism" he mocks the "Commissar Origins" of Roy Medvedev, "whose father, like his friends, gaily pushed Russia into the abyss" in 1917 [NOVOYE RUSSKOYE SLOVO 2 April 1976].

I would like to make a small observation. In 1917 my father was not a commissar: He was a starving orphan in the city of Astrakhan. The following year he did not go to serve in the army for a "commissar's fat allowance" but out of a feeling of justice and solidarity with poor people. My mother comes from a Jewish family with several children and has never lived in Russia, but in Georgia. I have reason to believe that even Korzhavin knows what little reason the Jews had for sympathizing with Russian tsarism.

History knows many changes. There were also commanders and commissars, sons of poor peasants, who set themselves at the head of armed detachments to prevent the starved peasants from reaching the railroad stations. That was in 1932-1933. My father was not one of them. And I never had the time to ask him what he thought and knew of those tragic events.

I am called a Marxist, Bolshevik, Leninist, Jeffersonian and Khrushchevian. Without special qualifications, I would only accept the first definition. I regard it as natural for a personification of scientific, ideological and ethnical trends to take place in the first instance. That shows the acknowledgement of the merits of a founder of a way of thinking. But it cannot be eternal. The ideas which bear the name of whoever expressed them first become a religion or a dogmatic code of moral rules. Scientific trends must not become new sciences, which must not necessarily take this or that name. Therefore I describe myself as simply a socialist. Nor do I intend to discuss here and now how I view socialism.

But no historian, no Western politician can ignore the complex history of the Russian revolution. It is an experience which must be understood and not merely rejected, if we really have the West's future at heart.

I think you and I send you my best regards.

[Signed] Roy Medvedev.

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