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USSR Monthly Review

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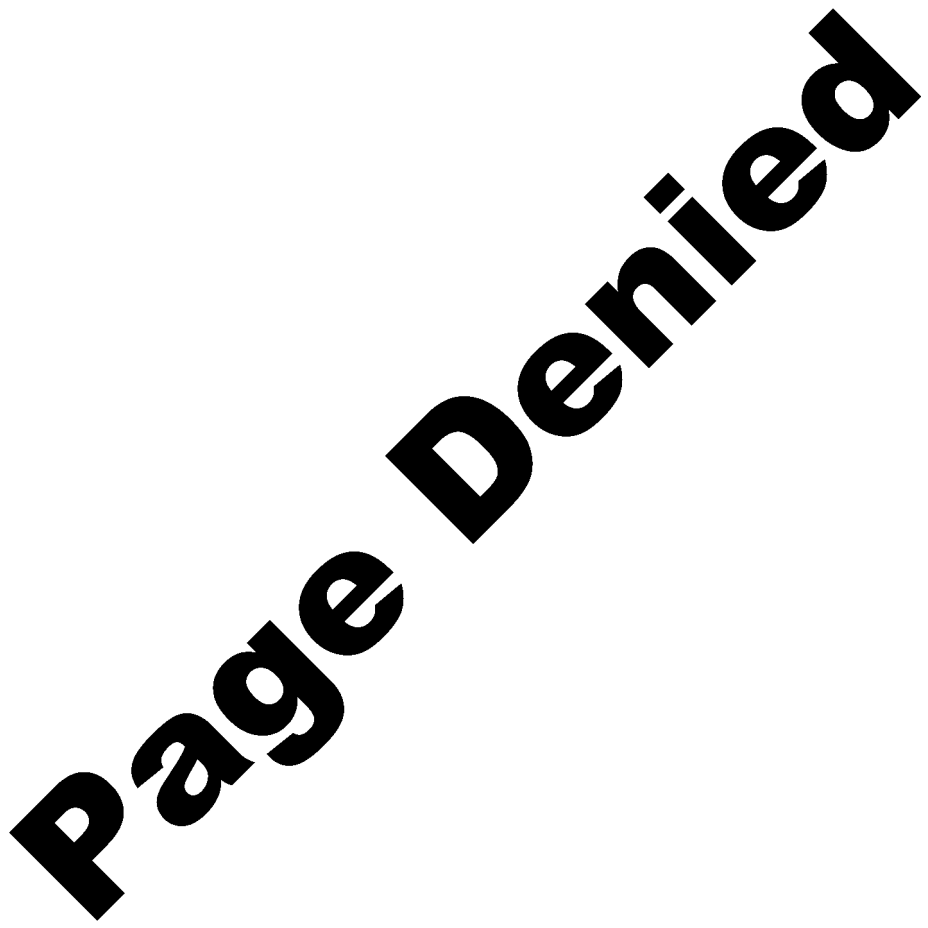

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The *USSR Monthly Review* is published by the Office of Soviet Analysis. Comments and queries regarding the articles are welcome. They may be directed to the authors, whose names are listed in the table of contents.

25X1

Secret
SOV UR 82-010X
November 1982

25X1

Contents

25X1

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25X1

Soviet Influence and Pressure in the Third World

Perspective: Soviet Influence in the Third World—Instruments, Opportunities, and Tactics

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During the Brezhnev era, the USSR supplemented its traditional instruments of influence in the Third World with new capabilities and became more flexible in its choice of tactics and targets. Although more willing to become involved in Third World conflicts than its immediate predecessor, the collective leadership under Brezhnev was more careful in the conduct of foreign policy. In contrast to Khrushchev's behavior, the Brezhnev leadership expanded Soviet influence in the Third World while avoiding situations that posed a high risk of superpower confrontation.

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Arms sales and associated training and advisory packages are the longest standing instruments of Soviet policy in the Third World and continue to be the USSR's major means of influence. At present there are more than 16,000 Soviet military advisers and technicians in Third World countries, primarily in support of Soviet arms sales. As discussed in the article on Soviet-Syrian relations, the USSR is trying to use weapons deliveries to Syria to counter the Arab tilt away from Moscow.

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Moscow's longstanding emphasis on arms sales as an instrument for entree in the Third World has been supplemented by the acquisition of a limited capability to project military power to distant areas:

- Major naval surface combatants increased in number from 184 in 1965 to 270 in 1982.
- Amphibious ships capable of distant-area deployment increased from 14 in 1965 to 80 in 1982.
- Military Transport Aviation aircraft capable of long-range flights increased from five in 1970 to 230 in 1982.

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The Soviets also acquired a sizable naval presence in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, as well as small naval groups off West Africa and in the South China Sea (see article on Soviet naval deployments outside home waters). They currently have limited access to port facilities in all of these

Secret
SOV UR 82-010X
November 1982

25X1

areas, as well as in Cuba.

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Nonetheless, as discussed in the article on Soviet military intervention beyond Eurasia, there continue to be major limitations on Moscow's capability to conduct military operations far from its borders in the face of effective local opposition. Present-day constraints include an inability to provide tactical air support in distant theaters, limited naval gunpower, and the lack of a network of foreign bases from which to mount distant operations.

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Moscow has also enhanced its potential for influence in the Third World by the use of proxies and other intermediaries. The proxy relationship minimizes the level of direct Soviet involvement while achieving Soviet aims and projecting an image of "socialist solidarity" with Third World regimes. This relationship applies most directly to the situations in Angola and Ethiopia, where Soviet penetration is linked to local conflict. In both of these countries, the USSR supplies most of the weapons, material, and logistic support for the Cuban combat forces.

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The revolutionary or destabilizing propensities of countries such as Cuba and Libya also afford Moscow opportunities to further its objectives in the Third World. As the article on Soviet activity in the Caribbean illustrates, Moscow has maintained a low profile in the US "backyard" while promoting leftist change through its support of Cuba. Castro's revolutionary ambitions in the region ensure that Moscow will not miss opportunities to further its influence with leftist groups who seek to establish new regimes in Latin America. The USSR's growing interest in the Caribbean and Central America suggests that Moscow may view this region as offering the best prospects for new Soviet successes in the Third World today.

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Soviet policy in the Third World also has reflected a skillful opportunism. The Brezhnev leadership carefully selected those "exploitable" opportunities that emerged in distant Third World settings. In the case of Angola and Ethiopia—the most dramatic of Moscow's Third World interventions—the USSR was fairly confident of success and saw limited risk of confrontation with the United States. Moreover, the Soviet decision was facilitated by Cuba's willingness to bear the bulk of the "human" burden associated with military intervention.

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The Soviet-Syrian Relationship After Lebanon

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Moscow and Damascus need each other more than ever. The ineffectiveness of the Soviets' response to Israel's invasion of Lebanon and thorough thrashing of Syrian forces in the Bekaa Valley severely strained relations between the USSR and Syria. The realization by both, however, that their political and military reversals had increased the importance of their relationship quickly spurred efforts that eased the strain. Primary among these efforts has been Moscow's response to Syria's acute need for a more effective air defense network. The new equipment and the greater involvement of Soviet advisers and technicians increase both Moscow's stake in the survival of President Assad's regime and the risk that Soviet personnel could become directly involved in future clashes between Israel and Syria.

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Background

In the Middle East, out of necessity rather than design, the Soviets have gradually put most of their eggs in the Syrian basket. Before Assad's seizure of power in 1970, the Kremlin's support of the chronically unstable regimes in Damascus was relatively limited; Syria was isolated in the region, and Egypt played the central role in Soviet strategy. President Sadat's expulsion of Soviet military advisers in 1972 forced the USSR to give more emphasis to developing Syria as a reliable partner. Cairo's turn toward the United States after the 1973 war, its abrogation of the friendship and cooperation treaty with Moscow in 1976, and its signing of the Camp David Accords in 1979 accelerated the Soviet-Syrian cooperation. During this period (1973-79), Damascus received nearly $6 billion worth of arms from the USSR and became the second-leading recipient—after Libya—of Soviet weapons in the Middle East. The upswing in the relationship was exemplified by the signing in October 1980 of a treaty of friendship and cooperation, long sought by Moscow.

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Despite the improved ties, important differences remained. Unlike some Third World regimes that have developed close relations with the USSR, the Syrian Ba'th Party and Assad do not have an ideological affinity with Moscow. Assad was careful to keep the Soviets in Syria on a short leash. He only reluctantly granted port calls to Soviet ships, and he opposed a major increase in the number of Soviet military advisers. Moscow—as is its practice with most Third World countries—withheld its most advanced air and ground equipment. The two nations' most significant disagreement arose when Syria intervened in the Lebanese civil war in 1976 despite the Kremlin's strong objection. Events in Lebanon this year again caused serious differences between Moscow and Damascus but also served, ironically, to bind the two even closer together.

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The Israeli Invasion and Moscow's Response

The Syrians were shaken by the rapid Israeli advance on Beirut and especially by the Israeli Air Force's total dominance of the air over Lebanon. The seeming ease with which the Israelis destroyed the Syrian surface-to-air missile sites in Lebanon and along the Lebanese-Syrian border and downed almost 90 Syrian MIGs with only one loss of their own caused Damascus to question the worth of its Soviet weaponry.

The Soviets privately blamed the Syrians' poor showing on the operators of the weapons rather than on the weapons themselves. Moreover, the Kremlin continued to refuse to consider itself bound to protect the Syrian presence in Lebanon. Although after 1976 the Soviets toned down their opposition to the Syrian occupation and in 1981 even tacitly recognized its legitimacy (during the crisis over Syria's introduction

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of SAMs into the Bekaa Valley), they made it clear to Damascus that Soviet "commitments" to assist it did not extend to the Syrian forces in Lebanon.

Moscow's support for Syria during this summer's crisis was limited to unimaginative diplomatic and propaganda backing, a relatively modest resupply of military equipment, a slight augmentation of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron, and naval patrols along the Syrian and Lebanese coasts. None of these actions affected the outcome of the crisis. In addition, the Kremlin highlighted its irrelevance with an ill-considered policy toward the evacuation of PLO and Syrian forces from West Beirut. It engaged the late President Brezhnev's prestige in warning Washington against introducing US troops into Beirut—and then had to sit by impotently as all sides, including the Syrians, accepted those forces.

The Soviet connection thus proved to be of questionable worth to Syria in a time of great need. Nevertheless, the Assad regime did not begin looking elsewhere for arms—partly because it recognized that it had nowhere else to turn for large amounts of military equipment, and partly because Moscow began to take steps to remedy Syria's most glaring military weaknesses.

Repairing the Damage

Shortly after the clashes between Syrian and Israeli forces on 9-11 June, the Soviets began to send high-level military officials to Damascus. In addition to determining how the SAMs and MIGs were destroyed with such seeming ease and trying to mollify Syrian grievances over the performance of Soviet weapons, they presumably began mapping out a strategy to meet Syria's military needs.

Some of this equipment began arriving in late July, around the time of the visit of the Chief of the Soviet General Staff, Marshal Ogarkov—the highest level Soviet defense official to visit Damascus since 1975.

While they are training the Syrians, Soviet personnel operating the new equipment will be in a more exposed position than ever before in Syria. Although there is no evidence that the Soviets manning these air defense systems will be with Syrian forces in Lebanon, their presence at SAM sites even on the Syrian side of the border will increase the likelihood of their being involved in hostilities if future Israeli airstrikes spill over the border. The scale of the Soviet presence—now some 3,300 to 3,500 personnel—is still far short of that in Egypt in 1970-72, when Moscow sent complete SAM units and fighter brigades totaling 15,000 men. But the Kremlin has increased its stakes in Syria, and this in turn might constitute a compelling reason to provide more decisive aid to Damascus in future crises.

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Continuing Limitations

Despite this effort to strengthen the Syrian air defense network, there have been no reliable indicators that the Soviets plan to introduce their own combat units into Syria, and we believe the Kremlin would be loath to do so. Similarly, Moscow remains unwilling to sign any commitment to come to Syria's defense.

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Shortly after the United States and Israel announced their intention last fall to conclude a "strategic cooperation" agreement, the Syrians began to speak publicly about the need to balance this with a similar agreement between Moscow and Damascus. Foreign Minister Khaddam made such a statement before his

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visit to the USSR in January 1982 but failed to win over the Soviets. The Syrians, nonetheless, continued to call for a "strategic alliance."

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The USSR's behavior during the Lebanese crisis demonstrated its reluctance to risk a military confrontation with Israel or the United States for the sake of either the PLO or the Syrian presence in Lebanon. This does not necessarily mean that it will avoid such risks in any future crisis if the stakes are greater. But Moscow's primary concern is still to maintain its freedom of action and ability to decide on its own—unfettered by formal commitments—when and where to make a stand.

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The Assad regime also has reason to impose limits on its military relationship with the USSR, despite its desire for a formal commitment from Moscow:

- The Soviet presence has never been popular in Syria. During 1980-81 about 20 Soviets were assassinated, presumably by the Muslim Brotherhood. There also are some within the ruling Ba'ath party and probably—since Lebanon—some among the military who oppose closer ties with Moscow.

- Damascus has to be careful not to alienate Saudi Arabia, its primary source of financial assistance.

- Assad still seems reluctant to allow the USSR to enlarge its naval support, independent intelligence gathering, or communications facilities on Syrian territory. The Soviets would probably demand such concessions in return for any agreement that increased their commitment—even symbolically—to the Assad regime.

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Potential Problem Areas

Although Israel's invasion of Lebanon has driven the Soviets and Syrians closer together, at least temporarily, there are a number of issues that could lead to new frictions in their longer term relationship.

Lebanon. Moscow's recent substantial military assistance to the Syrians does not necessarily mean that it wants them to hold fast in the Bekaa Valley. It recognizes the vulnerability of the Syrians' position there, and an Israeli move to oust them would again pose unwelcome choices for Moscow:

- The Soviets would be hesitant to provide military aid to shore up a Syrian forward deployment that they regard as militarily untenable.

- However, another failure to come to Syria's aid while it battled Israeli forces would threaten the foundations of the Soviet-Syrian relationship and further undercut the USSR's greatly diminished credibility in the Middle East.

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Given these considerations, the Soviets probably would be compelled to assist Damascus despite their limited ability to affect the military situation in Lebanon. In addition to forceful diplomatic offensives against Israel and the United States, Moscow would take further steps to aid Syria militarily. Such assistance would be aimed not at saving the Syrian presence in Lebanon but at preserving the USSR's position in Syria. It would also warn Tel Aviv and Washington of the risk of Soviet involvement if the Israeli offensive were to cross into Syria.

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Negotiations to obtain the mutual withdrawal of Syrian and Israeli forces from Lebanon could also cause problems for Moscow. Although the Soviets for purely military reasons would probably prefer that Syria withdraw from the Bekaa, they are not likely to urge Assad to do so because a mutual withdrawal is

likely to occur only as a result of US mediation, which would leave the USSR on the sidelines. Moscow, in this case, would probably use its leverage with Damascus in an attempt to forestall a US-sponsored solution, but would have little choice other than to acquiesce if the Syrians decided to go along.

An Arab-Israeli Peace Settlement. The new fluidity in the peace process also raises the potential for disagreement between Moscow and Damascus. There are three major "peace plans" under discussion: the US (announced by President Reagan on 1 September), the Arab (agreed to at the Arab League summit in Fez, Morocco, 6-9 September), and the Soviet (repackaged by President Brezhnev in a speech on 15 September).

Syria was evidently the driving force behind the Fez Plan's call for UN Security Council guarantees of a settlement, which would enable the USSR to play a role. The Soviets, however, may be concerned that Syria's decision not to condemn the US initiative officially and its participation in the Arab League delegation that traveled to Washington in late October to discuss common points between this initiative and the Fez Plan reflect a readiness on the part of Damascus—despite its rhetoric—to accept a negotiating forum that would leave Moscow out. The Kremlin also must have been disappointed by Syria's lukewarm endorsement of Brezhnev's new peace proposal, which attempted to make the Soviet position more compatible with the Fez Plan.

The PLO. The defeat of the PLO in Lebanon and its dispersal throughout the Middle East has complicated the three-cornered relationship between the USSR, Syria, and the Palestinians. The Kremlin found it difficult in the past to balance its relationship with PLO leader Arafat and Assad so as not to affront either. It has sought to keep a direct link to Arafat and has opposed Syrian attempts to control the PLO. The current widening of the rift between Arafat and Assad could make the Soviet balancing act impossible to maintain. Thus, the Soviets will devote considerable effort to preventing a total break between Arafat and Assad.

Outlook

The lack of alternatives open to Moscow and Damascus suggests that their mutual dependence will grow. With the loss of the PLO's military arm, the erosion of PLO support for the USSR, and Moscow's continuing inability to capitalize on the war between Iran and Iraq, Syria is more than ever the most important Soviet foothold in the Middle East. The Israelis' advance in Lebanon along the western flank of Syria has increased its military vulnerability and, concomitantly, its need for Soviet military support. Assad, no matter how much he distrusts Moscow and wishes he had a benefactor more able to exert influence on the other powers in the region, apparently believes that the USSR is the only country that can provide Syria the military "parity" with Israel he considers necessary before any acceptable peace settlement can be reached.

The Soviets, by increasing their exposure in Syria through the provision of some of their most advanced conventional military equipment and the advisers to man it, probably have raised expectations in Damascus that in future Syrian-Israeli clashes they will respond more forcefully. This narrows the Kremlin's maneuvering room—the commodity it has always prized most in Middle Eastern crises. Failure to satisfy such rising Syrian expectations would lead to an even deeper strain in relations than occurred this summer over Lebanon.

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Soviet Activity in the Caribbean Basin

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Moscow has reason to be satisfied with its efforts in the Caribbean Basin. In a short time and with modest economic cost, the USSR has gained a foothold in Nicaragua and Grenada and complicated Washington's relations with its hemispheric neighbors. The Soviet leadership understands that growing instability in the area, especially in Central America, creates serious policy dilemmas for Washington. In Moscow's view, if the United States does not respond effectively in Central America during the next few years, revolutionary momentum will accelerate there and elsewhere in Latin America. If Washington intervenes directly, however, Moscow perceives that it will be able to stimulate international criticism of US action. In either case, the USSR anticipates that revolutionary ferment in America's own backyard will divert US attention and resources from more distant problems and lead to an upsurge of anti-Americanism throughout the Third World.

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Objectives

Soviet activity in the Caribbean Basin—and in Latin America generally—is largely motivated by the USSR's global competition with the United States and its ideological commitment to support revolutionary movements. Moscow's basic aim is to undermine US influence by expanding political, economic, and military ties and by promoting radical change. Toward this end, the Soviets also actively try to exploit the latent anti-US sentiment that exists in much of Latin America.

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With the exception of Cuba, however, the Caribbean region is relatively peripheral to Soviet geostrategic concerns. Except in Cuba, the USSR has expended only limited resources in this area. Aware that US security interests would cause Washington to react strongly to certain Soviet activities in the Caribbean, Moscow has let the Cubans take the lead. The Soviets, nevertheless, are establishing links to leftist groups and Communist parties in the Caribbean Basin.

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Activity

In the Caribbean island states Moscow engages in a variety of activities aimed at garnering influence and heightening anti-US sentiment. Most of its efforts focus on the orthodox Communist parties, which Moscow has traditionally used as instruments of Soviet policy. The Soviets give most of these parties an annual financial stipend and proffer "guidance"—in some cases amounting to instructions—in formulating political strategy.

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On the Central American mainland, where armed insurgencies are in progress, Moscow has used different tactics and has moved more aggressively to exploit revolutionary opportunities. Soviet support and guidance for Central American revolutionary movements now focus on:

- Encouragement of broad revolutionary coalitions uniting pro-Soviet Communist parties with their traditional leftwing rivals.
- Creation of loyal military components.
- Use of hemispheric and other intermediaries.
- Training of revolutionaries.

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Caribbean waters. The transit of the task group coincided with US discussions of the Soviet brigade in Cuba. Such behavior has been characteristic of the Soviets since the Cienfuegos Controversy in 1970, and Moscow probably will continue to refrain from developing a major naval support base in Cuba or elsewhere in the region 25X1

The Soviets have shown particular concern over the possibility of inciting Washington to use military force against their most important regional equities—Cuba and Nicaragua. US warning of the consequences of delivering Soviet-supplied MIG aircraft to Nicaragua may prompt Moscow to defer such deliveries. Nonetheless, preparations for their arrival continue, as evidenced by training of Nicaraguan pilots in the Bloc countries. 25X1

Similarly the level of arms deliveries to Cuba in 1981—the second-highest annual total on record—and the more circumspect Soviet efforts to build up Nicaragua's military forces principally through Moscow's allies and other intermediaries, are also indicative of the USSR's continuous commitment to strengthen the military power of its principal Caribbean clients. Continued Communist rule in Cuba is highly important to Soviet prestige, as Cuba serves major Soviet foreign policy interests in the Third World, particularly in Africa and Central America. For example, it was Fidel Castro's initiative to increase support of the Nicaraguan revolutionaries in 1978 that eventually enabled the Soviets to establish a diplomatic, economic, and military presence in that country. Now the Soviets are working closely with the Cubans to consolidate the Sandinista regime, which both view as central to promoting leftist gains in the Caribbean region.

The radical regime in Nicaragua, and to a lesser extent the one in Grenada, are also of political and symbolic significance to the USSR. At a time of economic stringencies at home, Moscow's willingness to respond to some of Nicaragua's and Grenada's economic needs attests to the importance it attaches to the survival of these regimes. Nevertheless, the 25X1

Constraints

Despite its optimism about trends in the region, Moscow recognizes that there are major constraints on its ability to influence developments. Foremost among these is the attitude of the United States. Moscow is wary of placing itself in direct confrontation with US forces. This concern accounts in part for the limited and sporadic nature of Soviet naval deployments to the region. Although their naval forces—particularly the reconnaissance aircraft stationed in Cuba—are useful to demonstrate support for Castro and do have operational benefits, the Soviets have shown that they are mindful of the political repercussions of altering their naval presence. In 1979, for example, a Soviet task group apparently en route to Cuba was abruptly diverted before entering

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Soviets appear reluctant to commit the substantial hard currency assistance most needed by Managua and have privately advised the regime to be cautious in disrupting economic ties with Nicaragua's most important Western economic partners.

Propaganda Effort

To blunt any US reaction, and to exploit the rising anti-US sentiment in Latin America in the wake of the Falklands crisis, the USSR continues to sponsor various propaganda activities, including using front organizations such as the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the World Peace Council to support Caribbean revolutionaries.

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Moscow has also exploited generally leftist sympathies of the Mexican Government and has encouraged the Mexicans to become more active in the Caribbean Basin and thus complicate US initiatives there. The Soviets almost certainly were behind Havana's backing for the Mexican initiative on Central America last spring, no doubt seeing it as a promising tack to halt the momentum against the regional leftists in the wake of successful US-backed elections in El Salvador. In this context, Moscow probably hopes that the austerity measures which the International Monetary Fund (which is seen by some as dominated by the United States) has proposed to combat Mexico's economic crisis will intensify nationalist sentiments and lead to a more assertive foreign policy, particularly in the Caribbean region. At the same time, the Soviets recognize that economic difficulties could lead the new Mexican Government to adopt a more cautious stance in the region to avoid strains in relations with the United States, as happened in Jamaica in 1980.

Outlook

Local US military and economic preponderance and Washington's increasingly vigorous policy in the region are unlikely to affect Moscow's long-term objective of eroding US influence in the Caribbean region. Instead, Moscow will probably continue to pursue circumspect tactics in exploiting instability and urge its allies to provide assistance to local revolutionaries. It will stress that a US-Cuban confrontation must be avoided. Moscow, nevertheless, almost certainly will continue to encourage Caribbean revolutionaries, to underwrite the Cuban economy, and to support—while minimizing its own visibility—Cuban assistance to the local leftists. It will work in this way to maintain a degree of revolutionary momentum to undermine the US position in the region.

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Limitations on Soviet Military Intervention Beyond Eurasia

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Over the past 10 years, various Soviet spokesmen have stated that the "changing correlation of forces" vis-a-vis the United States has enabled the Soviet military to assume a new role—one outside the borders of the USSR. Despite this assertion, Soviet behavior still shows the Kremlin's sense of caution and of the limits to Soviet conventional military capabilities in distant areas. Soviet restraint during the current Lebanese crisis suggests that the Kremlin's perceptions of the local balance of forces and of US interests continue to be the dominant factors in Moscow's decisionmaking calculus.

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We do not believe the Soviets have either a power projection doctrine or the forces needed to carry out operations in distant areas against anything more than light opposition. For example, such key Third World states as Israel and South Africa have modern air and mechanized forces that could fend them off. Moreover, construction patterns within the Soviet defense industry suggest that relatively little emphasis has been given to those programs that would be essential for improving Soviet power projection capabilities over the next 10 years, such as large aircraft carriers and amphibious ships.

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Soviet Intervention Doctrine

In judging whether the use of military force is necessary to solve a problem, Moscow has always made a critical distinction between states on its borders and those in noncontiguous areas. The former fall within traditional national security interests, and the Kremlin uses a substantially different yardstick for threat and risk assessment when they are involved. In addition, the forces needed to resolve a crisis on the borders of the USSR can be massed and operated along the lines of traditional military doctrine.

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The Soviet invasions of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Afghanistan all demonstrate Moscow's willingness to use force to correct a situation across its border deemed inimical to Soviet interests. From the standpoint of Soviet military doctrine, the most recent of these—the invasion of Afghanistan—does not demonstrate a fundamentally new approach toward the use of military forces nor suggest a greater inclination to use Soviet combat forces in the Third World.

In respect to the use of Soviet military forces in the noncontiguous areas, we do not believe a developed doctrine for intervention or force projection exists. It is true that since the early 1970s Soviet military and political writers have made references to the "external function" of the Soviet armed forces. For example:

- Some observers have attached particular significance to a statement Marshal Grechko made in 1974 that the role of the Soviet armed forces "is not restricted to their function in defending our Motherland" and that the Soviet state "resolutely resists imperialists' aggression in whatever distant region of our planet it may appear."

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- Admiral Gorshkov, Commander in Chief of the Soviet Navy, has also paid increasing attention in his writings to the political value of global naval deployments, and Soviet naval authors in particular have discussed issues regarding local wars.

But none of these discussions has yet been developed to the point where it can be said to represent a doctrine for distant military intervention.[1] It is noteworthy that while the open and classified Soviet military literature in the US Intelligence Community's abundant holdings discusses almost every possible aspect of military operations on the Eurasian landmass, virtually nothing is to be found on the conduct of distant operations.

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While the Soviet Union does not appear to have a doctrine for the integration and deployment of combat forces in distant areas, it does use a wide range of

[1] The term "doctrine" is used here as Marshal Grechko used it in 1975: "a system of views on the nature of war *and methods of waging it*" (emphasis added).

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Excerpts From *The Sphinx and the Commissar*, by Mohamed Heikal

[Immediately on arriving in Moscow during the 1956 Suez crisis, Shukri Kuwatly, President of Syria, asked to see Khrushchev and Marshal Zhukov. At the meeting, a highly emotional Kuwatly insisted that Egypt must be helped.]

"But what can we do?" asked Khrushchev.

"Is it for me to tell you what to do?" shouted Kuwatly. "Egypt is being attacked, and Egypt believed you were going to come to her aid. If you do nothing your position in the Arab world will be utterly destroyed . . . ."

Zhukov produced a map of the Middle East and spread it on the table. Then, turning to Kuwatly, he said, "How can we go to the aid of Egypt? Tell me! Are we supposed to send our armies through Turkey, Iran, and then into Syria and Iraq and on into Israel and so eventually attack the British and French forces?"

At this Kuwatly . . . cried, "Do you want me, a poor civilian, to tell you, the great marshal, the conqueror of Germany, what should be done?" Khrushchev folded up the map and told Kuwatly, "We'll see what we can do. At present we don't know how to help Egypt, but we are having continuous meetings to discuss the problem."

* * *

It was when [Egyptian Defense Minister] Badran and his party were leaving [in June 1967, on the eve of the Six-Day War] that the real misunderstanding took place. Marshal Grechko . . . chatting to Badran at the foot of the aircraft steps . . . said: "Stand firm. Whatever you have to face, you will find us with you. Don't let yourselves be blackmailed by the Americans or anyone else." After the plane had taken off the Egyptian Ambassador in Moscow, Murad Ghaleb . . . said to him, "That was very reassuring, Marshal." Grechko laughed, and said to him (in Russian), "I just wanted to give him one for the road."

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military instruments to support its foreign policy efforts in the Third World. Primarily through military sales, but also through the training of foreign military personnel, resupply efforts in crises, and the use of military advisers, Moscow seeks to build relationships with client states. Given Soviet limitations in competing with the West on economic or technological grounds, Moscow's willingness to supply arms and advisers is frequently its only bond with its clients—a situation which explains to a large degree the historical fragility of many of these relations.

Forces for Intervention

There is no evidence that the Soviet Union has any distinct military organization or equipment whose primary purpose is combat operations in distant areas. Soviet conventional forces are trained and equipment is developed for the purpose of winning a war on the Eurasian landmass. Improvements in equipment and training can provide greater capabilities for more distant operations, but whatever distant-area benefits may be derived are "spinoffs" from what is essentially a continental view of war.

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The Soviets' seven airborne divisions and their one division and three brigades of naval infantry, along with transport aircraft and amphibious ships, are usually considered the forces best suited for distant deployments. Depending on the scenario presented,

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these forces do have some capability for distant operations. Nevertheless, their capability suffers from the fact that this is a role for which they were not designed or trained. The Soviets view their airborne and amphibious units as part of an offensively oriented combined-arms force. The limited organic firepower of these units makes them dependent on tactical air support and a quick linkup with conventional ground force elements. Some of the major constraints facing Soviet forces in distant operations are:

- The lack of a network of large-scale foreign bases from which to mount and sustain operations.
- The lack of tactical air support, resulting from a lack of aircraft carriers and the limited range of Soviet tactical aircraft; this problem is aggravated by the absence of an aerial refueling capability for the fighters.
- The limited amphibious lift capacity of any single fleet of the Soviet Navy, and the limited naval gunfire support available for operations against well-armed Third World forces.

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Among programs now under way, the two that will most significantly improve Soviet power projection capabilities in the future are those for the development of the first large Soviet aircraft carrier and a new large heavy transport aircraft. The carrier is not expected to be operational until about 1990, however; and although the transport will almost certainly fly within the next year, significant numbers will not be available until the latter part of the 1980s. The Soviet aerial refueling program remains inexplicably moribund, and programs for the construction of transport aircraft and amphibious ships lack the vigor of Soviet programs for strategic weapons, ground forces equipment production, or tactical aircraft. In the event of any Soviet defense cutback, it is quite probable that the first systems to be cut would be those least critical to primary Soviet military missions—including those most closely associated with a potential power projection mission.

Operations in Africa

The success of joint Soviet-Cuban operations in Angola in 1975-76 and in Ethiopia in 1977-78 led to much concern in the West over what was perceived to be a new dimension of Soviet strategy. The passage of time, however, has presented no similar episodes, and in neither country has the Soviet-Cuban assistance subdued the internal or external threats to the client regime. It now appears that these combined operations succeeded (to the extent that they did) because of a unique confluence of events in each case.

South Africa will remain a major source of instability in the region, particularly in Mozambique, but the Soviet and Cuban interest in exploiting this tension to gain a military presence will be restrained by the recognition that Pretoria almost certainly would be unwilling to tolerate a large Cuban combat force near its borders. The emergence of the United States from the self-imposed restraint of the Vietnam/Watergate period (as demonstrated by its combined action with the French and Belgians in Zaire's Shaba Province in 1978) will also affect the Soviet leaders' perceptions of their scope of action. Opportunities for Soviet manipulation may arise periodically, but Moscow's calculations for the likelihood of success are much less certain.

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Caution in Foreign Military Commitments

The Soviet regime historically has been extremely cautious in committing forces beyond its periphery. Threats to intervene are normally quite vocal, but have always been made after the peak of a crisis had passed and have always been formulated in imprecise language that leaves all options open. This pattern was demonstrated in every Middle East crisis from 1956 through 1973; the growth of Soviet strategic and conventional forces during that period did not affect the pattern.

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The current crisis in Lebanon is notable for the lack of any Soviet threat to protect its interests or those of its clients. Even by past standards, Brezhnev's letter to President Reagan on 7 July was a weak and open-ended warning, noting that if US Marines were to go to Beirut "the Soviet Union will build its policy taking this fact into account." Such caution strongly suggests that Moscow's intended audience was not the United

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States and the West, but the Arab states and other Third World nations, to whom the Soviets wanted to demonstrate reliability as an ally.[2]

This caution and military conservatism are deeply rooted in history. The dangers of "adventurism" are a common theme in Soviet military-political literature. In their invasions of Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, Soviet planners demonstrated a conservative approach in their force assessments and operational planning—reflecting an attitude that appears throughout their classified writings.

An episode that illustrates this attitude among the military was the dismissal of Marshal Moskalenko, head of the Strategic Rocket Forces, in April 1962. This was approximately the time that the decision to emplace missiles in Cuba was taken, a decision Moskalenko presumably opposed—and which Marshal Zakharov himself later attacked as one of Khrushchev's "harebrained" schemes. Similarly, the military leadership demonstrated apprehension about Khrushchev's threats regarding Berlin.[3]

An article published in *Military Thought* in 1971 expressed in theoretical terms the importance of caution and the proper meshing of military capabilities and foreign policy goals:

> *Military strategy, just as military science as a whole, is strong and correct only when it is built on careful consideration of all objective factors, in strict conformity with the tasks and capabilities of the foreign and domestic policy of a state. Disregard of objective laws or underestimation of important factors as a rule leads to military-political setbacks. Although diplomacy as a means of foreign policy usually comes to one's aid in such cases, it is not always able completely to neutralize the consequences of military-strategic miscalculations.*

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In the Middle East arena, Soviet planners certainly include among their "objective factors" the Israelis' overwhelming local superiority and the strong US commitment toward an ally. In these circumstances, while the military fate of Syria represents an important interest in Soviet foreign policy, that interest is almost certainly surpassed by Moscow's determination not to risk its superpower image by exposing its forces to the possibility of defeat. It would be a devastating blow to Soviet military prestige if an intervention force were to be defeated by Israeli forces. Should the Kremlin be forced to consider such an operation, the military leaders would at least have recourse to the Marxist vision that history is on their side anyway, and could argue that diplomatic retreat carries less disgrace than military defeat.

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Moscow's sensitivity toward its military prestige was demonstrated in an unprecedented fashion in June 1982 when, after the Syrian debacle in Lebanon, a TASS article directly challenged the "deliberately false information on Soviet combat equipment" and its performance in the conflict. A day earlier TASS saw fit to carry a commentary from a Jordanian newspaper stating that while the Soviet Union is pledged to arm its Arab friends, "The Soviet Union has never promised to any Arab country to bring its armies to defend it."

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Such disclaimers have been made before. In an interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper in April 1980, *Pravda* political commentator Yuriy Zhukov rhetorically asked the Arab leaders: "Do they expect the Soviet forces to liberate their land for them? This is the duty of the Arab armies." Soviet caution extends beyond the Middle East, as evidenced by Moscow's

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[2] There has been only one large-scale deployment of Soviet military forces outside the periphery of the USSR—the 15,000 Soviet air and air defense personnel in Egypt in 1970-71—and it does not invalidate this view of Soviet caution. The Soviet air defense system in Egypt in 1970 was primarily a reserve force whose combat actions were closely coordinated with Egyptian authorities and were generally restrained and cautious. Both the pilots and the SAM crews operated under guidelines designed to minimize confrontations with the Israelis while giving the appearance of an effective deterrent force. Soviet pilots were cautious throughout, and when their only air-to-air engagement with the Israelis resulted in the loss of four MIG-21s, all Soviet fighter units stood down for two weeks. Similar restraint can be expected of Soviet personnel in their current efforts to improve the Syrian air defense system.

[3] *The Penkovsky Papers* brings this out vividly: "Many generals bluntly say: 'What in hell do we need this Berlin for? We have endured it for 16 years; we can endure it for a little more. One of these days Khrushchev will catch it good! They will hit him in the teeth so hard that he will lose everything. . . .' Even our marshals and generals consider him to be a provocateur, the one who incites war."

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official statement via TASS the day after China invaded Vietnam: "the heroic Vietnamese people, which has become the victim of a fresh aggression, is capable of standing up for itself this time again, the more so since it has reliable friends." The statement closed with a pledge to honor the obligations of the Friendship Treaty with Hanoi—a treaty which contained no obligation to go to Vietnam's defense.

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Soviet Naval Activity Outside Home Waters in 1981

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Throughout 1981, significant trends in Soviet naval deployment patterns included:

- *Expanded reliance on naval reconnaissance aircraft operating from overseas bases.* In addition to continued antisubmarine warfare (ASW) and reconnaissance missions from airfields in Cuba, Angola, South Yemen, Ethiopia, and Vietnam, the Soviets initiated deployments to Syria and Libya (see figure 1).

- *The use of naval ships to respond to regional political crises or to demonstrate Soviet support for a friendly government.* The deployments of Soviet warships in response to South Africa's attacks on Angola, to the tensions resulting from Syria's placement of missiles in Lebanon, and to the attempted coup against President Rene in Seychelles were examples of such activities.

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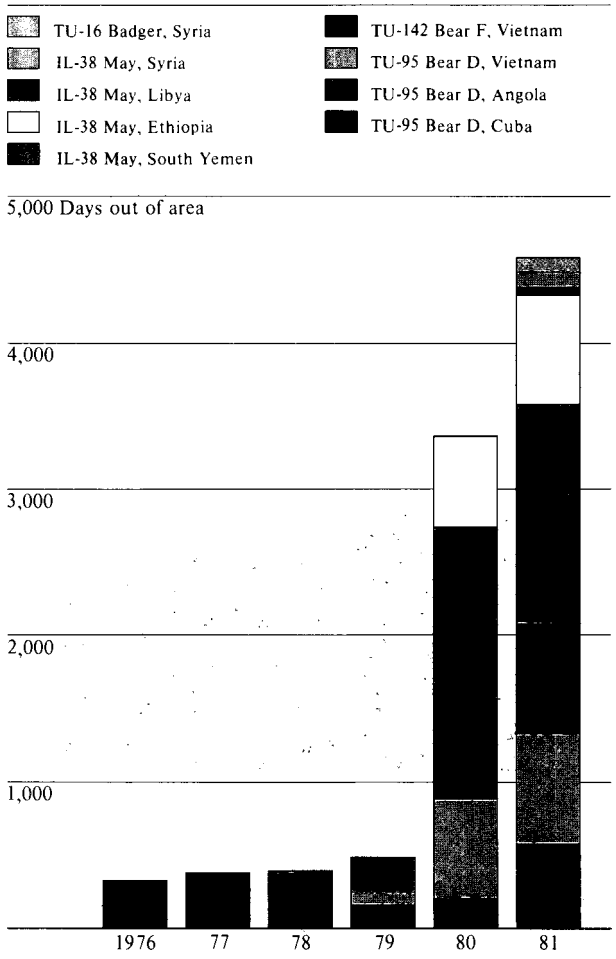
- *Continued foreign deployment of the highly capable units that joined the fleets in 1979 and 1980,* such as the Ivan Rogov (the Soviets' largest amphibious ship), and maiden deployments by newly constructed units such as the Udaloy guided-missile destroyer.

Soviet naval ships spent about 55,000 ship-days[1] outside home waters during 1981—4.5 percent below the record high totals of 1980, but still about 3 percent higher than the previous peak year of 1974. Soviet presence declined somewhat in the Indian and Pacific Oceans—the two regions that accounted for the dramatic increase in 1980—and in the waters off West Africa. Ship-days almost doubled in the Caribbean in 1981 but were relatively stable in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Changes in the composition of naval forces in distant waters included cutbacks for

Figure 1
Overseas Deployment of Soviet Naval Aviation, 1976-81



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[1] The Naval Ocean Surveillance Information Center provides statistics for Soviet deployments outside home waters and determines the regional limits of distant deployments. A ship-day represents one ship away from home waters for one day.

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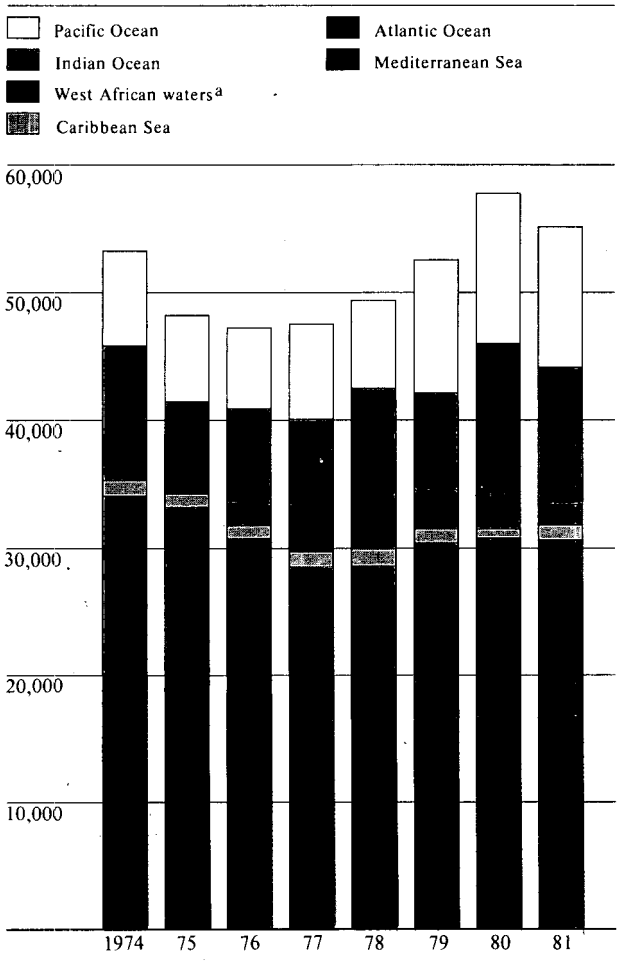
Figure 2
Ship-Days in Distant Waters, by Region, 1974-81



[a]West African ship-days are not available for 1974-75 and are included in Atlantic Ocean data.

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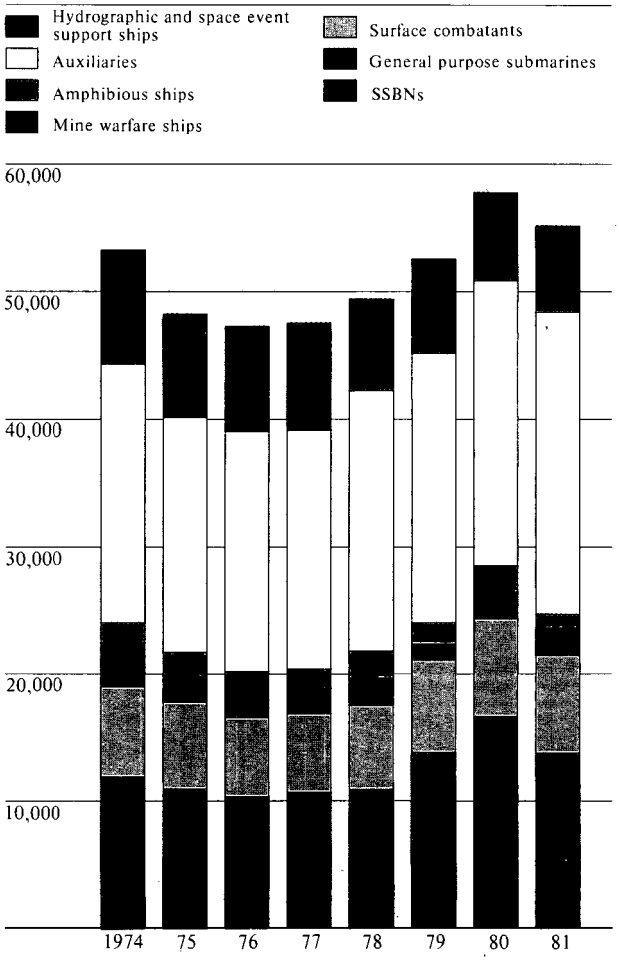
Figure 3
Ship-Days in Distant Waters, by Type, 1974-81



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most types of ships except auxiliaries and mine warfare ships. (Figures 2 and 3 summarize Soviet out-of-area deployment trends by region and type since 1974.)

Indian Ocean

Soviet ship-days in this area dropped about 9 percent during 1981. The Indian Ocean Squadron consisted of an average of 30 ships—slightly less than the 32 ships

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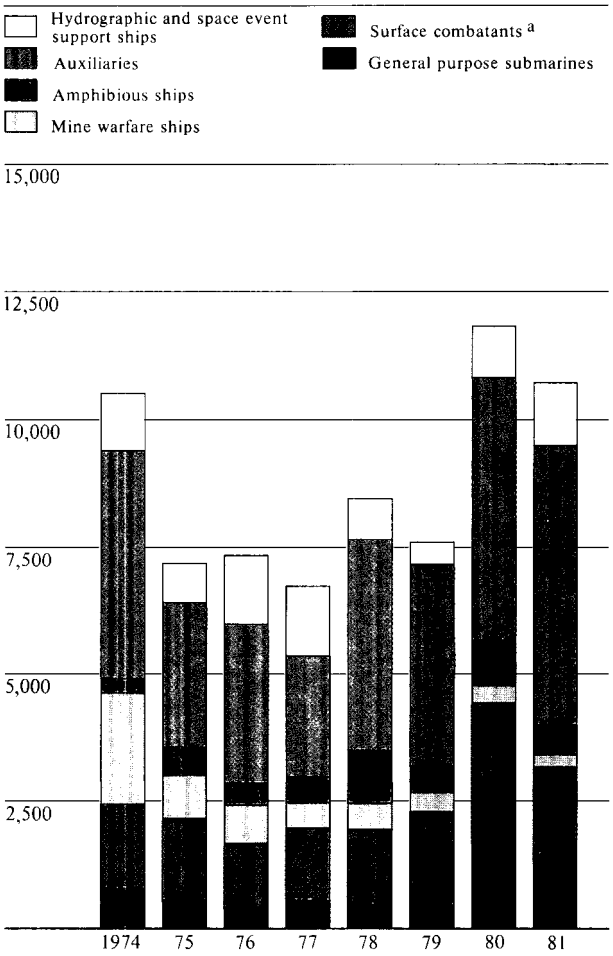
Figure 4
Ship-Days in the Indian Ocean, 1974-81



[a]The data for patrol combatants are included in surface combatant category.

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that normally were present during 1980 (see figure 4). The decline in Soviet presence paralleled a drop in US naval force levels following the resolution of the Iranian hostage crisis. The Squadron's major responsibility is to monitor Western naval movements, and the decline in US deployments to the Indian Ocean probably permitted this reduction.

Throughout the year, the Squadron consisted of an average of three or four general purpose submarines, four or five major surface combatants, a mine warfare ship or patrol craft, an amphibious unit, and 15 auxiliaries. For the first half of the year, no ship equipped with antiship missiles operated with the Squadron, and the burden of providing a cruise missile capability fell to the submarine force—an E-II-class nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine (SSGN) and a newer C-I-class SSGN. The presence of general purpose submarines fell more than 20 percent, but a pair of Northern Fleet V-class nuclear-powered torpedo attack submarines (SSNs) operated in the region for part of the year.

As in earlier years, Soviet ships spent much of their time at international anchorages off Socotra Island outside the Gulf of Aden and did not engage in extensive training. In addition, Moscow dispatched a cruiser and a frigate to Seychelles as a show of support for President Rene, who thwarted a mercenary coup at the end of November. An amphibious ship spent two weeks in the area of Seychelles in December as a further gesture to Rene.

An important aspect of Soviet naval presence in the region is the continuous deployment of IL-38 May ASW aircraft—normally four to Aden, South Yemen, and two to Asmara, Ethiopia—for periods of

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about two months. The level of flight operations increased slightly during 1981. The aircraft monitor Western forces in the northern Arabian Sea, but they cannot cover the waters around the US naval base at Diego Garcia.

Pacific Ocean

Partly because fewer ships transited to the Indian Ocean, Soviet ship-days outside home waters in the Pacific Ocean decreased last year. There were 29 or 30 ships on distant deployments—down from 32 in 1980. Nonetheless, the Soviets maintained a naval force of about two warships, seven support ships, an intelligence collection ship (AGI), and an SSGN or cruise missile submarine (SSG) in the South China Sea

Continued improvements of Cam Ranh Bay included construction of a new pier and some support buildings and the installation of a fresh water system. Cam Ranh still lacks bunkering facilities, however, and its repair capabilities are limited to maintenance performed in a floating drydock for small combatants and diesel submarines or by a Soviet repair ship. It is a convenient stopover for ships en route to the Indian Ocean from Pacific Fleet bases, however, and Soviet ships made about 10 port calls per month there during 1981

Ships on distant deployment in the Pacific normally conduct only limited training. Last year, there was no large-scale exercise in the Pacific, but the Soviets did carry out an unusual transit around the northern Pacific and down the west coast of the United States. The training cruise, which involved a Kara-class guided-missile cruiser and a C-I-class SSGN, was the first such deployment across the Pacific since 1974. The Soviets also cooperated with the Vietnamese Navy in a small-scale ASW exercise last fall.

Mediterranean Sea

Soviet ship-days in the Mediterranean Sea increased only marginally and remained well below the level of the early 1970s, when the Soviets had access to naval facilities in Egypt. Generally the Mediterranean Squadron included seven or eight general purpose submarines, eight or nine major surface combatants, a mine warfare ship or patrol craft, and about 26 auxiliaries. There were no amphibious ships with the Squadron for most of the year.

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Routine operations of the Squadron include monitoring Western naval movements and carrying out antisubmarine and anticarrier exercises. In 1981 there were several cases of heightened or unusual activity:

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- In May and June Moscow reinforced the Squadron and shadowed the US naval forces that moved to the eastern Mediterranean during the Syrian missile crisis.

- Soviet tactical aircraft deployed to bases in the region for the first time since the Soviet Naval Aviation squadron withdrew from Egypt in 1972. The aircraft—two IL-38 Mays and four TU-16 Badgers—staged to Syria in late June as part of preparations for a joint ASW–coastal defense exercise that took place in July. Several Soviet amphibious ships were dispatched from the Black Sea to act as the aggressor force.

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- Soviet ships and aircraft began a series of deployments to Libya after the Syrian exercise. Soviet warships—which had not called in Libya since 1970—and submarines made additional port calls before the end of the year, and IL-38s operated from Libyan airfields on several occasions. There have been subsequent visits in 1982, and a pattern of deployments may be evolving. The stability of Soviet access will continue to be conditioned by the uneasiness of Moscow's relationship with Qadhafi.

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Atlantic Ocean

Ship-days in the Atlantic Ocean dropped about 2 percent, to some 13,900. The presence of surface combatants rose more than 50 percent, an increase partly accounted for by ships moving to a Baltic exercise during the summer, the transfer of the Udaloy guided-missile destroyer to the Northern Fleet, and the reinforcement of the West African patrol. Other activities in the Atlantic included surveillance of Western naval exercises, monitoring of US SSBN transit routes, Northern Fleet exercises in the spring, and joint Warsaw Pact naval training.

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Caribbean Sea

In April 1981 a Soviet task group—a Kara-class cruiser and two frigates—called in Cuba for the first time since 1978. Similar task groups were sent out in both 1979 and 1980 but were recalled before reaching Cuba. During their stay in Cuba, the Soviet ships carried out ASW and coastal defense training with the Cuban Navy. The presence of the task group drove ship-day totals up more than 60 percent, making the year's total only somewhat lower than that of 1978. The Soviets also kept research or space event support ships and an AGI in the Caribbean and a naval auxiliary in Havana.

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West African Waters

The Soviet presence off West Africa dropped by 40 percent in 1980. No amphibious ship served with the contingent—the first such gap since 1971—and large combatants were present only briefly in the summer. Soviet naval forces were more visible than in earlier years (when they spent most of their time in either Conakry, Guinea, or Luanda, Angola, or in transit between the two ports). During the first two months of 1981, two Soviet warships were sent to the waters off Dakhla, Western Sahara, to protest the seizure of Soviet fishing trawlers. Although a compromise was reached, Moscow kept a minesweeper on patrol in the fisheries area for the rest of the year. Late in the summer, Soviet warships again responded to regional political developments—this time to the conflict between South Africa and Angola. Three combatants, including two diverted from other operating areas, made port calls in Luanda and eventually moved closer to the area of conflict by visiting Mocamedes, Angola. These incidents demonstrated the political utility of the West African contingent despite the continued decline in the Soviets' commitment of naval ships to the region.

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Outlook

We have not seen dramatic changes in Soviet naval operations in distant areas thus far in 1982, and do not expect any. Nevertheless, the use of the Navy to respond to regional political tensions will cause fluctuations in force levels. Indian Ocean ship-day totals for the first nine months of 1982 dropped marginally. Renewed conflict in the Indian Ocean, an expansion of US naval forces there, or new opportunities for access in the littoral states could prompt the Soviets to augment their naval presence there or to intensify their level of activity. Similarly, the use of naval forces to signal Soviet concern about the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and to track the US naval units concentrated in the eastern Mediterranean may alter the yearend picture of the Mediterranean Squadron.

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Worldwide, the real changes will not be numerical, however, but qualitative. Large, capable ships already operational will increasingly take responsibility for representing the USSR, as the Moskva ASW cruiser did in Nigeria recently. Newly constructed combatants—the Sovremenny and Udaloy guided-missile destroyers or the Kirov nuclear-powered cruiser—probably will be active in foreign waters. The Soviets may also redistribute the burden of distant operations by experimenting with new force combinations, such as the initial deployment in June 1982 of a V-III-class SSN from the Pacific Fleet to the Indian Ocean.

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The use of maritime reconnaissance aircraft will remain central to the Soviet presence outside home waters and may expand. More Bear D's or a different type of aircraft may deploy to

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Cuba. The recurrent use of the airfield at Tripoli, Libya, may evolve into a routine presence of Soviet land-based aircraft in the Mediterranean, and Soviet hopes of securing air rights in northwest Africa as a supplement to Luanda may be fulfilled. Overseas bases for naval aircraft proved of some value to the Soviets during the Falklands crisis, and Moscow will be quick to exploit opportunities for new air access.

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The Soviets will also actively pursue wider access to support facilities throughout the Third World. In recent months they have made evident their interest in Sri Lankan repair facilities, and they may expect to make inroads with the newly elected Mauritian Government or with the troubled governments of Seychelles or Madagascar. The search for naval access will be low key but will influence the selection of ports of call and the level of regional naval presence. Similarly, the Navy's role in reassuring those states that already provide some logistic support will contribute to keeping ship-day totals for 1982 well above the level of the early 1970s.

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Soviet Economic Woes Affecting Global Influence

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A senior official at Moscow's leading institute studying economies of the Communist World believes that the USSR's declining domestic performance is undermining the credibility of the socialist model abroad. He contends that increasing economic stringencies at home require a rethinking of current Soviet Third World assistance policies. His unorthodox arguments suggest that economic problems may be generating pressures on the Soviet elite for changes in the traditional Soviet modus operandi abroad as well as at home.

In the August issue of *Voprosy Filosofii* (Problems of Philosophy), Yuriy Novopashin, a sector chief at the Institute of Economics of the World Socialist System (IEMSS), argues that Moscow's influence abroad is limited by the Soviet Union's poor economic performance at home. He asserts that furthering socialist revolution depends not only on direct assistance to leftist client regimes and revolutionary movements but also on the "demonstrative effect" of successes in the Communist World. A Communist country, he contends, must provide an attractive model of "effective socioeconomic growth" and "just social relations." He chastises those who try to whitewash the flaws in the Communist system in an effort to influence world public opinion. The surer path to world influence, he suggests, is through a "self-critical assessment" of Communism "in all its complexity and contradictoriness."

Novopashin takes direct aim at the economic performance of the Communist states. He cites statistics showing a dramatic decline in the growth rates of economic production and national income in CEMA countries in the latter half of the 1970s and acknowledges that the trend has continued into the 1980s, attributing these problems largely to flaws in the economic system. As a result, he argues, the level of economic development in Communist countries "cannot yet preclude shortages of certain food products and consumer goods and, frequently, low quality of such goods." These shortcomings, he suggests, hamper Communism's ability to provide an attractive alternative to capitalism.

Impact on Aid

Novopashin finds the Soviet Union at a disadvantage in economic competition with the West in the developing world. He admits that the USSR and its Communist allies find it difficult to help Third World client states "in all the many salients where such assistance would be desirable." He criticizes left-leaning Third World leaders for expecting the Communist states to finance dubious efforts to "force" socioeconomic change through rapid industrialization. In his view, this Stalinish preoccupation with developing basic industry—the traditional goal of Soviet economic aid—has been too costly for both patron and client, usually resulting in a decline in the standard of living and an alienation of the population.

Novopashin uses these arguments to call for a restructured Soviet aid strategy that he claims would more effectively serve both domestic and foreign policy needs. In particular, he recommends:

- *A shift in emphasis in economic assistance from developing basic industry to increasing agricultural production.* Such an approach would serve the interests of both parties, he maintains, particularly in light of the "existence of a food problem" in Communist countries.

- *Greater selectivity in choosing client states.* He implies that a more discriminating approach would not only save money but also enhance the Soviet Union's international prestige by avoiding "compromising ties with repressive, antipopular regimes." He charges that some self-proclaimed "socialist-oriented" Third World leaders actually "discredit the idea of socialism" with their harsh "mobilization" policies.

- *Greater coordination of efforts by the Communist states in their Third World aid policies.* He suggests that it is particularly important for the CEMA countries to pool their resources in order to compete with the efforts of Western countries to step up their "economic expansion" in the Third World.

Novopashin's arguments stand in contrast to recent paeans to aid policies by prominent Soviet Third World specialists who may be lobbying to protect the foreign aid program. Recent articles by Africa Institute director Anatoliy Gromyko and Oriental Studies Institute deputy director Georgiy Kim, published in September issues of *Kommunist* and *Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnyye Otnosheniya* (World Economy and International Relations) respectively, effusively praised Soviet economic assistance and specifically defended its emphasis on developing basic industry.

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Briefs

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Defense Council Membership

The late President Brezhnev's speech to a special conference of Soviet military commanders on 27 October provided a unique opportunity to examine the current composition of the Defense Council, the USSR's highest deliberative body on defense matters. Brezhnev was the only officially acknowledged member of the Council, but the presence of five other full Politburo members on this occasion—Yuriy Andropov, Konstantin Chernenko, Andrey Gromyko, Nikolay Tikhonov, and Dmitriy Ustinov—suggests that these five figures now constitute the Council's senior membership and the group from which the new chairman probably will be chosen.

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Others present on the rostrum included Marshal Nikolay Ogarkov, Chief of the General Staff, and Leonid Smirnov, chairman of the Military-Industrial Commission. Their presence on this occasion as well as their responsibilities for the full range of military and industrial matters suggests that they are the only two non-Politburo members of the Defense Council.

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Tighter Soviet Control Over CEMA

A Soviet diplomat in Belgrade recently stated that a "major review" of CEMA relationships is under way and that the USSR will propose at a CEMA summit next spring that the Soviet Union assume a more "active" role, while other members become more "passive." Although members would retain considerable autonomy, economic planning would have to be coordinated more closely to avoid duplication of effort, needless competition, and waste.

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This is the clearest indication that Moscow intends to use the proposed CEMA summit to advocate a basic restructuring of the organization. If the report is true, it probably reflects recognition that the USSR's economic problems require more strenuous efforts to reduce inefficiencies within CEMA and the burden of Soviet aid to Eastern Europe. Moscow may expect the severe economic problems of the East Europeans to make them more amenable than in the past to increased Soviet dominance of CEMA. Their determination to resist encroachments on their autonomy, however, and to pursue their individual objectives within CEMA make it unlikely that the USSR will achieve its goals in the near term.

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Soviet Cobalt Substitute

the Soviets have discovered a substitute for cobalt in the binding of titanium carbide, and that a formal announcement will be made

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shortly. The new hard metal is said to consist of tungsten, molybdenum, and nickel. The research unit was directed to discover a substitute because cobalt would soon be unavailable in the USSR for nonmilitary applications. 25X1

Cobalt is a superhard, heat-resistant metal used extensively in the production of military hardware. If the claim is true, the discovery of a substitute represents an important technological breakthrough in this area for the Soviets. (The United States developed partial substitutes for cobalt when supplies were threatened after Zaire was invaded in 1978.) The Soviets have been steadily increasing their domestic production of cobalt but still import about 15 percent of their requirements from Zaire and, more recently, Zambia. 25X1

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Soviet Criticism of Private Agriculture in Poland

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Soviet television recently reported that the quantity of grain being sold in some parts of Poland is not commensurate with this year's good harvest because private farmers are withholding their produce from government buyers. The report also asserted that at least one cooperative farm is unable to expand its holding, and thereby increase its efficiency, because private farmers refuse to sell it land except at inflated prices. 25X1

The continued prevalance in Poland of private agriculture periodically attracts Soviet criticism on economic and ideological grounds, and some Soviets consider it among the basic causes of the Polish crisis. It has received relatively little attention in recent Soviet commentary, presumably because it is considered less urgent than the need to rebuild the party, win back alienated workers, and limit the role of the Church. The recent broadcast is a reminder, however, that the Soviets continue to include the issue among Poland's unresolved problems

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