

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

29 WEST 57th STREET

New York 19, New York

PLaza 1-3850



*done.
duplication*

November 11, 1958.

Sir:

Albania
Bulgaria
Czechoslovakia
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Romania

I have the honor to inform you that the Assembly of Captive European Nations held its 60th to 63rd Plenary Meetings on October 23 and 24, 1958, at the Carnegie Endowment International Center, New York City.

The 60th Plenary Meeting, held on October 23rd in commemoration of the second anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution, unanimously adopted a Declaration on that subject (ACEN RES/PA 126 (V) Pol.), introduced by the Rapporteur, Mr. Jozsef Kovago, former Mayor of Budapest and currently Vice-Chairman of the Assembly. The Assembly further unanimously adopted a Resolution entitled, "Cardinal Mindszenty and the Papal Elections" (ACEN RES/PA 125 (V) Gen.).

During the meeting guest speakers from the United Nations Delegations of China, Denmark, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands paid tribute to the heroism of the people of Hungary. Messages of sympathy and solidarity were also received from Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, Dr. Emilio Nunez-Portuondo, Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations, Mayor Robert F. Wagner and Representative Kenneth B. Keating.

The 61st Meeting of the Plenary Assembly unanimously adopted a Resolution on "The Problem of Refugees from the Captive Countries" (ACEN RES/PA 128 (V) Soc.), introduced by the Rapportuer, Dr. Jan Papanek, of Czechoslovakia, and also endorsed the report of the General Committee on that subject (ACEN Doc. No. 124 (V) Soc.).

The 62nd Plenary Meeting debated the Soviet Co-existence Offensive, unanimously adopting a Resolution (ACEN RES/PA 129 (V) Pol.) introduced by the Rapporteur, Dr. Otton Pehr, of Poland. In view of the forthcoming debate in the First Committee of the Thirteenth United Nations General Assembly on a Draft Resolution proposed by the so-called Delegation of Czechoslovakia, this may be of particular interest to you.

The 63rd Plenary Meeting unanimously adopted a Resolution entitled, "The Fortieth Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Czechoslovak Republic" (ACEN RES/PA 130 (V) Pol.), introduced by Mr. Vaclovas Sidzikauskas, of Lithuania.

Finally, in order to mark United Nations Day, the Plenary Assembly unanimously moved to send messages to the President of the Thirteenth United Nations General Assembly and to the Secretary General of the United Nations (ACEN RES/PA 131 (V) Gen. and RES/PA 132 (V) Gen.).

I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of each of the above-mentioned documents.

I beg you, Sir, to accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Stefan Korbonski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stefan Korbonski
Chairman

H. E. Dr. Charles Malik
President
13th General Assembly of the United Nations
United Nations Plaza
New York City

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS CAPTIVES D' EUROPE

October 23, 1958
RES/PA 125 (V) (Gen.)



FIFTH SESSION

Albania
Bulgaria
Czechoslovakia
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Romania

CARDINAL MINDSZENTY AND THE PAPAL ELECTIONS

Resolution unanimously adopted by
the 61st Meeting of the Plenary
Assembly, October 23, 1958.

The Assembly of Captive European Nations,

Having learned with astonishment and revulsion of yet
another outrage committed by the puppet regime in Budapest in
formally refusing to permit Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty to go
to Rome in order to fulfill his sacred obligations entrusted
to him as a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church,

VIGOROUSLY CONDEMNS:

this gross and brutal interference into the religious
life of the Hungarian people which is in clear violation of
the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS CAPTIVES D' EUROPE



October 27, 1958

ACEN RES/PA No.126 (V) (Pol.)

FIFTH SESSION

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THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL REVOLUTION

Albania

Bulgaria

Czechoslovakia

Estonia

Hungary

Latvia

Lithuania

Poland

Romania

Declaration unanimously adopted by the 60th Meeting of the
Plenary Assembly, October 23rd, 1958

We, the member nations of the Assembly of Captive European Nations - Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania - solemnly profess our profound admiration and respect for the martyrs and heroes of the Hungarian Revolution.

We declare that the re-establishment of Hungary's independence and the restoration of the right of the Hungarian people to freedom and self-determination are basic and inescapable obligations of all people living in liberty and independence, not only toward Hungary but toward all Soviet subjugated peoples.

Today, on October 23, 1958, the second anniversary of the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution, we reaffirm our conviction that the human rights and the independence of the free world will remain in mortal jeopardy as long as the Soviets, in violation of the principles embodied in the Atlantic Charter and in the United Nations Charter, keep any of our peoples in bondage.

We consider the Hungarian revolutionary struggle of 1956 a symbol of the urge for liberty of our peoples. As proof of our solidarity with the Hungarian people we demand:

1. The immediate withdrawal, in concordance with the United Nations resolutions, of Soviet military forces and all Soviet agents from Hungary, to be followed by democratic and unfettered elections, under United Nations supervision;
2. The expulsion from the United Nations of the Hungarian Communist Delegation appointed by the Communist administration against the will of the Hungarian people.

October 27, 1958

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Parallel with the aforementioned basic demands, we request that the Soviet Union and the Soviet-imposed Hungarian government proceed with:

1. The immediate release of all political prisoners and suspension of all discriminatory measures against them;
2. The immediate re-establishment of human rights, trampled under foot by the Soviets;
3. The immediate cessation of persecution directed against the true or alleged participants in the Hungarian Revolution.

Recalling that the Hungarian people overthrew their Communist overlords without outside help, but were unable to secure their freedom owing to lack of diplomatic and political support from the West, we warn the free governments not to repeat this grave error and, in case of any future popular uprising in East-Central Europe, to prevent the Soviet Union from restoring Communist governments by armed intervention.

We earnestly appeal to all peoples who enjoy liberty to come to the succor of the subjugated peoples of Central and Eastern Europe to the full extent of their moral and material possibilities, asking them for unceasing new efforts so that the enslaved peoples may once more share in the peaceful and free development of humanity, through their knowledge, talent and industry.

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS CAPTIVES D' EUROPE



October 27, 1958

ACEN RES/PA No.128 (V) (Soc.)

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FIFTH SESSION

THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES FROM THE CAPTIVE COUNTRIES

Albania

Bulgaria

Czechoslovakia

Estonia

Hungary

Latvia

Lithuania

Poland

Romania

Resolution adopted at the 313th Meeting of the General Committee, on October 15, 1958, and endorsed by the 61st Meeting of the Plenary Assembly, on October 23, 1958.

The Assembly of Captive European Nations,

Deeply concerned over the tragic fate both of the unsettled refugees in Europe and of recent escapees who, despite the lack of moral and material incentives, still risk their lives to flee from the Communist-ruled countries;

Noting that, according to the Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the Thirteenth United Nations General Assembly, the number of such unsettled refugees amounts to 178,000, most of whom are still sheltered, under distressing conditions, in refugee camps;

Convinced that the achievements of the peoples of Central-Eastern Europe constitute an integral part of European culture and civilization, and believing that the free world will benefit from a speedy resettlement of refugees and from their participation in and contribution to the life of their new countries;

Considering that the Geneva Convention of 1951 and other international and national measures benefiting refugees have not completely eliminated legal and de facto discrimination against refugees in regard to employment, legal and social protection and travel;

Disturbed by the situation of the more than 10,000 children living in the unhealthy and cramped camps in Europe who continue to be discriminated against by the United Nations Children's Fund in contradiction to its expressed humanitarian purpose;

Desiring to contribute to the resettlement, or integration, and permanent care of the "hard core" of refugees and recognizing that the financial means at the disposal of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international and national governmental and voluntary organizations for service to refugees are insufficient;

SUPPORTS

the plan initiated in the Executive Committee of the United Nations Refugee Fund (UNREF) for the World Refugee Year, the purpose of which would be to focus interest on the refugee problem, and to encourage additional financial contributions, all of which should strengthen the present efforts to solve the refugee problem.

APPEALS

earnestly to the governments of the free world to increase their pledges and contributions for the project of the World Refugee Year in the meetings of the General Assembly on October 27, 1958, thus bringing the refugee problem nearer to an adequate solution.

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS

CAPTIVES D' EUROPE

October 27, 1958

ACEN Doc. No.124 (V) (Soc.)

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FIFTH SESSION



THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES FROM THE CAPTIVE COUNTRIES

Albania
Bulgaria
Czechoslovakia
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Romania

Report adopted by the General Committee and endorsed by the 61st Meeting of the Plenary Assembly, on October 23, 1958, by Mr. Jan Papanek, Czechoslovakia, Rapporteur

The Assembly of Captive European Nations, the membership of which consists of organizations of exiles from Central and Eastern European countries, has the continuing duty and responsibility to concern itself with the problem of refugees, who often wait many years for resettlement. Their stay in refugee camps or in even more miserable conditions outside such camps can only result in the gradual demoralization and physical deterioration of individuals, and in the loss of their usefulness to their nations. Furthermore, the distressing living conditions of the refugees generates negative political consequences since it seems to reflect a diminishing respect and regard for all victims of Communist persecution.

A recapitulation of some of the basic facts concerning the numbers and situation of refugees must necessarily precede any discussion of the problem.

According to the latest report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there remain in Europe some 178,000 non-settled refugees, of which 58,000 are still in camps. In Austria 59,000 refugees remain, in France 36,000, in Germany 60,000, in Greece 10,000, in Italy 11,000 and in Turkey 1,000. The number seems to grow rather than to decrease, though some 22,000 have been re-settled within the last year. Only 12,000 refugees were assisted in other ways, and more than 11,000 needy refugees did not benefit in any way.

The program for camp clearance continues. It is planned to resettle, by the end of 1960, all refugees who have been living in camps for more than ten years. The clearance and closing of camps depends, however, on funds - which are not forthcoming.

According to the latest report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) some 10,000 children still remain in the cramped and unhealthy refugee camps in Europe. The problem is acute

for children of ten years of age, or older and it should have been the primary concern of UNICEF, which has been helping needy children all over the world. However, because of the opposition of the Communist-dominated countries, who are also members of the Fund, refugee children are omitted from this otherwise humanitarian program. It is, therefore, vital to draw the attention of the free governments to this deplorable situation.

The great problem of the handicapped, the aged, the sick, the disabled and other "hard core" refugees remains. In this respect the generosity of several smaller Western European nations has permitted some progress to be made. Some is evident also in the legal protection, travel facilities (travel documents, etc.) granted to refugees and in the increasing equality of their treatment as regards working conditions, social security benefits, etc. However, much remains to be done in all these fields.

The governments and peoples of Western Europe - the Scandinavian countries, the Benelux countries, France, Great Britain, Italy, Germany, Austria and the countries of the Western Hemisphere - the United States, Canada, Australia and many others - generously have contributed to the solution of the refugee problem and to the improvement of the lot of these unfortunate people.

When asking for continued support from various governments of the free world, particularly the United States government and its people, it is important to bear in mind what the United States has already done for refugees and what is the present situation. In this respect it should be noted that since 1952 a special program, known as the United States Escapee Program, has given considerable assistance, both financial and material, to some 300,000 refugees and has financed the resettlement of 90,000 refugees.

Furthermore, of the 2,600,217 immigrants to the United States in the period 1946-1957, 713,531 were refugees. The direct expenditure connected with their resettlement amounted to \$926,000,000. The refugees entered the United States under the basic U.S. immigration laws, under the President's directive of 1945, the Displaced persons Act of 1948, the Refugee Relief Act of 1952, and are now entering under Public Law No. 85-316 of 1957. A special law was passed in August 1958 admitting Hungarian parolees for permanent residence as of the date of their entry. This applies to Hungarians who have lived in the United States for two years.

The remarkable speed and effectiveness with which the problem of Hungarian refugees was dealt with and solved following the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution, in the Autumn of 1956, conclusively proves that even the greatest difficulties can be overcome by concerted international and national action, both on the governmental and the non-governmental level, given a fervent will and desire for action.

Within a few weeks, at the end of 1956 and the beginning of 1957, more than 180,000 Hungarian refugees escaped to Austria. Today all but some 18,000 are permanently resettled. According to the newest plans the remaining unsettled refugees will be permanently settled within one year. Some 20,000 Hungarians who escaped to Yugoslavia have already been resettled.

The mortgaging of quotas, which are very small for Central and East European countries, and which stopped immigration for many years, has been abolished, so that the possibilities of immigration to the U.S. under basic immigration laws have tremendously increased.

Permanent residence visas for the United States can be granted to refugees from the nine captive European countries under the following conditions:

Albania:	to refugees who applied before September 20, 1950
Bulgaria:	to refugees who applied before January, 1954
Czechoslovakia:	the quota is current, i.e. open
Estonia:	to refugees who applied before April, 1952
Latvia:	to refugees who applied before July, 1951
Lithuania:	to refugees who applied before February, 1951
Poland:	to refugees who applied before June, 1954

Visas are not at present available for applicants from Hungary and Romania

Under the provisions of another law, those admitted to the United States on a temporary basis are now enabled to become permanent residents without having first to leave and to be re-admitted to the United States. Diplomats and other official representatives of foreign countries can too become permanent residents. Under certain conditions, some "hard core" refugees, who were formerly not admitted - because of illness, for example - can now enter the United States.

With regard to the United States, it is to be hoped that the United States Escapee Program will continue its work on the same scale as hitherto and that the present immigration quotas, which discriminate against the Central and Eastern European countries, will be revised.

On the international level, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should be provided with the funds necessary to carry out planned programs through the medium of the General Assembly of the United Nations, where refugee problems are debated.

The question of a World Refugee Year has been under discussion for several months. The Executive Committee of the United Nations Refugee Fund, during its September meeting, passed a resolution supporting the idea and asked the High Commissioner to bring it to the attention of the General Assembly. The purpose of the World Refugee Year would be to focus interest on the refugee problem and to encourage additional financial contributions both from governmental and voluntary agencies and from the general public. This plan will be discussed by the current session of the United Nations General Assembly.

It should be stressed that the only justification for adopting the proposal concerning the "World Refugee Year" is the expectation that this initiative will not result in mere empty declarations by governments but in the allocation of the necessary funds. It is also to be hoped that this same initiative will not result in shifting this task to non-governmental organizations, which are already taxed to the limit of their resources.

During recent years the United Nations has exerted moral pressure on its members, requesting them to pledge financial contributions in order to solve the refugee problem. For that purpose the General Assembly will meet as an ad hoc Committee of the Whole, when governments will pledge their contributions to the UNHCR to enable him to carry out his approved program. This pledging meeting will be held on October 27, 1958.

With this in view, the General Committee has approved both this report and the draft resolution on the Problem of Refugees from the captive countries. Both documents have already been transmitted to the non-Communist delegations to the United Nations.

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS

CAPTIVES D' EUROPE



October 27, 1958
ACEN RES/PA No.129 (V) (Pol.)
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FIFTH SESSION

SOVIET "CO-EXISTENCE" OFFENSIVE

Resolution unanimously adopted by the 62nd
Meeting of the Plenary Assembly on October
24, 1958.

Albania
Bulgaria
Czechoslovakia
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Romania

The Assembly of Captive European Nations,

Noting that, evidently on the order of its Soviet masters, the Delegation of the Czechoslovak Communist regime, on October 8, 1958, proposed for adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations a Draft Declaration on Measures Aimed at the Implementation and Promotion of Peaceful and Neighbourly Relations Among States (Doc A/SPC/L.24);

Pointing out that the afore-mentioned Draft Declaration suggests that "peaceful and neighbourly relations among nations" be based, among others, upon "respect for the principle of equality and self-determination of nations," as well as upon "non-aggression respect for each other's sovereignty, ...territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries," and recommends "the development of cooperation in the field of economy, culture, science, and technology" as well as "the dissemination of the ideas of peaceful co-existence among nations in schools, in the press, on radio and television programs;"

Reminding that the afore-mentioned Draft Declaration is, in substance, but a repetition of a Draft Declaration (A/3673) proposed by the Delegation of the Soviet Union in the 12th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations;

Emphasizing that the factual policy of the Communist dictators who, by force, threat to use force, subversion and intervention, imposed their alien domination over nine formerly sovereign states of Central and Eastern Europe and on a part of another sovereign state - Germany - has cynically violated and continues to violate the principles of equality and respect for the sovereignty of states, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and of the self-determination of nations;

Recalling that the intensification of the Soviet "co-existence campaign" has always followed acts of Soviet aggression and intervention, such as the recent savage suppression of the Hungarian national revolution;

Considering that the Communist-proposed promotion of peaceful and neighbourly relations among states is merely a tactical political move, aiming at the moral, political, and military disarmament of the free world the condonation of Soviet aggression and consolidation of its conquests in Europe and Asia, the international recognition of the present status quo in East-Central Europe and, thus, at furthering the Kremlin's goal to extend its domination over the entire world;

Recalling the Resolution of the Assembly of Captive European Nations on the same subject, dated December 11, 1957 (ACEN Doc. No. 102);

Resolves to urge the Delegations of the free member-states of the United Nations that, instead of considering the repetitious and hypocritical proposals of the Delegations of the Communist regimes, they pass a declaration

(1) Stating inter alia that normal peaceful and good neighbourly relations among states should and must be based

on strict observance by the governments of these states of the provisions of the United Nations Charter requiring "the suppression of acts of aggression" and the "respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples";

on the solemn war-time obligations of the Great Powers, including the Soviet Union, to restore "the sovereign rights and independence of which they (these nations) were forcibly deprived by aggressor nations," all peoples having "the right to choose the form of government under which they will live" (Declaration on Liberated Europe of February 11, 1945);

on mutual treaty obligations and general principles of international law; and

on loyal compliance with the decisions of the United Nations;

(2) Recommending that all governments of the member-states take measures for the dissemination of these ideas of genuine peaceful co-existence of states and reign of law in international relations in the schools, in the press, on radio and television programs - as a major moral and political requirement of our century and a challenge to our generation.

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS

CAPTIVES D' EUROPE



October 27, 1958

ACEN Res/PA No. 130 (V) (Pol)

FIFTH SESSION

THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC

Resolution unanimously adopted by the
63rd Meeting of the Plenary Assembly,
October 24th, 1958

Albania
Bulgaria
Czechoslovakia
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Romania

The Assembly of Captive European Nations,

in commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the
proclamation of the Czechoslovak Republic,

renders homage to the Czechoslovak nation for its achievements
during the period of its independence;

condemns once again the suppression of the Czechoslovak
independence by one totalitarian power in 1939 and by another
in 1948;

declares its solidarity with the Czechoslovak people in
their struggle to regain freedom and independence;

expresses its conviction that the determined joint efforts
of all the captive peoples, assisted by the free world, will
bring about the restoration of independence and freedom to the
now-captive nations of East-Central Europe and the integration
of the whole of Europe in freedom.

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS

CAPTIVES D' EUROPE

FIFTH SESSION

October 30, 1958
ACEN RES/PA 131 (V) Gen
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UNITED NATIONS DAY (I)

Resolution unanimously adopted by the
61st Meeting of the Plenary Assembly,
October 23, 1958

Albania
Bulgaria
Czechoslovakia
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland
Romania

The Assembly of Captive European Nations,

Considering that October 24th has been proclaimed United Nations Day;

RESOLVES

that the following message be sent forthwith under the signature of the Chairman, to the President of the Thirteenth General Assembly of the United Nations:

" On this United Nations Day it is my privilege to convey to you, Mr. President, in the name of the Assembly of Captive European Nations, now in session, the good wishes of the enslaved peoples of Central and Eastern Europe.

We are certain that our peoples will pray on this day that the free members of the United Nations will re-dedicate themselves to the purpose and principles embodied in the United Nations Charter and that they will tirelessly strive to develop the world organization into a body capable of enforcing its decisions and of compelling all states to observe the law of nations as well as the rights of man.

In all sincerity we must express on this day our concern at certain trends which have become more and more apparent through the past few years. First, while making persistent and frequently successful efforts to help non-self-governing peoples in certain parts of the world to achieve statehood, the United Nations turned and continues to turn a deaf ear to the plea of our once-independent nations to be helped to regain freedom and is treating the tools of the alien oppressor of our countries as lawful governments, thus placing the seal of its authority on the bondage of our peoples.

October 30, 1958
ACEN RES/PA 131 (V) Gen.
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Secondly, while subjecting free member nations to pressures and enforcement measures, the United Nations has permitted the Soviet Union, the state which has enslaved our nations, to flout the will of the majority and at the same time use the processes of the Charter to undermine and to divide the free nations.

Since these trends have lent substance to the charge that a double standard prevails in the United Nations we respectfully voice the hope of the people of Central and Eastern Europe that the free nations, under the guidance of enlightened statesmen like yourself, will remedy the situation in order to ensure that the United Nations fulfil its mission of maintaining peace with justice and respect for human dignity."

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS

ASSEMBLÉE DES NATIONS CAPTIVES D' EUROPE



FIFTH SESSION

October 30, 1958
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UNITED NATIONS DAY (II)

The Assembly of Captive European Nations,

Considering that October 24th has been proclaimed United Nations Day;

RESOLVES

that the following message be sent forthwith, under the signature of the Chairman, to the Secretary General of the United Nations:

" On this United Nations Day the Assembly of Captive European Nations, now in session, joins those wishing the United Nations success in the fulfillment of its mission of worldwide importance. May we respectfully urge your Excellency on this occasion to consider ways and means to carry out the tasks conferred upon the Secretary General of the United Nations by the General Assembly Resolutions 1004 (ESII) paragraph 4, 1005 (ESII) paragraph 3, 1127 (XI) paragraph 1, 1130 (XI) paragraph 3, 1131 (XI) paragraph 5 and 1132 (XI) paragraph 6.

It is our conviction that in making all possible efforts to bring about compliance with decisions of the General Assembly Your Excellency would serve the cause of justice and, at the same time, help to strengthen the authority of the world organization."

Albania

Bulgaria

Czechoslovakia

Estonia

Hungary

Latvia

Lithuania

Poland

Romania

RUSSIAN COLONIALISM

The Tzarist and Soviet Empires

by

Włodzimierz Baczkowski

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The author, Włodzimierz Baczkowski, is a former secretary-general of the Institute for the Near and Middle East in Jerusalem and Beirut.

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Chapter 4

Russian colonialism: the Tsarist and Soviet empires by Włodzimierz Baczkowski

Before proceeding to analyze Russian colonialism in its Tsarist and Soviet manifestations, it may be necessary to establish its very existence as a historic fact. That this necessity persists is obviously, as has been mentioned in previous chapters, the result of the historical accident that most of the other great modern colonial empires have extended overseas, with the colonial territories located elsewhere than on the continent of Europe, where most of the colonial powers were themselves situated. To argue from this accident that intervening waters are an essential factor in identifying a "colonial empire" would, of course, be ridiculous, and such an absurd line of reasoning is not usually found stated explicitly. It is, nevertheless, the implicit assumption underlying such oddities as a chapter on "Colonial Empires" in

a standard textbook on political geography¹ which dwells at length on the colonies of the western European powers, but fails to make even a passing reference to Russia as a colonial power.

The only valid definition of a colony—in the political sense used here—is that it is a political unit for which the important political decisions are made elsewhere, by a foreign government, often in the interests of the colonial power and its people, whether they have remained at home or have settled in the colony. Discussion of the applicability of this definition to territories comprised within the Tsarist and Soviet empires is the task of this chapter.

The early Tsarist empire

The history of Russia from the expulsion of the Tatars about 1480 to the outbreak of war in 1914 is one of almost continuous expansion, by military conquest, by peaceful annexation, or by pioneering settlement. The first stage lasted from the rise of the grand duchy of Moscow under Tatar domination in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries until 1552, and consisted of the absorption of neighboring Russian-inhabited territories adjoining Moscow in every direction. As these were incorporated directly into the Russian state, no colonialism resulted.

In 1552 the conquest of Kazan, capital of a Moslem Tatar khanate on the middle Volga, inaugurated the second phase, the extension of Russian rule over non-Russian peoples. This was promptly advanced by the conquest in 1554-1556 of a second Tatar khanate, Astrakhan on the lower Volga, which gave Russia access to the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus, and left the Crimea and Kuban the sole Tatar enclaves in European Russia. Kazan and Astrakhan were incorporated into the Tsarist state, and both the political units and the remaining inhabitants—for many of the Tatar nomads emigrated—lost their national identity.

In a simultaneous expansion toward the north—where the Arctic Ocean had been reached by 1487, and the sea route around the North Cape to Archangel in the White Sea was discovered in 1555 by the English—and the northeast, the Finnic forest and tundra tribes were overrun and absorbed.

The conquest of Kazan led immediately to a rapid push in an easterly direction. In 1555 Yagadir, the Moslem ruler of western Siberia, became a vassal of Moscow and began to pay a yearly tribute. In 1558 a family of aggressive merchants, the Stroganovs, secured a land concession on the Kama river east of Moscow, and in 1581 they started the systematic penetration of the vast spaces of Siberia, setting up an ever-expanding network of trading posts and claiming large territories on both sides of the Ural mountains. Between 1581 and his death in 1584, an energetic adventurer in Stroganov employ, Yermak Timofeyevich, using firearms against tribes armed only with bows and arrows, opened up western Siberia as far as the Ob and Irtysh rivers, where Tobolsk was founded in 1587 at the confluence of the Irtysh and the Tobol.²

Throughout the seventeenth century the Muscovite state extended and consolidated its holdings in Siberia, by subjecting the scattered ill-armed tribes, building fortresses, and exacting taxes. Omsk was built on the Toma river in 1604 by Russian explorers. They reached the Yenisei river in 1618 and the Lena in 1628, building Yakutsk there in 1632. A Siberian department was established in the Moscow government in 1637, and soon became infamous for its corruption and its harsh extortionate methods, which caused many natives to flee to China and leave the land empty for Russian settlement.

In 1648 the fast-moving pioneers reached both the Arctic Ocean at Kolima and the Chinese frontier on the Amur river. By 1649 the continent had been crossed and Okhotsk founded on the Pacific seaboard; in 1652 Irkutsk was built on Lake Baikal; in 1665, Albazin on the Amur; and in 1697

the exploratory phase ended with *Atlasov's discovery of Kamchatka*.⁵

This penetration had been amazingly swift, brutal, and unscrupulous. For greed and sheer disregard of human rights it rivaled the Spanish rape of Mexico and Peru. Thus it falls into the class of imperialisms entailing the virtual annihilation or expulsion of most of the subjected peoples, or elsewhere their decimation and utter spoliation. The slowly increasing flow of Russian settlers colonized the relatively small area fit for agriculture, yet no political relationship of a colonial type ensued, but rather a gradual development of equality within a larger unit, roughly comparable to the swifter progress in the westward settlement of North America, or to the contemporary development of the interior of Brazil.

Thus by the middle of the seventeenth century the Russian state controlled an area nearly coterminous with the present Russian S.F.S. Republic. Kamchatka was shortly added, rounding it out in the northeast; only the Amur province and of course Sakhalin and the Kuriles were lacking in the southeast; the long southern frontier from the Amur to the Urals was virtually identical. The northern Caucasus was missing, but the Tsar controlled parts of the present Kazakh, Ukrainian, and Karelian Soviet Socialist Republics by way of compensation. And throughout this vast expanse, no political colonialism existed, because the conquered peoples either had been annihilated or expelled, or had been subjected and deprived of national identity.

The Tsarist colonial empire

Peter the Great is usually cited as the Tsar who diverted Russian expansionism from the Asiatic theater to that of Europe, but actually this shift occurred under Alexis I (1645-1655). Just when the trans-Siberian impetus was diminishing after the mid-century attainment of the Pacific, a

new opportunity for expansion developed in the Ukraine. The Lithuanians and Poles, who had previously blocked Russian expansion westward and southward, had been unable to organize a permanent state which could make effective partners of the Ukrainians and Belorussians, yet neither of these peoples had been able to establish its own independence. After an interlude under Cossack hegemony, the eastern Ukraine took the first step toward annexation by Russia in the agreement of Pereiaslav in March 1654, under which it accepted Russian protection but retained its autonomy and the right to conduct its own foreign affairs, though under Russian supervision. The eastern Ukraine also was to have its own armed forces, and the office of head of state—the Hetman—was to be elective, with only the final result of the elections to be communicated to Moscow. The vagueness of the text of this agreement, however, afforded Russia a pretext to meddle in Ukrainian internal affairs, leading eventually to the abolition of the office of Hetman and, by the 1667 peace of Andruskovo, to the partition of the Ukraine between Russia and Poland.⁶ Kiev and the surrounding region were definitively incorporated into Russia in 1680, and the eastern Ukraine became Russia's first colony, almost simultaneously with the part of Belorussia around Smolensk.⁷

Russian historians who argue that the Ukraine never was really a Russian colony, but always constituted an integral part of the Russian nation, ignore the fact that, immediately after the incorporation of the eastern Ukraine, the Tsarist government commenced the systematic eradication of all manifestations of Ukrainian cultural, religious, linguistic, and economic life. Formally, the annexation of the eastern Ukraine bore all the characteristics of a voluntary union of two kindred nations and the fusion of their peoples and cultures, but the ruthless and persistent attempts at Russification over a quarter of a millennium, negated alternately by passive resistance and by bloody uprisings, are ample

proof of the differences in national characteristics and consciousness.⁶ The failure of the Tsarist policy is evident in the creation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic as a distinct political and cultural unit, and the same process led to an analogous result in Belorussia.

The reign of Peter the Great (1689-1725) was notable not for the extension of his realm, but for its strengthening. With its internal progress we are not concerned, except to note that Russian exploitation of the eastern Ukraine was accelerated, while abroad he seized Azov but was unable to extend his domain to the Black Sea, and so turned westward toward the Baltic. He broke the power of Sweden in 1709, and occupied Karelia, Ingria, Estonia, and northern Latvia (Livonia), obtaining title to them by the 1721 treaty of Nystad. He founded St. Petersburg and forcibly populated it with Russians, but the Tsars held the northern Baltic states in a colonial status, reflected in their independence between the two world wars and their present status as Soviet Republics. Russian troops occupied these lands, plundered the countryside, and decimated the population, but the western ties and superior culture along the Baltic, as later in Poland and Finland, saved them from the full brutality of Russian colonialism, and strengthened their resistance to political oppression and cultural Russification.

Before returning to the imperialism of Tsarist Russia in the south and east, we will note its later western successes. The southern Ukraine, except the Black Sea coast, was annexed before 1740, and the southwestern portion (Yedisan) in 1792. The western Ukraine (Podolia and Volhynia) was almost all obtained in 1793 by the "second partition" of Poland. Portions of Belorussia were acquired by all three partitions, in 1772, 1793, and 1795, with the last of these also including Lithuania and southern Latvia (Courland). Finland was obtained in 1809 and was made an autonomous grand duchy, and a similar autonomy was at first accorded to Poland, acquired in 1815 upon the downfall of Napoleon,

while Bessarabia was annexed in 1812. Tsarist efforts to penetrate the Balkans and acquire the Straits were successfully opposed. Finland and Poland experienced alternating periods of decent treatment and oppression, but were able to resist successfully the pressure of Russification and to retain their national identity, while Lithuania and Bessarabia shared the fate of Estonia and the Ukraine, and were treated as colonies—fairly well by Russian standards, which then as now were unpeasable.

The first successful attempt to conquer the Crimean Tatars in 1677 was followed by others in 1736-1738 and 1771. A ruse finally succeeded where force had failed. Moscow incited an uprising against the khan, tricked him into requesting Russian help, and sent troops which quelled the revolt but did not leave. The formal act proclaiming its incorporation into the Russian state was promulgated by Catherine II in 1783.⁷ To the Tatar population, as formerly to their fellow-Muslims of Kazan and Astrakhan, and thereafter to those of Azerbaijan and Turkmenan, were applied colonial policies which combined religious persecution and forced conversion with the usual economic spoliation and cultural Russification.

With the annexation of Poland in 1815, the Tsarist empire had reached its final magnitude except in three areas—Caucasia, Turkmenan, and the province east of Albasin on the Amur river. Tentative advances had been made in the steppe between the Ural river and the Aral Sea, and southwest of the Irtysh river, in what are now respectively northwestern and northeastern Kazakhstan, but no major conquests either in Turkmenan or in the Far East preceded the acquisition of Poland in 1815, the terminal date for westward Tsarist expansion.

The conquest of the Caucasus was well under way, however, having been facilitated by the 1774 treaty of Küçük-Kainarji, which had ceded to Russia the Kabardinian principalities in the northern Caucasus and had thus afforded

a land route to Georgia, then at war with its Moslem neighbors. An appeal to Russia for assistance led inevitably to Georgian acceptance of protectorate status, in a 1783 agreement which guaranteed internal autonomy. This was promptly violated by Russia, and in 1801 Georgia was incorporated into the Tsarist empire as a province under a Russian governor, followed in 1802 by Mingrelia to the west of Georgia south of the Caucasus range.

In 1804 Russian troops occupied the khanate of Ganja, and this was followed by the surrender of several other autonomous Azeri khanates in western Azerbaijan. In 1806 resistance was finally crushed in the Baku Khanate and other independent principalities of eastern Azerbaijan.⁸ The absorption of Daghestan in 1813 completed the Azeri holdings, now represented by the Azerbaijanian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Acquisition of the remaining parts of Transcaucasia, though subsequent to the gains in Finland and Poland, was not long delayed. Armenia was rounded out in 1828, and acquisition of the eastern coast of the Black Sea in the following year virtually completed the present Armenian and Georgian Republics, though the Tsarist troops in 1878 seized Kara, which has since reverted to Turkey.

By a break of history, Transcaucasia was thus won before the northern slopes of the Caucasus, except for coastal strips and the military road through the central gorge. The inevitable Russian conquest of the isolated mountaineers was to be neither quick nor easy, despite overwhelming superiority in numbers—200,000 in 1856, when only 150,000 were in the Crimea to fight the British and French—and in weapons. The fierce resistance by local tribes, temporarily united under the extraordinarily able leadership of the Circassian Shamil, and the mountainous nature of a terrain ideally suited to defensive guerrilla operations, combined to score many victories and to compel Russia to exert a major war effort in an area where apparently little effective opposition

had been expected—recalling vividly the unexpected difficulty experienced by the Soviet armies in Finland between 1939 and 1943. After 1840 the Tsarist high command used a strategy of encircling and besieging entire mountain ranges, and concentrated powerful artillery and the major part of its forces in the northern Caucasus, sustaining losses which for several years averaged 12,000 men annually. The heroic and hopeless stand of the tribes was crushed piecemeal, and by 1864 Russia had succeeded in occupying the entire region.⁹

Both the relatively advanced, predominantly (70 percent) Moslem Transcaucasians and the north Caucasian mountaineers with their fantastically fragmented ethnic and linguistic subdivisions were subjected to a rigorous colonial domination by the central Tsarist regime.

Russian rule was simultaneously expanding southward into Turkmenia, and by the middle of the nineteenth century had gained control over an area roughly covering contemporary Kazakhstan. This brought it to the borders of the three Moslem khanates of Khiva, Bukhara, and Kokand. In 1865, after a bloody battle, Russian troops occupied Tashkent, the largest city of the Kokand khanate, with a population of 100,000. Two years later this area became the province of Turkmenistan under a Russian governor, General Kaufmann, noted for his cruelty. Under his command in 1868 Russian troops occupied Samarkand in the khanate of Bukhara, a center of Moslem religious and cultural life famed far beyond the borders of Turkmenia. Both these khanates forthwith became vassals of the Tsarist state, and were relegated to colonial status. In 1878 the last independent state in Central Asia, the khanate of Khiva, was occupied and incorporated into Russia's domain.

Only the deserts and steppes of Turkmenistan remained free, but they had proved formidable obstacles to invasions by land routes in the past.¹⁰ Led by the ruthless General Skobelev, troops of the Caucasian military district were

ferried over from Baku and began a new invasion. The conquest of Turkmenistan lasted from the construction of a fortress at the Krasnovodsk bridgehead in 1869, through the storming of Gök-Tepe oasis—fanatically defended with swords and rifles against artillery³⁰—in 1881, to the final capture of Merv oasis in 1884.³¹ The whole of Turkistan, now comprising five Modern Soviet Republics—four Turkic and one, the Tajik, Islamic in language—became typical Tzarist colonies, and will be considered in some detail shortly.

Later efforts to expand further in this region, like similar efforts in the Balkans and Anatolia, made some diplomatic headway before being frustrated. Every move toward the imposition of Tzarist control over Iran and Afghanistan aroused the same British opposition that such moves in Rumania and Bulgaria did. An Anglo-Russian agreement on the partition of Iran in 1907 placed five northern provinces, with approximately three fourths of the population of the country and the cities of Tehran, Tabriz, Meshed, Kerm, Kuchan, Isfahan, and Yezd, in the Russian zone.³² In this zone, as contrasted with the British and neutral zones, an accelerated process was at once initiated of political domination, commercial penetration, and financial pressure. For all practical purposes, Tabriz was ruled by Russian "consuls." Iranians who did not object to Russification were issued Russian passports. Tehran street names were indicated in Russian and Persian. In fact, northern Iran was slowly being reduced to the status of Turkistan, and was saved from formal Tzarist absorption only by war and the Bolshevik revolution.³³

It was this revolution, also, which frustrated Tzarist plans for seizing control of Constantinople and the Straits, and from assisting in partitioning Anatolia and creating a large Armenian vassal state.³⁴ Russian imperialism had gone, by 1917, through three phases: expansionism without colonialism, in most of the present Russian S.F.S. Republic;

colonialist expansionism, in the present constituent republics and autonomous regions within the Russian republic; and unsuccessful attempts to expand still further.

Among these unsuccessful efforts must be mentioned the Tzarist overseas leap into North America, which proved unfeasible and ended with the sale of Alaska to the United States in 1867.

More productive was the renewed push in southeastern Siberia. By a series of treaties the Tzarist government extorted from a weakened China territorial and commercial concessions: everything west of the Amur river in 1858, the Primorie region including the coastal province of Vladivostok in 1860, and northern Sakhalin in 1875. Construction of the trans-Siberian railway opened the country for settlement; China was forced to permit its extension across Manchuria in 1901, and in 1898 Russia concluded a 25-year lease on the Liaotung peninsula. Using the Boxer rebellion as a pretext, the Tzarist government seized Manchuria in 1901, and only defeat by Japan in 1905 halted this wave of Russian expansionism; southern Manchuria became a Japanese sphere of influence, but the northern section became virtually a Russian colony.³⁵

The 1911 revolution in China provided a new opportunity, and in January 1912 Russia demanded independence for Mongolia under Chinese suzerainty.³⁶ Mongolia, like northern Manchuria, was destined to be a Russian colony, though only a few years remained before the collapse of the Tzarist empire and the temporary contraction of Russian imperialism. But the Vladivostok region and other areas of the Far East incorporated into that empire, and comprised in the present Russian S.F.S. Republic, cannot be legitimately termed colonial, as was true of the earliest Siberian acquisitions.

This review of the birth and growth of the Tzarist empire traces its territorial expansion from the late fifteenth century to the Bolshevik revolution. During this period its

area grew from approximately 14,000 square miles to over eight and a half million, or about sixty times its original size. About three fourths of this vast expanse was directly integrated into Russia, and hence largely non-colonial, but over two million square miles were treated by the Tsarist government as colonial territories.

The colonial policies of Tsarist Russia

It is easy to identify a western European colony, whether contiguous to its motherland or located overseas, by determining its actual amount of autonomy and the locus of critical political decisions. It is more difficult in the case of Tsarist Russia, where no region—except Finland and occasionally Poland—was permitted any real autonomy, and where all important decisions were made in Moscow in complete disregard for the preferences of the provinces or peoples affected. It is not impossible, however; in areas where the population was annihilated, or expelled, or enslaved, or expropriated and left to starve, and into which Russian settlers were introduced and allotted the best fields and forests, the territory became an extension of Russia rather than a colonial dependency.

As a rough rule of thumb, regions now nominally autonomous—either as constituent republics or as units within the Russian S.F.S. Republic—were treated even in Tsarist days as colonies; the rest of the present nuclear republic was not. It is of interest to examine the Russian concept of colonialism as it manifested itself in the words and deeds of the Tsarist government. At the beginning of the 1864 Russian offensive in Turkestan the foreign minister, Prince Alexander M. Gorchakov, explained Russian aims and territorial ambitions in a note to the Western powers, asserting that his country's action was very similar to those of France in Africa, of Great Britain in India, and of the Netherlands in

Indonesia.¹⁷ Actually it resembled them at their worst, without any of their redeeming features.

Mention has already been made of the unscrupulous methods by which Russia acquired its colonies: force in Siberia and Turkestan and the northern Caucasus, trickery in the Crimea, perjury and treachery in Georgia and the Ukraine. The stress laid by Russian historians on the alleged liberative character of the wars conducted by Moscow against the nomadic tribes of Eurasia has only a limited basis of truth in the original expulsion of the Tatars, and none whatever thereafter.

Even these "liberators"—the early Muscovite princes—are described by Russia's foremost historiographer as "robbers of the most unblushing type."¹⁸ A renowned historian of Russian culture is even more forceful:

If one had asked those Moscow dukes what they would do if they were freed [from the Mongols], they would surely have been unable to evolve any program other than the old traditional one, which had become instinctive: to crave still more, to hoard, deceive, and violate with the sole aim of securing as much power as possible and accumulating the largest amount of money.¹⁹

After freeing Muscovy from the Tatar yoke, these princes indulged their greed and lust for power unconstrainedly, ceaselessly building up their armed forces, acquiring new territories, and consolidating these into springboards for further conquests.

Neither did the acquisitive character of Russian policy change in succeeding eras, regardless of a greater . . . admixture of ideological slogans. Russia's part in the Napoleonic wars was far from altruistic, and the annexation of Finland, Poland, and Bessarabia were no deeds of compassion by any stretch of the imagination.²⁰

After conquering a region, the Tsarist government varied its policies according to the nature of the inhabitants. In

the western borderlands it was the least oppressive, stressing cultural Russification. In relatively empty areas such as Siberia, the natives were disposessed and decimated. Trading posts surrounded by stockades and manned by military garrisons were established, as in America and Africa in the early days, and the natives were induced to barter merchandise for "free water" and trinkets. Like the Spanish *conquistadores* in Central and South America, the Russian pioneers exacted tribute from the natives, in the form of costly furs, and crushed all resistance with incredible brutality. This dual policy was initiated unofficially by the first arrivals, and was then systematized into an orderly pattern of exploitation upon the arrival of representatives of the Tsarist government.¹⁴ In the "colonial" areas, military and political subjugation and economic oppression were emphasized.

The cruelest aspect of Russian imperialist policy was the callous expropriation of the best fields, grazing lands, and forests. In the Kazan khanate Moscow boyars appropriated large estates in addition to the lands for which they received official Tsarist grants. A similar policy was applied in central Siberia and the Altai mountain region in the eighteenth century, where the natives were forced to pay exorbitant taxes with furs. The same ruthless policy led to the extinction of entire tribes on the Kamchatka peninsula. During the reign of Peter the Great much of the arable land and the forest in the foothills of the southern Urals was confiscated for the location of large factories, and the expropriated population was indentured as peasant labor in the surrounding countryside. Adventurers acquired vast estates from the Bashkirs for almost nothing by misrepresenting the value of the Russian currency and similar frauds. In Kazakhstan, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Cossacks and colonists also appropriated the best grazing lands. Later in the century, the same thing happened to the agricultural regions of the northern Caucasus.¹⁵

Colonization of occupied lands and expulsion of the

natives into barren areas became the cornerstone of Tsarist imperialist policy. By burdening the inhabitants with excessive taxes and compulsory labor for state works, the Russians compelled them to migrate to other less advantageous parts of the country, or flee across the borders. Russian settlers moved in, and in the long run changed the ethnic characteristics of these regions, such as Bashkiriya and northern Kazakhstan, where local inhabitants were displaced by colonists and by Cossack garrisons.¹⁶

Even in the twentieth century this policy was applied unchanged. From 1907 to 1913, 2,600,000 hectares of land were taken from the Kazaks* by the Stolypin bill. In 1914 the Kalmyks were disposessed of a million hectares, and the expropriated land was leased to Russians at unusually low fees. A similar situation prevailed in Kirghiz and Buryat territory, as well as in the lands bordering the Black Sea. This policy inevitably led to the impoverishment of non-Russian peoples and the eventual extinction of whole tribes, like the Ostiaks.¹⁷

Resettlement of whole segments of the population was by no means a rare occurrence. During the conquest of the northern Caucasus, for example, about 420,000 mountain people were expelled to Turkey under inhuman conditions, and another 90,000 were resettled on the plains of the Kuban river and along the river Laha.¹⁸

Colonial nations of western Europe have been severely criticized for using missionaries and Christianity to gain possession of the souls of their colonial peoples and thus forge a stronger link with the motherland. Russia used similar methods, only cruder and more direct.

After the conquest of Kazan, the Tsarist government ordered the razing of mosques and the compulsory "conversion" of Moslems and pagans to the Orthodox faith;

*Kazak is the correct spelling, but Kazakh is the official Soviet form.

recalcitrance was severely punished. More than 400,000 people were baptized in the region of the middle Volga during the seventeenth century, most of them presumably involuntarily. Those who clung to the faith of their fathers were either lured with rosy promises or persecuted by being assessed additional taxes, beaten, or banished. Analogous policies were applied in the Crimea: mosques were turned into churches, tombs were used as building material, and historic structures associated with the glories of the Crimean Tatar past were wantonly destroyed.¹¹

That such proselytizing was dictated by political considerations rather than by reasons of faith is evident from the seventeenth-century ban on baptism in Siberia, because neophytes were released from the duty of paying the *yasak*, the tax paid in furs.¹²

In assessing Tzarist colonial policy, it is clear that the same methods were applied both to colonial dependencies within the imperial frontiers and to other areas more closely integrated politically and ethnically. Forced "conversion" was applied to all pagan and Moslem peoples, though not with equal vigor and success, and occasionally also to Jews and non-Orthodox Christians. Where ethnic Russification succeeded, the colonial relationship dwindled and vanished; cultural Russification had no complete successes in Tzarist times, and resistance to it probably kept national identity alive in the spirits of many subject peoples, to burst into view the instant the fierce clench of Tzarist Russia was loosened by the revolution.

The disintegration of the Tzarist empire

The strains of war and the effects of centuries of despotic misrule led to the complete collapse of the Tzarist government, and to a vicious and confused struggle among rival groups competing for power within the vast Russian territory. Immediately the subject nations began to throw

off their colonial shackles and proclaim their autonomy or independence, and for a brief period this process was accepted by the new Bolshevik masters of Russia as irrefutable proof of Tzarist imperialist tyranny, which indeed it was. For convenience, these uprisings will be briefly reviewed in geographical order—counterclockwise from the northwest—rather than chronological.

Finland, which had enjoyed considerable autonomy since its 1809 incorporation into the Russian empire as a grand duchy, proclaimed its independence on December 6, 1917. Ingria also attempted to claim status as a free nation. Estonia was declared an independent state on February 24, 1918; Latvia, on November 18, 1918; and Lithuania, on December 11, 1917, by proclamation of the Lithuanian National Council, which established close ties with Germany in military matters, communications, customs, and currency. Germany's defeat gave Lithuania the opportunity to discard these entanglements and establish full independence.

Polish portions of Russia were reunited with the areas allotted, in the partitions, to Prussia and Austria, and a free Poland was established on November 9, 1918. Belorussians also declared their intention of organizing their own democratic national independent state. The first all-Belorussian congress was convened in Minsk on December 18, 1917, attended by 1,872 delegates from the provinces of Minsk, Mogilev, Vitebsk, Smolensk, Vilna, and Grodno. These delegates, representing all social strata, rejected the Bolshevik Soviets and passed a resolution establishing a democratic republic.¹³

On the vast plains of the Ukraine, the cry of national independence was eagerly taken up. On November 20, 1917, the Ukrainian Central National Council proclaimed a people's republic extending to the ethnographic frontiers, but qualified this—in order to placate the Russians who by then formed a majority in Kiev and other Ukrainian cities—by providing for federation with Russia.¹⁴ Transcarpathia broke

away, but wavered between independence and attaching itself to Rumania.

On May 5, 1917, about 1,500 delegates representing all parts of the Crimean peninsula met at Simferopol in a constituent assembly to proclaim the cultural autonomy of the Crimea, and seven months later, following the Ukrainian declaration of independence—which incidentally, specifically asserted "Crimea for the Crimeans"—the Crimea severed all ties with Russia. The decisive date was December 26, 1917, when the Tatar parliament approved a constitution establishing a democratic Crimean republic.²²

Transcaucasia, threatened by anarchy from the north, seized the opportunity to realize its long-cherished dream of independence, and on April 28, 1918, proclaimed a free democratic federated Transcaucasian republic, to include Georgians, Armenians, and Azerbaijanis. Foreign influences, however, caused intense disagreements, with the Azerbaijanis gravitating toward Turkey while the Armenians and Georgians feared Turkish invasion. This disunity resulted in the collapse of the federation and the establishment of three independent republics: Georgia, as of May 26, 1918, and Armenia and Azerbaijan two days later. The tribes of the northern Caucasus, whose fierce yearning for freedom dated from the days of Shamil, issued a joint declaration of independence on May 11, 1918.²³

The trans-Volga Tatars tried to establish their autonomy. The first all-Russian Muslim congress, which opened at Moscow on May 1, 1917, voted by 446 to 271 to approve a federal union with Russia, with full political and cultural autonomy for each nationality. The second Muslim congress, held at Kazan on July 21, 1917, confirmed this decision, and a national assembly, convoked at Ufa on November 20, 1917, created ministries of religious affairs, education, and finance, and laid the foundations for the first government of the Autonomous Tatar Region of the Middle Volga.²⁴

Turkmen also evinced a desire for national independence,

as was natural considering the recency of its subjugation, the brutality of its treatment, and its utter ethnic and religious dissimilarity to everything Russian—Tsarist or Bolshevik. On December 9, 1917, a Muslim congress met at Khokand and proclaimed the autonomy of (southern) Turkmen within the framework of a democratic Russian federal republic, appointing a government to rule the area of the former government-general of Turkmen. In the same month, the "Öläh-Örda" party convened a congress of Kanks at Orenburg, which deliberated from December 18 to 26 and proclaimed the autonomy of Kank lands, appointing a cabinet which collaborated closely with the government of Turkmen. Thus Mahamedjan Tinisbayev was simultaneously premier of Turkmen and minister of the interior in the Öläh-Örda government, and for a short time Mustafa Chokai-Oglu was minister of foreign affairs for both at once.²⁵

Cossacks inhabit the regions of the Kuban and Terek rivers in the northern Caucasus, the basins of the Don and Donets rivers, and the steppes of the lower Volga. Some Cossacks are also found in the Ural river basin north of the Caspian Sea, the Orenburg Cossacks live in southwestern Siberia, and other Cossack groups are settled in the trans-Baikal region and along the Amur river. A separatist movement flared up immediately after the Bolshevik revolution, but three attempts between 1917 and 1919 to create an autonomous state embracing the area of the Don, Kuban, and Terek were crushed by Moscow. On the fourth attempt a Cossack congress, called the "high assembly of the Don, Kuban, and Terek," was convened at Ekaterinograd on January 5, 1920, and five days later proclaimed the unification of all Cossack territories in an "independent federal Cossack republic." Owing to military defeat this belated decision was never put into effect.²⁶

In addition to these major separatist movements of 1917-1920, attempts were made elsewhere in the defunct Tsarist

empire to secure autonomy for various peoples in the Far East, for the Bashkirs and the Buryats, and for others.

The collapse of Russian power proved to be a temporary phenomenon, as did the manifestations of Bolshevik sympathy for resurgent nationalisms. Only the western borderland—Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland—managed to maintain their sovereignty, and they had to fight Soviet armies to do so. The other provinces and borderlands lost their autonomy as soon as the Bolsheviks were sufficiently secure in their internal position to give thought to the reconquest of Russia's erstwhile colonies.

Lenin's views on the self-determination of peoples

Colonial powers have used various ideological concepts to justify their colonial policies. In the nineteenth century, these stressed the alleged superiority of the white race and its duties toward the colored peoples, or the dissemination of a higher form of religion; in the twentieth, the need for raising the economic level of under-developed areas, or for the diffusion of medical and technological skills.

The Soviet empire has likewise based its official pronouncements on colonial policy on an ideological premise. This "Leninist policy of nationalities" stressed the validity of national practices and the necessity of a policy of concessions with respect to the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union.

The nature and principles of this Leninist policy have been analyzed in some detail by Schlesinger, Towster, Pipes, and others.¹⁴ Less attention has been paid to Lenin's own statements on the subject and to the evolution of his views on nationalism, which throw a revealing light on the very essence of his policy.

The cornerstone of Lenin's philosophy was doctrinaire internationalism and anti-nationalism. In 1915 he wrote, "Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism even if

the latter is just, irreproachable, and civilized. Marxism is moving forward ahead of every nationalism as an international idea of the amalgamation of all nations into a higher whole. . . ."¹⁵ It was fundamental to his position that "The idea of national culture is bourgeois and often a clerical imposture. Our slogan remains: The international culture of democracy and the worldwide labor movement."¹⁶ This is typical of his many statements on the subject.

Lenin's views were, by his own formulations of them, decidedly hostile to every form of nationalism. What, then, was the origin of the various Bolshevik maxims proclaiming the right of nationalities to self-determination—maxims which later led to repeated acknowledgment of the peoples' theoretical right to secede from the Soviet Union and create separate national states? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to return to the events of the period from 1905 to 1914 and to consider their impact upon Lenin's thinking.

He was doubtless aware that one of the most important factors in Russia's defeat by Japan, and the principal cause of the 1905 revolution, had been the revival of national consciousness among the colonial peoples of the Tsarist empire. In Finland there had developed strong pressure for self-government and the restoration of the Finnish constitution, which had been suspended in 1902. In Poland the struggle against Russian occupation had intensified, while Belorussia and the Ukraine had shown signs of restlessness. In Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan the peasants had risen against estate owners and against national oppression. Among the Tatars of the Volga region a national Moslem movement had demanded abolition of the existing restrictions on their religious practice. Simultaneously, separatist movements were increasing in Austria-Hungary, the downfall of Ottoman Turkey was drawing nearer, and a demand for unrestricted sovereign autonomy was growing in China, India, Persia, and elsewhere.

Lenin had watched these developments closely, and had assessed their importance:

In eastern Europe and in Asia, the period of the democratic revolution of the bourgeoisie began in 1905. The revolutions in Russia, Persia, Turkey, and China, the Balkan wars, form a chain of world events of our epoch. . . . In that chain of events only a blind man will fail to notice the number of democratic national movements and the tendency toward the creation of nationally independent . . . states.²⁰

From that insight he had proceeded to a logical conclusion: "the necessity for the Communist proletariat of all countries to deal with special care with the obsolete national feelings in the countries longest oppressed."²¹

Nevertheless, Lenin had never intended to relinquish the doctrine of internationalism and the "supra-national" unity of peoples. In his opinion caution and concessions were only a means to accelerate the decline of national feelings: "It is necessary to make some concessions in order more quickly to exterminate national distrust and superstitions."²² He repeatedly explained this policy of concession: "Propaganda of the right to self-determination is of great importance in the fight against the disease of nationalism in all its forms."²³

Pointing out that 57 percent of the population of the Tsarist empire was non-Russian, Lenin wrote in 1916: "The particularly strong reactionism of the Russian Puryshkevichs [Vladimir M. Puryshkevich, a Russian *duma* deputy, was representative of the reactionary point of view] will increase and intensify . . . separatist tendencies among oppressed peoples, who sometimes enjoy more freedom in neighboring countries."²⁴

Lenin conceived of propaganda for self-determination as a tactical weapon to be used with great caution. He stressed that the recognition of the right to self-determination should

not be interpreted as an encouragement of the peoples to avoid separation: "A nation's right to self-determination . . . should not be linked with the problem of whether such self-determination is in fact expedient. Such a matter should be decided independently in each individual case in conformity with the interests of the class struggle and of the proletarians. . . ."²⁵

On another occasion he spoke more explicitly: "Of course the right to self-determination is one thing, and the suitability of self-determination and of the separation of one or another nationality, is quite another thing . . .,"²⁶ and in practice it turned out that the decision as to such suitability was always to be made in Moscow, and was always adverse.

Even in theory, Lenin regarded such separation as temporary:

Just as humanity may attain the ideal of the liquidation of classes after a transitory period of dictatorship of the oppressed classes, so the ideal of the inevitable amalgamation of nations may be attained, but only after a transitory period of full emancipation of all oppressed nations, that is, by their gaining the freedom of separation.²⁷

Lenin's views acquired peculiar significance during the Russian civil war. At that time the former Tsarist empire was faced with disintegration as a result of the rise in its borderlands of separatist national movements hostile to Russia. Only the Bolshevik espousal of the so-called Leninist principles of quasi-recognition of the right of people to independence saved the outlying parts of the empire. Fooled by delusory guarantees of their right to autonomy, many of the peoples of Russia remained comparatively indifferent to the possibility of gaining complete independence. Wiser peoples, however, mistrusted Bolshevik intentions and therefore resisted by force of arms the involuntary incorporation

of their countries in the new Soviet colonial empire; against them, military measures were adopted.

Establishment of the Soviet colonial empire

It was the inauguration by the Bolshevik government in Moscow—contrary to all its ideological pronouncements of respect for national self-determination, and to a sheaf of treaties and non-aggression pacts—of the policy of reconquering all lost territories that marked the beginning of the new, Soviet phase of Russian colonialism. Soviet colonial wars for the forcible restoration of the lost Russian empire had three basic characteristics: the employment of military forces, both partisan and regular; the incitement of class warfare and internal subversion; and the proclamation of the Marx-Leninist gospel to conceal imperialist aims and give these unprovoked aggressions some spurious semblance of moral and ideological justification.

Attempts to reconquer the western borderlands failed when the Red Army was hurled back by the newly organized forces of Poland (with French assistance), the Baltic states, and Finland. Ingria, however, was too close to Petrograd and too weak to prevent reconquest.

Belorussian independence was the shortest-lived of all. The Belorussian congress which met on December 18, 1917, was dispersed by Russian troops on December 30. The next day, the delegates met again under the protection of the Minsk railroad workers, who placed the depot at their disposal. They delegated plenary power to a council elected by the congress, which proclaimed itself the representative of the sovereign people. An executive committee was established, but the whole national leadership was forced to go underground.²⁷

In the Ukraine, several political factions struggled for power, but the real contest was between the badly divided nationalists and the pro-Russian centralists, who were sup-

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ported by the Red army units. The fall of Kharkov in December 1920 sealed the fate of the young republic,²⁸ and the collapse of the Ukraine doomed the separatism of Bessarabia and the Crimea.

Of all the independent republics, save those in the northwest, Georgia came closest to attaining stability. After organizing two unsuccessful coups, the Bolsheviks recognized Georgian independence on May 7, 1920. This independence was recognized *de jure* by the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers on January 27, 1921, and by thirteen other states. On February 16, 1921, Red armies took the offensive against Georgia, in flagrant disregard of this recognition. The Eleventh Army, under the command of a former Tsarist officer named Hecker, crossed the frontier and headed directly toward Tiflis, while cavalry units of the Thirteenth Army under Semyon Budennyi invaded Georgia from the east. After bloody battles around Tiflis, the Georgian army was forced by this overwhelming force to retreat toward Batumi, and Georgian independence was ended.²⁹

The conquest of Armenia in December 1920 resulted chiefly from Soviet-Turkish negotiations. The Armenian republic was overpowered first by the Turks, who regained permanently the Kars district lost to the Tsarist empire in 1878, and then by the Bolsheviks, who took advantage of the hopeless situation to demand that the Armenian government surrender power to the Communists. As this ultimatum was accompanied by the simultaneous entry of units of the Eleventh Red Army from Azerbaijan and their occupation of Erivan, the capital of Armenia, there was no alternative.³⁰

The republic of Azerbaijan, particularly important for Russia because of the Baku oil fields, had been the first of the trans-Caucasian states to succumb. On April 27, 1920, a numerically superior Bolshevik army under General Levan-dovskiy had invaded it and brusquely ended its independence. The republic of the North Caucasus, which lay adjoin the

road from Russia to Georgia and Azerbaijan, and had been occupied by a White army under General Anton Denikin, fell in 1919 to a Red army led by Mikhail Tukhachevsky.²⁶

The autonomous republics in Turkestan were liquidated by Red troops in similar fashion. Soviet battalions composed of former Tsarist garrisons and local volunteer Russian colonists declared war against both governmental centers—Khokand and Orenburg. On February 13, 1918, after a two-week siege, Khokand was reoccupied, and on March 18 the Olash-Orda government in Kazakhstan was overthrown. Guerrilla activity against Russian rule, known as the Basmachi movement, spread throughout Turkestan, but in September 1920 formal resistance ended with the occupation of the former emirate of Bukhara and khanate of Khiva by Soviet troops under the command of Mikhail Frunze.²⁷

The military phase, which lasted from 1917 in Belorussia to 1921 in Georgia, was everywhere followed by savage retaliation against separatist leaders, by repression of actual or potential resistance to Russian domination and to the application of Communist economic and social policies, and by insistence on absolute subservience to the centralized rule in Moscow.

Economic considerations in Soviet colonial policy

The Bolshevik revolution and ensuing civil war of 1918-1920 revealed the economic dependence of Russia upon its border colonies. A noted historian of Soviet economics wrote that Russia was cut off, during that period, from basic raw materials—coal, metallurgical ores, cotton, and oil—as well as from metal-processing centers and grain-producing areas. Factories remained idle, and the population was starving.²⁸

Grigory E. Zinoviev expressed, before the Petrograd Soviet in 1920, the view that recovery of the lost resources and their reintroduction into the nation's economic bloodstream

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were essential. Russia, he said, had renounced the policy of exploitation, but could not do without the petroleum of Azerbaijan or the cotton of Turkestan. These products were necessary to Russia, not as the former exploiter, but as the older brother bearing the torch of civilization.

Stalin spoke more tactfully, pointing out that the border regions, which abounded in raw materials, fuel, and foodstuffs, were also the most vulnerable from a military point of view, and could not defend their independence without Russian assistance, just as Russia could not preserve its power without the assistance of these border regions.²⁹

By 1924 the empire had been patched together again. Under the guise of granting all peoples equal rights, the old Tsarist colonial system had been resurrected. The pattern of this system had by 1919 become clear: the center of the empire—the ethnically Russian core and the lands colonized by Russians and now comprising the Russian S.F.S. Republic, the "non-colonial" area—showed a concentration of all principal industries, while the constituent republics were mainly suppliers of raw materials and semi-finished products. Turkestan and Transcaucasia produced cotton; the Donbas region, coal and ore; the Caucasus, oil; the black-soil zone of the Ukraine, trans-Volga, western Siberia, and Kazakhstan, grain and meat; the lower Volga, fish; the south, fish; and the north, timber.³⁰

After 1928 the Soviet planners decreed the partial industrialization of certain border areas, in a fashion reminiscent of the sort of industrialization introduced by western colonial powers into their colonies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This policy stressed local specialization, each region being expected to produce within limits of its natural and climatic resources. A good example of the way in which this led to an intensification of the exploitive colonial relationship is furnished by the cotton and textile industries in the Soviet Union.

After 1917 the Russian textile industry, centered around

Moscow, was desperately in need of cotton. The demand was so great that chairman Kolesov of the short-lived Communist-sponsored "autonomous" Turkistan republic published a ukase in 1929, decreeing the expropriation of all cotton in Turkistan "under penalty of death."¹⁰ On the basis of this ukase, militiamen and military patrols confiscated not only the cotton found in bums and moors, but even old cotton pillows and blankets belonging to the town-dwellers and peasants.

To prevent a recurrence of this shortage by organizing cotton production systematically, Moscow decreed the partial industrialization of Turkistan. This plan was summed up in 1931 by Alexander E. Fersman: "... for the sake of cotton alone, industrialization of Central Asia is an absolute necessity, because good crops need artificial fertilizers: phosphates, nitrates, and potash. . . . The chemical industry needs structural brick and firebrick, motors need fuel, and the rail transport system needs coal."¹¹

Thus the establishment of cotton mills and chemical plants, the sinking of oil wells, and the building of new railroads, roads, and canals were all dictated by the needs of central Russian industry. The smooth natural development of Turkistan's economy was deflected; the production of grain and other foodstuffs was reduced to a minimum; cotton became the sole consideration. As a cotton producer for the Russian textile factories, Turkistan became dependent on Russia for its grain and other foods, and lived in fear of famine, either as a result of poor crops or faulty distribution, or by the deliberate plan of Moscow to ensure subservience.

The strictly colonial nature of this Turkistan industry is underlined by the concentration within Russia proper of almost the entire textile industry. Even after the establishment in Turkistan of a modest textile industry of its own, under the duress of World War II and of earlier strategic reasons for a decentralization of industry, about 80 percent

of the local cotton is exported to Russia and only 20 percent is processed locally.¹²

A similar situation exists in the oil industry, 90 percent of which is in the Moslem republics of the Soviet Union. The oil industry is totally subordinate to the power and military necessities of the state. The concentration in Moscow of the administrative responsibility for the oil industry sometimes gives rise to ludicrous inefficiency. Before World War II there were times when the local residents of Baku had no kerosene, and long queues were formed before distribution centers which stood in the shadow of oil derricks.

After the German invasion showed the strategic weakness of excessive industrial concentration, and after the modification of geopolitical planning necessitated by atomic warfare, Soviet industry was dispersed to such remote areas as the eastern Urals and Turkistan, but again solely in the interest of the state and to the detriment of orderly regional development and improvement in living standards.

Even after this process was well advanced, the Russian S.F.S. Republic still accounted for 70 percent of all industrial production and electric power consumption. It leads in machine building, non-ferrous metallurgy, chemicals, and textiles, and supplies its "colonies" with automobiles, airplanes, locomotives, railroad cars, machine tools, paints, and products of the printing industry.

Demographic aspects of Soviet colonial policy

Within the Soviet Union, Russians are frequently alluded to as a sort of master race, having a higher culture and evincing more political maturity than peoples of the other parts of the Soviet empire. This is natural, since they are favored in educational and career opportunities, and a large proportion of the urban population of Russia proper are skilled laborers, professional workers, or bureaucrats. The

best brains of the colonial peoples are sent to Moscow or Leningrad for education in the numerous technical schools and institutes there, are assimilated to the Russian nation socially and culturally, and are formed into cadres for service in industrial centers far from their original homes.

Meanwhile, the old Tzarist policies of encouraging Russian settlement in colonial territories have been systematized and stepped up. Russian newcomers, strong economically and politically, have begun to outnumber the natives even in the new colonial industrial centers. Independent of industrial workers, Moscow has begun to attach great importance to agrarian settlement in the virgin and fallow lands of the east and south, many of which are climatically marginal for agriculture. Colonization of the Far East, Kazakhstan, the Kalmsk steppes, and the northern Caucasus has expanded enormously during the Soviet period. One authority writes that of 508 new towns founded between 1917 and 1947, 299 were in non-Russian republics, and of 2,000 workers' settlements of an urban type, nearly half were located in non-Russian areas, including 230 in Turkmenistan alone. Of the 299 new towns in the Russian S.F.S. Republic, many were founded in ethnically mixed or non-Russian districts.¹²

This colonization drive has been gaining momentum. In his report to the twentieth congress of the Communist party on February 14, 1956, Nikita S. Khrushchev spoke of the great importance of "taming" the virgin lands in Kazakhstan, Siberia, and other parts of the empire. More than 350,000 colonists had already left for those parts.¹³ There is no doubt that the colonization and ethnic Russification of non-Russian territories will proceed from now on at an accelerated pace.

Another type of colonization has been used, notoriously, in settling areas too uninviting to attract voluntary migrants. Slave labor camps have been established in such regions, especially northern Siberia, and released prisoners are not

permitted to leave the districts, to which additional persons and families, and not seldom entire communities or peoples, are banished. Individual prisoners may be political or criminal; their number has been enormously swollen by prisoners of war and wartime detainees, and more recently by deportees from satellite nations like Hungary and Bulgaria. This, too, may be expected to continue.

Many former inmates of these slave labor camps who managed to escape abroad have revealed that even in prison camps there was a sharp division between Russian and non-Russian. Former prisoners report intense hatred of Russians among slave laborers. They do not distinguish between the Communist regime and Russians in general, and this blanket antagonism is believed to reflect popular opinion throughout the Soviet colonies.¹⁴

Colonial powers are sometimes attacked on the score that by physical extermination, economic exploitation, or the sale of alcoholic beverages, they have contributed to the extinction of entire tribes. Even more direct and primitive methods are quite common in the Soviet Union; examples are legion and a few must suffice. In the 1930's, the Polish minority—numbering 200,000—resident in the Ukraine and Belorussia was forcibly resorted in Siberia, scattered among the mixed population of that region. At about the same time the Marchlewski Autonomous Region (situated between the towns of Zviabul and Zhitomir in the Ukraine) was liquidated and its 20,000 inhabitants dispersed.¹⁵

From 1941 to 1945, during World War II, the Soviet government liquidated several "autonomous" non-Russian regions. Thus in 1941 they abolished the Autonomous Soviet Republic of Volga Germans and removed 500,000 ethnic Germans to Siberia, Tajikistan, and northern Kazakhstan. In 1944-1945 the same fate befell the Crimean A.S.S.R. (200,000 inhabitants), the Kalmsk A.S.S.R. (135,000), the Cherkess-Ingush A.S.S.R. (500,000), and the Karachai Autonomous

Oblast (75,000). The citizens of these units were deported to Siberia and elsewhere under the most cruel and inhuman conditions. Many were shot for resisting evacuation and thousands died en route.²⁰ It was announced in February 1957 that the survivors of the 750,000 Caucasians would be returned by 1960, but no mention was made of the Crimean Tatars or the Volga Germans.²¹

Mass deportations have also been reported for the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, and Karelo-Finnish republics, in which politically reliable Russians have replaced the unborably nationalist inhabitants.

Soviet colonialism as a political system

By definition, the essential distinctive characteristic of a colonial relationship is political domination of the colonies by the imperial power. This is true in the Soviet as it was in the Tsarist empire: the locus of political decisions is Moscow and Russians rule over non-Russians, although neither has any more opportunity to choose its own rulers in the self-perpetuating dictatorship of the top Bolshevik clique than it had under Tsarism.

The leading position among the constituent republics is of course held by the tremendous Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, which in 1939 embraced four fifths of the territory of the Soviet Union and three fifths of its total population.²² This leadership—political as well as cultural and economic—is to be expected, but its pervasiveness and the coercion which ensures it are seldom realized except by specialists.

The fifteen other constituent republics, which surround the Russian S.F.S. Republic on the south and west, are mere puppets. Their constitutional right "freely to accede from the U.S.S.R." (article 17) is—like all their other "constitutional rights"—purely academic, and was utterly negated

from the start by article 14, which transferred all top authority to the Soviet federal government. The "autonomy" of the constituent republics is further limited by article 21, establishing a single Soviet citizenship, and by article 153, providing that impairing the power of the state is "punishable with all the severity of the law as the most heinous of crimes."

The republics have minimal authority even in trivial matters. Permission to build a bridge in Bashkiriya, to install water pipes in Tiflis, to run trolley-buses in Nalchik, to build a school or hospital in Tajikistan, or to construct an opera house in Adzharia must be secured from Moscow before funds are released.²³

It is true that life in the constituent republics differs in certain respects from that in Russia proper. Local languages are used freely and are taught in elementary and, to some extent, in secondary schools. The republics have their own flags, anthems, emblems, and constitutions, their own administrations, and imaginary frontiers neatly drawn on the political maps of the Soviet Union. In the capitals of these republics, natives occupy administrative posts as chairmen and ministers, but full Russian control is invariably exercised, behind this false front, by their Russian "deputies," the real power behind each throne. Secluded in their offices, less accessible to the public, they rule and command. They are the government and the party, and are responsible to Moscow.

The Communist party played a decisive role in the establishment of the Soviet empire. Supra-national and non-Russian motives were less important in the deliberations of the Communists than the outside world was led to believe. In the formative period of the U.S.S.R., even more than at present, the Soviet urban working class—the "industrial proletariat"—was predominantly Russian. Even in the most advanced regions such as the Ukraine, the town workers are mainly Russians, while Ukrainians are almost exclusively

peasants. In such backward areas as Turkmenistan, one out of every four Russians is an industrial worker, but only one out of every fifty Turkmen is.

Logically enough, therefore, the proportion of Russians in the Communist parties of the Soviet Union is very high. In 1923 the membership of the Communist party of the Ukraine was 52 percent Russian and only 25 percent Ukrainian. In 1924 Kazakhs comprised only 5 percent of the party organization of Kazakhstan.⁴ In subsequent years the Kremlin tried to lower this barrier dividing the Russian rulers from the colonial peoples by launching a vigorous drive for the "nationalization" of party and governmental machinery. The number of non-Russians was greatly increased, but remained low in comparison to the non-Russian proportion of the total population. In some republics the increase was negligible: for example, in the Kirghiz* S.S.R. at the end of 1949 only 18 percent of those prominent in industry were local nationals, in planning, finance, and trade 27 percent, and even in agriculture a mere 28 percent.⁵

The ratio in government is even more lopsided, and it is evident that the higher administrative and specialist posts are almost monopolized by Russians. Only in the Armenian and Georgian republics are the party and governmental machinery mainly staffed by local nationals; elsewhere the Russians were and are complete masters of the empire. This predominance may have been unavoidable in the early years of Soviet rule,⁶ but if this is still true that fact itself is an indictment of Soviet colonialism.

From the beginning, but especially in recent years, Russians have held most of the leading positions in the security and "justice" ministries. In the general staff of the Soviet army, among generals and commanders of lower rank, Russians are overwhelmingly predominant. The foreign

service has been completely dominated by Russians since the early 1930's.⁷

To the question whether these Russian Communists are primarily Russian nationalists who find it advantageous to term themselves Communists, or primarily internationalist Communists who happen to be Russians, the answer is that they are Russians, first, last, and always. Lenin understood this fact and wondered how to deal with Russian nationalists parading in the guise of Communists. Two years before his death, he lashed out at this element of his encourage: "The Great Russian chauvinist dwells in many of us and we must fight him."⁸ It was a losing battle then, and has remained so ever since.

A statistical approach to the question of Russian preponderance tends to be misleading. It should be stressed that all important non-Russian members of the Communist party passed through the deep transforming process of thorough Communist indoctrination and complete Russification. Acceptance of Russian culture is, indeed, an essential factor. Of course, few of these non-Russian members of the party and state machinery show their unquestioning—and unquestionable—adherence to Russian beliefs and cultural values, since it is their foremost duty to pretend to be wholly representative of their own native society and culture. It is their duty to penetrate the distrustful non-Russian communities and win them to the Communist regime. Non-Russian party leaders and high state officials are even ordered to pretend an attachment to their native culture, and to use their local language in public.

Thus, leading Communists of non-Russian origin become in reality Russian *chavvinists* of alien origin, with all the characteristics of the convert and the psychology of the snob. Lenin once criticized Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, and Odeskenskide because of their behavior toward Caucasian Communism, calling them true Russian *derzhimordy* (brutal policemen). Of course, these men were not Russian but "Russified non-

*Kirghiz is the correct spelling, but Kirgiz is the official Soviet form.

Russians" who, according to Lenin, "always shoot beyond the mark in their true Russian moods."¹⁹

It is an established principle in the Soviet Union that only true converts to Russianism and Sovietism can occupy posts of importance in the Soviet government and the Communist party machinery, while all insincere and false converts are sooner or later accused of nationalist deviation or bourgeois nationalism and are removed or shot "to encourage the others." Thus an increase in native elements at the expense of Russians would not indicate an internationalization of the Soviet apparatus. On the contrary, it would mean that the hitherto less pliable non-Russian components of the empire are now subverted by the presence of natives in the party and state machinery.

One of the characteristic features of colonial regimes is opposition by native patriots to alien imperialist domination. Such opposition finds expression in uprisings, political activity, and personal hatred, depending on circumstances. All these elements are plainly discernible in the present Soviet colonial system.

Between 1920 and 1951, resistance of the colonial peoples asserted itself in both silent non-cooperation and open rebellions marked by guerrilla activity. A general uprising broke out in Georgia in 1924, lasting for several months before it was crushed by military units and strong secret police (G.P.U.) detachments; in 1930-1931 the entire Caucasus resisted the collectivization drive and Soviet tyranny with fanatical zeal. Guerrilla activity in Turkestan was well organized and widespread until 1924, with many isolated sections for considerable periods under Basmachi control; sporadic uprisings continued until 1951, and even later. The Ukraine was a boiling cauldron for several years after 1920, and again from 1928 to 1951. These examples are typical of a remarkably large number of similar events.

Political activity being absolutely outlawed and vindictively punished, the only outlet for colonial resentment

other than violent or passive resistance is personal hatred of the oppressor. Frequent mass purges conducted by Moscow are ample proof of this smoldering fury against the Soviet regime. Ibrahimov and his associates in the Crimea, Sultan-Galliev and his friends among the Tatars, the "Organization for the Liberation of the Ukraine," and many other patriotic organizations supplied thousands of victims to the firing squads and the forced labor camps.²⁰

During World War II there were many instances of armed opposition to Soviet Russia. In Germany, prisoners of war of non-Russian nationality who had been organized into a kind of Foreign Legion fought Soviet armies to the bitter end, ambitious for the liberation of their respective mother countries, or just for revenge on Russia. Their hatred of Communism as a doctrine, and of the Soviet government, was coupled with detestation of everything Russian.

The Soviet satellites as colonies

Before terminating the discussion of the Soviet colonial empire, we must consider whether the "independent" nations of eastern Europe and Asia which are often referred to as Soviet satellites are in fact colonies of the Soviet Union.

It seems reasonably clear that Tito's Yugoslavia left the Soviet bloc in a dispute over precisely this point; Tito refused to permit Moscow to make the critical political decisions for Yugoslavia, or to exploit it economically, and therefore took the immense risk of defying the Soviet Union and withdrawing from its bloc, though retaining a national Communist dictatorship.

This very development, indeed, demonstrates clearly the colonial status of the other eastern European countries which were not in a geographic or military position to risk such a gamble. Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Czecho-

slovakia, Poland, and East Germany had no alternative, and became Soviet colonies. Politically, they made no decisions without approval from Moscow, and their secret police devoted themselves to eliminating all potential separatist leaders and punishing all who detested their humiliating dependence. Economically, these colonies were looted by the Russians and converted into portions of the Soviet industrial complex, so the extreme destitution of their own economic progress and to the standard of living of their citizens. Demographically, they saw their leaders deported or executed, their best young men sent to Moscow for Russian indoctrination and a technical education calculated to serve Soviet needs, their citizens terrorized by mass arrests and deportations.

This reduction of once-independent nations to the status, not only of colonies, but of exploited and brutally mistreated colonies on a pattern long renounced by western colonial powers, might have been expected to produce resentment and unrest, though Soviet Russia's iron control over the educational process led some observers to assume that the younger generation would not share the antagonism of its elders. The 1956 revolt in Hungary proved such assumptions false; the youth of Hungary, even those especially pampered by the Communists, led the nationalist uprising and died fighting for freedom. The ruthless reimposition of colonial rule in its worst aspects, with executions, deportations, and suppression of every vestige of freedom, is too fresh in every mind to require laboring.

Poland, on the other hand, has moved gradually as opportunity offered toward increased autonomy, and will obviously continue to do so if permitted by the Soviet manner. Its self-rule is still too recent and too limited—especially by the presence of Russian military forces—to warrant reclassification as a self-governing associate rather than a Soviet colony.

Self-governing associate is, however, an accurate descrip-

tion of Communist China, which makes its own political decisions, though in close collaboration with Moscow. Thus China cannot correctly be classified as a Soviet colony, but instead has colonies of its own in Tibet and Manchuria, which fall outside the scope of this survey. North Korea and Outer Mongolia seem to be under joint control of Moscow and Peking, but the pattern is fluctuating and obscure.

Final remarks

In summary, Tsarist and Soviet colonialism resemble in many respects Western colonialism of an earlier era. But Western colonial methods long ago began to change, with the gradual but eventually complete adoption first of more humane methods and liberal ideas, and then of the principle of trusteeship and development of self-government. No matter how brutal Western colonial practices may sometimes have been, ideas of freedom and human dignity, representative government, and democratic principles penetrated the minds of both rulers and ruled, invisibly at first but quite perceptibly as time went on. Such ideas undermined not only lethargy and complaisance among the subjected peoples, but also any unquestioning assumptions of manifest destiny among imperial citizenries; this led to a wave of demands for independence or autonomy and in most instances to the grudging acquiescence of the colonial powers.

Not so within the Soviet empire. Tsarism and Marxism provided little inspiration to the development of democratic ideas. By maintaining the specious pretense of having no colonies, and of being a voluntary association with rights of secession (remember Hungary!), the Bolshevik monolith has evaded all discussion of the progress of dependent areas toward self-government.

After World War II the differences between the two types of colonial rule became unmistakably evident. Western

colonialism was on the way out, but Soviet colonialism continued to grow in scope and intensity. It is now impossible to deny this, except for those who uncritically equate colonialism with capitalism and absolve socialist powers, or who willfully refuse to face the facts, for reasons of their own.

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