

D. T. SHEPILOV

**THE INTERNATIONAL
SITUATION
AND THE FOREIGN POLICY
OF THE SOVIET UNION**

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*Report to the ~~Sixth~~ Session
of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.
February 12, 1957*



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Comrade Deputies,

The current session of the Supreme Soviet has approved the State Plan for the Development of the U.S.S.R. National Economy and the State Budget for 1957. It has thereby defined the vital tasks of the further development of the socialist economy, raising the standard of living and advancing Soviet culture. Realization of these grand tasks will be a big step towards fulfilment of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, towards construction of communism in our country.

In adopting the national-economic plan and the budget for the current year, the session cannot but discuss the more important aspects of the international situation in which the Soviet people are doing their great constructive work.

The past year was not wanting in major international developments.

We all remember the recent past, which was marked by a substantial *lessening* of international tension achieved through the efforts of the peace-loving countries and the broad public throughout the world. A weighty contribution to the lessening of international tension was made by the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic and the other People's Democracies.

Also fresh in the memory of all are the events of last autumn which aggravated the world situation and

heightened international tension. These events were the product of aggressive action undertaken by the imperialist circles with a view to bolstering their steadily weakening positions in the East, restoring the colonial regime there, undermining the unity of the socialist camp countries and poisoning the international atmosphere by a policy of provocation and outright military gambles.

Thus a struggle was precipitated between the forces upholding peace, universal security and social progress, and the forces of reaction and imperialist aggression.

I. TWO FOREIGN POLICY LINES

Our great teacher Lenin substantiated in his works the possibility and the necessity of *peaceful co-existence of the two systems*, the socialist and the capitalist.

Drawing on Lenin's theses and on the experience of the recent decades, the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union formulated propositions of great theoretical force and practical significance: a) the peaceful co-existence of the two systems; b) the possibility of averting wars in our time; and c) forms of transition to socialism in different countries.

The policy of the peaceful co-existence of the two diametrically opposed social systems is not a transient political manoeuvre thought up by the Soviet state, as alleged by our adversaries. No, *it is the corner-stone of the foreign policy of the Soviet state*. Our foreign policy is based on the immutable principles of respect for the sovereign rights of all countries, big and small, strict non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, and complete equality in relations with them.

The Soviet Government has done much in recent years to secure a lessening of international tension. It is common knowledge that the Soviet Union actively helped stop the war in Korea in 1953, extinguish the flames of war in Indo-China in 1954, and settle the Austrian question. Soviet-Yugoslav relations have been normalized on the initiative of the Soviet Government. Diplomatic relations have been established between the U.S.S.R. and the Federal Republic of Germany. A friendly exchange of opinions took place at the Geneva Conference of the Heads of Government of the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and France in the summer of 1955; as a result, the Heads of Government of the Four Powers unanimously announced their desire "to contribute to easing international tension and strengthening confidence among states," and their desire "to avert the danger of war and to ease the burden of armaments."

We are especially glad to note the strengthening of friendly co-operation between the Soviet Union and such a Great Power as India, and also with Indonesia, Egypt, Syria, Afghanistan, Burma and other countries of Asia and Africa. Our people welcomed the establishment of diplomatic relations with Cambodia, the Sudan, Ceylon, Tunisia, Liberia and Nepal. They sympathize with the selfless struggle waged by the peoples of the East against the outmoded colonial system of imperialism.

The year 1956 was marked by a certain improvement of the political situation in the Far East. The normalization of relations between the U.S.S.R. and Japan, opening up good prospects for business co-operation between the two countries, has been of great importance in this respect.

Personal contacts between Soviet and foreign statesmen have been extended considerably. It is difficult to overestimate the political significance of the visits paid by Comrades Bulganin and Khrushchov to India, Burma, Afghanistan and Great Britain. Comrade Voroshilov's visit to Finland, Comrade Mikoyan's visit to Asian countries, and visits by other leaders also yielded favourable results.

During the past year, the Soviet Union was visited by statesmen and public figures from the fraternal People's Democracies. The Soviet people gave a warm, cordial welcome to the envoys of the socialist countries: Comrade Chu Teh, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Republic, the Chinese Government Delegation headed by Comrade Chou En-lai, the Government Delegation from the Korean People's Democratic Republic led by Comrade Kim Il Sung, the Government Delegation from the German Democratic Republic led by Comrades Otto Grotewohl and Walter Ulbricht, the Delegation from the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and the Government of the Polish People's Republic headed by Comrades Wladyslaw Gomulka and Josef Cyrankiewicz, the Government Delegation from the Rumanian People's Republic headed by Comrade Chivu Stoica, the Delegation from the Czechoslovak Republic led by Comrades Antonin Zápotocký, Antonin Novotný and Viliam Široký.

A warm welcome was given to Comrade Josip Broz-Tito, President of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

The friendly relations between the Soviet Union and the Eastern countries have been greatly strengthened by the visits to the Soviet Union of Mr. Nehru, Prime Min-

ister of the Republic of India, and Mr. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of the Republic of India, Mr. Sukarno, President of the Republic of Indonesia, His Majesty the Shah of Iran Mohammed Reza Pahlevi, Mr. Kuwatly, President of the Syrian Republic, U Nu, Prime Minister of Burma, Mohammed el-Badr, Deputy Prime Minister of Yemen, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Heir Apparent of Cambodia, Mr. Ichiro Hatoyama, Prime Minister of Japan, and Sardar Mohammed Daoud, Prime Minister of Afghanistan.

Our good-neighbourly relations with Finland have been further strengthened by the visits to our country of the late President Paasikivi, of Finland, the present President Kekkonen and Prime Minister Fagerholm.

Mutual understanding and the growth of business co-operation between the U.S.S.R. and the West have been * furthered by the visits to our country of Prime Minister Gerhardsen, of Norway, Prime Minister Hansen, of Denmark, Prime Minister Erlander, of Sweden, the French Government Delegation headed by Prime Minister Mollet, and the Belgian Government Delegation led by Prime Minister Van Acker.

Exchange of numerous parliamentary delegations, begun on the initiative of the Soviet Union, developed fruitfully last year, and the Soviet Union's international economic and cultural relations were broadened.

The definite easing of the international tension opened the way for reducing the heavy burden imposed on mankind by the arms race. The Soviet Government worked hard to end the disarmament deadlock. It effected a unilateral and substantial reduction in the Armed Forces by 1,840,000 men and cut military appropriations accordingly. In January 1956 the Soviet Union turned

over to Finland its military base at Porkkala-Udd. China, Poland, Czechoslovakia and other People's Democracies likewise substantially reduced their armed forces and military expenditure.

On November 17, 1956, the Soviet Government put forward new and important disarmament proposals which considerably facilitate the possibility of agreement on this matter.

How did the leading Western Powers respond to the sincere striving to strengthen peace displayed by the Soviet Union, the People's Democracies and all other peace-loving forces?

Facts show that a struggle between *two foreign-policy trends* is taking place among the ruling circles of these Powers. The more far-sighted statesmen realize that the national interests of their countries call for relaxation of international tension. However, another, an opposite trend won the upper hand in the policy of these countries towards the end of 1956.

The way of closer co-operation between the nations obviously does not suit the adherents of this second trend, who place their selfish interests above those of the nation, above the interests of peace and security. That is why far from supporting the initiative of the Soviet Union and other peace-loving states designed to improve the international situation they resorted to open attacks in two main directions—against the national-liberation movement in the East and against the great community of the socialist nations.

It follows, therefore, that certain imperialist circles are, in effect, relinquishing the idea of peaceful co-existence and, as in the past, banking on settling international problems by force.

An important part in all this, of course, is played by the fact that the monopolists are using the international tension for an unbridled arms race. After all, military orders yield huge profits.

It is common knowledge that the NATO countries have spent over 364,000 million dollars on armaments in the seven years since the bloc was formed. A further increase—approximately 5-8 per cent—in NATO military appropriations is planned for 1957. The United States is now spending as much on arms as it did during the war. From 1940 to 1945, for instance, the United States spent an annual average of 42,200 million dollars on military purposes. Its 1957-58 budget provides for an expenditure of 45,300 million dollars on military needs. Payments under commitments incurred during past wars bring the total to 57,300 million dollars — 77 per cent of all budget expenditure. A military budget on this scale is a bonanza for the monopolies specializing in armaments. And the last thing any of them wants is less profit.

However, there were other factors as well. After the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. the ill-starred bourgeois strategists incorrectly interpreted the criticism we made of our mistakes and shortcomings in the different spheres of Party life and state affairs, criticism which reflects the inviolable monolithic unity of our Leninist Party and the remarkable vitality of the Soviet social system. Wishful thinking led them to count on some kind of “evolution” of the Soviet system, on our renunciation of “some aspects” of the dictatorship of the proletariat and that we would become, if not actually “white,” at least “pink.” In anticipation of this “evolution” certain quarters in the West took pains for a time to veil the sub-

stance of their anti-Soviet policy by peace-sounding phrases. This verbal loyalty, however, concealed intensified subversive operations designed to undermine the unity of the socialist camp.

Clearly the strategists of the bourgeois world incorrectly assessed the strength of the national-liberation movements in the East. They continued to count on strengthening and even extending imperialist domination in those areas of the world where the peoples after centuries of oppression have risen in the sacred struggle for freedom and independence.

Then, when the imperialists became convinced of the steadily growing might of the socialist countries, of the growing moral and political unity of their peoples and that any calculation on an "evolution" of the Soviet system in the direction of a bourgeois regime was but an empty fantasy, when they realized that their dreams of preserving and consolidating the system of colonial slavery in the East were castles in the air, they fell back once more on the poisoned weapon of anti-popular conspiracies and military gambles.

This explains the aggression of Britain, France and Israel against Egypt, and the counter-revolutionary putsch in Hungary, which formed part of a single broadly conceived strategic plan.

The sponsors of this plan counted on changing the international situation in their favour by two blows. They overestimated, however, their strength and underestimated the strength of the camp of socialism as well as the strength of the national-liberation movement in the countries of the East. (*Applause.*) They badly miscalculated and sustained a twofold counter-blow of crushing force. (*Stormy applause.*)

Comrade Deputies,

On the ancient soil of Egypt the forces of imperialism decided to give battle not only to the Egyptian people but to all the peoples of Asia and Africa fighting for their freedom and independence. In doing so they challenged the cause of peace, freedom and democracy throughout the world.

Their calculations, however, came to naught. The courageous struggle waged by the Egyptian people, supported by the entire Arab world, the firm and resolute stand taken on this issue by the socialist countries, the Republic of India, and all the peace-loving forces, decisively influenced the events. The aggression against Egypt failed. Its lessons are highly instructive.

Britain and France, to say nothing of Israel which was assigned the unseemly role of provoking the aggression, sustained above all a *military defeat*. Their troops, by virtue of the reasons cited above, far from bringing Egypt to her knees, far from occupying the entire Suez Canal zone—the immediate purpose of the aggression—failed to get a complete grip of even a single strong point—Port Said. This circumstance, in particular, provided a pretext for the vast “press empire” of the United States to beat the drums with assertions to the effect, that Britain and France are no longer numbered among the Great Powers.

Britain and France also sustained *economic defeat*, for the war has seriously aggravated their economic difficulties and made them much more dependent on the United States. It should be borne in mind that some 30 per cent of British imports and exports passed through the Suez Canal in 1955. The blocking of the canal caused a complex chain reaction throughout the economic or-

ganism of the country. The flow of Middle East oil, which accounted for 80 per cent of British oil consumption in 1955, sharply declined. And this in a country where the furnaces producing 40 per cent of the steel use oil fuel, as is the case also with a considerable part of the non-ferrous metallurgy, chemical, ceramics, paper industry and other branches. Britain, like many other West-European countries, has been forced to purchase American oil at high prices. But this has jeopardized her dollar reserves, small as they are, and intensified her financial dependence on the United States. France is in the same predicament.

Finally, Britain and France suffered a grave *moral and political defeat* in the war against Egypt. Their influence in the East has been seriously undermined. As for the Israeli aggressors, their action evoked indignation and protests on the part of millions far beyond the Arab world.

Such are the lessons of the gamble undertaken by the colonialists in the Arab East. It would seem that they should have sobered those who up to now have refused to march in step with the times. Nevertheless, to this day the imperialists are continuing their intrigues against the Arab East, first and foremost against Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, which cannot but alarm all the peace-loving peoples.

However, those who continue playing with fire would do well to remember that neither outright war gambles nor covert intrigues can withstand the action of the irresistible laws of social development. There is no force that could impose a regime of alien domination on peoples who have risen in struggle for their liberation. (*Applause.*) The building up of aggressive military blocs like the Baghdad Pact and SEATO, establishing military bases in

foreign countries and other manifestations of the "positions of strength" policy can but aggravate the contradictions and speed up the process of the final abolition of the colonial system which has outlived itself. "He who sows the wind will reap the whirlwind."

It will be recalled that recently the forces of international reaction also launched a direct subversive operation against the socialist camp. This operation had been long and thoroughly prepared. It had been prepared by the instigations emanating from such centres of ideological intervention, belonging to the United States Government, as the "Voice of America" radio station. It had been prepared by United States subversive agencies, operating under the mask of "private institutions," such as the "Crusade for Freedom" and its "Free Europe" radio centre, the "Committee for Struggle against Bolshevism" and others disposing of powerful means of radio communications, devices for launching balloons carrying counter-revolutionary leaflets, etc.

The United States Government officially allocates vast sums for espionage and sabotage against the U.S.S.R. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic and the other socialist states. During the last six years the U.S. Congress has appropriated for this purpose over 600 million dollars. These funds are used to finance subversive gangs and military units drawn from the reactionary emigrant scum, for sending spies and provocateurs into the People's Democracies to form underground counter-revolutionary organizations from the remnants of the internal reactionary elements.

International reaction, exploiting the grave mistakes made by the former Hungarian leadership and playing on chauvinist and nationalist survivals, banked on

confusing and deceiving the Hungarian people. The organizers of the putsch intended to wrest Hungary from the socialist camp, to make a breach in the community of the free countries, split them, and then try to weaken and crush them one after another.

There is no doubt that a victory for the counter-revolution in Hungary would have been followed by the physical annihilation of many thousands of sons and daughters of the Hungarian people, of workers, peasants and intelligentsia, and would have led to the restoration of the fascist regime. Hungary would have become a dangerous centre of war in the heart of Europe. But the working class, the peasantry, all toilers in the Hungarian People's Republic divined what the Eszterházys and Mindszenty's, the big landowners and capitalists, the ring-leaders of fascist-monarchist and clerical reaction had in store for them. The people, led by the Socialist Workers' Party and the Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government, aided by the Soviet Union, quickly smashed the counter-revolutionary plotters. This was a major victory for peace and socialism. (*Stormy applause.*) In coming to the aid of the people the U.S.S.R. discharged its international duty to the working people of Hungary and the other socialist countries, which corresponds to the interests of world peace.

The working people of the Republic aided by the fraternal peoples are now healing the wounds inflicted on the country by the counter-revolutionary uprising. They are getting things going in town and country, taking broad measures for further developing the democratic principles of the people's system in order to ensure a steady advance in the material well-being of the citizens and cultural progress in a socialist Hungary.