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EUROPEAN INTEGRATION -- A SOVIET TRAUMA

The Soviet leadership has arrived rather late, if suddenly, at the full significance for the world balance of power of European integration. An article by V. Cherpakov in the May issue of the Party's theoretical journal Kommunist, "The 'Common Market' -- An Instrument for the Intensification of Monopolistic Oppression and Aggression," reflects the painfulness of the awakening and the extremeness of the reaction.

Although we are currently witnessing the initiation of a broad campaign of propaganda and political action designed to impede the process of European integration and the association with the community of underdeveloped, particularly African, countries, the Kommunist article reveals somewhat greater "optimism" regarding the creation of a "United States of Europe" than presently exists even in the West. This "optimism" may result in part from the suddenness of the awakening, coming at a time of growing realization of the stagnation of Soviet Bloc integration efforts, but it results also from the theoretical explanation of European integration which Kommunist has devised. International capitalism, the explanation runs, must now centralize its resources in a last desperate effort to survive before it goes under. Thus, in Soviet eyes, there are no longer any theoretical limits to the economic and political integration which may take place in the "capitalist" world.

Soviet Appraisal of European Integration

It is interesting to note Kommunist's selection of the symbol "wave" -- a symbol of irresistibility and danger for opposing forces -- to describe the progress of European integration:

"The first wave took place in the fifties.../comprising/ the Coal and Steel Community, Euratom, the EEC and the EFTA. The present, second wave, consists, first, in the transfer from the customs union to tighter economic connections, and second in efforts to broaden the EEC... (more exactly, the inclusion of England and the remaining members of the Seven, or still more exactly, the absorption of the Seven...by the Six.) It is a question of the creation of a 'Common Market' of almost all capitalist Europe. And, of course, it is a question of the direct and altogether active participation of the USA in the clamping together of the 'Common Market.'"

Kommunist sees European integration primarily as a political and military threat, neither mentioning Comecon specifically nor touching upon the economic problems of Bloc trade with Western Europe. Couve de Murville is quoted as stating: "Our purpose is primarily political. We want to create a political union. The customs union, the economic society, are only means to attain this goal." D. Ball of the US State Department is quoted as "seeing in the unification one of the two supports of the transatlantic union against communism."

Although Kommunist makes passing reference to possible difficulties in creating the supranational union ("thus far these efforts have not been successful due to differences of opinion"), the basic approach of the article is that international imperialism, in its new crisis, must and will resort to supranational policies. For example:

"The existence in capitalist Europe of two competing groupings, the Six and the Seven, creates a threat to the existence of NATO, and this, of course, does not serve the aggressive, military-strategic interests of international imperialism."

The adherence of England, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and Norway to full membership in the Common Market is treated almost as a foregone conclusion. Only the present or future tenses are used, never the conditional:

"For Sweden, Austria and Switzerland the entry into the 'Common Market' means the renunciation of the traditional policy of neutrality. For these, as well as for all the small European countries, joining the 'Common Market' means the loss of sovereignty and parliamentary control in vitally important spheres of policy."

Further, the addition of the military potential of these small countries to West European strength is seen as a likely possibility:

"Those European countries which have remained outside the armaments race will be drawn into it."

One can also conclude the Kommunist envisions a great increase in the efficiency of the West European economy. The article deals at length with the "new concentration of capital" which is now taking place, crowding out and absorbing not only small and medium enterprises, but also large enterprises, and also resulting in a decrease in the agricultural population as uneconomic farms are absorbed

"The 'Common Market' is rationalizing European agriculture in such a manner that many peasants will lose their land. The small and medium farmer is not in a position to compete with monopolistic capital which is subordinating agriculture to itself, transforming him into a farm of the 'factory type.'"

Ideology

The Common Market trauma, as reflected in Kommunist, appears to have had two effects on the ideology. First, although the Marxist principle that larger enterprises will progressively swallow smaller enterprises is stressed, the Common Market has of necessity caused a retreat from the principle that the national contradictions between capitalist countries are increasing. (As late as August 1961 Vneshnaya Torgovlya -- Foreign Trade -- maintained that the contradictions between the Six and the Seven were increasing.) The new line concedes that European or even broader integration is indeed possible, although the process will inevitably lead to the downfall of capitalism. Kommunist includes a quotation from Lenin to clarify the discussion of ideology:

"However, it is just as mistaken to conclude that integration is impossible (i.e. an agreement of the monopolists), as it is to maintain that integration leads to the unity of the capitalist world. Lenin, refuting Kautsky's theory on ultraimperialism, wrote: 'There is no doubt that development is going in the direction of one united world-wide trust, absorbing all enterprises without exception and all states without exception. But the development goes in this direction under such circumstances, with such tempo, and with such contradictions, conflicts and jolts -- by no means only economic, but also political, national, etc., etc. -- that without fail before the world-wide trust and a world-wide unification of national finance capital is achieved, imperialism will meet its end and capitalism will be transformed into its opposite.' Works, Vol. 22, pp. 94-95."

The second impact of the Common Market on Soviet ideology is more serious and unfortunate. Since Stalin's death Soviet ideology has taken timid steps toward accommodation with the reality of the West. Although the moving force in this development was to infuse some life into an ossified body, nevertheless one could note a trend toward a gradual cure of the Russian psychosis. Now the Common Market has set the cure back, at least temporarily. Kommunist sees economic exploitation of the workers and political terror on the increase in the West. It predicts "a new attack on the wages and standard of living of the proletariat.../and liquidation/ of the concessions in social benefits won by the workers from the capitalists in furious class struggle." The growth rate of capitalist countries is slowing down and the stock market drop reflects the impending crisis.

As examples of the resorting "more and more openly to terroristic methods," Kommunist gives the "practical outlawing of the CPUSA," the replacement of parliamentary government by personal rule in France, the "iron regime of Adenauer" in West Germany, and McCarthyite trials of government employees

in Great Britain. The absence of any reference to conditions in Belgium or Italy may be seen as a grudging concession to those Communist Parties which have lately been moving toward a more favorable attitude toward the Common Market, but this massive Soviet retreat from reality cannot fail to have unfavorable repercussions on the West European Parties which must operate within conditions of increasing Common Market prosperity.

Underdeveloped Countries

On May 19 in Bulgaria Khrushchev took a new "hard" line toward the "national bourgeoisie," i.e. the non-Communist leaders of newly independent countries, indicating a possible reversal of the post-Stalin trend toward acceptance of nationalist leaders, indeed often even preference of nationalist leaders to indigenous Communist Parties. It appears that Soviet failures in Africa and other areas have caused an "agonizing reappraisal" of the whole spectrum of Soviet relations with these groups, but it is important to note that Kommunist neglects the opportunity to pick up this line and solemnify it as basic Party policy. The overriding concern of Soviet policy as reflected in the article is to terrify the newly independent, particularly African, countries with the image of the Common Market as a new "collective colonizer." Having forewarned the "national bourgeoisie" in the May 19 speech of the Soviet attacks they will be inviting if they are foolish enough to associate with the Common Market, the Soviet leadership appears to be holding this counterpoint theme in reserve.

Although the point is not elaborated in theoretical terms, the efforts of the young, independent states to integrate economically are characterized as "the opposite of monopolistic integration":

"The young sovereign countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America* are striving toward economic rapprochement...this is not only not directed toward oppression and exploitation...but, on the contrary, is a means of struggle against these evils...and is a natural continuation of the tendency toward the useful, harmonious use of resources, toward a rational division of labor and cooperation in production."

These young, "newly independent" states are warned of the special "association" agreements with which the Common Market is trying to bind them, and which will "inevitably slow down their economic development...will impede to a great degree the solu-

* Kommunist here corrects Pravda's printing of the cliché in Khrushchev's 30 May speech in which he repeated his Thailand "faux pas" by saying "The young states of Asia, Africa and Latin America, recently having won their political independence..."

tion of social problems...and the introduction of democratic social-economic measures." If and when these countries associate with the Common Market the threatened Soviet "hard" line, calling for replacement of the national bourgeoisie with more "progressive" elements, may then be brought into play.

A major Soviet propaganda campaign against the Common Market is underway. The breaking off of negotiations for a new trade agreement with France may be followed by similarly strong moves toward other countries. The upcoming visit of Austrian chancellor Gorbach to Moscow could provide the occasion for such a move. Meanwhile, the Soviet leadership has prepared itself psychologically for an eventual "United States of Europe" and has undertaken maximum efforts to retard the development, to brake Eastern Europe's growing recognition of the need to reach an accomodation with the Common Market, and to attempt to reverse the movement of certain underdeveloped countries into the Common Market orbit.

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