Are we facing a new Cold War? The blusterings and sabre rattlings of the Reagan Administration together with its sinister activities in the Central America would indicate that we are already in one. But what about the Russians? Do they also have their nuclear hawks and their worst-case theorists? The balance of the world's forces has substantially altered since the 1950s. The People's Republic of China, a wild card in the world power game, is now a major nuclear power. The non-aligned movement has developed and expanded its influence and the anti-war movement seems to be riding the crest of a popular wave of concern. But the existence of an increasing number of volatile smaller states possessing nuclear capacity means that the Cold War of the 1980s could be more unstable and menacing than the sterile power plays of the 1950's. In this article a controversial argument is put forward that the policies of both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. is determined by self-interest as interpreted by their social and military elites.

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The election of Ronald Reagan marked the culmination of a concerted campaign by those on the extreme Right of American politics to refreeze their nation's relations with its principal adversary, the Soviet Union, and to return the world to the Cold War atmosphere of the nineteen forties, fifties and sixties. And despite the monumental changes which have taken place in the world since the Cold War was at its height, the campaign has met with spectacular, if temporary, success — at a governmental level at least.

What factors have brought about this decisive shift in political thinking in America, a development which has undoubtedly propelled the world closer towards the nuclear precipice? What is the Russian attitude to the new political climate? and more fundamentally, what is the nature of the so-called "New Cold War" and how does it relate to the original Cold War and to the period known as detente? All these questions require answers if we are to devise a rational and realistic response to a phenomenon which now directly jeopardises our future security.

In the view of America's hard-liners (the so-called "hawks"), there is nothing particularly new about the New Cold War. They see it as simply a return to the sensible policies which a well-meaning but naive America chose to abandon after ignominious defeat in the Viet Nam War. The Soviet Union, they argue, "duped" America into believing that cooperation was possible, while relentlessly pursuing its plans for world domination. Paul Nitze, co-founder of the hawkish Committee on the Present Danger, and currently a senior Reagan foreign policy adviser and arms control negotiator, expressed this myopic world view in Foreign Affairs journal: "The Kremlin leaders do not want war; they want the world. They believe it unlikely, however, that the West will let them have the world without a fight." Nitze and his colleagues believe that most of the world's ailments are attributable to the Soviet Union: "For example, it appears probable that the Red Brigades in Italy, the assault on the Mosque in Mecca, and the seizure of the American hostages in Iran were supported and perhaps instigated by agents of the Soviet bloc." The fact that there is no hard evidence for such allegations is irrelevant, for the hawks base their case largely on recent examples of Soviet military involvement in Angola, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. And it is this concept of a ruthless and relentless communist expansionism which has, they claim, forced the United States, to adopt a tough, uncompromising and interventionist stance of its own.

To give these men their due, one must certainly agree that the Soviet Union has been responsible for many dangerous and provocative actions. But the Soviet Union has always acted in this fashion, and a brief glance through the pages of American history will show that the United States has behaved no differently (in fact its behaviour has been considerably worse). Rather than being a decisive factor in reinvigorating the Cold War, Russian actions have merely served as a pretext to justify a shift in American foreign policy whose roots lie elsewhere. It must be remembered that the invasion of Afghanistan took place fully two and a half years after American hawks began calling for a tougher, more militant stand against the Soviet Union. If anything, the Russian decision to re-establish control in that country by military means was encouraged by what was undoubtedly perceived as a dangerous and provocative change in American foreign policy. It is no coincidence that the invasion took place...

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just two weeks after the NATO decision to deploy Pershing and Cruise missiles in Western Europe. These missiles will, for the first time, give NATO the option of initiating a devastating nuclear strike against military targets in the Soviet Union, a development which will, ironically, in the event of a crisis, give the Russians a strong motivation to destroy these missiles before they can be used. The Russians tried very hard to forestall deployment of these weapons, offering to freeze production of their own SS20s which were then only very few in number, but no American response was forthcoming.

The point which needs to be made is that the New Cold War has done nothing to curb the Russians — they are still in Afghanistan and Ethiopia (and Eastern Europe) and look like remaining there for some time to come. Indeed, there was never any possibility the United States could do anything to change Soviet policy by adopting a confrontationist stance. The overriding lesson of the 1950s is that posturing and proselytising are entirely lost on the adversary during a climate of tension and conflict. In fact, ironically, Soviet adventurism was at its peak during the period of maximum American diplomatic and military coercion (1947-1953). The times when Soviet co-operation has been most forthcoming have been during partial thaw in the Cold War. The Partial Test Ban Treaty and a whole series of similar agreements were signed in the 12 months following the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, before Kennedy and Khrushchev were both removed from office. Similarly, SALT emerged during the early days of detente, a period when the Soviets dramatically increased the quota of Jews permitted to leave the country. Now, with the refreezing of the Cold War, the number leaving has been reduced to a trickle.

Has this lesson simply been lost on the hawks? In many cases the answer is probably yes; however, men such as Paul Nitze have been close to the seat of power for a long time (Nitze himself was a senior foreign policy adviser to President Truman, and chaired the committee which produced NSC-68, the blueprint for the Cold War), and for all we might dislike them and disagree with them, we must give them credit for intelligence and cunning. These men are acutely aware that the Cold War serves as a vital instrument in the exercise of American power. And, as we shall see, the roots of the New Cold War lie primarily outside the orbit of the superpower military confrontation.

Nevertheless, that confrontation is still the basis of the Cold War world order, and it has become so widely accepted that it is now believed by most people to be both permanent and inevitable. The division of the world into two armed camps is nowhere more evident than in Germany, particularly since the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961. According to the unending stream of propaganda emanating from both camps, the world is undergoing an ideological struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil (of course which superpower represents which forces depends entirely upon whom one chooses to believe), and smaller nations must take shelter beneath the ideological and military umbrella of the one superpower, for fear of being engulfed by the immutably aggressive designs of the other. So the argument goes.

In order to meet the seriousness of the threat as it is presented to the public, each superpower has deployed a gruesome array of sophisticated weaponry, and stands poised to rain unparalleled destruction on its adversary at what is literally a moment's notice. An arms race of this magnitude is unavoidable given the nature of the Cold War, and the great tragedy is that this arms race will undoubtedly destroy us unless the Cold War can be rapidly and permanently terminated. Again, most of the hawks are well aware of this, as evidenced by their admission of the ultimate need for disarmament. The Reagan administration has proposed a Soviet-American arms reduction of one-third of existing strategic nuclear stockpiles. But because it publicly argues that the Soviets can never be trusted to keep their word, the administration has a very convenient excuse for giving disarmament negotiations only perfunctory attention. The problem is that the short term benefits derived from prolonging the Cold War are perceived as being more important than the long term advantages of superpower co-operation. And so leaders cling to an antiquated and dangerous world order which at least promises certainty, if not security.
This certainty derives from the confrontation itself and the "black and white" propaganda it generates. And yet, in historical perspective, the degree of antagonism between the superpowers harks back far beyond their legitimate borders. They share no common border and hence have no conflict over territory; they do not compete for markets (the Russians do not believe in the market principle), or for resources and energy (the Russians are almost entirely self-sufficient in resources, and are net energy exporters); nor do they conflict over religious doctrine (the Russians care little about religion). Such an observation raises critical questions about the nature of the superpower confrontation, for most wars are fought between nations with common interests and the two World Wars being good examples. Until 1917, the United States and the Soviet Union had very little contact with one another. After the revolution, the Americans, in concert with other capitalist powers, briefly attempted to overthrow the fledgling Bolshevik regime, then succeeded in isolating it from the world community by encircling it with a cordon of anti-Soviet states. The Soviets pursued the only option available to them — isolationism — a policy broken only when Hitler's invasion thrust them into the heartland of Europe.

Ironically, despite the geographical, political, economic and social chasm which divides them, the superpowers share a great deal in common, although both would be unlikely and unwilling to recognize this. The ideological conflict between them is, in practice, far less meaningful than they would have us believe. After all, what is ideology if not merely an intellectual justification for the pursuit of self interest? Be it the interest of the many or the few? And it is a profound self interest which the superpowers share in common. Both are primarily concerned with the preservation of domestic privilege. There is no doubt that both social systems are highly stratified, and largely exist to protect the interests of the very few. When Leonid Brezhnev speaks of Russia, it is in most cases a totally different country to that inhabited by its citizens. Brezhnev's Russia is represented by power, privilege, and a holiday house on the Black Sea. The Russia most of its citizens know is represented by petty corruption, shortages of consumer goods, and a general lack of personal freedom. Similarly, Ronald Reagan's America is symbolised by corporate power, fabulous wealth, and a 700 acre ranch at Santa Barbara; while that of millions of its citizens is symbolised by rampant crime, corporate corruption, and social injustice on a scale only understood by those who are living in the ghettos of urban America. The fact that the American citizen had no better choice for President than that between Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan is ample evidence that his/ her political influence is, in practice, little better than that of his/ her Soviet counterpart. The American elite discovered long ago that democracy was no threat to privilege as long as it remained ineffective.

In America's case, the Cold War has been absolutely essential for the pursuit of its foreign policy goals. A good example of this is the CIA-organised coup which toppled the government of Guatemala in 1954. The real reason the United States chose this particular action was because the American-owned United Fruit Company objected to the Guatemalan government's decision to expropriate unused company lands and redistribute them to landless peasants. But the Eisenhower administration was no more prepared to accept the overthrow of a democratically-elected government in the name of preserving United Fruits land holdings. The American people have never held the free enterprise principle to be absolutely sacrosanct, for leaders, actions in the name of "peace." The same can be said of a dozen other nations in which the United States has exerted its political, economic and military muscle to topple "unfriendly" regimes (Iran, Brazil, Indonesia, Ecuador, Zaire, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Viet Nam, etc.).

Similarly, when the Soviets wish to exert influence for reasons of their own, they justify their actions by raising the spectre of American "imperialism" and its concomitant military threat. The Soviet people are understandably sensitive about invasion from the West (having lost over 20 million people in the last World War) and are quite prepared to support their American counterparts in the Eastern bloc for fear it might spread to the Soviet Union and destroy its system of privilege. And so the Cold War has evolved as a means of accomplishing two things: protection of the ideologically different social systems which, in essence, exist in pursuit of somewhat similar domestic goals. The world has been divided into two "spheres of influence" so that each superpower may effectively control what it deems as its own. This is not, of course, to imply that two ideological social systems are fundamentally different. The world has been divided into two "spheres of influence" so that each superpower may effectively control what it deems as its own. But, so long as the Cold War is in existence, the ultimate goal of each superpower is to prevent the other from spreading its own ideology. The superpowers pursue this common interest? In the Soviet Union, privilege is maintained both by prohibiting social, economic and political reform, and by ensuring that Russia is never again threatened by invasion. Russian policy directly reflects Russian history brutal, introspective and, ironically, relatively conservative. In the United States, on the other hand, privilege is pursued by the preservation of a grossly inequitable economic order, both domestically and internationally. With only 5% of the world's population, America consumes fully 27% of its resources, and 29% of its energy. American power and wealth rest on the exploitation of peoples around the globe including the American people. The multinational corporations which control the bulk of wealth in the Western world and which are responsible to no one but themselves, are, in very blunt terms, international pirates, pillaging resources and labour from the Third World and leaving a legacy of pollution, repression and economic deprivation. Again, American policy reflects American history — brash, daring, ruthless, and usually successful.

The only difference between the superpowers is in the scale of their ruthlessness. Their ruthlessness is responsible (either directly or indirectly) for a great deal more repression than the Soviet Union (certainly since the demise of Stalin). So often, however, this unpleasant reality is overlooked, mainly because, unlike Russian brutality, American brutality is not concealed against foreign peoples and usually in very subtle forms (the death of a million children each year through the sale of infant formula is every bit as horrific in scale as the Stalinist purges or the nazi holocaust).
Rather, the system evolved as a result of unilateral actions taken by each of the partners in the Grand Alliance. Roosevelt was intelligent enough to realise that the Russians had legitimate fears about a reunited and rearmed Germany, and would expect to be adequately compensated if they were to accept a world order in which virtually the entire globe was to become an American sphere of influence.

Despite later denials by the Truman administration, the evidence is quite conclusive that Churchill and Roosevelt sacrificed Eastern Europe to the whims of the Soviet dictator. There was little else they could do, given the fact that Soviet troops occupied these countries (many of which had fought loyally for the Nazis). The United States and Britain had control over the areas which were of economic importance (Western Europe, Greece, Japen, the Middle East). As far as they were concerned, Eastern Europe was of little interest (except for the countries which had American-owned oil fields) and was a small price to pay for a free hand in the West.

The Russian reign of terror in the East was preceded by a British and American reign of terror in the West, particularly in Greece where the left was very strong. Stalin demonstrated his ruthlessly counter-revolutionary nature by abandoning the left in the West, and by even admonishing Tito for giving aid to the Greek communists during the Civil War. The Cold War began as a ruthless trade-off, with the superpowers sacrificing the ideals they publicly espoused in pursuit of the greater goals of "national security" and "national interest" (the Russians pursuing the former and the Americans pursuing the latter).

Of course, following the death of Franklin Roosevelt and the departure of his clique of foreign policy advisers (Stimson, Wallace, Hull), the inexperienced and overconfident Harry Truman chose to overturn the carefully evolved postwar plans of his predecessor, and return American policy to the ideals of Woodrow Wilson. Truman firmly believed in the policy of Open Door — that no corner of the globe should be closed to American economic penetration. Given the predominance of American economic power (America was responsible for half the world's industrial output and half its financial reserves in 1945), the Open Door principle was tantamount to a global sphere of American influence. And, naturally, a Soviet sphere of influence was quite incompatible with this world view. But, as Roosevelt had been acutely aware, like it or not, there was nothing America could do about the Soviet sphere, short of armed conflict which, of course, was totally out of the question.

Anti-nuclear demonstration, Amsterdam, 21 November 1981

Despite the rapid deterioration of superpower relations after the inauguration of Harry Truman, Czechoslovakia still managed to preserve the Grand Alliance into the postwar period, and to use superpower co-operation as the basis for a lasting peace during which the two great powers could pursue their respective interests (which in Russia's case was economic recovery, and in America's case, economic expansion). He was banking on the notion that Stalin was longing to play the role of international statesman and would find no need to communise Eastern Europe so long as it deferred to Russian foreign policy requirements. The Czechoslovakian experience would seem to justify Roosevelt's faith.

Fearing that the United States could not preserve the Grand Alliance into the postwar period, and to use superpower co-operation as the basis for a lasting peace during which the two great powers could pursue their respective interests (which in Russia's case was economic recovery, and in America's case, economic expansion). He was banking on the notion that Stalin was longing to play the role of international statesman and would find no need to communise Eastern Europe so long as it deferred to Russian foreign policy requirements. The Czechoslovakian experience would seem to justify Roosevelt's faith.

It must be very doubtful that American political leaders (with the exception of President Reagan) seriously believe that bellicose rhetoric can be of any help to the people of Poland. If anything, such rhetoric merely encourages the continuation of repression, for a decision to abandon Poland would appear to the world as a sign of Russian weakness in the face of American resolve. Such a decision would also set an unacceptable precedent, giving the United States the impression it could get whatever it wanted by simply pushing hard enough. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that the American government seriously wants the repression to cease, for if it did, it would be much harder for the hawks to paint the Soviet Union in the image of the insatiable aggressor. Similarly, it is unlikely the Soviets seriously want the United States to pull out of Central America for to do so would rob them of a valuable propaganda goldmine. Where would they be if there were no visible signs of US militaristic imperialism?

Grandstanding in the name of "freedom" or "equality" has become a standard method by which both superpowers reinforce the stereotyped images of the Cold War. They play on human nature, on our desire to identify who we are as individuals and as nations by who we are not. If no international "bad guy" existed, we couldn't possibly be the "good guy". The superpowers have both used this principle of "bonding-by-exclusion" to unify their diverse ethnic populations.
But detente ended when the right wing of American capitalism realised that none of these goals was being realised. Rather than permitting America to rebuild its domestic consensus in support of intervention, accommodation with the Soviet Union was making it harder to portray that nation as the cause of all of America’s international problems. The concept of the “international communist conspiracy” had lost its credibility now that America was fraternising with the “enemy”. The Senate investigated the FBI and the CIA and began to curtail their power to operate as subversive organisations. Even the power of the president was reduced with the introduction of the War Powers Act in 1973.

The “crisis of democracy”, as the Trilateral Commission came to call the problem, became alarmingly clear in 1976 when Angola fell to the Cuban-backed marxist MPLA. The Ford administration desperately pleaded for sufficient funds to prolong the civil war, but the Senate refused, seeing no purpose in continued American involvement. The marxist forces had guaranteed not to interfere with Gulf Oil’s drilling operations (in fact, Gulf’s operations are currently being guarded by Cuban troops!), so there was no threat to American economic interests. The real threat was that a leftist victory might set a precedent in Africa and start a veritable chain of social upheaval among the world’s most deprived nations, particularly those upon which the United States depended for cheap resources and energy (Nigeria, Zaire, Zambia, Rhodesia, South Africa). Ford and Kissinger were primarily concerned with demonstrating to the world that America was still willing and able to defend its interests.

It had become patently obvious that the Russian interpretation of detente was markedly different from American. The Russians had no more intention of terminating their pursuit of national interests abroad than had the United States. Nor did they intend reintegrating the United States who felt America was that nation as the cause of all of America’s international problems. The concept of the “international communist conspiracy” had lost its credibility now that America was fraternising with the “enemy”. The Senate investigated the FBI and the CIA and began to curtail their power to operate as subversive organisations. Even the power of the president was reduced with the introduction of the War Powers Act in 1973.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia destroyed many illusions the international communist movement had about the nature of Soviet ideology. Previously, loyal communist parties condemned the Soviet action, and set about redefining their relationship with that country. Similarly, the Viet Nam War brought the United States condemnation from its NATO allies and brought millions of previous apathetic citizens out into the streets to protest their government’s policies. For the first time ever, American democracy was beginning to work and was threatening to inhibit the elite’s ability to exert American power around the globe to protect its economic interests.

Both superpowers were facing ideological crises, and needed a breathing space to rebuild their domestic consensus and to reassure their allies that they were still the “good guys”. What emerged was the period known as detente — the relaxation of tensions. Of course, there were other factors at work pushing the superpowers to adopt an erratic approach to international relations. Foremost among these was a realisation after the Cuban Missile Crisis that the Cold War was becoming too dangerous for comfort, and that one day it might suddenly turn hot without either power meaning or desiring this to happen. It should be remembered that the Cuban affair is the only occasion when one superpower has tried to move into the other’s sphere of influence. All other postwar conflicts have taken place either by one superpower moving to crush dissent within its own sphere, or by one attempting to move into a “grey”, unclaimed area of the world (e.g. Afghanistan or parts of Africa). This is why the Missile Crisis was unique and so...
Unfortunately, however, a great deal has changed since the Cold War was at its height. In the first place, America's allies are no longer as compliant as they were. Many have been frightened by the militant rhetoric emanating from their hegemonic ally. Large numbers of young people simply don't believe the Cold War propaganda any more. Peace movements are growing rapidly and are exerting considerable influence on government policy in Western Europe. The new awareness is even starting to spread into Eastern Europe. Romania recently witnessed peace marches in which 300,000 people participated, calling for nuclear disarmament by both the superpowers. This call was reiterated by the Romanian president in December 1981.

The allied nations are beginning to realise that their interests and those of their "protectors" are not necessarily the same. This is particularly the case in the Third World, where American allies are being ruthlessly exploited and plundered. Their populations are realizing in increasing numbers that their enemy is not the Soviet Union, or Viet Nam, or Cuba or any other communist bogey, but is, in fact, the capitalist system itself and the multinational corporations which own their economies, buy the allegiance of their corrupt elites, and support whatever repression is necessary to keep the resources and profits flowing. In South Korea and the Philippines, for example, the American military bases exist not to defend these countries from enemy attack, but to defend American economic interests from internal rebellion and revolution.

This is the principal reason the Cold War warriors have been calling for a major new build-up in armaments. The United States already has many times more strategic nuclear weapons than it needs to adequately deter the Soviet Union from attacking either the American homeland, Europe or Japan. What it lacked in the mid-1970s, however, was a large, well-armed, conventional force, trained in the tactics of counter-insurgency and ready to be sent to wherever American interests needed defending. This gap has now been filled by the Rapid Deployment Force, an airborne strike-force of 200,000 men which will serve to project American power to all four corners of the globe. The RDF's formation was publicly justified as a response to the invasion of Afghanistan. However, the decision was actually leaked to the press at the beginning of 1978, almost two years before the Russian action. The hostage crisis, which gave the American public a stark view of their nation as a "helpless giant" in the face of Third World nationalism "gone mad", was brilliantly orchestrated to elicit a flag-waving, guns-blazing, "nuke 'em till they glow" response. The Carter doctrine of explicitly threatening to resort to the first use of nuclear weapons as a means of defending American interests in the Middle East marked the spectacular climax of a campaign which began three years before. It is a testament to the power of the American elite that a man who came to power promising nuclear disarmament and the continuation of detente, should have finished his political career by initiating the largest peacetime armaments build-up in American history.

The tragedy is that the lesson of Viet Nam is still as valid today as it was a decade ago: revolutionary movements cannot forever be dealt with by resort to arms. It is only natural that people will choose to fight to better their lives when faced with gross deprivation (and especially when surrounded by opulence). American interests will remain under threat as long as that nation supports the institutions of repression. Similarly, the threat to communism in Eastern Europe will remain as long as the Soviet Union refuses to grant the kind of political and economic reforms groups like Solidarity are demanding.

The answer to the world's current problems lies outside the realm of Cold War politics. It lies in the restructuring of the world political and economic order towards a more equitable distribution of the planet's resources. It lies in the realisation that all peoples have the right to a decent, dignified and free existence, and that nations are more than just spheres of influence to be used, abused and cast aside. The Cold War has become a dangerous anachronism which stifles the very changes necessary to ensure the survival of civilisation. It must be ended rapidly or it will end us.
FOOTNOTES:


2. Nitze, p. 91.

3. These allegations (the latest of which is that the attempt on the life of the Pope was a Soviet plot) have been tabulated in a recent book by Claire Sterling, The Terror Network. Sterling's thesis is that all international terrorist activities are directed and coordinated by the Kremlin. Her conclusions have more recently been refuted by Harry Roseitzke in his book, The K.G.B.: The Eyes of Russia. Unlike Sterling, Roseitzke has 25 years of experience with the CIA and OSS behind him, working mainly on Soviet operations. Interestingly enough, when Sterling took her findings to Jimmy Carter's adviser on terrorism in the National Security Council, he replied: "You don't really believe this bunk about international terrorism?" See "Parking Your Helicopter", by Tony Clifton, in New Statesman, August 7, 1981, p. 17.

4. Between 1917 and 1940 the Soviets reconquered most of what had been the Tsarist empire, including Poland and the Baltic States. Under the aegis of the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939, they annexed Poland and Bessarabia, and invaded Finland (unsuccessfully). They set up "co-operative" regimes in Poland (1944), Romania and Bulgaria (1945), and ultimately throughout all of Eastern Europe. Later, they crushed uprisings in East Germany in 1953, Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968; and invaded Afghanistan and overthrew its communist government in 1979. The Soviet Union is currently directing the Ethiopian armed forces in a barbarous war against Eritrea. The United States intervened militarily in the affairs of other nations (mainly in Latin America) on 21 separate occasions between 1898 and 1924 alone! It conquered the Philippines, Hawaii, Panama and Cuba; it overthrew governments in Nicaragua, Haiti and Guatemala before the Second World War. Since then it has militarily intervened in the Dominican Republic in 1965, Greece (1946-1948), South Korea (1945-46), Vietnam (1961-1973), Cuba (1961) and Micronesia (seizing over 2000 islands under the guise of a UN Trusteeship). The CIA has participated in the overthrow of governments in Zaire, Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Iran, Ecuador, Indonesia, Guyana, Ghana, Sudan and Syria. The US is currently directing the El Salvadoran armed forces in a barbarous war against leftist guerrillas and nationalist groups.

5. The Soviets accepted the idea that Jews had the right to leave Russia in the early 1970s. The number of Jews who left in the course of the following year, and in subsequent years, reaching a peak of 51,320 in 1979. 3000 were expected to leave in 1982. See "Refusenik", in The New York Times, October 11, 1982.

6. The class structure in the Soviet Union is discussed in great detail in: Milovan Djilas, The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System (Prager, 1957); Hendrick Smith, The Russians (Quadrangle, 1976); Robert Kaiser, Russia: The People and the Power (Athanaeum, 1976); and Jerry Hough Soviet Leadership in Transition (Brookings, 1980). When criticising class divisions in the Soviet Union, however, we must remember three important points: firstly, these divisions are minor compared to those which exist in capitalist societies (although social mobility is more static); secondly, there is no widespread dissatisfaction with the existing system; and thirdly, and most importantly, it has been the development of this new class which has largely been responsible for the tremendous liberalisation that has taken place since the death of Stalin.

7. For figures on American wealth and consumption, see Richard Barnet, The Lean Years: Politics in the Age of Scarcity (New York, 1980).


9. The Heinz and Nestle Corporations have become notorious for their abuse in the sale of powdered milk to mothers in the underdeveloped world. Mothers are encouraged to feed their babies infant formula instead of breast feeding them. This denies the children vital antibodies only available in human milk, and they become quickly susceptible to disease. Clean tap water is rarely available, so mothers use impure and sometimes stagnant water, diluting the milk to less than half the required strength. In 1981, the World Health Organisation attempted to place restrictions on the activities of companies involved in this deplorable trade. Of all the participating nations, only the United States chose to ignore the Organisation's recommendations, the Reagan administration declaring them to be against the principles of free enterprise. In the meantime, 1½ million children have died. See Francis Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, Food First (New York, 1978), pp. 336-348.


15. For a discussion of the concept of "bonding-by-exclusion", see E.P. Thompson, Beyond the Cold War (London, 1982).

16. A detailed discussion of the Cuban Missile Crisis can be found in "The Logic of Madness: The Development of Nuclear Policy", by K. Enderby.

17. Startling evidence for this can be found in the top secret 1949 U.S. plan for war against Russia, publicly released in 1977 through the Freedom of Information Act. Operation Dropshot's ultimate aim was to be the occupation and subsequent reorganisation of Russia, restoring democracy and capitalism (supposedly to the relief of the Russian people). How this was to be achieved after a full-scale atomic blitz was completely ignored? See Anthony Cave Brown, Dropshot (New York, 1978).

18. The Trilateral Commission is an international organisation of European, Japanese and American businessmen who believe that excessive competition between Western nations is weakening their hold over the economies of the developing world. They are particularly disturbed by the demand for a New International Economic Order. Their members include Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, Henry Kissinger, David Rockefeller, Cyrus Vance, Bzigniew Brzezinski and a large percentage of the American business elite.

19. In 1975 the Trilateral Commission published a book entitled The Crisis of Democracy (New York, 1975) in which it suggests that American democracy was becoming far too democratic for its own good: "... the effective operation of a democratic political system usually requires some measure of apathy and noninvolvement on the part of some individuals and groups" (p. 114). These groups include, of course, leftists and peace activists. The book concludes: "We have come to recognise that there are potentially desirable limits to the indefinite extension of political democracy. Democracy will have a longer life if it has a more balanced existence." (p.115). This is really just a subtle way of saying that democracy is tolerable only so long as it is powerless to affect the decisions of the nation's traditional ruling elite.


21. Half of America's cobalt comes from Zaire, a nation where one-third of the population is undernourished, and where food aid is sold off to the wealthy dictator Robert Mobutu's uncle. 97% of the world's known chrome reserves are in South Africa and Zimbabwe. South Africa (including Namibia) has 86% of the world's platinum, 64% of its vanadium, 48% of its manganese, and 40% of its gold. Only the USSR is more self-sufficient in minerals than South Africa. See Barnet, The Lean years, ch. 5.

22. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara estimated (in 1967) that the United States needed only 400 deliverable strategic nuclear warheads to deter a Soviet attack. The U.S. currently has 25 times this number of such warheads, as well as 50 times as many tactical nuclear weapons.


24. For detailed discussion on recent developments in nuclear policy, see K. Enderby, "The Logic of Madness: The Origin and Meaning of Nuclear Policy". For further detail on the Rapid Deployment Force, see Michael T. Klare, "Is Exxon Worth dying For", in The Progressive, July 1980.

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