

While the two policies are, of course, interrelated, Soviet relations with China must have played at least as significant a part as the German perspective in the decision of the other Soviet leaders to remove Mr. Khrushchov from office. His policy of moving towards a confrontation with China, at least at the party level, has already had a profound effect in helping to loosen the monolithic unity of the Soviet bloc and to weaken Soviet control over their former satellites in Eastern Europe. It has also affected the unity and strength of the Communist Parties in countries where they do not hold power and their attitude towards the Soviet leadership in Moscow. These corrosive effects of the dispute and the anxieties of other Communist Party leaderships on this score were dramatically brought to the attention of the world in a memorandum written by Signor Togliatti, the Italian Communist Party leader, which was published shortly after his death last month.

There has obviously and inevitably been deep perplexity and concern among all Soviet leaders about how to handle problems posed for the Soviet leadership by the challenge from Peking. This challenge had important implications not only for Soviet policy towards the West but also towards the non-aligned parts of the world, particularly in terms of Sino-Soviet competition for influence among the Afro-Asian countries. For the Soviet leaders, too, the situation must have been further complicated by the implications for the Soviet Union itself of the Chinese nuclear programme. There has been speculation about whether the timing of the Chinese nuclear explosion had any influence on the removal of Mr. Khrushchov. We cannot speak with any certainty about its effect. If the other Russian leaders were aware beforehand of the exact timing of the explosion, this may conceivably have been one additional factor in prompting a decision by the other members of the Soviet Party Presidium to oust Mr. Khrushchov immediately. For it would be a matter of importance to them to have Mr. Khrushchov replaced before rather than after the dramatic news of the explosion in China lest the impression be created that Mr. Khrushchov's replacement was a victory for the Chinese Communist regime.

As for the future, here again we are necessarily in the realm of conjecture. In domestic affairs the new Soviet Government does not apparently intend to abandon the policy of de-Stalinization, although it may tend towards a more cautious and traditional policy than that advocated by Mr. Khrushchov. There may be some changes in the priorities of allocation of scarce resources, including possibly less emphasis on consumer goods. Towards Eastern Europe there may be certain cautious modifications of Mr. Khrushchov's policy, with the aim of removing any impression that Moscow is going to be "soft on capitalism". I would expect no immediate overt abandonment of Soviet criticism of Chinese policy, but I would not be surprised if some attempt were made to lower the temperature of hostility and bitterness which now prevails in relations between the two big parties. However, the deep-seated and almost inevitable basic rivalry between the two great Communist and national power centres will almost certainly continue to affect their relations in one form or another for some time to come, above or below the surface.

In the relations of the Soviet Union with the West, we need not, I think, expect any dramatic developments but rather a continuation of the present situation. On the great questions of peace and war, the aims and the inhibitions of the new leaders may not prove to be very different from those recently demonstrated by Mr. Khrushchov, who, since the Cuban crisis, has shown considerable