

economy of the capitalist world; on the contrary, Marxism would seem to imply a sustained effort, at most, to disrupt the economies of the free world and, at least, to avoid any contribution to their welfare. The U.S.S.R. has sought autarky only in so far as this was necessary to guarantee itself an independent source of the materiel of war, and it has used every possible conventional means to break out of a commercial isolation which is in large measure due to a low capacity to export, in the broadest sense. On only two occasions has Soviet action on the world market seemed to be intentionally disruptive, and in both instances it is clear that the Soviet state was reacting to concrete pressures rather than pursuing sinister political ends. Still more impressive is the tendency not only to widen commercial links, but also to extend these into the ever more distant future. It would be the sheerest lunacy to try to have it both ways — to seek a planned and stable order for communism and chaos for the free world, and at the same time to try to cement these two worlds by long-term contractual associations.

The fact is, of course, that Marxism has no formula for foreign economic policy. The result is that, under the impact of reality, the very terms with which the government seeks to justify trade with the enemy have become less and less Marxist. Voznesenskiy rationalized the position in 1946 by explaining that such trade would contribute to the ultimate self-sufficiency of the U.S.S.R., and this was later enlarged to mean the self-sufficiency of the bloc; but the economists have long since been talking of the "improvement of national welfare," of "normal, peaceful, commercial relations," of the "international division of labour" and of comparative costs. A Marxist state is now preaching the classical theory of foreign trade, and is even advocating "common sense"! The obvious strength of capitalism remains a very troublesome point, for, in recent years, the Party has had rather less to say about the long-term prospects for the Western system, and recent comment tends to concentrate on the descriptive analysis of recessions and to avoid specific forecasts. The Party is under increasing pressure to reconcile its formal view of the Western future with the facts and with the very assumptions underlying actual Soviet policy. Thus, ten years ago it silenced Varga when, speaking for many Soviet intellectuals, he pointed to the increasing role of government in the Western economy as a sign of capitalist vitality and an indirect fulfilment of the Marxist prophecy. Yet the Soviet economist of today is allowed to accept an increasing role for government as a specific political objective of the U.S.S.R. in the less developed countries. In all this, there is glaring inconsistency, since the Party obviously cannot identify increasing statism with progress in Asia and deny this equation in the West. There is also more than a hint of retrenchment, in so far as statism has become an absolute good in Soviet thinking, and threatens to replace communism as the primary export.

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The Soviet attitude toward international law also has certain implications for Soviet external ambition. Despite an early tendency to work out a peculiar Marxist approach, the Soviet Government has never presumed to repudiate the principles of international law. In the past twenty years, increasing attention has been paid to this subject, and the focus has shifted firmly to the study of existing law and to its practical implications for the immediate problems of the Soviet state. Although the U.S.S.R. has refrained, with typical caution, from accepting the jurisdiction of the International Court, it provides this institution with financial support and with one of its judges, and a Soviet representative sits on the Law Commission of the General Assembly. Those Soviet innovations which have proved lasting have included no radical changes to the traditional body of law, and have been largely confined to the extension of sovereignty over land and air. It has become abundantly clear