

basic national interest of the U.S.S.R., seem to demand a continuing commitment to a strategy which entails a constant danger of collision with the West.

On the other hand, the overriding need to avoid such a collision, with its danger of nuclear catastrophe, the need to find a solution to the problems of nuclear proliferation, and the necessity to resist the Chinese challenge - all these seem to demand accommodation with the West, and, therefore, relinquishment of a revolutionary role.

The solution which is apparently being tried is interesting and could be both disturbing and encouraging from the Western point of view. I prefer on the whole to regard it as encouraging. This development, which is logical, and would scarcely be remarkable in the policy of another country, is the increasing differentiation shown by the Soviet Union in its policy toward Western countries. If the revolutionary imperative prevents an accommodation with the West in general, it does not prevent accommodations with certain Western states in particular, and some of the benefits of détente can be retained even at a time when the most important détente, that with the United States, is in suspense because of the revolutionary imperative.

It would be a mistake to treat this development purely as a device to enable the U.S.S.R. to make the best of both worlds. There are clearly other advantages the U.S.S.R. may hope to derive from such a policy -- most obviously, perhaps, to divide the Western alliance, "to take advantage", as the journal Kommunist puts it, "of the contradictions in the imperialist camp in the interests of the U.S.S.R. and socialism". It is in this respect that this Soviet policy may be thought disturbing. Being both more subtle and more realistic, and at the same time ostensibly no less antagonistic, it confronts us with a more complex problem of the best response. As I have said, however, I judge this evolution to be encouraging, not only because I do not believe the unity of the Western alliance will be subverted by it, and because I know we are capable of finding the appropriate response, but also for the simple reason that any increase of realism is a contribution to the long-term understandings we seek.

Let me be more specific about the differentiation of Soviet policy towards the West. The best known example is of course the manifest Soviet desire to cultivate the friendship of France. The Soviet Union is also cultivating friendly relations with the Scandinavian countries, Japan and Canada. The significance of these should not be exaggerated. They are thrown into greater relief by the relative coolness of the Soviet attitude toward the United States, Britain and West Germany. They are, nevertheless, illustrative of Soviet recognition not only of the political but of the economic necessity of keeping its lines open to the other industrial nations of the world. This is yet another imperative, one which has come into play with greater force as it has become clearer that the Soviet economy is desperately ill-equipped to meet the social demands of the second half of the twentieth century.