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Soviet-American Relations, 1929-1941: The
Impact of Domestic Considerations on Foreign
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of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in History

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Date October 26, 1978





1978

DONALD JAMES MANNING

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SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS, 1929-1941: THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC
CONSIDERATIONS ON FOREIGN POLICY DECISION-MAKING

Donald Frank Hastings

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

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ABSTRACT

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By

Donald James Manning

The diplomatic relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in the interwar period was unstable. This instability was a function of domestic considerations which both nations projected onto a changing international environment. These domestic considerations consisted of economic, political, bureaucratic, ideological, institutional, and organizational pressures which coalesced into definite, if frequently self-contradicting, foreign policies.

In Wilson's administration, the president was preoccupied with the New Freedom and the internationalization of American laissez faire. He subordinated Russia's self-determination to a League of Nations, and he intervened militarily in the Russian Civil War because of the insistence of France and Great Britain. Both these powers were essential to the postwar political and economic system Wilson desired. Russia was not nearly as important. In the 1920s a coalition of Republican progressives and conservatives promoted a nationalist orientation reflecting the prosperity of the New Era. Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover were more involved in

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updating U.S. capitalism through industrial self-regulation than with the U.S.S.R. The "irrationality" of the Bolshevik experiment, Republican leaders assumed, doomed it to failure. Confident of the universal applicability of private property, the sanctity of contracts, and the concept of free labor, they were inclined to continue the policy of nonrecognition. The support given the Kremlin by certain progressives, peace groups, and those intrigued by federal control of the means of production was invariably ignored.

In the 1930s Franklin Roosevelt adjusted, in part, to the depression and the political complications it produced by recognizing the Soviet Union. It was another example of his predilection to coordinate disparate points of view into a delicately balanced consensus supporting some specific action. The fact that this approach to Moscow became entangled in the debate concerning the supposed confrontation between collectivism and "individualism" in the U.S. confirmed, rather than denied, the entire interwar character of Soviet-American relations.

In Russia the Bolsheviks adapted the theoretical tenets of revolutionary socialism to the realities of holding power in an underdeveloped state surrounded by capitalist opponents. A suicidal war against the international bourgeoisie was grudgingly rejected as domestic priorities predominated. This evolutionary development was guided initially by Lenin. It was affected by the political tensions accompanying Lenin's succession and especially by the confrontation between Stalin and the Right Opposition. By the time Stalin suppressed his internal opponents, Russia and the United States had

established a tenuous economic and political connection which purportedly served the interests of the two countries.

Despite the instability which undermined their relations, cooperation between the two capitals was never precluded. In the 1920s the U.S. supported the American Relief Administration, which alleviated the suffering brought on by the Russian Civil War and War Communism. In the 1930s the revanchism of Germany and Italy combined with the aggression of Japan in eastern Asia to press the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. together. Notwithstanding enormous differences in ideological perspective and economic institutions, current perceptions of national self-interest invariably induced short-term bilateral arrangements which were conducive to both countries. That these failed to erase the underlying disagreements between the two states was understandable and inevitable. Their respective societies remained in conflict.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The librarians and archivists of the Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt presidential libraries, the National Archives, the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, Stanford University, and the University of Chicago have all given me the help in easing the research that has been a major part of this effort. The efforts of Warren Cohen, Director of the Hoover Library, and the advice of Madison Kuhn, Director of the Roosevelt Library, were essential to the content of the manuscript. Finally, I am indebted to the staff of the defense of the dissertation, who have been most helpful in reviewing and criticizing my work. I am also indebted to the staff of the National Archives and Records Administration, who have been most helpful in separating us on a number of important points. I am also indebted to the students who have taken my course in American and European history have sustained this endeavor in many ways. I am also indebted to the staff of the National Archives and Records Administration, who have been most helpful in separating us on a number of important points. Finally, responsibility for errors of fact and interpretation is mine.

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The librarians and archivists of the Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt presidential libraries, the National Archives, the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, Michigan State University, and the University of Chicago deserve special thanks for their help in easing the research burdens of this dissertation. Also, the efforts of Warren Cohen, director of my doctoral committee, and the advice of Madison Kuhn, Donald Lammers, and Paul Varg added measurably to the content of the manuscript. In the final weeks before the oral defense of the dissertation, Robert M. Slusser was gracious enough to review and criticize my work. His careful reading revealed several embarrassing errors as well as the differences of interpretation which separate us on a number of important points. In addition, my family and the students who have taken my class in economic and business history have sustained this endeavor in ways too numerous to mention. Finally, responsibility for errors of fact and interpretation is mine.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	vi
PROLOGUE	1
PART I	
Chapter I: "Lessons of the past" played a role in the	
in I. WAR AND REVOLUTION	30
II. NONRECOGNITION AFFIRMED	63
III. DEPRESSION	97
IV. VERSAILLES DENIED	139
PART II	
V. ANOMALY REMOVED?	181
VI. "DETERIORATION"	258
VII. REPRISE	323
EPILOGUE	361
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY	368

PREFACE

All thought exists for the sake of action.

Robin Collingwood, Speculum Mentis

In recent years Ernest May has argued that international politics restricted alternatives open to Washington in World War I, that the "lessons of the past" played a particularly significant role in determining U.S. foreign policy during and after World War II, and that the character of Secretary of State George Marshall affected Sino-American relations during the late 1940s. In 1975 he completed a manuscript on the Monroe Doctrine in which he treated simultaneously three hypotheses, none of which, he thought, inherently the more plausible. Concluding that "foreign policy can be determined less by the cleverness or wisdom of a few policymakers than by the political structure which determines their incentives," May offered readers his judgment that presidential politics played a decisive part in affecting U.S. foreign policy in 1823. In all of these works, and particularly in his analysis of the Monroe Doctrine, May relied on what he termed the "nonformal epistemology" of R. G. Collingwood and Benedetto Croce. This study of Soviet-American relations in the interwar period began with similar preconceptions. Not only does it include an emphasis on the historian's explanation of the past by "achieving empathy with the people who

experienced it," but it also accepts, in modified form, Collingwood's description of history as thought, a description which assumes that thinking and doing are stages in a single continuous operation. Collingwood amplified this point when he sought to define the "historical process" as one in which "man creates for himself this or that kind of human nature by re-creating in his own thought the past to which he is heir." For the historian of the twentieth century this necessarily involves the pragmatist and existentialist traditions, something, interestingly enough, Collingwood himself had great difficulty in accepting. Cohen, Robert T. *Collingwood's Philosophy of History: A Study in the Methods of Historical Thought*. These prefatory observations are to advise the reader of this historian's interest in political theory and its relevance to the subject of this volume. Recall for a moment the substitution by Hobbes of the myth of the social contract for the myth of divine right, and the way he thought of the people rather than god as the original source of the king's power. Not surprisingly, Hobbes' conception of the people as plural soon gave way to an understanding of the people as singular, and this fostered the work of Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, and many others. Of interest was the development of two tendencies: one dealt with ideal models of society, and the other, predominantly Anglo-Saxon in origin, recognized the limits imposed by reality. The Jacobin or totalitarian tradition sought to overcome diversity by imposing conformity; the other tradition, identified with liberal democracy, accepted diversity and proclaimed its willingness and ability to accommodate it. The parallels between the Soviet Union and the United States are obvious immediately, and their relevance to the personal papers of key advisers of both administrations. Considerable

interpreting political thought and political action commonsensical, particularly if one remembers May's observations on the pertinence of political structures to foreign policy decision-making.

The prologue to this volume will seek to clarify the methodological approach adopted. Two additional points, however, should be noted immediately. First, the "totalitarian model" which served historians and political scientists for several decades obscured as much as it explained. This is evident in the continuing debate about the connection among Marxism, Leninism, and Stalinism, with the work of Stephen Cohen, Robert Tucker, and Moshe Lewin revealing some of the methodological and interpretive crudities that have often prevailed, and that have restricted greater understanding of Soviet Russia in its revolutionary period. Second, America's penchant to ascribe non-ideological, nonconformist motivations to its activities has given way to an increasing understanding of the rise and significance of state capitalism, the impact this has had on interpreting U.S. liberalism, and the range of alternatives which were (and are) realistically entertained in political debate.

By coordinating recent work in political and economic theory with traditional diplomatic analysis, this work seeks to achieve what Thomas McCormick in 1970 termed the diplomatic historian's "unique opportunity." It is to produce a "comparative, cosmopolitan, culturally relative analysis" of the foreign relations of the United States and the U.S.S.R. in the 1930s. To sustain this approach the archival resources of the Hoover and Roosevelt presidential libraries have been thoroughly examined, as have the memoirs, diaries, and personal papers of key advisers of both administrations. Considerable

attention has also been given bureaucratic politics, particularly how and why the State, War, Navy, Commerce, and Treasury departments affected American foreign policy in these years. Moreover, the influence of American public opinion, congressional and presidential politics, and the parts played by influential organizations and institutions have been introduced to broaden the analysis presented.

The application of similar methods to the study of the U.S.S.R. created serious problems. Archival restrictions preclude a definitive account of Soviet policy. It is assumed, however, that the approach adopted provides adequate support for the arguments developed. Soviet and American publications have peeled away a great deal of the deliberate falsification that Stalin encouraged, and a relatively clear picture of the intricacies of Stalin's rule has emerged. With the data already made available by the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the Red Army, and the Soviet Trade Commissariat, a surprisingly vivid, if incomplete, view of the Soviet Union before World War II can be assembled. Finally, by relating Soviet foreign policy to the crises in Europe and East Asia, difficulties that have previously plagued American historians can be resolved convincingly.

Pokrovskii also helped to establish the Russian Association of Social Science Research Institutes, an organization which supported the work of non-marxist scholars. The revolution's goals and the Bolsheviks' hypotheses could still be evaluated critically.³

A competent survey of Soviet historiography is provided by Konstantin F. Shteppa, Russian Historians and the Soviet State (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1982).

With Stalin's rise to power in the party, regimentation increased and the hypotheses of non-marxist historians were repudiated as bourgeois and idealistic. Even the professional work of the "leader" of the historical front came under narrowing criticism before being eventually suppressed altogether. In a joint action of the Soviet government and the Central Committee of the Party, the

PROLOGUE

To analyse the works of Soviet and American historians is to understand the character of their respective societies. The career of M. N. Pokrovskii, the erstwhile "father" of Soviet historiography, is a pertinent example. A delegate to the Brest-Litovsk conference which ended the Russo-German war in 1918, Pokrovskii was later appointed a deputy People's Commissar of Education of the R.S.F.S.R. The first president of the Society of Marxist Historians, an editor of Istorik-marksist and Krasnyi Arkhiv, and a leader of the "historical front" created by the Bolsheviks after the revolution, he worked to further the ideological and political aims of the Soviet state. In addition, he participated in the lively debates among Russia's historians in the 1920s. These debates revealed the socio-cultural complexities of the postwar era and, more importantly, the gradual weakening of the initial efforts to sustain "marxist orthodoxy" in historical studies. Pokrovskii also helped to establish the Russian Association of Social Science Research Institutes, an organization which supported the work of non-marxist scholars. The revolution's goals and the Bolsheviks' hypotheses could still be evaluated critically.¹

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With Stalin's rise to power in the party, regimentation increased and the hypotheses of non-marxist historians were repudiated as bourgeois and idealistic. Even the professional works of the "leader" of the historical front came under harrowing criticism before being eventually suppressed altogether. In 1934 a joint decree of the Soviet government and the Central Committee of the Communist party depicted Soviet textbooks as "abstract and schematic." It was an indirect attack on the approach of Pokrovskii who had died two years before. This line of argument was intensified following the publication of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) in 1938. A model of Stalinist falsification, the Short Course was a direct thrust at Pokrovskii's "school." It was not long before the "Trotskyite-Bukharinite hirelings of Fascism" were described as cleverly disguising themselves "with the help of Pokrovskii's anti-Leninist historical ideas."²

The extraordinary transformation in the interpretation of the significance of Pokrovskii's work was but one step in the systematic distortion of the past initiated by the Kremlin. Most familiar in terms

²Of interest is the introduction by Roman Szporluk in M. N. Pokrovskii, Russia in World History: Selected Essays, trans. and ed. by Roman and Mary Szporluk (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1970), pp. 1-46. The arguments presented against Pokrovskii can be viewed most completely in B. Grekov et al. (eds.), Protiv istoricheskoi kontseptsii M. N. Pokrovskogo (Moscow and Leningrad, 1939) and Protiv antimarksistskoi kontseptsii M. N. Pokrovskogo (Moscow and Leningrad, 1940). Since it reveals one side of Soviet governmental decision-making, it should be noted that none of Pokrovskii's works were published in the U.S.S.R. for more than thirty years. In 1965 Moscow began publication of M. N. Pokrovskii, Izbrannye proizvedeniia v chetyrekh knigakh (Moscow, 1965-1967) which contained previously published material on Lenin, historiography, the revolutionary movement, and popular education.

of Stalin's kul't lichnosti (cult of personality), this approach led to other extreme swings of interpretation which paralleled the history of Bolshevism itself. It also accelerated the drift toward Soviet historical analyses of diplomatic events which monotonously combined Great Russian nationalism and ritualistic obeisance to the ideals of proletarian democracy.

A recent study of the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. bears this out. The Soviet authors insisted that socialism in Russia had already "given the world a model of a just social order," which ruled out "exploitation of man by man." They reasserted the "intrinsically scientific" nature of socialist foreign policy, and they praised Moscow's "knowledge of the objective laws governing the development of society and international relations." They argued that the "mercenary interests of the ruling class" determined the foreign relations of every capitalist state, and they derided the protestations of "bourgeois ideologists" who sought to convince the masses that it was possible to "pursue a 'supra-class' policy" devoid of a clearly "defined social character of its own."³

Even after taking into account Niebuhr's observation that nations and classes tend to defend themselves and define their interests in terms of social myths, the analytical coarseness of these propositions is obvious. Such an approach artificially creates an antipodal extremism between Marxist-Leninist ideas and reality. It imposes methodological categories that vitiate whatever relevance

³I. D. Ovsyany et al., A Study of Soviet Foreign Policy (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), pp. 11-12.

dialectic has as an explanatory tool of social development, and it sustains a perverse kind of monistic unity understandably dismissed by American scholars as disingenuous.⁴

Concurrently with this transmogrification of the Bolshevik revolution and the impact it had on Soviet studies, American historians tended to reflect the successful, if labored, amelioration of American capitalism in the twentieth century. If nothing else, the relative ease with which the "governmental habit" had dealt with domestic crises led many to conclude that Marxism was at best a failed theory, a response to the industrial abuses of nineteenth-century capitalism. Certainly it was an inappropriate framework through which to analyse internal growth and external relationships. Instead, many American historians sought to write within the guidelines of the Rankean or Actonian traditions, describing what happened or what went wrong. In their explanations of U.S. foreign relations, a procapitalist bias was subsumed within their texts, and their preoccupation with the detritus of diplomacy--the documents, memoranda, and position papers of diplomatic personnel--failed to mask western conceptions of liberalism and international law. It was but a short step, considering the legacy of the Stalinist terror, for many of these historians to attack Soviet

⁴ Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Social Myths in the 'Cold War'," Journal of International Politics, XXI (1967), 40-56. Further confirmation of his view can be found in popular descriptions of America today by Soviet publicists; see, for example, A. A. Fursenko, Kriticheskoe desiatiletie Ameriki (Leningrad, 1974) and B. Strelnikov and V. Peskov, Zemlia za okeanom (Moscow, 1975). One might also wish to consult R. N. Berki, "On Marxian Thought and the Problem of International Relations," World Politics, XXIV (October, 1971), 80-105.

U.S. Relations with the Soviet Union, 1917-1974 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1974), pp. 134-135. A student interested in this point of view could consult any of the works of William

Russia with missionary zeal. Steeped in the rhetoric of the Cold War, they described Russia as eternally aggressive, malevolent, and dangerous, while simultaneously projecting the validity of liberal democracy as the exemplar of progress and freedom.⁵

Some U.S. historians, however, updating the dialectic adumbrated by Marx, rejected the procapitalist assumptions of the group identified by Higham as "conservative evolutionists." These "neo-Marxists" traced their origins to the Progressive school of the early twentieth century. But rather than emphasizing areas of conflict within American society they centered their attention on the continuous development of corporate liberalism. These revisionists of the 1960s insisted that the dynamics of monopoly capitalism explained the U.S. economic and political imperialism they detested. The United States was pictured as a counterrevolutionary power, driven by its institutions and ideology. In this view America became the aggressor, eager to use its economic power to dominate the global marketplace.⁶

⁵A review of the work of American historians should include Robert J. Loewenberg, "'Value-Free' Versus 'Value-Laden' History: A Distinction without a Difference," Historian, XXXVIII (May, 1976), 439-454; William Welch, American Images of Soviet Foreign Policy: An Inquiry into Recent Appraisals from the Academic Community (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970); Robert G. Wesson, Why Marxism: The Continuing Success of a Failed Theory (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Ernest R. May, "Emergence to World Power," The Reconstruction of American History, ed. John Higham (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 180-196; and Thomas J. McCormick, "The State of American Diplomatic History" and Laurence Evans, "The Dangers of Diplomatic History," The State of American History, ed. Herbert J. Bass (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 119-156.

⁶An extended treatment of "conflicting views among U.S. historians" can be found in Joan Hoff Wilson, Ideology and Economics: U.S. Relations with the Soviet Union, 1918-1933 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1974), pp. 133-154. A student interested in this point of view could consult any of the works of William

Although cursory and limited in themselves, these observations concerning Soviet and American historiography reveal some of the problems affecting any study of Soviet-American relations. There have been radical and reactionary distortions of marxist ideas that are as self-serving as they are inadequate. Also, American historians have too frequently ignored the policies of the U.S.S.R., incorporated them as part of the anticapitalist argument, or distorted them in order to excuse errors of American diplomatic and political officials. Overall, it can be argued that none of the methods adopted to analyse Soviet-American relations since the First World War has been entirely satisfactory, a development hardly surprising considering the range and complexity of the problems encountered.

To overcome these limitations several steps are essential. It is reasonable to proceed directly from the lessons learned from the misjudgments already mentioned as well as to harness selectively some of the improvements recently discernible in Soviet and American studies. Concentration of effort must also be given an area paradoxically left underdeveloped by historians of both countries. The relationship between domestic adjustments to the dynamics of change and an international environment which recurrently accommodates alterations in each nation's definition of its diplomatic interests is a key to understanding that must be used carefully but thoroughly. Finally, in a preface to his study of the Italo-Ethiopian war, Laurence Lafore astutely reminded historians that the past illuminates "the enormous

Appleman Williams; and a recent work that sustains theoretically and practically this argument is Michael Harrington, The Twilight of Capitalism (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976).

intricacy and particularity, and hence the unpredictability, of historical development." This caveat is a forthright reminder that must not be overlooked by the historian intrigued by the order of his explanations.⁷

I

In late fall 1971 a symposium of Soviet Amerikanisty (American specialists) met in Moscow to discuss the state of American studies in the Soviet Union. V. K. Furaev of Leningrad University, author of a well-known monograph on Soviet-American relations in the interwar period, delivered one of the more important papers presented to the conference. Interested in an interdisciplinary approach to the study of diplomatic history, Furaev stressed the scarcity of this type of work. But he noted that in the last seven or eight years several major volumes had been published which emphasized the analysis of "all forms of relationships between the two states." From biographical sketches of American revolutionary war leaders to manuscripts on American foreign relations, Soviet professional historians have recently demonstrated a greater degree of flexibility and sophistication in their studies of the United States. Even if this reorientation of a part of Soviet scholarship is simply a temporary response to the government's

⁷ V. K. Furaev's views on interwar Soviet-American relations can be found in his Sovetskoe-amerikanskoe otnosheniia 1917-1939 (Moscow, 1964). Also see Furaev, "On the Study of the History of Soviet-American Relations," Soviet Studies in History, xiv (Winter-Fall, 1975), p. 183. For other recent views of the United States by Soviet scholars read Frederick Starr, Soviet Views of the American Revolution, Office of Research and Information, U.S. State Department (Washington, D.C., 1964).
 James Dugan and Laurence Lafore, Days of Emperor and Clown: The Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935-1936 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1973), p. xi.

support of detente, it can be mined effectively by American historians familiar with Soviet political and diplomatic history.⁸

American diplomatic historians have also become more aware of the restricted framework in which they have been operating. After World War II the two historiographical schools of significance in the U.S. throughout most of the twentieth century were perceived as irrelevant. The complexity of American society had overwhelmed many of the simplistic assumptions previously entertained. America's industrial maturity and the economic and political ramifications of U.S. power throughout the world stimulated studies of the structures and functions of U.S. domestic and foreign expansion. The entrepreneurial school of interpretation, nurtured at Harvard University, led the way in this regard. Approaching the same material from a dramatically different point of view, radical historians also began to reassess the institutions of American society. The resulting body of work has persuaded many that a new synthesis of American history depends on the adoption of organizational methods, that is, a coordinated attempt to relate social, cultural, economic, ideological, bureaucratic, and intellectual elements to explain why American society evolved the way it has.

⁸ The papers from the First Symposium of Soviet Historians of America were published in *Materialy Pervogo Simpoziuma Sovetskikh Istorikov-Amerikanistov* (30 noiabria-3 dekabria 1971g.) (Moscow, 1973). V. K. Furaev's views on interwar Soviet-American relations can be found in his *Sovetsko-amerikanskii otnosheniia 1917-1939gg* (Moscow, 1964). Also see Furaev, "On the Study of the History of Soviet-American Relations," *Soviet Studies in History*, XIV (Summer-Fall, 1975), p. 183. For other recent views of the United States by Soviet scholars read Frederick Starr, *Five Soviet Views of the American Revolution*, Office of Research Unclassified Report R-16-76, United States Information Agency (Washington, D.C., 1976) and the Stanford Research Institute study entitled *Soviet Perceptions of the United States*, prepared under contract for the Department of the Army by William M. Carpenter et al. (SRI Project 3884, November, 1975).

Propaganda For years many diplomatic historians were hardly touched by some of the historiographical debates of the twentieth century. The arguments for adopting the tenets of organizational history, however, would seem to be convincing. Ascertaining the ideological and economic motivations of a particular society, the institutions by which they are implemented, and the roles and maneuvering of the personnel involved can provide a most effective explanation of specific actions taken. Rigidly defined and clearly and thoughtfully presented, this approach can make a substantive contribution to comparative foreign relations.

for the Accompanying these changes in Soviet and American studies has been the intriguing, if often abstruse, work of political scientists. Admittedly, many of their studies are marred by terminological obscurantism, and in some areas it is debatable how much progress has actually been made. Interest in international relations theory, for instance, has always been keen. Yet, excepting the work of Hans Morgenthau, Arnold Wolfers and several others, one wonders if great strides have been taken since the mid-seventeenth century when James Harrington drew distinctions in the behavior of "empires."

Nonetheless, their preoccupation with new ways of starting investigations rather than interpreting or explaining what is found has led to several scholarly contributions useful to diplomatic history. Two of the more important concern the theories of decision-making and input-output analysis. In 1958 Jan Triska defined a model for the study of Soviet foreign policy. He adapted concepts from Soviet military doctrine and sought to order data around the following divisions: ideology, strategy, operational direction, and tactics.

Propaganda, he thought, served as an instrument of the four components as well as a fifth element of policy itself. Several years later Triska and David Finley projected the utility of multiple symmetry models in the study of Soviet-American relations. Although serious weaknesses flawed both presentations, these articles were forerunners of more substantive research designs that can be adapted by historians. One of the more sophisticated, which was recently published by Michael Brecher, combined the valuable insights of systems analysis and decision-making theory into a lucid, if excessively rigid, framework for the study of a nation's foreign relations. It included the operational environment in which the state operates, the communication and assimilation of information, and the process and implementation of the decisions taken. A valid exercise, it allows the diplomatic historian to identify precisely the structural assumptions that are the underpinnings of his analysis.⁹

Finally, political scientists and others have again become fascinated with the relationship between domestic and foreign policies. The results were predictable, and, if judiciously applied, worthwhile.

⁹For an overview of input-output analysis and the theory of decision-making read George Modelski, A Theory of Foreign Policy (New York: Praeger, 1962); Joseph Frankel, The Making of Foreign Policy: An Analysis of Decision-making (London: Oxford University Press, 1963); and Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, Foreign Policy Decision-making; An Approach to the Study of International Politics (New York: Free Press, 1962). The three specific case studies referred to can be found in Jan F. Triska, "A Model for the Study of Soviet Foreign Policy," American Political Science Review, LII (March, 1958), 64-83; Jan Triska and David D. Finley, "Soviet-American Relations: A Multiple Symmetry Model," Journal of Conflict Resolution, IX (March, 1965), 37-53; and Michael Brecher, Blema Steinberg and Janice Stein, "A Framework for Research in Foreign Policy Behavior," Journal of Conflict Resolution, XIII (March, 1969), 75-101.

The Revisionist and Bureaucratic-Political Models of Foreign Policy, XVII (October, 1974), 87-106.

Samuel Huntington, Richard Neustadt, and Roger Hilsman have worked diligently to understand the implications of democratic politics on decision-making. Governmental bureaucracies have been studied by Morton Halperin and Graham Allison. John G. Stoessinger and Robert Jervis have shown interest in the basic processes of perception, the tendency to see what we expect to see and the assimilation of incoming information to pre-existing images. Theodore Moran has tried to relate the "institutional necessity" of U.S. corporate capitalism to foreign expansion; and Amos Perlmutter, rejecting the revisionist and bureaucratic-political orientations of Allison, Halperin, and Moran, has argued that the "presidential political center" is the one element that should receive the closest scrutiny.¹⁰

II

Incorporating selectively significant contributions from these developments, this study seeks to explain the diplomatic instability and enmity that characterized the relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in the interwar period. Chosen for particular emphasis are the thirteen years from 1929 through 1941. The reasons for this are readily apparent.

¹⁰James N. Rosenau (ed.), Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (New York: Free Press, 1967); Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971); John G. Stoessinger, Nations in Darkness: China, Russia, and America (New York: Random House, 1971); Robert Jarvis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Theodore H. Moran, "Foreign Expansion as an 'Institutional Necessity' for U.S. Corporate Capitalism: The Search for a Radical Model," World Politics, XXV (April, 1973), 369-386; and Amos Perlmutter, "The Presidential Political Center and Foreign Policy: A Critique of the Revisionist and Bureaucratic-Political Orientations," World Politics, XXVII (October, 1974), 87-106.

First, the availability of documentation is impressive, if not complete. British, French, German, American, and Soviet materials can be usefully employed to substantiate the conclusions presented. One of the more significant series is the Soviet Foreign Ministry's publication of Dokumenty vneshnei politiki. Volumes for most of the interwar years are already available, and comparisons with the documents published by the other great powers give some assurance concerning their accuracy.¹¹

Second, the decline in the American production of consumer and producer goods in the summer of 1929 led the slide of the western industrial nations into the depression decade of the 1930s. As the economic and political measures of the postwar peace settlement collapsed, structural weaknesses were revealed and American capitalism entered a period of crisis. The adjustments precipitated by the depression and implemented by U.S. policymakers preserved the essential ingredients of American society. Yet they also affirmed dramatically the interdependence of states, and this led to long-term effects vis-à-vis the U.S. approach to international economic and political commitments.

Third, by 1929 Stalin had effectively defeated the Right Opposition before a plenum of the Central Committee, and in the following years he increasingly imposed his own "order" on the Soviet Union and, consequently, on the world revolutionary movement. Industrialization, the collectivization of agriculture, the liquidation of "dissident" elements in the party and military through great purges, all reflected

¹¹U.S.S.R., Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dokumenty vneshnei politiki (hereafter cited as DVP) (Moscow, 1957-).
 12. This observation can be found in a letter from F.D.R. to Henry L. Stimson, February 6, 1935, in Elliot Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R.

the Stalinist phase of the Bolshevik revolution. The impact of these developments had a dramatic effect on what Russia could achieve through international politics.

Fourth, the 1930s were, according to Franklin Roosevelt, "not normal times," and many agreed with the president's observation that people were "ready to run after strange gods," not only in the United States but throughout the world. Although an analysis of a period of crisis can easily distort understanding, it does facilitate a deeper penetration into the causal connections that allow explanations of the specific actions taken. This supports the adoption of an interdisciplinary approach, and it assumes that diplomatic history is something more than simply divination of diplomatic entrails.¹²

Fifth, these thirteen years witnessed several significant developments: the continuation of the diplomatic nonrecognition of the U.S.S.R. by Hoover's administration; the relentless impact of the depression on attitudinal differences within both countries; the exchange of letters of intent between Roosevelt and Litvinov in November 1933 which dealt with debts, religious freedom, propaganda, and the other assorted items of their respective national interests; the "deterioration" in Soviet-American relations in the mid-1930s, when both powers (for different reasons) turned away from the other to accommodate domestic demands or to respond to external pressures; and finally coalition against a common foe, Nazi Germany, which

¹²Roosevelt's observation can be found in a letter from F.D.R. to Henry L. Stimson, February 6, 1935, in Elliot Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R. His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, I (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), pp. 450-451.

epitomized the centrifugal and centripetal forces animating the foreign relations of both nations.

Coordinating all these themes in a meaningful way has led to the following proposition: the foreign policies of the United States and the Soviet Union in the interwar period can best be understood in terms of domestic policy. Both countries assumed that their individual national interests coincided with the world's interests as they projected domestic considerations onto the international environment in which they functioned. The soundness of this statement involves an analysis of a number of relevant and interrelated matters, including the ideological, economic, and socio-cultural commitments of both countries, the distinct and significant impact of bureaucratic and party politics on decision-making, the overall composition and quality of Soviet and American political leadership, and the international political and economic developments of the "twenty years' crisis" that followed World War I. Although it would be easier simply to order the familiar events of interwar Soviet-American relations to document this conclusion, the validity and usefulness of the methods adopted can be judged more completely if elucidation is given to some of the assumptions on which they are based as well as their applicability to the events under discussion.

Of the elements involved in this study the one abused most frequently is ideology. Ever since Marx used it to identify the "false consciousness" of the ruling class, western scholars have generally retained this meaning. Reflecting this assumption, distinctions between ideas and actions became inevitable. There was a difference,

it was argued, between ideology and power and between ideals and self-interest. To be ideological was to be irrational and dogmatic, and, self-interest supposedly could be calculated rationally. Recent studies indicate otherwise: works done in the psychology of motivation dismiss on the whole the contention that political leaders can easily identify their best interests, and the proposition that economic influences are pre-eminent has lost ground, and is no longer taken as seriously by scholars as had once been the case. In addition, the division between ideology and power prevalent in American studies after World War II is now perceived as a leftover of the liberal realist treatment of international relations.¹³

Appropriate as these observations are, there remains the problem of identifying with reasonable precision the meaning of ideology for this study. Usually, ideology is taken to mean a body of doctrine affording a system of belief for an entire population. This doctrine is made known and interpreted by leaders and elites who often claim a "knowledge of the objective laws governing the development of society." Assuming this and claiming authority for "revealed truth," the "party," representing the leader and the elites, enforces conformity, and this is viewed as a logical development considering the initial presuppositions that are readily accepted. Soviet Russia fits handily in this category; but, it can be a dangerous one. For it has prompted linkages among Marxism, Leninism, and Stalinism that, acceptable as

¹³ Consult Wilson, Ideology and Economics; David E. Apter (ed.), Ideology and Discontent (London: Free Press, 1964); and Arne Naess, Democracy, Ideology, and Objectivity (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 1956).

they might be in general terms, limited needed analysis of each and led simplistically to the conclusion that one proceeded directly and inevitably from the other.¹⁴

This definition of ideology also had the support of democratic states which rejected the oppression of one-party rule and the determinism of elite images that might be doctrinally sound but were actually unrealistic and visionary. Committed to freedoms of speech and thought as well as mutual tolerance, the marketplace of conflicting ideas was supposedly to reconcile significant differences in ways acceptable to the majority, who could then rule through a multiplicity of parties and interests. Unfortunately, and in spite of the eagerness with which this is espoused, there is a striking disparity between the ideal expressed and reality itself. Louis Halle's Ideological Imagination has sought to deal with this and has concluded that, albeit liberal democratic states are certainly not proponents of ideologies defined in the sense applied to Russia, they are nonetheless eager proponents of what he termed "ideological thinking." This kind of thinking, he argued, denoted a "habit of mind" rather than a body of doctrine which applied to society abstract principles assumed to have the status of moral law. Most assuredly, this type of thinking can be so sure of its righteousness as to be intolerant of dissent.¹⁵

¹⁴The most recent work of interest is Robert C. Tucker (ed.), Stalinism: Essays in Historical Interpretation (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977).

¹⁵Louis J. Halle, The Ideological Imagination: Ideological Conflict in our Time and its Roots in Hobbes, Rousseau and Marx (London: Chatto and Windus, 1971).

ethics. "Modern ideologies and the simplicities of ideological thinking," Halle stipulated, "have developed to meet the needs of societies based on the conception of popular sovereignty and the general will. Their function is to make the people one in thought and action, to make them singular rather than plural." Sharing as they do this common ground, it is permissible to seek to define ideology in a way that permits its use for both the United States and the Soviet Union, an effort that is seen as a troublesome and possibly dangerous simplification if not handled properly.¹⁶

Proceeding cautiously, therefore, this study will assume that ideology means a program suitable for mass consumption which has been derived from a set of assumptions about the nature of society. It includes an understanding of the past and present with definite guides for improving the future. It is, in fact, an established view of man's nature, his past, as well as his aspirations for the future. This viewpoint can be creatively adapted to changing political and economic stimuli or it can be artificially suppressed or destroyed.¹⁷

Applying this to interwar Soviet-American relations, several observations come immediately to mind. The hostility between the United States and the Soviet Union after World War I was certainly grounded in the contradictory ideas sustained by leaders of both governments. Many Americans accepted the relevancy of Christian

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

¹⁷ See, for example, Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics (2nd ed. rev.; New York: Praeger, 1967) and Louis O. Mink, Mind, History and Dialectic: The Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969).

ethics. In addition to a willingness to enunciate a commitment to the equality of man and to government by the consent of the governed, they had also fervently accepted the long-term implications of the English origins of American colonization. America had developed at a time when marketplace capitalism had reached the zenith of its popularity. Private property, freedom of choice, and freedom of enterprise had all become interwoven with assumptions of self-determination and achievement unrestricted by governmental controls. Often sublimating the racist and structural weaknesses of their system, they repeatedly promulgated their economic freedom. It was presumed that without it social and political freedoms were forfeit. It was commonsensical for them, therefore, to project these assumptions overseas through a U.S. commitment to the sovereignty of individual states and the codification of international law. Locke, the Calvinist ethos, and western capitalism had been digested, and the universal applicability of liberal democracy assumed.¹⁸

The Bolsheviks on the other hand were equally convinced that Marx had unraveled the internal logic of history, and it was definitely neither capitalism nor Christianity. The fundamental assumption of the

¹⁸ An eclectic list of sources for these observations would include Roger D. Masters, "The Lockean Tradition in American Foreign Policy," Journal of International Affairs, XXI (1967), 253-277; Michael G. Kammen, People of Paradox: An Inquiry concerning the Origins of American Civilization (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1972); and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "America: Experiment or Destiny?," Robert Kelley, "Ideology and Political Culture from Jefferson to Nixon," and C. Vann Woodward, "The Aging of America," American Historical Review, LXXXII (June, 1977), 505-603.

thought similar views to had gone as antecedent to Poland in the early 1920s, and the statements of Florentin Hoffat, Joseph Crow, R. Walton Moore, Robert Kelley, William R. Castle, Jr. and

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Soviet leadership in the interwar period was that material reality changed continuously through the clash of antagonistic contradictions. This conflict was the basic law of social development, and it would continue until socialism became a worldwide system. This led naturally to the Bolshevik assumption that conflict between the capitalist system and communism was both necessary and desirable. Convinced that their policies were a reflection of "scientific" calculation rather than pseudo-liberalism, the new Soviet regime theoretically rejected the traditional basis for diplomacy which relied on the interplay of nation states promoting national objectives. Even the acceptance of peaceful coexistence following the failure of the world revolution after World War I could be rationalized considering their "belief" in the long-term validity and authenticity of their socio-economic system.

The diplomatic record confirms the applicability of these assumptions. American officials frequently demonstrated their inclination to accept the inherent superiority of American institutions and ideals. In April 1917 Woodrow Wilson, eager to support the new provisional government established after the collapse of the Romanov dynasty, maintained that Russia had in fact always been "democratic at heart." After the Bolsheviks came to power, diplomatic recognition to many Americans was impossible. Herbert Hoover in March 1919 wrote Wilson that the Bolshevik regime was a "murderous tyranny" and that to accept it diplomatically would transgress "every national ideal of our own." Hugh Gibson brought similar views to his post as Ambassador to Poland in the early 1920s, and the statements of Pierrepont Moffat, Joseph Grew, R. Walton Moore, Robert Kelley, William R. Castle, Jr. and

other State Department officials sustain this point conclusively. Perhaps not all would have agreed with William C. Bullitt, who had decided by the late 1930s that Stalin was a representative of "Satanism," or with Hugh R. Wilson, an expert on disarmament and the League of Nations, who argued in 1939 that the "ends of civilization would be furthered" if Germany destroyed Stalin's government, but their anti-pathy was obvious.¹⁹

As far as the leaders of Soviet Russia are concerned, their pronouncements were equally forthright and tendentious. Stormy applause greeted Lenin when he spoke before the First All-Russian Congress of the Navy on November 22 (December 5), 1917. He proclaimed that the revolution had put its "trust in the international solidarity of the working masses," and that "every obstacle and barrier in the struggle for socialism" would be surmounted eventually. Several months later Lenin assured Raymond Robins, a member of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, that "proletarian democracy" was "coming in all countries." The "imperialist-capitalist system in the new and old world," Lenin maintained, would be "crushed" and swept away. Similar statements were reproduced endlessly and reverently. Stalin, Litvinov, Molotov, and other Bolshevik leaders joined in the litany: Russia was "the invincible fortress of the world revolution"; Russia was witnessing the development of a "classless socialist society"; Russia was "summoning

¹⁹ Wilson quoted in N. Gordon Levin, Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: America's Response to War and Revolution (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 43. Letter of William C. Bullitt to Alexander Kirk, September 28, 1939, in Hugh R. Wilson Papers (Hoover Presidential Papers, West Branch, Iowa), Box 3. Cited hereafter as H. R. Wilson Papers. Hugh R. Wilson to Alexander Kirk, December 4, 1939, H. R. Wilson Papers, Box 3.

all those who still groan under the yoke of capitalist penal servitude" to overthrow the old order.²⁰

To argue, however, that the ideas of these men as expressed in these pronouncements were a sufficient explanation of the diplomatic instability between the two countries is extreme and unduly simplistic. Ideologies are guides, links between theory and practice. To cope with the complexity of modernization, antithetical orientations have evolved that predispose people to respond in a certain way. Moreover, the decisions taken often become engulfed in self-satisfying myths, nourished by interparty rivalries. But ideologies do not necessarily determine these responses. An example is perhaps worthwhile. During and immediately after World War I Herbert Hoover believed that the Bolsheviks were murderers, that they had succeeded partly through "political chicanery that was learned on the eastside of New York," and that their economic views were irrational and ephemeral. Twenty years later, in the aftermath of the Wehrmacht's invasion of the U.S.S.R., Hoover sought to rally American public opposition to U.S. involvement in Europe's wars. The United States, the Republican ex-president argued, should "stand aside in watchful waiting, armed to the teeth" while the U.S.S.R. and Germany "exhaust themselves." To aid the Soviet Union, he maintained, would be a "gargantuan jest" considering the differences in Soviet and American ideals. There is seemingly great continuity here, and yet it is partly deceiving. In

²⁰ Lenin, Collected Works, XXVI, 341-346. Also see Lenin to Raymond Robins, April 30, 1918, DVP, I, 276 as well as translations of numerous statements of Soviet leaders in National Archives decimal files for the Department of State, 861.00S.R. 1/31. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975).

the intervening years Hoover had opposed American military intervention in northern Russia and eastern Siberia. He had denounced the actions of A. Mitchell Palmer, the U.S. Attorney General who had sought to ride the Red Scare to the presidency. And he had led the American Relief Administration's efforts to relieve the famine in Russia in the early 1920s. Ideological antagonisms alone, therefore, do not preclude cooperative efforts between two countries. In Hoover's case, the acknowledged ideological presuppositions must be integrated within a constantly changing political, economic, and international context.²¹

III

The relative stages of economic development that had been achieved by the Soviet and American economies in the interwar period is another area of concern, as is the impact their economies had on the foreign relations of both countries. The United States by the First World War had achieved its industrial maturity. Over the latter part of the nineteenth century great vertically integrated companies had arisen in response to the socio-political, economic, demographic, and technological changes of the era. Organized in oligopolistic industries these corporations had contributed to higher levels of

²¹ Review Hoover's Russian policy memorandum, January 24, 1920, Pre-Commerce Subject File, Container 37; also Hoover in 40 Key Questions about our Foreign Policy (Scarsdale, New York: The Updegraff Press, 1952), pp. 2-3. For an analysis of Hoover's role in the famine relief of Russia consult Benjamin M. Weissman, Herbert Hoover and Famine Relief to Soviet Russia, 1921-1923 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974). One of the most recent biographies of Hoover, particularly important for the years after his presidency, is Joan Hoff Wilson, Herbert Hoover: Forgotten Progressive (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975).

national income, perceptible increases in the American standard of living, and the demise of laissez-faire capitalism. The institutional reforms implemented by government and business alike reconciled most Americans to the disadvantages of industrial capitalism. In the twenty years after the Great War, increased attention was given an evolving mass-production-consumption society. The debate continued over how to achieve growth, stability, and equity simultaneously within the marketplace. Some governmental officials sought to combine nineteenth-century values with modern industrial performance by updating voluntarism and promoting cooperative competition, and others supported a larger role for government as well as rational economic planning similar to the efforts made during the American involvement in World War I. Whatever the differences of approach, however, there was great faith in the future of the American economy and the prosperity it created.²²

In contrast to the United States, Russia in 1917 was a predominantly agricultural economy. The industrialization that had taken place in the last years of the Romanov dynasty had been significant, but, as World War I revealed dramatically, Russia was economically less

²²Harold G. Vatter, The Drive to Industrial Maturity: The U.S. Economy, 1860-1914 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975); Louis Galambos, Competition and Cooperation: The Emergence of a National Trade Association (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966); Samuel Haber, Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); Robert F. Himmelberg, The Origins of the National Recovery Administration: Business, Government, and the Trade Association Issue, 1921-1933 (New York: Fordham University Press, 1976); and Jerry Israel (ed.), Building the Organizational Society: Essays on Associational Activities in Modern America (New York: Free Press, 1972).

developed compared to America and the great European powers. Moreover, participation in the Great War, the revolutions of 1917, and the internal struggle between the Bolsheviks and the counterrevolutionaries left the national fabric in tatters. With the end of the Russian Civil War the Bolsheviks implemented a policy of modernization to secure the interests of Russian communism, which, it was assumed, would be the best means available to promote the world revolutionary movement. In the early 1920s Lenin supported a program of gradual industrialization. It was effective, but after his death in 1924 Soviet economic policy was inextricably linked to the politics of succession. By 1929 Stalin had effectively defeated the moderate elements within the Communist Party. This was the political prelude to his "revolution from above," as Stalin swung the weight of the party and government away from Lenin's New Economic Policy and toward the adoption of an extreme version of what was termed teleological planning, the primacy of wilful exertion over objective restraints.²³

The diplomatic implications of these differences in economic development were especially significant. Washington, disillusioned by the aftermath of the First World War, presumed that America's economic

²³ Alec Nove, An Economic History of the U.S.S.R. (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1969); Alexander Baykov, The Development of the Soviet Economic System (New York: Macmillan, 1947); Maurice Dobb, Soviet Economic Development Since 1917 (rev. ed.; New York: International Publishers, 1966); and Naum Jasny, Soviet Economists of the Twenties: Names to be Remembered (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972). Two recent articles give some indication of current thinking on Russia's Five Year Plans: R. W. Davies and S. G. Wheatcroft, "Further Thoughts on the First Five Year Plan," Slavic Review, XXXIV (December, 1975), 790-802; and Barbara G. Katz, "Purges and Production: Soviet Economic Growth, 1928-1940," Journal of Economic History, XXXV (September, 1975), 567-590.

power could achieve its national goals without it undertaking unnecessary political responsibilities. As a creditor nation in the postwar period the U.S. promoted private investment overseas and worked effectively to break down restrictions that hindered the growth of multinational corporations. Nevertheless, the ability of domestic industries to adapt to an urbanized and interdependent society convinced many that, while foreign trade was essential for high rates of economic growth, there was no pressing need for Washington to assume direct responsibility for the stability of the international economic system.²⁴

Relating all this more specifically to interwar Soviet-American relations, the following can be stated with confidence. First, in the 1920s the United States did not need the Russian economy either as a source of raw materials or as a market for its manufactured goods. This provided an economic basis for the political decision of diplomatic nonrecognition adopted by the Wilson administration. It also permitted the U.S. government to maintain for years the argument that Bolshevik Russia owed the U.S. for the funds extended to the Kerensky government. Overall, the absence of formal political relations was an economic

luxury of the New Era. Next, the extent of Soviet-American trade that did develop in the 1920s fit perfectly the ideas of controlled trade expansion

²⁴ In particular consult Michael J. Hogan, Informal Entente: The Private Structure of Cooperation in Anglo-American Economic Diplomacy, 1918-1928 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1977); Charles P. Kindleberger, The World in Depression, 1929-1939 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); and Mira Wilkins, The Maturing of Multinational Enterprise: American Business Abroad from 1914 to 1970 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

fostered by the Republican administrations of the period. Large-scale U.S. corporations could extend credits to the U.S.S.R. for profitable contracts if they so desired. The American government did not interfere except to prohibit the use of Soviet gold for domestic goods, to prevent the sale of Soviet securities to the American public, and to dissuade American manufacturers from shipping military equipment to the Soviet Union.²⁵ Third, even after the Roosevelt-Litvinov talks of November 1933 had established normal political ties, the disparities in the two national economies did not induce strong trade links between the two countries. Admittedly, trade, or more precisely the expectation of it, had persuaded many in the U.S. that Washington should heed the call of the Kremlin and exchange diplomatic representatives, but the record of the 1930s was unimpressive. Even the trade agreement of 1935 was overshadowed by the Seventh Comintern Congress, the domestic American repercussions to it, and the Kremlin's willingness to cast aside American sensibilities for other more important considerations.²⁶

²⁵ See the review of accomplishments of the Division of Eastern European Affairs for 1929 to 1933, Presidential Papers--Cabinet Offices, State, Hoover Library, Box 48 as well as the July, 1933 memorandum on U.S.-U.S.S.R. trade relations, President's Secretary File: Diplomatic/Russia, Franklin Roosevelt Presidential Library, Container 67, Folder 1932-1933. In addition, the reader might wish to examine the relevant chapters in Wilson, Ideology and Economics and Peter G. Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).

²⁶ Edward Bennett, Recognition of Russia: An American Foreign Policy Dilemma (Waltham, Massachusetts, 1970); Donald G. Bishop, The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreements: The American View (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1965); and Robert Paul Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953).

Fourth, in the 1920s the backwardness of the Soviet economy and Moscow's commitment to modernization led to peaceful coexistence with the capitalist powers, as well as economic agreements to bring western technology to the U.S.S.R. But the central aim of the Soviets was succinctly expressed by Stalin in 1933 in his analysis of the First Five-Year Plan. The industrialization of the U.S.S.R. was to make the Soviet Union "entirely self-sufficient and independent of the caprices of world capitalism" and to establish "all the necessary technical and economic prerequisites for the maximum increase of the defensive forces of the country." Soviet officials assumed that agreements with the capitalist powers were temporary; this was the hallmark of Soviet foreign policy in the interwar period.²⁷

Finally, the unwillingness of the United States to join with Soviet Russia in a concerted effort to oppose the aggressor nations in the 1930s was definitely a result of a number of different developments. But, one of the more important was the American assumption, naive as it turned out to be, that the U.S. had the economic levers at its command to maintain American interests. The Second World War eventually disabused Washington of this assumption.

IV

Since there is little point to provide in miniature the chapters that shall sustain the explanation offered, restating several of the

²⁷ Stalin's evaluation of the significance of the First Five-Year Plan can be found in *Moscow Daily News*, January 15, 1933, pp. 1-8 and *Soviet Union Review*, XI (February, 1933), 31-40.

observations already noted should be sufficient before proceeding with the body of the work. The insights provided by the descriptions of the ideological motivations and economic developments heretofore given are just two of the variables treated in this study, and both shall serve as the general background through which the diplomatic relationship of these two countries shall be clarified. Equally important are the specific political leaders involved, their decisions, and the implementation of these decisions by their respective governments. It must also be born in mind that, while the past truly reflects, as Lafore argued, the basic "unpredictability" of historical development, there must be a method of ordering the data at the historian's disposal. In this study it is assumed that an understanding of interwar Soviet-American relations depends on accepting the correlation between domestic considerations and the international economic and political developments that occurred in the twenty years following the First World War. It is also assumed that this will support Collingwood's emphasis on the importance of the idea of history, a fitting conception considering the ideological pretensions of the Soviet commitment to the dialectic and America's readiness to affirm the validity of liberal democracy.

CHAPTER I

WAR AND REVOLUTION

PART ONE

"In no nation," according to Herbert Hoover, were the "installations of progress more advanced. In no nation were the fruits of accomplishment more secure. In no nation was the independent mind more often worthy of respect." Hoover's 1924 address to Congress left the indelible imprint of the prosperity that had been achieved. The United States was in the position, he said, that the president insisted that many of the best nations of the world had accompanied industrialization. "The United States," he said, "had preserved the humanitarian ideals of the world. It had given 'renewed hope and courage' to the world. It had 'inspired the people.'" Determined to bring "the world to a state of cooperation" that had characterized the United States, Hoover promised to restrict selfish but politically motivated interests, to promote the ideas of voluntarism, and to insure economic stability through economic growth. As he would later recall this still young nation, the United States to act "in full cooperation with good forces" throughout the world. "War-provoking social movements" would be effectively isolated, "confined to fumes from the Communist system [sic] in Russia

and [from] Fascism in Italy." American individualism would emerge triumphant in its confrontation with the alien ideologies of the postwar world.¹

Within eighteen months CHAPTER I

delivered a major political address to the assembled delegates of the Sixteenth Party Congress. He was primarily concerned with extending

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"In no nation," according to Herbert Hoover, were the "institutions of progress more advanced. In no nation" were "the fruits of interests, the emphasis and the fruits of the decay of capitalism and communism more secure. In no nation" was "the government more worthy of respect." Hoover's 1929 inaugural address bore the unmistakable imprint of the prosperity of the New Era. Confident that the United States was in the process of creating a "new race," the president insisted that many of the socio-economic and political problems that had accompanied industrialization had already been resolved. America had preserved the humanitarian ideals of earlier generations, and it had given "renewed hope and courage" to all who had faith in "government by the people." Determined to further the "new-found capacity for cooperation" that had characterized the postwar years, Hoover promised to restrict selfish but politically powerful vested interests, to promote the ideas of voluntarism, and to insure domestic stability through economic growth. As he would later recall this path would allow the United States to act "in full cooperation with moral forces" throughout the world. "War-provoking social movements" would be effectively isolated, "confined to fumes from the Communist caldron [sic] in Russia

ideas through *The New Day: Campaign Speeches of Herbert Hoover, 1928* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1928) and William Starr Myers (ed.), *The State Papers and Other Public Writings of Herbert Hoover* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1934).

and [from] Fascism in Italy." American Individualism would emerge triumphant in its confrontation with the alien ideologies of the postwar world.¹

Within eighteen months of Hoover's inauguration, Stalin delivered a major political address to the assembled delegates of the Sixteenth Party Congress. He was primarily concerned with extending his attack on the Right Opposition, and he astutely pictured the international environment in ways conducive to his internal political interests. He emphasized how World War I had "intensified the decay of capitalism and undermined its equilibrium." He ridiculed the "exalted speeches" of western economists and politicians who had honored the "new technique" and the "capitalist rationalization" that had followed the war. He admitted that a period of stability had been achieved by the middle of the 1920s, aided measurably by American capital. But this stability had disintegrated. Crises, he insisted, could not be considered accidental events in capitalist countries, and the pressures of the deepening depression were aggravating the antagonistic contradictions among western powers. The possibility of peaceful temporary settlements of outstanding difficulties became increasingly unlikely. The League of Nations was "rotting even before burial." "Disarmament schemes" were "falling into oblivion, while conferences for reducing

¹U.S., Congress, House, Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States from George Washington to Richard Nixon, 93rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1974, House Document No. 208, pp. 225-233. Also Herbert Hoover, Memoirs: The Cabinet and the Presidency, 1920-1933 (New York: Macmillan Company, 1952), pp. 330-331. One can trace many of Hoover's ideas through The New Day: Campaign Speeches of Herbert Hoover, 1928 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1928) and William Starr Myers (ed.), The State Papers and Other Public Writings of Herbert Hoover (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1934).

naval armaments became conferences for re-equipping and extending navies." There were, he maintained, "two different tendencies acting in opposite directions." A policy of undermining the economic relations between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist countries was paralleled by the sympathy and support of workers throughout the world for the Soviet Union. "It is the struggle of these two factors that determines the external position of the U.S.S.R."²

Hoover's and Stalin's observations in 1929 and 1930 were functions of domestic considerations which, they assumed, were of international significance. Direct reflections of the internal and external adjustments of their nations to the aftermath of the First World War, their evaluations represented several of the symbolic and substantive differences between the two countries. Understanding these differences and the impact they had on the bilateral relationship that developed in the 1930s is possible only in terms of the American and Bolshevik reactions to the war that began in Europe in the summer of 1914. A monumental disaster that shattered the international order which had been the legacy of the nineteenth century, World War I accelerated the transformation of nation states in an evolving epoch of revolution and conflict.

²Iosif Stalin, Political Report to the Sixteenth Party Congress of the Russian Communist Party (London: Modern Books Limited, 1930), pp. 2, 14, 17, and 27. For additional coverage of this congress see XVI s'ezd vsesoiuznoi kommunisticheskoi partii: stenograficheskie otchet. 2 vols. (Moscow, 1935); or Inprecor, July 3, 1930, 549-554; July 10, 1930, 575-588; and July 17, 1930, 608-615. For an appraisal of Hoover and his cabinet consult Inprecor, April 26, 1929, 417-418; and Coleman to Stimson, January 9, 1930, State Department files, 711.61/184.

I

The election of Woodrow Wilson in 1912 was a logical, though by no means inevitable, culmination of many of the developments of the "progressive society" of the early twentieth century. Preeminently a man of Victorian heritage, the new president represented one wing of the political accommodation that had evolved in his generation to industrial capitalism. He had reconciled the traditional elements of southern Democratic politics with an understanding of Manchester liberalism, and he rejected "absolutely" domination of political institutions by special interests. He anticipated that his administration's commitment to reform of the maldistribution of power in American society would be his chief concern, a domestic preoccupation that would retain widespread popular approval. His thinking reflected the basic ideas he reiterated then and later, which he thought most Americans eagerly sustained: private property was sacrosanct; liberty was born of universal cooperation; government had the right to prevent tyranny by any minority faction; and freedom was impossible without public order and authority. Convinced that American "character" had forged the most humane and Christian form of government, Wilson tended to universalize his perceptions of the specific principles and interests of the United States.³

³ Arthur S. Link's multi-volume biography of Woodrow Wilson, which includes The Struggle for Peace; Confusion and Crises, 1915-1916; and Campaigns for Progressivism and Peace, 1916-1917 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960, 1964, and 1965); Arthur Link, Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917 (New York: Harper and Row, 1954); Woodrow Wilson, The New Freedom: A Call for the Emancipation of the Generous Energies of a People (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1918), pp. 60-61; and R. S. Baker and W. E. Dodd (eds.), The

The president's views were unexceptionable. Liberals and conservatives of the Republican and Democratic parties held common ground in their idealized versions of the role of the United States in international affairs. Sustained by the relative self-sufficiency of the U.S. economy, America's political leaders rejected the alliances of rival empires, repudiated the extravagant colonialism of the great powers, and, notwithstanding their own involvement in the Philippines, Guam, and Cuba, proudly hailed their commitment to self-determination. As advocates of an international environment which would respect national rights of property and liberty, they maintained that the United States could remain neutral during the latest European confrontation. Such a policy, they assumed, suited traditional patterns of U.S. diplomacy. International law, moreover, would protect Washington's interests. And the strategic position of American manufacturing and finance vis-à-vis the belligerent powers would allow U.S. corporations to exploit Europe's predicament to America's advantage.⁴

This curious admixture of neutrality, moral superiority, and economic practicality failed in its original intent. Washington was drawn inexorably in the direction of the war. International developments confirmed the interdependence of states, and reemphasized that

Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson: War and Peace, 1917-1924, II (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1927), pp. 85 and 440-441.

⁴Lloyd Gardner, "A Progressive Foreign Policy," From Colony to Empire: Essays in the History of American Foreign Relations, ed. William Appleman Williams (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1972), 204-251; Ernest R. May, Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power (New York: Harper and Row, 1961); and Gabriel Kolko, Main Currents in Modern American History (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 1-99.

the long-term objectives of the American government, no matter how vaguely perceived, could be jeopardized by untoward events, including the German campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare initiated in 1917. Moreover, even though the U.S. involvement in the Mexican Revolution had revealed the disasters that could undermine the best of intentions, the magnitude of the European war suggested an intriguing proposition. If legal and moral mechanisms could be created which were suitable to the projection of American conceptions of voluntarism onto the international political arena, then the interests of the United States (internally and externally) would be well-served.

These ideas were positively affected by the upheaval in Russia in March 1917. A "glorious act," it substantiated Wilson's belief in the vitality of democracy. In fact, he was delighted that the U.S. was the first power to recognize the new provisional government. Writing to Paul Kennaday of the American Society of the Friends of Russian Freedom, the president emphasized that U.S. diplomatic recognition demonstrated America's "natural sympathy" for "popular government." Assuming that the Russians would henceforth be better able to fight the Germans, he also dispatched Elihu Root and several other Americans to Petrograd to express Washington's interest in the Russian war effort. As Secretary of State Robert Lansing would later recall, it was essential that the provisional government realize its duty to "humanity" and preserve "internal harmony" in order to insure the longevity of Russian democracy and to facilitate the defeat of the "autocratic power" of the German government.⁵

⁵Woodrow Wilson to Paul Kennaday, March 23, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (microfilm edition) series

The Bolshevik seizure of power in November 1917 complicated Wilson's plans, but it did not come as a complete surprise. Astonished by the optimism of the Root mission, Lansing had thought it much more likely that developments would mirror the stages of the French revolution of the late eighteenth century. Russia, he assumed, would be reduced to chaos before a strong man emerged to restore stability through a military dictatorship. The political turmoil in July had reaffirmed his assumption that drastic changes in the provisional government were probable, if not inevitable. Moreover, Lansing and other members of Wilson's cabinet had frequently discussed revolutions as "spiritual" phenomena that invariably went further than anticipated. Herbert Hoover in particular was eager to dissect the implications of revolutionary ideas on the American labor movement, the impact this might have in the postwar period, and the long-term adjustments that would have to be undertaken in order to retain the essential components of the industrially mature, capitalist state.⁶

The limited and often contradictory information emanating from David Francis and other American diplomatic personnel in Moscow and Petrograd, the genuinely held commitment to self-determination, and the residual hopes that the revolution, even if it reduced Russia to chaos

2, reel 85; E. David Cronon (ed.), The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, 1913-1921 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), May 11, 1917, p. 150; and Robert Lansing, The War Memoirs of Robert Lansing (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1935), p. 333.

⁶Lansing, War Memoirs, pp. 333-338; Lansing to Wilson, December 10, 1917, Wilson Papers, series 2, reel 93; Francis William O'Brien (ed.), The Hoover-Wilson Wartime Correspondence, September 24, 1914 to November 11, 1918 (Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1974); and Cronon (ed.), The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, December 21, 1917, p. 254.

temporarily, would help eventually to sustain the American position after the war persuaded the Wilson administration to approach the Russian situation cautiously. Lansing argued in December 1917 that it was best to "do nothing." Since Russia was an "unanswerable riddle," it would be a "serious error" to recognize the Bolshevik government. "Their followers" in other lands, he maintained, would be encouraged; it would make them more "insolent," winning "their contempt, not their friendship." Considering America's commitment to political institutions "based on nationality and private property," it was better to "leave these dangerous idealists alone," to "have no overt dealings with them," and to allow this "wholly novel" situation to work itself out unhampered by outside interference.⁷

Ideally, Washington could have proceeded along these lines. U.S. economic interests in Russia were minimal. There were no significant military, ethnic, or business groups pressing actively for intervention, and the legacy of Wilson's involvement in the Mexican revolution had convinced many of the limits of military solutions to revolutionary developments. Absorbed with the organization of the American Expeditionary Force, the conversion of the U.S. economy to wartime production, and the defeat of Germany, Washington hesitated. In November and December 1917 it was not immediately apparent that the

⁷David R. Francis, Russia from the American Embassy: April, 1916-November, 1918 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921); Lansing, War Memoirs, pp. 339-340, and 342; and Lansing to Wilson, January 6, 1918, Wilson Papers, Series 5a: Paris Peace Conference, reel 384. Lansing continued to argue that the situation in Russia "should not be too hastily judged."

Bolsheviks would sacrifice traditional Russian national interests in order to resolve domestic political problems.

Bolshevism, however, was an international phenomenon, not only in its ideological presuppositions, but also in terms of its impact on Russia's foreign policy. Inevitably, Washington's inclination to "do nothing" collapsed beneath the weight of internal and external pressures. First, the president had considered the actions of Lenin and Trotsky in seeking a separate peace with Germany in 1918 as "opera bouffe," but the Russo-German treaty signed at Brest-Litovsk in March signalled a massive shift in the military situation in favor of the Central Powers. Shortly, France and England, apprehensive about the expected spring offensive of the German armies, recommended military action in Russia to reestablish the eastern front. Supporting their decision were the representatives of Kerensky's government, who accelerated their efforts to persuade Washington to aid those Russians opposed to the Bolsheviks.⁸

Second, the harsh tactics of Lenin's regime aroused the antipathy of the general public and prompted U.S. diplomats in Russia and the State Department to conclude that something had to be done. Basil Miles, DeWitt Poole, William Phillips, and Maddin Summers reflected

⁸Cronon (ed.), The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, November 27, 1917, p. 243; November 30, 1917, p. 244; December 11, 1917, p. 249; December 18, 1917, p. 252; and December 21, 1917, p. 254. Also, Arno W. F. Kolz, "British Economic Interests in Siberia during the Russian Civil War, 1918-1920," Journal of Modern History, XLVIII (September, 1976), 483-491; Michael Jabara Carley, "The Origins of the French Intervention in the Russian Civil War, January-May, 1918: A Reappraisal," Ibid., 413-439; and Robert James Maddox, "Woodrow Wilson, the Russian Embassy and the Siberian Intervention," Pacific Historical Review, XXXVI (November, 1967), 435-448.

the conservative's disgust with the violations of life and property that the Bolshevik leadership so callously employed. So too did David Francis, the American ambassador in Russia, who viewed Lenin's experiment as a "monstrosity" and "a blot on the civilization" of the twentieth century. Together they pressured Wilson to intervene to save Russia's revolution from the tyranny of the communists.⁹

Third, despite the initial exemption of U.S. investments in Russia, the Soviet confiscation of property in February 1918 troubled U.S. businessmen. The White House, committed to a policy of equality of trading opportunities, also wondered about the ramifications of a Russian state working through trade monopolies to achieve particular national goals. Moreover, the Japanese indicated that they intended to exploit the developments in Russia to their own advantage. This threatened the outcome of the revolution, jeopardized Russia's territorial integrity, and complicated the work that would have to be done if Wilson's postwar plans were to be achieved.¹⁰

Still, the president procrastinated. Many liberals had already been disillusioned by America's declaration of war. Progressives like William Borah of Idaho were cautious or actively opposed to any

⁹William Appleman Williams, "American Intervention in Russia, 1917-1920," Studies on the Left, III (Fall, 1963), 24-48; and Ibid., IV (Winter, 1964), 39-57. David Francis, Russia from the American Embassy, pp. vi and 335.

¹⁰Arthur Walworth, America's Moment, 1918: American Diplomacy at the End of World War I (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), pp. 231-248; B. M. Unterberger, America's Siberian Expedition, 1918-1920 (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1956); Christopher Lasch, "American Intervention in Siberia: A Reinterpretation," Political Science Quarterly, LXXII (June, 1962), 205-223; and Sumner Shapiro, "Intervention in Russia, 1918-1919," United States Naval Institute Proceedings, XCIX (April, 1973), 52-61.

interference by the U.S. in the internal affairs of another country. The War Department under Newton Baker also thought military intervention impractical, and argued against it. Wilson, too, agonized over the impact that intervention might have on the "moral position" which he had done so much to preserve and exploit.¹¹

Eventually he acted, recognizing that certain compromises were inevitable in any restructuring of the international political and economic order, especially if America's aims were to succeed. In 1918 he reluctantly ordered U.S. military personnel to Archangel and Murmansk to protect allied military supplies. Additional battalions under General William Graves' command were disembarked in Siberia to facilitate the removal of Czechoslovak forces from Vladivostok and to limit Japanese expansionism in the Far East. The president restricted the operational discretion of Graves, forbidding him to interfere in Russia's internal problems, and he insisted that his actions did not violate either his theoretical or practical commitment to Russian self-determination. Whether Wilson secretly hoped that these steps would help topple the Bolsheviks from power is relatively insignificant compared to the fact that they were undertaken primarily to accommodate the French and the British. The postwar era would depend on the ability of the great powers to cooperate; the differences in their present and

¹¹Christopher Lasch, The American Liberals and the Russian Revolution (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962); William E. Borah Papers, General Office File, Container 79: Russian Matters, 1918-1919, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Newton D. Baker, "Personal Observations about the North Russian and Siberian Expeditions," November 11, 1924, Baker to Mrs. John Casserly, November 15, 1924, Newton D. Baker Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; and Cronon (ed.), The Cabinet Diaries of Josephus Daniels, March 1, 1918, p. 285.

prospective foreign policies were considerable; and Russia's good will, although important, was less significant than the support of Paris and London for Wilson's league of nations. The president was attempting, therefore, to propitiate the Allies, to protect America's interests, and to delimit as much as possible the damage to his political credibility and moral standing not only in the U.S. but throughout the world. The contretemps with Japan over the number of military troops involved and the extent of their intervention in Siberia were future aggravations that did not affect the initial decision taken.¹²

Wilson's decision to subordinate Russian self-determination to the association of nation states he hoped to establish after the war was consistent with U.S. national interests. It reflected the importance of his administration's commitment to a "special" postwar "order," which was to be based on "individual liberty and the supremacy of the popular will operating through liberal institutions." These ideas, shared by many Europeans who believed in the integrity and effectiveness of democratic government, were the culminative effect of disparate economic and political developments that had shaped America's internal and international politics since the early twentieth century. The extent of the tragedy of the First World War forged links among those

¹²Two of the most intelligent appraisals of American intervention are Eugene P. Trani, "Woodrow Wilson and the Decision to Intervene in Russia: A Reconsideration," Journal of Modern History, XLVIII (September, 1976), 440-461 and George Kennan, Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1920, 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956-1958). Also consult these new interpretations: Lloyd Gardner, Wilson and Revolutions, 1913-1921 (Philadelphia, 1976) and Robert J. Maddox, The Unknown War with Russia: Wilson's Siberian Intervention (San Rafael, California: Presidio Press, 1977).

repulsed by the failures of the "old order," and provided the momentum which Wilson thought to use to insure international cooperation and peace.¹³

Despite America's traditional avoidance of "entangling" alliances, the president was convinced that the Progressive movement had altered the perceptions of the American people, and that their understanding of voluntarism, their familiarity with corporate organizations, and their willingness to prevent abuses through laws and regulatory agencies would make an association of nations acceptable to the electorate. Admittedly, such a scheme would have to promote democratic principles of life and property. It would have to reject imperialism and colonialism, and avoid unnecessary diminution of a nation's rights and privileges. Still, the major difficulties which the United States had encountered in adjusting to industrialization had been overcome, and had taught an important lesson. Men of good will had extended the domain of cooperation via industrial self-regulation, labor unions, and professional societies. The federal government had acted to promote these developments, and it seemed commonsensical that an international organization could succeed just as spectacularly.

Another fillip to Wilson's ideas was the burgeoning power of the U.S. economy. American multinational corporations had been active prior to the Civil War, and the closing of the frontier had accelerated large capital outflows, reflecting the decisions of industrialists and

¹³Lansing, War Memoirs, p. 343; Arthur Walworth, America's Moment, 1918; N. Gordon Levin, Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: America's Response to War and Revolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); and Arno J. Mayer, Wilson vs. Lenin: Political Origins of the New Diplomacy (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1964).

financiers to expand their penetration of foreign markets. Washington had wholeheartedly endorsed these endeavors, particularly as expansionism was linked to the emerging international creditor status of the U.S. economy. By 1914 America's direct and portfolio investment overseas had risen to seven percent of U.S. gross national product. Although a majority of this investment was concentrated in Canada and Mexico, U.S. businesses had funneled hundreds of millions of dollars to England, France, Germany and other European countries. International cooperation would facilitate foreign trade, raise international standards of living, and alleviate economic pressures that might lead to antagonism and conflict. Assured access to raw materials and money markets was clearly in the general welfare.¹⁴

An obvious concern to the president, however, was the fact that domestic prosperity did not depend on overseas trade. U.S. manufacturers had succeeded admirably in their programs of import substitution. Increases in foreign trade, therefore, were desirable but not imperative. This buttressed the arguments of the protectionists who had managed throughout the late nineteenth century to persuade Congress to enact high tariffs. The limited success the president had had with the Underwood Tariff of 1914 confirmed the power of these "special interests." Committed to freer trade internationally, Wilson did not

¹⁴Harold G. Vatter, The Drive to Industrial Maturity: The U.S. Economy, 1860-1914 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975), pp. 307-327; Mira Wilkins, The Emergence of Multinational Enterprise: American Business Abroad from the Colonial Era to 1914 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1970); and Burton I. Kaufman, "The Organizational Dimension of United States Economic Foreign Policy, 1900-1920," Business History Review, XLVII (Winter, 1972), 444-465.

minimize the difficulties which he would encounter. Creating an international organization which favored his view of trade would inevitably have domestic repercussions. Yet this was especially appealing to the exemplar of the New Freedom, who had barely been reelected to the presidency in 1916.¹⁵

Wilson had become president in 1913 because he represented one wing of the Progressive movement, and because the Republican Party was split between William Howard Taft and Theodore Roosevelt. His efforts to reduce the tariff, create a central bank, enact antitrust legislation, and prevent the further concentration of America's industries had been only partially successful. The European war, moreover, had forced him to the right politically, as he struggled to unify the country in the event that neutrality and international law failed to protect U.S. interests. The character of the Federal Trade Commission, the appointments to the National Defense Advisory Council, the increasing power of oligopolistic industries and the minimal effectiveness of antitrust laws attested to the emasculation of the original program he had presented in 1912. The growth of the federal government because of the war was also disconcerting. Federally owned corporations had become necessary, as had various boards and agencies for trade, finance, industry, and labor.

¹⁵William Diamond, The Economic Thought of Woodrow Wilson (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1943); Ernest R. May, The World War and American Isolation, 1914-1917 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); Mira Wilkins, The Maturing of Multinational Enterprise: American Business Abroad from 1914 to 1970 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 3-45; Roy W. Curry, Woodrow Wilson and Far Eastern Policy, 1913-1921 (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957); and Robert D. Cuff, "Woodrow Wilson and Business-Government Relations during World War I," Review of Politics, XXXI (July, 1969), 385-407.

The successful development of an international association of states would create an environment which would help the president revivify the New Freedom. The domination of national politics by the Republican Party would be broken. The libertarian notions of his wing of the Progressive movement would be rekindled, and the power of the vested interests would be curtailed. Washington would be able to project internationally those ideas suited to Wilson's view of democratic capitalism.

In 1918 and 1919 the stakes were enormous, and the support of England and France was essential. The negotiations among Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Wilson, and between the allied and associated powers and Germany, were clearly much more important than the Bolshevik phenomenon. Although he had originally intended to incorporate Russia in his postwar league of nations, Wilson ultimately concluded that this was impossible in the immediate future. Russia's Civil War, Allied commitments to anti-Bolshevik factions, pressures emanating from within the American government to suppress revolutionary socialism, and the extended role of Japanese military forces in the Far East persuaded the president to temporize and to adapt U.S. plans gradually. This approach, an affirmation rather than a denial of his policy since 1917, led him to consider the phased withdrawal of U.S. forces from Archangel, Murmansk, and eastern Siberia, but it also meant continued support of the previously improvised efforts to quarantine the Bolshevik regime economically and politically. Further adjustments would be forthcoming following the repudiation of Lenin's ideas.¹⁶

¹⁶J. Joseph Huthmacher and Warren I. Susman (eds.), Wilson's Diplomacy: An International Symposium (Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing

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Wilson was convinced that the moderate middle course he epitomized reflected the best interests of the postwar period, and he intended to rally the American people to his cause, just as he had used European public opinion to influence the policies of the Allied governments. In late 1919 he traveled extensively throughout the western states. The congressional opponents of the treaty of Versailles would be overwhelmed once the issues involved were properly explained and understood. The strikes, political bombings, and radical outbursts that affected Europe and the United States at this time provided a perfect backdrop, and the events in Russia, or more precisely Wilson's depiction of them, became a tool of domestic politics.

Detailing the draconian measures employed by the Bolsheviks against their "class enemies," the president maintained that the Soviet leaders "exercised their power by terror and not by right." They were an "intolerable tyranny." Warning to his task he repeatedly emphasized a basic tenet of American politics. "Nobody can be free," he insisted, "where there is not public order and authority." This authority, moreover, which was established in government, had to reflect the interests of the majority. Pointing to Europe, which was in dread that the "distemper" of the Bolsheviks would spread throughout the entire continent, and warning his audiences that the United States was not "immune" from infection, the president asserted that "the conditions of civilized life" had to be "purified and perfected." This was

impossible without peace, and peace, he emphasized, was impossible without the League.¹⁷

The implications were clearly drawn. In a Memorial Day address at Arlington Cemetery one month after the U.S. entered World War I, Wilson had remarked that "America will once more have an opportunity to show to the world that she was born to serve mankind." Two and one-half years later he supported "settled and calculable order," rejected "disordered society" as "dissolved society," and committed himself and his administration to peace proposals that, he thought, best reflected America's national interests. Part of the price of this commitment had been military intervention in the internal affairs of Russia and a diplomatic policy of nonrecognition. Liberal democratic capitalism, he assumed, was evolving in ways that could prevent or at least suppress irrational revolution and its disastrous effects on peace and freedom. The League was essential. The Progressive's instinct to regulate and rationalize had survived the war.¹⁸

Significantly, Wilson's Republican opponents disagreed with the president's view of the League of Nations, but disputed neither his analysis of the tyranny of the Bolsheviks nor the impact of revolution on property, order, and the rights and responsibilities of a civilized society. They, too, assumed that the Soviets would fail. Human nature would triumph, and the irrational economic ideas of Lenin would succumb to common sense, the rigors of industrialism, or the

¹⁷ Wilson made these observations in a series of speeches in Iowa, Minnesota, and Montana in September, 1919; consult R. S. Baker and W. E. Dodd (eds.), War and Peace, II, pp. 15, 85, 107-109, and 143.

¹⁸ Baker and Dodd (eds.), War and Peace, I, p. 53; and Ibid., II, p. 109.

counterrevolutionary upsurge of Russians opposed to "the socialist millennium." The victories of Red over White in Russia's Civil War were temporary, a testimony to the cruelty and ruthlessness of the Bolshevik leaders.¹⁹

Henry Cabot Lodge, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, despised Wilson, assumed that the American people were unready to cooperate to the extent involved in the League Covenant, and concluded that the repudiation of the treaty of Versailles would lead to partisan political advantages. Handled properly the election of 1920 would return a Republican to the presidency. The prospect that the New Freedom would reemerge as a potent political force would be squashed. Protectionism would be reaffirmed. And the United States, strengthened by the war, would be able to exert itself internationally to protect expanding American interests. Russia was but a minor consideration, a market for future development, but of little present significance. The League of Nations, moreover, was completely unnecessary to maintain the isolation of the Bolsheviks. The shared antagonisms of the capitalist nations would be more than sufficient to achieve their ends.²⁰

¹⁹Read Arno J. Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918-1919 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967).

²⁰John A. Garraty, Henry Cabot Lodge: A Biography (New York, 1953); U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings, Treaty of Peace with Germany, Senate Document No. 106, 66th Cong., 1st Sess., Washington, D.C., 1919; and Ralph Stone, The Irreconcilables: The Fight Against the League of Nations (New York, 1970).

II

As U.S. political leaders projected variations of their theme of democratic capitalism overseas, the Bolsheviks reconciled their political and economic theories with reality. In 1913 Lenin had written that Marxist doctrine was "omnipotent" because it was "true," and that it provided men with "an integral world outlook irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction, or defence of bourgeois oppression." It was, he thought, an amalgam of the best of nineteenth-century German philosophy, English political economy, and French socialism. With the outbreak of war in Europe in the summer of 1914 he was convinced that this conflict would "not only terrify and benumb" masses of people "bamboozled by chauvinistic ideas," but also would "enlighten, teach, organize, strengthen, and prepare them for a war against the bourgeoisie." By 1917, after the Romanovs had been overthrown, Lenin wondered whether the Bolsheviks would be "too slow in seizing power." Uncertain how soon worldwide revolution would occur, unsure whether a Bolshevik victory would be followed by a "transition period of reaction and by victory for the counterrevolution," Lenin, Trotsky, and other leaders of the party seized their main chance: even a short-term success would hasten capitalism's demise and provide for the triumph of the proletariat.²¹

²¹ Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism," Collected Works, XIX, 23-24. This article was originally published in Prosveshcheniye (Enlightenment) No. 3; it was dedicated to the Thirtieth Anniversary of Marx's death. Lenin quoted in Michael T. Florinsky, World Revolution and the U.S.S.R. (London: Macmillan and Company, 1933), pp. 15-16. Also see Robert V. Daniels, Red October: The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 (London: Secker and Warburg, 1967).

Lenin and the other Bolsheviks assumed that the revolution could not succeed in isolation. The technology, industrial development, and requisite skills needed to manipulate the means of production, although evolving in Russia during the last years of the reign of Nicholas II, were insufficient to sustain the socialist millennium. The material and "spiritual" support of worldwide revolution was essential if the Bolsheviks were to survive. The party put its "trust," therefore, in the "international solidarity of the working masses," and in one of its first political acts sought "a general, democratic peace" by calling on governments and peoples to end the war without annexations or indemnities. The international situation, it seemed, would determine whether the Bolsheviks remained in power.²²

Simultaneously, Lenin acted to consolidate the party's position in a peasant-dominated Russian society exhausted by three years of war. On November 15, 1917 a Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia was promulgated. It called for equality and self-determination, the abrogation of all national and religious privileges, and the free development of national minorities. Wed to previous Bolshevik announcements on land, the renunciation of aggression, and the condemnation of colonialism, these steps confirmed the Bolsheviks' eagerness to achieve as rapidly as possible the socio-economic and political transformation of the Russian state.²³

²² Lenin in a speech at the First All-Russian Congress of the Navy, November 22 (December 5), 1917, Collected Works, XXVI, 341-346, and DVP, I, 31-32.

²³ DVP, I, 11-15.

As might be expected the early developments of the revolution revealed the inevitable adjustments between ideological presuppositions and actual decision-making. Assuming that the animus of revolutionary movements is opposition to things as they are, the emphasis is understandably negative rather than positive. The basis of every ideology, moreover, is partly and intrinsically false insofar as it is grounded in some vision of the world that does not yet correspond exactly to reality. Confrontation among members of an elitist organization committed to ideological goals is anticipated, and this was the case with the Bolshevik response to the provisional government and the continuance of the Russo-German war. It was particularly significant in the months immediately following the Bolsheviks' rise to power in Moscow and Petrograd in 1917 and 1918.

The preeminent issue that aggravated these internal contradictions concerned the Bolshevik policy toward Imperial Germany. After judging carefully the mood of the country and the needs of the party, Lenin supported the "immediate conclusion of a separate and annexationist peace" with the German government by January 1918. "The situation of the Socialist revolution in Russia," he argued, "must form the basis of any definition of the international tasks of our Soviet state." There was no doubt in his mind that the revolution in Europe "must come," for "all our hopes for the final victory of Socialism are founded on this certainty." Still, "a certain amount of time, not less than several months at the least" was needed during which the Bolshevik government would consolidate its power. In the months preceding the signing of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk Lenin stressed this point as he maneuvered to defeat those in the party who

avored a revolutionary holy war rather than submit to German demands. At the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party in March 1918 Lenin reaffirmed his position: the world revolution would come, but since it was impossible to predict when it would occur, the Bolsheviks could not "gamble on it."²⁴

Lenin secured by a narrow margin the implementation of his views of Bolshevik foreign policy, a victory that helped to preserve the Bolsheviks in power and gained for him a degree of unparalleled control over foreign policy decision-making throughout the formative years of the revolution. On March 3, 1918 at the final plenary session of the Brest-Litovsk conference, G. Y. Sokolnikov, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, announced that the Bolshevik government was "not in a position to resist the armed attack of German imperialism." Thus the Soviet delegates would sign the peace treaty "in order to save the revolution." Several months later Soviet Foreign Commissar Georgii Chicherin reported to the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Russia, he emphasized, was caught between two imperialist coalitions and "like being between two fires" it had to overcome this predicament" by internal consolidation." This entailed "the development of our internal life on Soviet principles," the "economic rehabilitation and consolidation" of Russia on the "basis of collective forms of production," and

²⁴Jane Degras (ed.), Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, I (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), pp. 34-39 and pp. 57-61. The "leaders" of the faction who demanded revolutionary war rather than surrender to the Germans included Bukharin, Dzerzhinsky, Radek, Yoffe, Uritsky, Kollontai, Lomov-Oppokov, Bubnov, Pyatakov, and Ryazanov.

the "re-creation of a military force for the protection of the conquests of our revolution." All of this followed Lenin's prescription learned from experience: it was "necessary to follow tactics of relentless advance whenever the situation" permitted it, but if those situations were not immediately forthcoming, then one had to "apply tactics of waiting and of slow accumulation of forces."²⁵

This "slow accumulation of forces" reflected the growing realization of the primacy of internal demands on the Bolshevik leadership, and their preoccupation with the Civil War, War Communism, and the adaptation of their views to the unique conditions within Russia was understandable. The possibility of internal consolidation was also sustained by what Lenin perceived to be the fatal flaw in the policies of the capitalist states. Although he frequently remarked that "the enemies of Soviet Russia surround us in a tight ring of iron" eager "to try to deprive the workers and peasants of everything they have gained from the October Revolution," he acted on the assumption that the great powers would fail to join together to crush the Bolsheviks. Writing in spring 1918, Lenin maintained that the "only real, not paper, guarantee of peace we have is the antagonism among the imperialist" states. These antagonisms, Lenin thought, were most pronounced between Britain and Germany and between the United States and Japan.²⁶

²⁵DVP, I, 115-205; Degras (ed.), Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, I, p. 50 and pp. 83-85; Izvestiia, May 18, 1918; and John W. Wheeler-Bennett, Brest-Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace, March 1918 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966).

²⁶Lenin, Collected Works, XXVIII, 41-43. A brief report of his observations was published in Izvestiia, August 3, 1918. Also, consult

In a critique of the theory of the non-capitalist evolution of agriculture in capitalist society, Lenin had indicated in 1915 that the U.S. was "in many respects the model for our bourgeois civilization" as well as "its ideal." He argued that even though "monopolies had acquired complete supremacy in the advanced countries" at the beginning of the twentieth century, it would be a mistake to think that the "rapid growth of capitalism" was precluded in the immediate future. The United States, for example, would continue to expand its political and economic power under the aegis of capitalist modes of production and distribution. An objective analysis of the American trade union movement, the strength of the monopolists, and the disinterestedness of the proletariat revealed a nation inadequately prepared for revolutionary socialism.²⁷

A comprehensive review of the Bolsheviks' approach to the U.S. in 1918 was disclosed in a letter to American workers published with the help of Borodin and Travin in The Class Struggle in New York and The Revolutionary Age in Boston. "America," Lenin emphasized, "has taken first place among the free and educated nations" in the development of "the productive forces of collective human endeavor, in the utilization of machinery and in all wonders of modern engineering." Exploiting this power, American imperialists had already played "the role of hired thugs who, for the benefit of wealthy scoundrels,

Lenin's "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," which was written in March and April, 1918, Collected Works, XXVII, 237-277; and Pravda, April 28, 1918.

²⁷ Capitalism and Agriculture in America, Part I of Lenin's New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture, Collected Works, XXII, 13-102; in this same volume one should also read Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism, 185-304.

throttled the Philippines in 1898" and were then "throttling the Russian Socialist Republic in 1918 on the pretext of 'protecting' it from the Germans." He denounced the U.S. along with Great Britain and France for betraying the interests of all nations when they rejected the Bolsheviks' calls for peace in 1917 and 1918. He ridiculed Wilson as the "head of the American millionaires and servant of the capitalist sharks." He insisted that temporary agreements with capitalist powers were suitable and did not hesitate to remark that these agreements would clearly be "in the interests of socialism." Finally, and perhaps most portentously, he warned that he was willing to use "the equally rapacious counter-interests of other imperialists" and that he would "not hesitate one second" to enter into new agreements with the Germans if that were necessary. As far as America's workers were concerned, Lenin called on them to "play an exceptionally important role as uncompromising enemies of American imperialism." Considering that revolutionary situations were evolving "in different countries in different forms and at different tempos," Lenin also averred that the Bolsheviks had recognized that help from the United States would "probably not come soon."²⁸

The Soviet government sought expeditiously to develop each element that Lenin described in order to achieve what it perceived to

²⁸ Lenin's letter to American workers, August 20, 1918, Collected Works, XXVIII, 62-75. This letter was published in Pravda, August 22, 1918; it was delivered to the U.S. by P.I. Travin (Sletov) who also carried with him the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R. and a note to Wilson demanding the end of American military intervention in Russia. These documents were published in the American press with the help of John Reed. The Class Struggle and The Revolutionary Age were organs of the left wing of the American Socialist Party.

be the objective interests of the revolution. Throughout 1918 Soviet diplomatic personnel tried to convince David Francis that the Bolsheviks should be accorded formal diplomatic recognition by the American government. In May Lenin turned over to Raymond Robins, the American who headed the Red Cross mission in Moscow, a plan for Russo-American commerce that had been designed by the Commission for Foreign Trade at the Supreme Economic Council. Unconcerned that Robins thought socialist economic doctrines absurd, Lenin sought to use this American progressive as a conduit to secure U.S. economic support for the transformation of the Russian economy. To enhance this possibility the Soviets excluded American property from immediate expropriation, a decision which Trotsky emphasized repeatedly to Americans in Moscow and Vologda. Furthermore, Litvinov, Chicherin, and Kamenev sought through various messages to stress the Soviet arguments for an accommodation suitable to the party and its interests. The "Russian workers and peasants" failed to understand, Litvinov maintained in late 1918, "how foreign countries which never dreamed of interfering with Russian affairs when Czarist barbarism and militarism ruled supreme, and even supported that regime, can feel justified in interfering in Russia now."²⁹

²⁹DVP, I, 16-17, 41-42, 98, 208-209, 211-212, 265-266, 276, 388, 390, 392-394, 396-397, 403-405, 531-539, and 628-630; Anne Vincent Meiburger, Efforts of Raymond Robins toward Recognition of Soviet Russia and the Outlawry of War, 1917-1933 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1958); Richard Kent Debo, "Litvinov and Kamenev, Ambassadors Extraordinary: The Problem of Soviet Representation Abroad," Slavic Review, XXXIV (September, 1975), 463-482; Henry L. Roberts, Eastern Europe: Politics, Revolution, and Diplomacy (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1970), pp. 75-125; Eugene L. Mazerovsky, "The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, 1917-1946 (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1975); and Litvinov quoted in Louis Fischer, The Soviets

Initially rebuffed by Washington, Soviet diplomats lashed out at capitalist obstinacy, but continued to seek the "breathing space" that the Bolshevik regime needed so desperately. There were two courses, Litvinov stressed: one was "continued open or disguised intervention on the present or on a larger scale," and the other was "to come to an understanding with the Soviet government" in order to facilitate the withdrawal of foreign troops from Russian territory, to raise the economic blockade, and to provide the technical services necessary to allow Russia to develop its natural resources. Arguing vigorously for the second alternative, Litvinov met with W. H. Buckler early in 1919 while the peace conference met at Versailles. Within weeks of these conversations Lenin agreed to participate in a meeting to be held at Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmara. He was convinced that Wilson had proposed the conference simply to secure for the United States parts of southern and eastern Russia, but he agreed to attend nonetheless. In March 1919 Lenin discussed with an American delegation led by William C. Bullitt a series of proposals that were mutually acceptable to Bullitt and the Bolshevik government. Although this "agreement" collapsed, a development that reflected the momentary success of Kolchak in Siberia and Wilson's preoccupation with problems he thought far more significant, it did not prevent the Soviets from continuing this aspect of their foreign policy. Later that year, as the Bolsheviks endured their greatest isolation from the outside world, Lenin again wrote to the American proletariat. A "durable peace," he

insisted, "would be such a relief to the working people of Russia that they would undoubtedly agree to certain concessions being granted." If this peace were achieved "under reasonable terms," it would facilitate, he argued, "the coexistence side by side of socialist and capitalist states" in the period preceding the inevitable triumph of socialism throughout the world.³⁰

In January 1918 Wilson had called for the "unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination" of Russia's political development and "a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing." This "acid test" of the western powers' response to the Russian revolution had been followed by the military intervention of Russia by the United States, Great Britain, France, and Japan. And Soviet peace initiatives had been rejected out of hand. Reflecting the "unconditional historical imperative" which the Bolshevik party had deciphered, the Soviets decided to rally through worldwide communist parties the political and social forces that would aid the Bolshevik regime in Russia. In March 1919, as Lenin and Bullitt discussed political problems in Moscow, the Soviets helped to organize the Third or Communist International.³¹

³⁰ Litvinov quoted in Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, I, 158; Mayer, Politics and the Diplomacy of Peacemaking, pp. 410-487; Lenin to Trotsky, January 24, 1919, Collected Works, XLIV, 191; DVP, II, 91-95; Beatrice Farnsworth, William C. Bullitt and the Soviet Union (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), pp. 3-54; and Lenin, Collected Works, XXX, 38-39.

³¹ Pravda, January 4, 1918, January 12, 1918, and February 24, 1918. See in addition Chicherin to Wilson, October 24, 1918, DVP, I, 531-539; George A. Finch, "The Peace Conference of Paris, 1919," American Journal of International Law, XIII (April, 1919), 159-186; and Jane Degras (ed.), The Communist International, 1919-1943, I (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), 17.

Denouncing the "white terror of the bourgeois cannibals" as "indescribable" and calling the "entire proletariat to this last fight, weapon against weapon, force against force," the platform adopted by the first congress insured a role for those party members shaken by the political and economic compromises that Lenin had already made. The Comintern was an organization for a "holy war" against the bourgeoisie. It would rally domestic and international support for the Bolsheviks. The breathing space which had already been achieved would be extended. The maneuvering room available to international capital and the governments that were supposedly its tools would be circumscribed. Rejecting the alternatives projected by American democracy and European imperialism, the Comintern repudiated the League of Nations, and it derided as delusive slogans the other proposals of European and American political leaders, which were supposedly offered to maintain in power those who ruled at the expense of the people.³²

Although a useful channel to permit the Soviets to announce and promote their policies of diplomatic recognition, abandonment of intervention, the cessation of blockade, and the resumption of trade relations, the Comintern did not create an international environment that served current Bolshevik interests. Indeed, it did much to discredit those who sought to change the policies of the western powers then engaged in the military intervention of Soviet Russia. Also, it tended to confirm for many that the Bolsheviks were a dangerous threat to western civilization. But, assuming as it did that worldwide revolution was indispensable to Bolshevik survival,

³²Degras (ed.), The Communist International, I, 17-24.

the party insisted that the promulgation of agitational activities and the contributions of the international proletariat were powerful levers which could be manipulated to promote the economic and political desiderata of the Soviet state.

III

The relationship which had evolved between the U.S. and the Bolsheviks in the years after the revolution of 1917 continued into the 1920s. A majority of Americans insisted on order, liberty, and law as the hallmarks of the capitalist approach. To them Bolshevism was preposterous. They rejected it, and assumed that it would fail. Convinced that the Progressive movement had confirmed the adaptability of American society, they emphasized the values and principles that had created the American Republic and that had sustained economic and political democracy in the U.S. into the early twentieth century. Wary of threats to their ideas, they awaited the collapse of Lenin's regime, confident that the temporary upsurge in radical alternatives would have little lasting effect. After all, capitalism had nourished the experiments in democratic government that had given character and distinction to the recent evolution of nation states. Plainly, it was the future, and not the classless international society proclaimed by the Soviets.³³

The Senate's rejection of the League Covenant and the treaty of Versailles did not alter America's approach to Moscow. The shared

³³Peter G. Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933: American Attitudes toward Russia from the February Revolution until Diplomatic Recognition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 1-63.

assumptions of U.S. decision-makers continued to shape Washington's view of the Russian situation. So too did American distaste for military "solutions" to political problems. Notwithstanding the Kremlin's descriptions of capitalist countries as inherently aggressive, and despite its own involvement in the First World War and in the Allied military intervention in Russia, Washington preferred to rely on the power of economics to affect other nations' foreign policies. Its response to the rise of Bela Kun in Hungary and to the other revolutionary upheavals in central and eastern Europe bears this out. Pre-occupied with gaining sufficient great power support for its postwar plans, Washington dealt with revolutionary socialism in a half-hearted, haphazard, and understandable way. Peace and stability would inevitably mean the end of these movements, and the isolation of the Bolsheviks would hasten their demise.³⁴

In 1920 Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby summarized why the U.S. acted as it did. Bolshevism, Colby insisted, was "the negation of every principle of honor and good faith and every usage and convention underlying the whole structure of international law." Soviet Russia rejected, he thought, "every principle upon which it is possible to base harmonious and trustful relations." He denied that "any common ground" existed between the U.S. and "a power whose conceptions of international

³⁴Read, for example, Peter Pastor, Hungary between Wilson and Lenin: The Hungarian Revolution of 1918-1919 and the Big Three (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1976). This volume is being distributed by Columbia University Press.

relations" were "so alien" and "so utterly repugnant" to America's "moral sense."³⁵

Meanwhile the Soviets continued to perfect the different elements of their approach to international affairs in general and to the United States in particular. They denounced American hypocrisy, particularly Wilson's penchant to promote the predatory interests of the U.S. government through the rhetoric of American liberalism. The Comintern rallied the support of the proletariat throughout the world, including an American Communist Party organized in 1919. Economic contracts were pursued with foreign governments and with multinational corporations able to extend the credits and loans needed to facilitate Russia's reconstruction. The geo-political implications of this trade were also exploited. This was in line with the Bolsheviks' view of the antagonisms which existed between the U.S. and the other great powers. "Temporary agreements," which served the socialist revolution, and which proceeded naturally from the current distribution of power in western Europe and Asia, were chosen in lieu of a suicidal war against the capitalist states. The opportunities were endless. Capitalism, Lenin assured a number of American journalists in July 1919, had "outlived itself"; its collapse was "inevitable."³⁶

³⁵ Bainbridge Colby to the Italian ambassador, Baron Camillo Avezzana, August 10, 1920, FRUS, 1920, III, 463-468; and DVP, III, 177.

³⁶ Lenin, Collected Works, XXIX, 515-519; Pravda, July 25, 1919; and Robert S. Reitzes, "Marxist-Leninist Ideology and Soviet Policies toward the United States, 1919-1939," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1973).

CHAPTER II

NONRECOGNITION AFFIRMED

"Relations between peoples," Christian Rakovsky reminded Americans in 1926, "should be based, not on social theory, but on the mutuality of political and economic interests." Not surprisingly, Rakovsky did not refer to Russia's attempts to exploit the differences among the great powers or its exacerbation of class conflicts within states and among colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Instead, he reflected the adjustments in Marxist-Leninist ideas induced by domestic concerns. Preoccupied with the politics of succession, the Bolshevik leadership subordinated international solutions to Russia's internal problems. Domestic demands remained preeminent.¹

A not dissimilar development occurred in the United States, although for different reasons, none of which had anything to do with Moscow's claims for the inevitability of a classless society. The Republican party regained the presidency in 1920, and it considered the issue of Soviet Russia relatively insignificant. Mindful of the fact that their constituency included agricultural interests and internationally-oriented businessmen, Republican leaders sought to exploit the economic advantages brought about by the war. Controlled trade

¹Christian Rakovsky, "The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia," Foreign Affairs, IV (July, 1926), 574-584.

expansion to increase U.S. economic power became the order of the day, as Washington helped private enterprise penetrate the Middle East and other areas previously underdeveloped by American corporations. Protective tariffs were enacted for the new industries that had developed during the war and for an agricultural sector sliding rapidly into an era of overproduction, declining profitability, and mounting bankruptcy. Private financial support to resolve outstanding European economic problems accompanied U.S. commitments to disarmament, a treaty system for the western Pacific, and political encouragement to nations eager to contribute to postwar stability. Although many Republicans had favored a league, they had been unwilling to support Wilson's program in its final form. After this issue became engulfed in domestic politics and after postwar disillusionment was intensified by an upsurge of American nativism, Republican politicians sought to disassociate themselves from the malaise of European political problems.

As far as Russia was concerned the Harding and Coolidge administrations recognized that military intervention had been a costly error. But their commitment to a system of international law based on the interaction of democratic states, their reading of public and bureaucratic opposition to the Soviet "experiment," and their assumption that Lenin's government was temporary led them to denigrate the significance of Bolshevism. Their decision to continue nonrecognition was partly a symbolic gesture that reassured the right wing of the Republican party. It was also supported by progressives like Herbert Hoover, then serving as the Secretary of Commerce. Hoover maintained that the interests of U.S. capitalism and the Republican party were synonymous, and he

believed that America's brand of "individualism" and freedom would outdistance the appeal of the other social philosophies competing in the postwar era.²

Notwithstanding their belief in the superiority of capitalism over socialism, a number of influential U.S. Senators opposed the administrations' approach to the Bolshevik phenomenon. In 1919 Hiram Johnson and William Borah had rejected Wilson's view of America's role in world affairs, and had vigorously opposed U.S. interference in Russia's struggle for self-determination. They had termed the military intervention of the great powers an "exhibition of the crassest stupidity," and they had described the treatment of the Russian people as "one of the crimes of history." Willing to concede that Bolshevism was "fatuous and pernicious," they had argued that a stable, lasting peace was impossible without integrating the Bolsheviks into international affairs. Ironically, this had been a development which Wilson had sought but failed to achieve.³

²A perceptive review of these developments by a participant can be found in chapter twenty-one of an untitled manuscript by William R. Castle, Jr., William R. Castle, Jr. Papers, Hoover Library, Containers 28 and 29. Also, Joan Hoff Wilson, Herbert Hoover: Forgotten Progressive (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975).

³Hiram Johnson quoted in Harry J. Carman, "Russia and the Reversal of Allied Policy," Journal of International Relations, X (April, 1920), p. 481. William Borah to M. M. Short, October 11, 1919, Borah Papers, General Office File, Container 79; Borah to F. M. Bieker, February 13, 1922, Ibid., Container 121; and Borah to Stanley A. Easton, January 11, 1924, Ibid., Container 167. The integration of Russia into the postwar peace settlement remained a theme throughout the 1920s. See, for example, Norman Davis to Cordell Hull, February 23, 1922, Norman Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Container 27; and S. O. Levinson to Borah, May 18, 1931, S. O. Levinson Papers, University of Chicago Library, Chicago, Box 8.

Proponents of a "constitutionally free government," they continued to press their case into the 1920s, arguing that Washington, by its example, could help move Russia toward a "sane democratic form of government." A nationalist at heart, Borah, for example, was concerned that the U.S. was playing right into the hands of the British and the "shortsighted policies of the old order." The isolation of the Kremlin, he insisted, would force Moscow toward Berlin, and despite its pretensions, the League of Nations would be unable to deal with the inevitable crises that would develop. New alliances and new wars would occur, which, even with the U.S. abstaining, would disrupt orderly government and create economic and political chaos. The conclusion was simple. Disgard the restrictions imposed on Russia. They only encouraged the Bolsheviks to spread their revolutionary ideas throughout the world, and they reduced unnecessarily the Soviet-American trade that could evolve and affect appreciably domestic prosperity. The "way to cure bolshevism or communism," Borah emphasized, "was to establish sound economic and political conditions" between the two nations.⁴

Harding, Coolidge, Hoover, Johnson, and Borah shared a common concern for the internal development of the United States. Domestic stability, they presumed, would insure growth and prosperity, as well as promote the position of the United States overseas. Woodrow Wilson accepted many of these ideas. In 1923 in an article published several

⁴The Borah papers provide a consistent development of this point of view. Consult Borah to C. E. Stokes, March 6, 1920, Container 87; Borah to John Spargo, March 28, 1921, Container 101; Borah to W. W. Trumbull, April 14, 1923, Container 144; Borah to Raymond Robins, December 20, 1923, Borah to Willis Abbott, December 26, 1923, and Borah to Stanley Easton, January 11, 1924, Container 167; and Borah to C. M. Cutting, October 10, 1925, and Borah to J. J. Desmond, May 21, 1925, Container 192.

months before his death, the Democratic ex-president restated several of the themes he had promoted before and during the early years of his first administration. Shaken by illness and the defeat of his League, opposed to the protectionism of the Republicans, and distressed by the lost momentum of the Progressive movement, he reasserted his belief that capitalism was prone to abuse and that "democracy had not yet made the world safe against irrational revolution." He maintained that the United States, "the greatest of democracies," must undertake the "supreme task, which is nothing less than the salvation of civilization itself." Since that civilization could not "survive materially" until it was "redeemed spiritually," America had to reaffirm its commitment to a "christian conception of justice." This had to include a "willingness to forego self-interest in order to promote the welfare, happiness, and contentment of others and of the community as a whole." This, he concluded, was what "our age" was "blindly" searching for "in its reaction against what it deems the too great selfishness of the capitalist system."⁵

Although Wilson sought to affect with these observations the direction, if not the content, of Republican policies, he was no longer a significant political force. Still, just as he had represented one wing of the political accommodation to industrialism, his ideas in the early 1920s reflected the thinking of many concerned Americans who thought that internal developments invariably superseded international considerations. Depending on the situation, the international environment could either be ignored or adjusted to further the domestic

⁵Woodrow Wilson, The Road away from Revolution (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1923), pp. 10 and 12.

interests of the United States. These interests, moreover, were supposedly synonymous with the interests of civilization itself. The New Era tended to reinforce these ideas.

I

In 1920 Russia signed a number of political agreements with its immediate western neighbors. It accelerated its drive to achieve economic accommodation with the capitalist powers. And it presumed that the wave of nationalism which had erupted during and after the war would be exploited by the Comintern and the Narkomindel to Moscow's advantage. Particularly interested in Turkey and China, the Kremlin continued to coordinate Russia's traditional national interests with the revolutionary ideology of the Bolshevik party. Not unexpectedly, this led to confrontations with England, France, Japan, and Germany. Yet it did not preclude the treaty of Rapallo with Berlin, the formal recognition of many of the great powers, and the gradual adjustment of the outstanding difficulties with Tokyo by 1925. These were significant developments. They were steps which gave legitimacy to the Kremlin and allowed the Bolsheviks to concentrate on domestic matters involving party policy and the modernization of the Russian economy.

The Kremlin's approach to Washington was a mixture of political acumen, economic necessity, revolutionary idealism, and communist hyperbole. It involved the Soviets in efforts to extract credits and loans from American businessmen and the U.S. government. It assumed that Washington would be a useful counterweight to the Japanese in Asia. And it presupposed that these gains could be achieved without

sacrificing the activities of the American Communist Party, the revisionist basis of Moscow's European policies, and the manipulation of revolutionary situations in China, Turkey, Mexico, and other states throughout the world. Most important, it was a function of the Bolsheviks' internal political maneuvering, which became more pronounced in its effects on Soviet-American relations with the conflict between Stalin and the Right Opposition.

In July 1920 Litvinov reported to Chicherin that Washington Vanderlip, an American businessman, had arrived in Copenhagen eager to discuss with Soviet officials the operation of concessions in Soviet Russia. Vanderlip, a California mining engineer who represented an association of financiers from several western states, was particularly interested in developing coal, oil, and fishery operations in north-eastern Siberia. Ready to promote these concessions "in American fashion," this advocate of U.S. overseas economic expansion was invited to Russia by Lenin, who was also eager, although for different reasons, to "hasten" economic contacts between the U.S. and the Kremlin. To facilitate planning for this endeavor an interdepartmental commission of representatives from the Supreme Economic Council and the Commissariats of Foreign Affairs and of Trade was organized. It was ordered to provide specific proposals for the Kamchatka peninsula.⁶

Following through on this initiative Lenin wrote to Vanderlip in March 1921 assuring him that the Bolshevik government attached great

⁶Litvinov to Chicherin, July 30, 1920, DVP, III, 70-71. Lenin, Collected Works, XLIV, pp. 423 and 551-552. Peter G. Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 107-108.

"value" to "our future business relations." An understandable observation considering the condition of the Russian economy, this same point was reemphasized by Lenin in a note to Chicherin later that year.

"Agreements and concessions with the Americans," Lenin reminded his Foreign Commissar, were of "exceptional importance to us."⁷

Throughout their talks with Vanderlip the Bolsheviks pursued parallel themes concurrently. The devastating impact of Russia's participation in the First World War, the Civil War that followed it, and the economic and political consequences of War Communism had led to the announcement of a New Economic Policy in March 1921. The Soviets assumed correctly that this policy would be reinforced by economic ties to the capitalist countries, particularly the United States. But other considerations also intrigued them. The area in northeastern Siberia which had been offered to Vanderlip was then under Japanese control. If the American entrepreneurs took the development of Kamchatka seriously, and if they received the support of the U.S. government, then Japanese-American antagonisms would be intensified. This would demonstrate the inherent conflicts between these two great powers in the Far East which the Soviets thought could be exploited to their advantage. In concert with the Vanderlip negotiations were the discussions undertaken by Krassin in London which culminated in the Anglo-Soviet trade agreement of 1921. The Bolsheviks were convinced that this would persuade Washington to arrange a similar type of agreement. After all, were not both England and the United States rivals in a postwar struggle for economic and political supremacy in world affairs? This

⁷ Lenin, Collected Works, XLV, pp. 98-99 and 354-355, and DVP, III, 616. Also see DVP, IV, 442-444.

rivalry, Moscow assumed, could be handled in ways that would make the U.S. more amenable to the needs of the Soviet state.⁸

The Kremlin's analysis was again found wanting. Nothing came of the Vanderlip "concession." Great Britain and the United States did not let their "antagonisms" interrupt the emerging informal economic entente which would characterize the 1920s. And the great powers, including Japan, created temporarily the "new order" in East Asia that reflected most, if not all, of the interests of the participating nations.⁹

Still, this did not dissuade Moscow from its course. Notwithstanding their irritation at Washington's approach to the Genoa Conference, the Bolsheviks continued to work toward American diplomatic recognition. In June 1922 Litvinov, Rykov, Kamenev, and Sokolnikov met at Riga, Latvia with James Goodrich, the former governor of Indiana who had important contacts among the Republican hierarchy. In the months that followed Borah and Robins were also urged to press the Kremlin's case in Washington. At the same time the National Council for the Prevention of

⁸ Lenin to Chicherin, November 19, 1920, Collected Works, XLV, 54.

⁹ On November 1, 1920 Chicherin informed Vanderlip that the concession was dependent on U.S. recognition of Soviet Russia by July 1, 1921. For a survey of the economic relations between England and America in the 1920s see Michael J. Hogan, Informal Entente: The Private Structure of Cooperation in Anglo-American Economic Diplomacy, 1918-1928 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1977). An extended treatment of Soviet-American relations vis-à-vis East Asia will be found in subsequent chapters. Also, Akira Iriye, After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921-1931 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).

War and the Women's League for Peace and Freedom lobbied for adjustments in America's foreign policy.¹⁰

The congressional investigations which were prompted by these activities failed to overcome the administration's objections to the U.S.S.R. In fact, Borah's ignorance of the Bolsheviks and their ideas was easily exposed by State Department personnel, who charted for the congress the theoretical and practical dangers of the communist movement. The documentation they provided revealed that the connection between the Kremlin and the Comintern was incontrovertible. Moscow's argument that the Soviet government and the Communist International were distinct and separate was repudiated. The hearings confirmed the distortion and treachery which, Robert Kelley and other U.S. diplomats argued, were typical of the Soviet approach to law and morality.¹¹

Irritated and disappointed by the hostility of the Harding and Coolidge administrations, Moscow, nonetheless, did not forego additional efforts to secure separate economic arrangements conducive to Russia's

¹⁰For an overview of the Genoa Conference by Soviet historians see B. Ponomaryov et al., History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1945 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), pp. 177-186. One may consult the diplomatic record in DVP, V, 191-415. Also, chapter one of Melvin A. Goodman, "The Diplomacy of Nonrecognition: Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1933," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1972); part I of David G. Singer, "The United States Confronts the Soviet Union, 1919-1933: The Rise and Fall of the Policy of Nonrecognition," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago, 1972); and Anne Vincent Meiburger, Efforts of Raymond Robins toward Recognition of Soviet Russia and the Outlawry of War, 1917-1933 (Washington, 1958), particularly chapter two.

¹¹Read Phillip L. Cantelon, "In Defense of America: Congressional Investigations of Communism in the United States, 1919-1935," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1971), and United States Congress, Senate, Recognition of Russia Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee of Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 68th Congress, 1st Session, pursuant to S. Res. 50. January 21, 22, 23, 1924. Part I (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1924).

modernization. Willing to conclude commercial agreements with London, Paris, and Berlin, the U.S.S.R. remained particularly interested in trade links with the United States. The reasons for this were obvious. First, American efficiency was especially impressive to Russian leaders. It was, according to Stalin, "an indomitable force which neither knows nor recognizes obstacles." Second, the Soviets had traced the massive shift in economic power that had been accelerated by World War I. They had realized that the postwar capitalist stabilization that had occurred was "achieved mainly with the aid of American capital and at the price of the financial subordination of western Europe" to Washington. Thus they were eager to divert to the U.S.S.R. investment capital through U.S. governmental loans and credits. Also, the Kremlin accepted the advantages of establishing trading agencies and other corporations in the U.S. In 1924 the Amtorg Corporation was organized under the commercial statutes of the state of New York. Despite the difficulties and restrictions under which it had to operate, Amtorg successfully negotiated numerous contracts between the Russians and U.S. corporations. Spurred on by the efforts of the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, which was reorganized in 1926 under the leadership of Reeve Schley of the Chase National Bank, Soviet-American trade increased substantially in the late 1920s.¹²

¹²Stalin's observations on American efficiency were made to the students of Sverdlov University in 1924; see Stalin, Works, VI, 195. A review of the international situation which was presented in December 1925 to the 14th Congress of the CPSU (B) is available in Stalin, Ibid., VII, 267-303. A recent discussion of Amtorg and the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce can be found in Joan Hoff Wilson, Ideology and Economics: U.S. Relations with the Soviet Union, 1918-1933 (Columbia-Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1974).

Washington readily accepted the advantages of these arrangements. Pressures from multinational corporations were appeased, and U.S. exports were increased. Both results were consistent with the interests of the Republican party, and they were further confirmation of the effectiveness of large-scale enterprises and their place in the mass-production-consumption economy of the 1920s. Moreover, the agreements negotiated increased Russia's familiarity with American goods and services. This was a fact of some significance, considering the prevailing view that the Bolshevik government could not continue indefinitely with the policies it had initiated. According to William R. Castle, Jr., "some of the windows to the outer world," which had been arbitrarily closed by the Kremlin, would be thrown open. Western ideas would enter, and this would make Russia's reintegration into the community of nations that much easier following the collapse of the Bolshevik movement.¹³

Most important, economic contracts could be divorced from political recognition. Harding's Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, had asserted that there was "no reason" for direct negotiations between both governments until Moscow satisfied Washington with "evidence" of its "good faith." This meant restoration of confiscated American property, repeal of the Soviets' repudiation of Russia's contractual obligations, and an end to the propaganda aimed at the overthrow of the American government. Convinced that industrial production was dependent on "firm guarantees of private property, the sanctity of

¹³Castle's views are available in the untitled manuscript which he began when he was Undersecretary of State. See pages 310-311 of this document, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 28.

contracts, and the rights of free labor," Hughes and Hoover continued to think that Russia would not be able to affect adversely America's international economic interests. Frank Kellogg agreed. As Secretary of State under Calvin Coolidge, Kellogg supported Washington's unwillingness to "barter away its principles" for the limited benefits that the Soviet Union could provide.¹⁴

Besides, American diplomacy had been very effective in securing a postwar environment conducive to Washington's view of international affairs. Following the Senate's rejection of the League of Nations, the U.S. had expanded its economic leverage in Latin and Central America, at the same time it reconsidered the value of military intervention and the effectiveness of the Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. In East Asia it had become convinced that Chinese nationalism was not antithetical to U.S. interests. In Europe, the Dawes Plan, Germany's entry into the League of Nations, and the Pact of Paris were developments that attested to the moderately successful efforts of the great powers to reconcile their outstanding differences and to make peace lasting and sure. The Kremlin's conclusion that international capitalism was rapidly entering a "third period," which would be marked by economic catastrophe and new revolutionary

¹⁴ Hughes' reply to Chicherin, December 18, 1923, Calvin Coolidge Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (microfilm edition) series I (156), reel 85. Also FRUS, 1921, II, 768. The views of others who supported the Republicans' approach may be read in John Spargo to Coolidge, August, 1923, Coolidge Papers, series I (156), reel 85; Samuel Gompers to Coolidge, February 16, 1924, Ibid., series I (156A), reel 85; chapter twenty-one of Castle's untitled manuscript, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 28; and Goodman, "The Diplomacy of Nonrecognition."

phenomena, seemed as absurd as most of the other predictions of the Bolshevik leadership. By the late 1920s the Republican ascendancy was secure, and its effectiveness not seriously challenged.¹⁵

II

In 1928 the U.S.S.R. brought Thomas Campbell, an American agricultural engineer, to Moscow to discuss agricultural aspects of Russia's First Five-Year Plan. On January 27, 1929 he was escorted to the Kremlin office of Stalin, who emphasized in their conversations the mutual benefits of expanded Soviet-American trade. Acknowledging the domestic political implications involved in discarding a governmental policy long identified with the Republican party, Stalin indicated that diplomatic recognition was not his immediate concern. This would follow naturally, he thought, once "normal" trade relations were undertaken between the two countries. Reminding Campbell that the British and Germans wanted to "monopolize" the trade of the U.S.S.R. by "scaring" Americans with erroneous tales of Soviet instability, Stalin stressed that the U.S. had a greater "basis for wide business relations with the U.S.S.R. than . . . any other country." This was the case not only because the United States was "rich in technique and capital," but also because "in no other land" were Soviet trade personnel received "so gladly and hospitably." Treating specifically an issue uppermost in the minds of many prominent Americans, Stalin stated "categorically" that representatives of the Soviet government did not

¹⁵Robert Freeman Smith, "Republican Policy and the Pax Americana, 1921-1932," From Colony to Empire, ed. William A. Williams (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1972), 254-292.

have "the right to mix either directly or indirectly in the internal affairs" of another state. "Of course," he added adroitly, "we cannot answer for the acts of persons unknown to us and not subordinate" to Soviet authority.¹⁶

The Campbell interview was not the first time that Stalin had dealt with Soviet-American relations. He had attacked "American capital" and its efforts to curb the revolutionary movement from 1917 through the early 1920s. He had shown himself reluctant to become too intimately tied to the American Relief Agency's efforts to alleviate the famine that devastated Russia following the Civil War. Reconciled momentarily to the implications of the "capitalist stabilization," he had discussed with Goodrich in 1925 the benefits of Soviet-American cooperation. In 1927 in conversations with Paul Douglas, George Counts, Stuart Chase, and Rexford Tugwell, Stalin had insisted that the existence of two opposing ideological systems did not preclude the possibility of temporary agreements. Admitting that these agreements would be limited by "the opposite characters of the two systems," he had pointed out that the U.S.S.R. had a consistent record of faithfully implementing the long-term political and economic arrangements that had so far been negotiated by Soviet diplomatic personnel.¹⁷

¹⁶Read Thomas D. Campbell, Russia: Market or Menace? (London, 1932) or Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 10, 1933, 4-5. Samuel Harper and others thought Campbell had been deceived by the Soviets. See Castle to George Akerson, September 18, 1930, Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Russia, Hoover Library, Container 993.

¹⁷Stalin, Works, III, 252-253. Goodrich to Coolidge, November 24, 1925, Coolidge Papers, series 1 (156A), reel 85. Douglas, Counts, Chase, and Tugwell were advisory members to the first American trade union delegation to the U.S.S.R. See Questions and Answers to American Trade Unionists (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1927); Sylvia R.

By the late 1920s Stalin had also dealt with the other principal issues affecting the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. and had resolved them to his own satisfaction. He had dismissed, as has already been noted, the American contention that governmental officials of the Soviet Union interfered in the internal politics of the United States. He regarded as "absolutely untrue" the assertion that the American Communist Party was under the direct orders of Moscow. He did admit that the Communist International rendered "assistance to the Communist Party of America" whenever it thought it necessary, and he assumed that the CPSU (b) would provide direct support to the American CP if it were requested. The propaganda issue, he thought, was ridiculous. "Bolshevism grows everywhere and anywhere," he insisted, and "not from without but from within."¹⁸

To understand the distinguish the Campbell initiative from others made throughout the 1920s two considerations must be kept in mind. First, the international position of the Soviet Union in 1929, although not demonstrably different from the year before, was not especially reassuring. The break with Great Britain that had followed the Arcos raid of 1927 had not yet been repaired and formal diplomatic relations would not resume until October. More important, Anglo-Soviet trade had been drastically reduced in the previous eighteen months, a development hardly conducive to the economic interests of the U.S.S.R.

Margulies, The Pilgrimage to Russia: The Soviet Union and the Treatment of Foreigners, 1924-1937 (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1968); and Lewis S. Feuer, "American Travelers to the Soviet Union, 1917-1932: The Formation of a Component of New Deal Ideology," American Quarterly, XIV (Summer, 1962), 119-149.

¹⁸Questions and Answers to American Trade Unionists, pp. 42 and 44.

Moscow continued to fear political isolation and often overreacted to a recurring nightmare of an anti-communist coalition of powers in a second intervention against the Soviet Union. In addition, Stalin thought France the "most aggressive and militarist" of the European nations. He feared the consequences of French political hegemony in Europe, particularly if it stimulated Polish adventurism. As for Germany the Soviets clung to their Rapallo partner. Stalin and other Russian leaders sought to sustain publicly the political, economic, and military ties that had been built up since 1922.

There were serious weaknesses, however, in Russo-German relations. The U.S.S.R. feared that Germany would turn toward the west away from its eastern partner. Stresemann's policy of fulfillment and the Locarno treaties had frightened the Soviets. A treaty of conciliation in 1929 seemingly reaffirmed the Russo-German relationship, but it did not resolve several outstanding problems. German businessmen were disappointed with the meager amount of trade between Germany and the U.S.S.R. from 1927 to 1929. The Shakhty trial in Russia, the growing strength in Germany of the KPD, the theses of the Sixth Comintern Congress, and Russia's nervousness about the Young Plan and its impact on Germany prompted the Soviets to seek alternatives, levers which could be used to their advantage. American support would add one more "weapon" to the Russian arsenal. The fact that its political significance would be more psychological than substantive did not make it any less desirable.¹⁹

¹⁹Harvey L. Dyck, Weimar Germany and Soviet Russia, 1926-1933: A Study in Diplomatic Instability (London, 1966) and Jon Jacobson, Locarno Diplomacy: Germany and the West, 1925-1929 (Princeton, 1972) provide an adequate overview of these developments.

Of even greater importance was the domestic political and economic situation in the U.S.S.R. from 1927 to 1929 and the impact it had on Russia's foreign relations. Even before the grain crisis of the late 1920s a detectable split had been evident between Stalin and those who were identified as the Right Opposition. The issue that divided the Bolshevik leadership concerned the rate of planned industrialization and the methods to be adopted to rectify the Soviet Union's difficult agricultural situation. Nikolai Bukharin, Alexei Rykov, Mikhail Tomskii and other important Bolshevik leaders opted for a gradualist approach to both problems. Bukharin, the brilliant theoretician who retained widespread support throughout the ranks of the party membership, had dealt rather abstractly with these problems through 1926. But after that he had sought specific solutions that eventually cost him his political position and finally his life.

Bukharin had studied carefully the changes undertaken by the capitalist powers and the adjustments made by the social democratic movement in western Europe in the 1920s. He had noted with interest the "trustification of state power" that he thought had helped to secure the capitalist stabilization following the First World War. He emphasized that Moscow should avoid quixotic political postures that would alienate the Soviet Union from the mainstream of social protest which would continue to evolve in the capitalist states. Internally, he maintained that it was preferable that the government follow policies of class cooperation, civil peace, and balanced evolutionary growth. Committed to such a program, he and the others who supported his ideas did not hesitate to seek from countries like the United

States the credits and capital investments that would help sustain the gradual industrialization of the U.S.S.R. Lenin's New Economic Policy, they argued, should be continued.²⁰

Stalin had little difficulty in agreeing with Bukharin that foreign credits would be a suitable means of alleviating a capital shortage in the U.S.S.R. as well as hastening the economic transformation of the Soviet state. He too could support commercial arrangements with the western powers, particularly the United States. But other means were available to produce more rapidly the desired changes. Internal savings, he argued, could be sufficient to effect a rapid rate of industrialization. Also, Stalin had developed an intensification theory, which was more militarist than Marxist and which stipulated that as socialism drew near the resistance of its internal enemies would increase and the class struggle intensify. "We have assumed power in a country whose technical equipment is terribly backward," Stalin asserted before a plenum of the Central Committee in November 1928. Russia had, he insisted, "the most advanced system, the Soviet system, and the most advanced type of state power in the world, Soviet power," but its industrial and agricultural base was pitifully underdeveloped. What was needed was not just planned industrialization, but a "fast rate of development." This was essential, Stalin emphasized, not only because of the "extreme backwardness of our agriculture," but also

²⁰A splendid study of Bukharin and his thinking in this period is Stephen F. Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888-1938 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973).

because of the significant disadvantages which accompanied the "capitalist encirclement" of the Soviet Union.²¹

By November 1928, two months before Campbell met with Stalin, the stage had been set for the momentous developments that occurred in 1929. Stalin had effectively isolated Bukharin and his supporters. He was moving rapidly to implement a radicalization of policy that would affect not only the internal domestic political configuration of the Soviet state, but would also bear directly on the efforts of the U.S.S.R. to secure from the United States and other powers the technological aid needed to facilitate the ambitious goals of the Five-Year Plan. From Bukharin's point of view Stalin was an "unprincipled intriguer" whose intensification theory was "idiotic illiteracy." It would lead inevitably, Bukharin thought, to a "police state."²²

III

In 1929 the decision whether to alter the U.S. diplomatic position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union was Herbert Hoover's, one of the original architects of the American policy of nonrecognition. Hoover had a long and intimate knowledge of Russian conditions. His experiences with Leslie Urquhart and the Russo-Asiatic Corporation before World War I had convinced him that Russia would "blow up" eventually, ridding itself of the "hideous social and governmental" practices of the

²¹Stalin's speech to the plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU (B) on November 19, 1928 is available in Works, XI, 257-262.

²²Stalin, Works, XI, 332, and XII, 29. Bukharin quoted in Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution, pp. 286 and 315.

Romanov autocracy. He had not anticipated, however, the overthrow of the provisional government by the Bolsheviki in November 1917. Adjusting rapidly to the changed situation and realizing that "revolutions always go further than their creators expect," he had advised Wilson to avoid political recognition of Lenin's government. "Actionist radicalism in every country in Europe," he had reasoned, would be stimulated by this decision. "Every national ideal of our own" would be simultaneously degraded. He had also opposed American military intervention in the Russian Civil War. Its cost in blood and treasure, he had assumed, would be prohibitive, and it might possibly have resulted in the "restoration of the old regime." This development, Hoover had thought, was antithetical to America's interests.²³

Instead of political recognition or military intervention, Hoover had recommended that the U.S. government employ its massive economic power to stabilize the situation in central and eastern Europe. Specifically, he advised that U.S. agricultural surpluses should be funneled through the international relief agencies already established. The distribution of these commodities, he maintained, would "stem the tide of Bolshevism" and prevent "a Bolshevik branch office in Vienna." Although Wilson disregarded Hoover's advice against committing American military personnel in Russia, he did order the shipment of foodstuffs to help to stabilize eastern Europe. By the early 1920s food again became a useful component of American foreign policy. In 1921 and 1922 it was distributed to alleviate the famine

²³Herbert Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: Years of Adventure, 1874-1920 (New York: Macmillan Company, 1951), pp. 102-109, 221, 266, and 412-414.

that struck Russia following the Civil War. Although in this case American agricultural commodities were not distributed to overturn the Communist government, their use reaffirmed for Hoover the superiority of American methods and added weight to his view of the irrationality of Bolshevik economics. Lenin's victory, Hoover maintained, had begun "the hideous tragedy of enthroned ignorance."²⁴

In spite of this record there was some speculation in the early months of Hoover's administration concerning America's position toward the Soviet Union. Partly fueled by the president's remarks to several businessmen that he was reconsidering the policy of nonrecognition, the activities of those who had sought throughout the 1920s some kind of formal reconciliation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. increased demonstrably. Pacifists, intellectuals, congressional leaders, and export-minded businessmen were eager to exploit the advantage and hoped to persuade the government to change its stance.

S. R. Bertron, a member of the Root mission to Russia in 1917 and by 1929 the chairman of the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, wrote frequently to Hoover in this period. He sought to impress on the president the possibilities of increased Soviet-American trade. After its reorganization in 1926 the chamber had built up extensive contacts with Mostorg and with Soviet officials assigned to the trade commissariat.

²⁴ Hoover, Memoirs: Years of Adventure, pp. 106 and 413-414; Hoover's memorandum on Russia, January 24, 1920, Pre-Commerce Subject File, Hoover Papers, Container 37; Arno Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking, pp. 24-27; and Hoover, Memoirs: The Cabinet and the Presidency (New York: Macmillan Company, 1952), pp. 23-26. The role of the American Relief Administration is treated in Benjamin M. Weissman, Herbert Hoover and Famine Relief to Russia, 1921-1923 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974). Also see Leo E. Chavez, "Herbert Hoover and Food Relief: An Application of American Ideology," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1976).

Based on this experience, Bertron reminded Hoover that an "enormous potential buying power" existed in Russia. Moreover, the Soviets, he maintained, had "a very kindly feeling toward America and Americans" as well as a "keen desire . . . to cultivate and adopt, as far as possible, American methods." He argued that there was nothing insurmountable to recognition, and he was confident that the U.S.S.R. would accept "our own terms as heretofore stated by three administrations." Careful to indicate that the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce did not recommend altering U.S. policy until formal Russian acceptance of America's demands, Bertron acknowledged the difficulties with which Hoover had to contend.²⁵

Of even greater interest was the attempt by Victor Chernov to influence the new administration. Minister of Agriculture in the Kerensky government and president of the Constituent Assembly before its dissolution, Chernov forwarded to Hoover a lengthy memorandum evaluating the current political and economic changes within the Soviet state. He drew two conclusions of particular significance. Any acts increasing the power of Stalin, he asserted, should be prevented. More important, efforts should be directed toward promoting the aims of Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomskii. Thus, Washington should move toward "normalization" of Russia's foreign relations. The Stalinist line that "merciless international capital" had placed a "noose" around Russia's

²⁵ See, for example, S. R. Bertron to Hoover, November 20, 1929, Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Russia, Hoover Library, Container 993. Bertron enclosed a memorandum entitled "The Business Aspect of Russian Recognition."

neck by outlandish demands would be circumvented. If this were done, Chernov thought, it might be of "incalculable value" considering the domestic political maneuvering then going on in the U.S.S.R.²⁶

Added to these efforts were the combined actions of those who had opposed Washington's nonrecognition of the Soviet Union throughout the 1920s. William Borah was still an enthusiastic proponent of adjusting U.S. policy toward Russia, particularly after the Kremlin's adherence to the Pact of Paris the year before. Alexander Gumberg, who had worked with Borah and with the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, had returned from traveling throughout the Soviet Union during the summer and fall of 1928 and contacted U.S. diplomatic officials, including Undersecretary of State J. Reuben Clark, seeking to convince them of the need for a change in Washington's position. In April Raymond Robins lunched with Hoover and tried to persuade the president that a new departure was in America's interests. More specifically, Robins sought to dissuade Hoover from appointing Henry L. Stimson as Secretary of State. Convinced that Stimson was too closely associated with the Hughes-Root wing of the Republican party, Robins preferred Dwight Morrow or anyone else who would help to discard the unrealistic policy of the U.S. toward the U.S.S.R. To coordinate their efforts Robins, Borah, Goodrich, Gumberg, and Reeve Schley met at the Mayflower Hotel in April 1929. The next day Borah introduced into the U.S. Senate yet another resolution calling for Russia's recognition.²⁷

²⁶Herman Bernstein to Hoover, July 23, 1929, Ibid. Chernov's memo, "The Present Status of Soviet Russia," was forwarded to the president by Bernstein.

²⁷Meiburger, Efforts of Raymond Robins, pp. 150-152. Borah's correspondence dealing with Russia can be followed in Borah Papers,

If Hoover ever had any real intention of altering U.S. policy in 1929, he failed to act on it, and a number of reasons that help to explain this come readily to mind. The president rejected Bertrons arguments concerning the relationship between diplomacy and trade. An advocate of economic expansion, Hoover had emphasized during World War I that the American economy required export markets, particularly after the closing of the frontier. On October 2, 1919 in an address on the League of Nations, he had repeated his conviction that Americans were "an overseas people," that the United States was "dependent upon Europe for the surplus products of our farmers and laborers," and that America was "forced" to interest itself in the "welfare of the world" if it was to "thrive." Nevertheless, trade with Russia would be severely limited in Hoover's estimation. Under the Soviets' economic system, he insisted, there could be no real return to production until the rights of private property were protected. Moreover, the Russian economy could export in great quantities only those agricultural products that were already in great supply in the United States. Finally, the trade which had already developed was being handled effectively by U.S. headquartered multinational corporations with the credit and managerial ability to deal profitably with the centralized economic apparatus of the U.S.S.R.²⁸

General Office File, Russia, 1922-1928, Container 261, and Russia, 1929-1930, Container 304. James K. Libbey, "Alexander Gumberg and Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1933," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1976).

²⁸ Hoover quoted in E. E. Robinson and V. Davis Barnett, Herbert Hoover: President of the United States (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1975), p. 98.

There was no need, therefore, to be swayed by specious arguments that somehow trade would be increased through recognition. In May 1929 Alexei Rykov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, argued before the Fifth Soviet Congress that the absence of diplomatic relations with the United States was "peculiarly absurd." He also remarked that the commercial arrangements which had already developed might be found "not merely inconvenient, but far too risky" as long as the U.S. prevented the Soviets from backing these arrangements "diplomatically and legally." Hoover was unimpressed. Trade, he thought, would develop more rapidly only if the U.S. extended long-term loans and credits to the U.S.S.R., and the president was disinclined to support such a program. In 1929 he continued to hold to the view that the question of trade with Russia was "far more a political question than an economic one" as long as the Soviet Union was controlled by the communists.²⁹

Any change in Washington's policy would also have had to overcome the bureaucratic opposition to the U.S.S.R. that had built up throughout the 1920s. The State Department had done much to nurture this anti-Soviet orientation of the federal government. Unwilling to interfere in the internal maneuvering of the Bolshevik leadership as Chernov and other Russian emigrés requested, it preferred to continue the policy enunciated by Bainbridge Colby nine years before. The Kerensky debt, the confiscation of American property during the revolution, religious freedom for Americans in Russia, and unwarranted intervention in America's internal affairs remained the staples of

²⁹Inprecor, June 7, 1929, 591-595.

the State Department's list of issues that would have to be resolved before recognition would be considered.³⁰

Many other agencies tended to support the State Department's evaluation of the Soviet system. A large number of federal bureaucrats assumed that it was "highly unlikely" that the communists could succeed with their designs for a socialist state in Russia. They based this judgment on the "presumptuous nature" of the task of "attempting to impose on a relatively backward people the demands of highly industrialized society," the "lack of brains and ability" left in Russia following the revolution and civil war, and the importance of "human nature." A recurring theme in the observations of many Americans, who had played and would continue to play a significant part in affecting governmental decision-making toward the U.S.S.R., this last point was particularly noteworthy. In 1923, for example, a member of the American Relief Administration in Russia had written to Coolidge informing the president that the Soviet government was being driven by the "forces of nature" toward "the paths that a thousand years of experience have shown to be the only possible methods by which civilized nations can exist." These ideas were characteristic of many members of the A.R.A., who generally opposed American diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union. Of relevance is the fact that large numbers of those who

³⁰ One can follow in the National Archives the decisions and recommendations of American diplomatic personnel throughout this period. Of particular interest are the general records, policy books, staff studies, and memoranda of the Division of Russian Affairs, 1919-1922 and the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1922-1937. With Robert Kelley as its chief, the Division of Eastern European Affairs was noted for its meticulous, if value-laden, work. An example is the compilation of Litvinov's statements throughout the 1920s; see State Department files 861.44 Litvinov, M.M./15.

served in Russia followed their "chief" to Washington when he took over the Commerce secretariat. These men remained in influential positions in Washington. Their thinking in 1929 toward the U.S.S.R. was not appreciably different from what it had been throughout the decade.³¹

Additionally, if any doubts about the continued opposition of politically significant interest groups had been entertained, they were quickly banished. On May 14, 1929 Matthew Woll, then acting president of the National Civic Federation, wrote Hoover denouncing the "venomous underground Communist organization," which was under the direction of the Soviet secret police and which was increasingly active in the United States. "Speaking from the standpoint of labor," he continued, "I can assert that at no time in the history of our country have the communists been so virulent and destructive." The antireligious campaign undertaken by the Soviets throughout 1929 also aroused the feverish opposition of the Catholic hierarchy, which had previously demonstrated in 1923 following the execution of the Vicar-General of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia, Monsignor Buchkavich, considerable, if limited, political power. When Pius XI called for three days of prayers for the victims of communist terror in 1930, American religious groups staged a massive anti-Soviet drive. These demonstrations were duly noted by the president.³²

³¹The opposition to the U.S.S.R. in the federal bureaucracy is treated most completely in Joan Hoff Wilson, Ideology and Economics. In addition, see Hughes to Coolidge, August 17, 1923, for memo from Major Mathews of the ARA, Coolidge Papers, series 1 (156A), reel 85, and Stimson to General W. W. Atterbury, March 30, 1931, State Department files 861.01/1653 1/2.

³²Matthew Woll to Hoover, May 14, 1929, Presidential Papers-Subject File, Communism, Hoover Papers, Container 108. For an extensive

Finally, Hoover had always judged American influence more potent if it disassociated itself from the intrigue and conflicting forces of European power politics. The First World War had confirmed these ideas in his mind as did the Allied intervention in Russia. Describing the latter as the "rankest folly," Hoover wrote in late January 1920 that even though the Bolsheviki were nothing more than a "combination of idealists and sheer criminals" the Allied intervention in the long run worked to their advantage. A great many Russians perceived the Allied military as willing to restore the old order and that was no longer possible. "Ideas," Hoover emphasized, "cannot be overwhelmed by military force." Of the five or six social philosophies then struggling for ascendancy in the postwar world the one of greatest value, he argued, was that of American Individualism. By this he meant an updated nineteenth-century liberalism and agrarianism adapted to fit the increasingly industrialized, urbanized nature of the United States economy.³³

What mattered to Hoover, therefore, after his inauguration in March 1929 was the further implementation of the ideas advanced by him when he had been Secretary of Commerce in the Harding and Coolidge administrations. Reflecting the drift to informal corporatism, Hoover acknowledged that modern-day life had to avoid the twin dangers of

survey of organizations and groups which took a position for or against the U.S.S.R. in these years, see Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment, particularly p. 247.

³³ Hoover's Russian policy memo, January 24, 1920, Pre-Commerce Subject File, Hoover Papers, Container 37. Also, Herbert Hoover, American Individualism (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1922).

reaction and radicalism. He rejected concentration of power, whether economic or political, and insisted that equality of opportunity was the shibboleth of American society. To insure competition in the marketplace and to redeem a campaign pledge, Hoover sought support for what would become the Agricultural Marketing Act of June 1929. Revitalizing the depressed agricultural industry was the sine qua non of his early administration, a concern made all the more important because of the political significance of the agricultural community within the Republican party. Hoover was confident that the overall prosperity of the New Era would continue. And he was convinced that American capitalism had evolved the sophisticated techniques to handle adequately whatever problems it might face in the immediate future. A "successful" Soviet society was assuredly not envisioned as one of the possible difficulties that might arise.³⁴

IV

Stalin's actions in 1929 tend to confirm that, even though he pursued actively technological assistance to accelerate the industrialization of the U.S.S.R. and remained apprehensive about the relative political isolation of the Soviet Union, he nonetheless maneuvered to assure his own political supremacy and to achieve acceptance of the plan for rapid industrialization that he supported. As far as the United States was concerned he probably did not anticipate any dramatic

³⁴The Federal Farm Board established by the Agricultural Marketing Act was attacked by the Soviets in the early 1930s. They argued that it was storing agricultural commodities in order to facilitate a new military intervention of Russia by the French. See the next chapter for further details.

change in U.S. policy when the Hoover administration came to power. Furthermore, the obdurate position of the Republican party throughout the 1920s had not precluded an expansion of lucrative trade for both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The financial restrictions imposed by the American government were admittedly irksome, but contracts with major American corporations had been forthcoming and were particularly significant if the ambitious plans of the Soviet government were to be realized. That the actions he would take throughout the year would exacerbate the tensions between the two countries would be justified by the internal economic and political transformation of the Soviet state.

"We must overtake and outstrip the advanced technology of the developed capitalist countries" had been Stalin's argument to the plenum of the Central Committee in November 1928. In 1929 he moved to eliminate publicly the opposition led by Bukharin and others. Russia could not tolerate the "slower rate of development of our industry" that the Right recommended. In April the Right Opposition was soundly defeated; it was a group "afflicted with blindness" and unable to "understand the new tasks of the Party." In the spring the goals of the Five-Year Plan were revised drastically upward. During the summer and fall new peasant unrest was evident as the effort toward state and collective farms was pressed by the government. The grain shortage became more acute, and "extraordinary measures" became commonplace. In November 1929 Bukharin was expelled from the Politburo. In December Stalin's birthday was celebrated with excess and hyperbole. The "cult of personality" had begun.³⁵

³⁵Stalin, Works, XI, pp. 258 and 332, and XII, p. 29. An excellent biography of Stalin that helps to explain these developments

In order to insure that the victory in Russia had international significance Stalin moved rapidly during the summer to revise the theses of the Sixth Comintern Congress held the previous year. Specifically at stake was the meaning of the "third period" of capitalist development, the onset of which had been proclaimed in 1927. In July 1929 at the Tenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International the third period was redefined to mean the end of capitalist stabilization, the upsurge of proletarian militancy, and the certainty of revolutionary situations in the West. Socialist parties were attacked as the enemies of the communist movement. Stalin embraced the "heroic tradition" of the revolutionary period and gained absolute control over the worldwide communist movement so that it could work effectively in the interests of the Russian state committed to an enormous restructuring of its industry and agriculture.³⁶

This approach had been forcibly brought home to the members of the American Communist Party in May when Stalin personally intervened to deal with the "factionalism" of the Lovestone and Foster groups. After observing that the American CP was one of those few communist parties "upon which history has laid tasks of a decisive character," Stalin reviewed the "objective conditions" that revealed the "weakness" of the United States. Unemployment of three million, antagonisms

is Robert Tucker, Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973).

³⁶ Inprecor, April 19, 1929, 408-409. Kermit E. McKenzie, Comintern and World Revolution, 1928-1943: The Shaping of Doctrine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 113-139. And Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution, pp. 291-295 and 329.

between the U.S. and Great Britain, the failure of the Versailles peace system and the inability of the western powers to curtail the growth of armaments, all were traced to reveal that "the moment is not far off when a revolutionary crisis will develop in America." When this occurred, Stalin insisted, it "will be the beginning of the end of world capitalism as a whole."³⁷

Most assuredly, Stalin knew that his intervention in the working of the American Communist Party would irritate the Hoover administration and fuel the antipathy of just those groups most active in opposing the Soviet Union. Although he probably underestimated the upheaval that would follow the plans adopted for the forced collectivization and industrialization of the U.S.S.R., he did not intend to tolerate any center of possible opposition. Moreover, long before 1929 the Russians had used the Comintern to protect the interests of the socialist state in Russia as the sole means of achieving the world revolution. Finally, it is doubtful that Stalin would have undertaken the arduous path that Russia would follow in the succeeding years if he actually anticipated revolutionary crises in 1929 or immediately thereafter. A useful device to distract attention, this preoccupation with revolution would sustain both the party members within Russia and the communist parties throughout the world during a period of adjustment

³⁷ Stalin gave two speeches concerning the American CP to the American Commission of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The first was on May 6, 1929; the second on May 14, 1929. Both were published by the Central Committee of the CPSU (B). Quotations are from a relatively rare pamphlet published in 1929, Stalin's Speeches on the American Communist Party, pp. 11-20. In addition, see Theodore Draper, American Communism and Soviet Russia: The Formative Period (New York: The Viking Press, 1960).

and change. Similar to the Soviet penchant to fear as well as to exploit the idea of an anti-Soviet coalition of powers in a new intervention of the U.S.S.R., Stalin's actions were boldly designed to secure his interests. He assumed that the interests of Russia and the world revolutionary movement would be served simultaneously.

CHAPTER III

DEPRESSION

The recession which began within the first eight months of Hoover's administration was aggravated by an October stock market crash and other deflationary factors affecting the international economy. This recession signaled the beginning of the plunge of the United States and most other industrial economies into a depression of worldwide significance. By the early 1930s the value of goods and services in the U.S. declined by about one-half. Correcting for the decrease in prices, the quantity of production fell by almost one-third. Unemployment rose to approximately one-quarter of the work force. Investment stopped almost completely. The rhetoric of the 1920s that identified American prosperity with the idea of civilization itself disappeared. The New Era disintegrated.

The great depression focused America's attention on the internal adjustments that had accompanied industrialism. It revealed the structural, political, and economic weaknesses of American capitalism. It also demonstrated capitalism's resiliency, and did much in the long run to sustain the widely supported movement which sought to isolate the United States in the 1930s from radical and reactionary threats, both foreign and domestic. Internal considerations remained preeminent as Washington sought ad hoc solutions to economic dilemmas

not entirely understood. American foreign policy, relegated to a subordinate role, sought to maintain traditional U.S. interests in the western hemisphere, Europe, and East Asia. It was also to secure, if possible, a peaceful environment in which Americans could reexamine and reaffirm their commitment to economic growth and the domestic and international implications that this entailed.¹

In Russia the depression affecting the capitalist states was first and foremost a consideration insofar as it affected the economic transformation of the Soviet Union. Following Bukharin's defeat in 1929 Stalin began the implementation of his "revolution from above." Russia was driven inexorably toward advanced industrialism and the collectivization of its agriculture, as the communist party, spurred on by the Stalinists in the Politburo, pressed forward with the incredible demands of the First Five-Year Plan. The enormity of the undertaking produced a shift of emphasis in 1932 and 1933, and the economic goals formulated for the remainder of the decade, although extraordinary, were more realistic. The Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934 also seemed to indicate that a period of reconciliation had begun. Reaffirmed by the work done on the new Soviet constitution, it was, however, merely an interlude. From 1936 through 1939 the political counterpart to Stalin's economic program was revealed. The destruction of the Old Bolsheviks and the remaking of the party in the image of its

¹Some works of interest on the Great Depression are Joseph S. Davis, The World Between the Wars, 1919-1939: An Economist's View (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975); Charles P. Kindleberger, The World in Depression, 1929-1939 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); and Peter Temin, Did Monetary Forces Cause the Great Depression (New York: Norton, 1976).

General Secretary confirmed that the Stalinist phase of the Bolshevik revolution had achieved its ascendancy.

The depression also seemed to verify the Kremlin's conception of the inherent instability and inequity among capitalist states. Exploited by the Comintern to serve the interests of the U.S.S.R., this line of argument was continued until the mid-1930s. At this time the revanchism and aggression of Italy, Germany, and Japan induced a reexamination of the Soviet Union's political commitments. Russia, the erstwhile proponent of postwar revisionism, swung around to support collective security. And the Communist International initiated a new role for communist parties, the Popular Front, which was enunciated at the Seventh Comintern Congress in 1935. Throughout these permutations, the Kremlin sought to prevent Russia's involvement in any war that would disrupt its domestic metamorphosis.²

I

In December 1929 the acting Soviet Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov reviewed the international position of the Soviet Union before the second session of the Fifth Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. He remarked that Russia was surrounded by hypocritical,

²An invaluable insight into the Soviet government in the 1930s can be achieved by reading the appraisals of U.S. diplomats stationed in Russia and Eastern Europe. See, for example, J. V. A. MacMurray to Hull, December 16, 1933, State Department files, 861.00 Congress of the All Union Communist Party, XVII/1. Also, Cole to Hull, June 16, 1934, Ibid., 861.00 Congress of the All Union Communist Party, XVII/6 to /7; Bullitt to Hull, July 23, 1934, Ibid., 761.00/245; Bullitt to Hull, October 2, 1934, Ibid., 861.01/2102; Bullitt to Hull, March 19, 1936, Ibid., 761.00/269; Davies to Hull, January 21, 1937, Ibid., 861.00/11649; and Henderson to Hull, September 15, 1937, Ibid., 861.00 Party, All Union Communist/189.

capitalist nations which supposedly sought peace, but which actively pursued their aggressive interests. As the only power not motivated by sordid, imperialistic ambitions, the Soviet Union, Litvinov maintained, continued to promote those policies that were consonant with the internal demands of the Soviet state. Peace, disarmament, neutrality, and nonaggression were the underpinnings of the Narkomindel's approach to international affairs and the major preoccupation of Litvinov's address.³

Restatements of the basic tenets of Russia's foreign policy were invariably accompanied by efforts to update the Soviet Union's view of the international environment in which it functioned. In January 1930 the Kremlin identified what it thought was "a phase of fresh aggressiveness" by the western powers. Although they assumed that this was a "natural sequel" to "the entry of world capitalism into the third period of its postwar existence," the Soviets watched with particular care "the new feature" which they thought characterized recent events. This new feature was the "increased part played by the U.S.A. in the anti-Soviet imperialist front."⁴

Several developments had led the Kremlin to this conclusion, including Washington's intrusion into the Sino-Soviet confrontation

³Inprecor, December 20, 1929, 1471-1476, and December 27, 1929, 1488-1492. In addition, consult Coleman to Stimson, December 31, 1929, State Department files, 761.00/176.

⁴Pravda, January 29, 1930, and Inprecor, February 6, 1930, 98-99. At the same time Walter Duranty, New York Times correspondent in Russia, was assuring U.S. diplomats that the Soviets were eager to extend trade between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. See, for example, Wiley to Stimson, January 29, 1930, State Department files, 861.00/11414.

over Russia's rights on the Chinese Eastern Railway. The dispute had begun when the Chinese governments at Nanking and Mukden sought to abrogate the treaty arrangements which had been signed with Russia in 1924. In December 1928 Chinese authorities seized the railway's telephone system. On May 27, 1929 Chinese police stormed the Soviet consulate general in Harbin and seized documents which purportedly confirmed the Soviet Union's efforts to spread communist propaganda in Manchuria and northern China. Misled by their German military advisers, who thought Russia incapable of an effective military response, and eager to dispose of the extraterritorial rights of all the great powers, the Chinese extended their control over the CER throughout the summer of 1929.⁵

At first Russia responded cautiously. Soviet diplomats denounced the "provocative acts" of the Chinese and the "violation of the treaties" which had been signed by both countries. Every effort was made to negotiate as Karakhan, the Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs, sought to maintain peacefully Soviet interests in the area. At the same time that the Kremlin warned the Chinese of the possible "serious consequences" of their actions, the Soviet military prepared a special Far Eastern Army under the command of General Vasilii

⁵The American consul in Mukden reported to the U.S. Minister in China that the "pet scheme" of the Chinese was to gain control of the CER. See Myers to MacMurray, February 7, 1929, FRUS, 1929, II, 189. To trace the developments in the crisis read FRUS, 1929, II, 186-434; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Documents with Reference to the Sino-Russian Dispute (Nanking, 1929); E. Butlitskii and D. Teplov, Voennaia ugroza na Dal'nem Vostoke. Chto proiskhodit na Sovetsko-kitaiskoi granitse (Moscow, 1929); M. Doronin, Zakhvat Kitaisko-Vostochnoi zheleznoi dorogi (Novosibirsk, 1929); and N. Konev, Na sovetsko-kitaiskoi granitse (Moscow, 1930).

Bliukher and N. E. Donenko, a member of the Revolutionary Military Council. On November 17, 1929, following the limited military forays that had begun in July, the Soviet army struck across the Manchurian border, quickly routing the Chinese forces. By November 19 Chang Hsueh-liang was ready for peace on Russia's terms. A provisional agreement was signed on December 3. The Khabarovsk Protocol, which established the status quo ante and which provided for a conference to be held in Moscow in late January 1930, was signed on December 22.⁶

The Americans had become involved for several reasons. First, in August 1929 Stanley Hornbeck, chief of the State Department's Division of Far Eastern Affairs, remarked that the CER and the other significant railroads in Manchuria had been "born in and of international politics. They serve not alone the people or the purposes of any one country." A restatement of America's commitment to an open door in China, it recalled for many the schemes of the Taft administration for the internationalization of these railroad lines. Second, the American Minister in China, John Van A. MacMurray, reminded the Secretary of State, Henry Stimson, that since extraterritoriality and the Chinese Eastern Railway were "interrelated," any "tactical success the Chinese might have in dealing with Russia would encourage their forcing upon us the extraterritorial issue." Third, several U.S.

⁶DVP, XII, 334-337, 380-386, 594-597, 601-602, and 673-676. Also, V. M. Kulagin and N. N. Iakovlev, Podvig Osoboi Dal'nevostochnoi (Moscow, 1970); Inprecor, June 14, 1929, 608-609; and George Alexander Lensen, The Damned Inheritance: The Soviet Union and the Manchurian Crises, 1924-1935 (Tallahassee, Florida: The Diplomatic Press, 1974), pp. 58-124.

military and consular officials in China, fearful of communist subversion, were apprehensive about the impact of Russia's role in this extremely volatile area.⁷

Albeit relevant to the crisis, none of these prompted the specific actions that were taken by Washington. Alexander Gumberg resurrected Knox's scheme of neutralization, but this was not taken seriously. Fear of communism was commonplace, but Chiang Kai-shek had previously dealt the communist movement in China a staggering blow. The extraterritorial issue was particularly significant, but it was not the chief concern of the Secretary of State, who, as Franklin Roosevelt later remarked, did not always prepare himself as thoroughly as diplomatic exigencies required.⁸

Uppermost in Stimson's mind was the overall treaty system which had been created and extended during and after World War I, and which had maintained relatively well the interests of the great powers during

⁷ Hornbeck's observation on the CER is quoted in Lensen, The Damned Inheritance, p. 92. One statement of MacMurray's concern about the issue of extraterritoriality is MacMurray to Stimson, July 22, 1929, FRUS, 1929, II, 226-228. In addition, read Magruder to the Legation in China, July 26, 1929, FRUS, 1929, II, 251-251; Hanson to MacMurray, July 10, 1929, Ibid., 199; and MacMurray to Stimson, July 25, 1929, Ibid., 246.

⁸ For Gumberg's observations consult Meiburger, Efforts of Raymond Robins, p. 157, and James K. Libbey, "Alexander Gumberg and Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1933," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1976). In a report to Stimson on October 12, 1930, Nelson Johnson wrote that communism in China was "not so much the cause of the present chaotic conditions in Central and South China, as it is the effect of certain fundamental conditions." See FRUS, 1930, II, 46-48. In June 1941 Roosevelt rejected Henry Morgenthau's suggestion that Cordell Hull be appointed to the Supreme Court and that Stimson be made Secretary of State. The president indicated that Hull's tactics might have been better suited to the early problems that developed around Manchuria. See Morgenthau's Presidential Diaries, IV, 932, Morgenthau Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.

a period of resurgent Chinese nationalism and civil war. Especially significant was the Kellogg Pact which renounced war as an instrument of national policy. The United States, China, and Russia were signatories, as were most of the other nation states of the world. Thus, throughout the summer and fall of 1929 Stimson sought to work through diplomatic channels to achieve resolution of the Sino-Russian difficulties and to preserve the treaties which had been created to maintain the peace.⁹

Stimson, who thought that the Chinese were responsible for the crisis, held numerous conversations with the ambassadors of the great powers. He sought to avoid antagonizing the Soviet Union, a development, which, as Borah wrote to Levinson in July, was "practically impossible." Seeking to restore the status quo without alienating either side led Washington to distribute an aide m moire on July 25. It called for an impartial commission of conciliation. It was addressed to Great Britain, France, Japan, Italy, and Germany. By December 3 another U.S. d marche was cabled to the great powers as well as to China and Russia. It arrived the same day that Russian and Chinese

⁹ Stimson thought that the Manchurian situation demonstrated "the importance of machinery which should be invocable by the parties themselves and also by outsiders when they would not invoke it." See Stimson's memorandum of his conversation with the French Ambassador, October 10, 1929, FRUS, 1929, I, 61-62. For further amplification of Stimson's role and the response to it consult the Russo-Chinese crisis in Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Russia, Hoover Library, Container 993. The State Department wrote in March 1933 a self-serving description that is of interest; read Presidential Papers-Cabinet Offices, State, Review of Accomplishments of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, Hoover Library, Container 48. As far as Stimson was concerned he argued before Hoover's cabinet in 1930 that a report to all nations would reveal "the full benefit of the signal service which this country had rendered to the Kellogg-Briand Pact by what we did. . . ." See Stimson Diary, microfilm edition, October 21, 1930.

diplomats signed the provisional agreement which led to the Khabarovsk Protocol of December 22.¹⁰

Irritated by the U.S. involvement in the dispute, the Soviets were outraged by the American statement of early December, particularly since it was issued at a time when direct pourparlers had already commenced between Chinese and Soviet authorities. Litvinov expressed "astonishment" at Washington's interference. He reminded the Americans that the Soviets had promoted a peace policy since the revolution in 1917, and that the Russians had heretofore responded militarily only when threatened by the "armed intervention of certain powers." (An obvious distortion, this was a reference to America's intervention in Russia during and after World War I.) Moreover, since the Kellogg Pact had no provisions for implementation by an individual state or group of states, Stimson's efforts were viewed as presumptuous. Finally, Litvinov referred to the reservations that had been attached to the pact by the great powers, including the U.S., and he argued that Washington would have acted militarily to preserve its interests in a similar situation while denouncing any interference by another power. Considering the previous Soviet efforts to negotiate treaties based on the equality of states and to abandon voluntarily their extraterritorial rights in China, the defensive and limited actions taken by the Red Army, Litvinov

¹⁰Stimson memorandum, August 15, 1929, FRUS, 1929, II, 276-277. Telegram from Borah to Levinson, June 28, 1929, S. O. Levinson Papers, University of Chicago Library, Container 8. In addition, consult FRUS, 1929, II, 242-244 and 366-383.

reasoned, were entirely justified. He insisted that America's proposal could "in no way be considered a friendly act."¹¹

The Soviet government had undertaken a long and tiresome debate before committing itself to the Pact of Paris. Chicherin, the Foreign Commissar, opposed it. He assumed that it would be used by the capitalist nations to exert control over areas of vital concern to the U.S.S.R. His objections had been overcome. Litvinov had argued that the Kellogg Pact was "a link in the long chain" of Soviet efforts which were directed toward general peace. Stimson's attempts to provide "machinery" to make the pact effective aroused Russia's fears. The war scares of 1926 and 1927, the American policy of diplomatic nonrecognition, and the Soviet assumption that the Chinese would have never moved against the CER without the approval of the western powers combined to persuade the Kremlin that it had every reason to be apprehensive.¹²

Other considerations supported the conclusion that the U.S. was adopting a more active and hostile role toward the U.S.S.R. The Kremlin had been convinced that the British and French had "lured" the Weimar Republic into the League of Nations in order to entice Germany into an

¹¹ A translation of the Soviet note was cabled to Stimson by Armour, the U.S. chargé in France. See FRUS, 1929, II, 404-406, and DVP, XII, 603-605. In 1931 the U.S.S.R. still maintained that the U.S. actions in 1929 were taken "in the interests of the Chinese white-guards" and that Washington's decisions revealed "anti-Soviet designs." Consult Pravda, May 12, 1931, and Coleman to Stimson, May 29, 1931, State Department files, 711.61/217.

¹² Louis Fischer, The Soviets in World Affairs, pp. 568-577. For Litvinov's address on the signing of the protocol putting into effect the Kellogg Pact see State Department files 761.00/190 and 760c.6112 anti-war/73. In addition, consult John P. Sontag, "The Soviet War Scare of 1926-1927," Russian Review, XXXIV (January, 1975), 66-77, and Lensen, The Damned Inheritance, 58-124.

anti-Soviet current. It had also accepted that the United States had gained financial control over much of western Europe by the middle of the 1920s. It watched closely, therefore, for initiatives that might persuade its Rapallo partner to jettison the Russian connection for advantages proffered by the victors of the First World War. From the Soviet perspective the Young Plan's attempt to resolve the problem of German reparations was especially noteworthy. Moscow assumed that it increased the dependence of Germany on the U.S. This development hardly seemed propitious considering the implications of Washington's involvement in the Sino-Soviet Manchurian clash. Moreover, the Soviet Union had become convinced that the U.S. was seeking an economic and political rapprochement between Germany and Poland, a bilateral relationship that the Russians did not want developed. Finally, the Mexican government dismissed the Soviet Minister, Alexandr Makar, in January 1930 and expelled all foreign communists from Mexico. According to the Kremlin, this was a direct result of "instructions from Washington." Mexico's decision, Soviet diplomats argued, revealed the hypocrisy of America's involvement in Manchuria in 1929, and was a direct consequence of Washington's continuing interest in western hemispheric solidarity. This had supposedly become even more significant because of the convening of the London Naval Conference, which devoted itself, according to Moscow, to "a new imperialistic parcelling of the world," and which followed soon after Washington's rebuff by Britain and Japan in the Manchurian situation the year before.¹³

¹³ Pravda, January 29, 1930. Inprecor, February 6, 1930, 98-99. Izvestiia, January 27, 1930. Sussdorff to Stimson, February 4, 1930, State Department files, 711.61/185; Wiley to Stimson, January 29, 1930,

In the summer of 1930 Litvinov became the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs. He replaced the diabetic Chicherin, who was physically unable to continue in office. Although the differences between Litvinov and his predecessor were well-known within the Narkomindel, the change in leadership was a formality. Both were primarily mechanics who implemented the decisions taken in the Politburo. To publicize that no dramatic shift in the Soviet Union's foreign policy was imminent, Litvinov restated in an interview immediately after his appointment the themes of the 1920s. "The principles of the October revolution," he asserted, were the basis of Russia's approach to international affairs. So too was the "defense of the acquisitions" of the revolution "against the external pressure and interference" of the capitalist states. Accordingly Litvinov reaffirmed the Russo-German alignment established at Rapallo, the "community of interests" which had arisen between the U.S.S.R. and those who had "suffered from the war," and "the further extension of economic connections with other states." Peaceful coexistence was indispensable. The tasks imposed by Stalin and the Politburo in 1930 made this even more readily apparent.¹⁴

II

In January 1930 a decree of the Central Committee doubled and tripled the tempo of collectivization in some areas of Russia. These

Ibid., 861.00/11414; Sussdorff to Stimson, February 18, 1930, Ibid., 761.00/177; and Sussdorff to Stimson, April 15, 1930, Ibid., 711.61/188.

¹⁴ Izvestiia, July 26, 1930; Coleman to Stimson, July 31, 1930, State Department files, 761.00/186; and Stalin, Political Report to the Sixteenth Party Congress, p. 32.

measures were imposed arbitrarily, and civil upheaval spread throughout the affected regions. Ignoring his own responsibility for these developments, Stalin shifted the blame to "local" officials who, he insisted, were "dizzy with success." Because of the violence that shattered Russia's agricultural sector and because of the apprehension of the moderates in the Politburo, who had previously supported Stalin, the collectivization effort abated temporarily. Stalin's real intentions, however, were reemphasized that summer before the delegates of the Sixteenth Party Congress. At this time the General Secretary lashed out at Right opportunism, the Bukharinist position which called for civil peace and evolutionary economic growth. Stalin also repeated his commitment to the rapid planning that he had consistently espoused. Beginning in the fall, when the collectivization drive was renewed, a change was noticeable. Its pace was slower, more cautious, and definitely crueler. Combined with the export and import demands of the Soviet state, this drive culminated in the deliberately created famine of 1932 and 1933, the last year of Stalin's war against the nation. Peasant opposition to his regime had been crushed.¹⁵

Seemingly convinced that force could resolve political as well as economic problems, Stalin sought to insure his reading of the legacy of Marx and Lenin. He assumed that Soviet power was dependent on the internal strength of the Russian economy. The Red Army, for example, would be unable to field and maintain for an extended conflict a modern military force without the backing of a strong industrial base.

¹⁵ A review of these developments can be found in M. Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power: A Study of Collectivization (New York: Norton, 1968); Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution, pp. 337-347; and Ulam, Stalin, pp. 289-357.

Certainly the "secret" military arrangements with Germany were too weak a reed on which to rely. Moreover, although agitational activities and propaganda could nurture public opinion to support the U.S.S.R., the Third International could conceivably collapse beneath the pressure of a new war, just as the Second International disintegrated with the onset of World War I. Western "reformers" who sought to persuade the masses of the inequities of capitalism were also a useful component of Russia's tactical efforts to protect the Soviet Union and to extend its influence. Yet realism dictated that the U.S.S.R. rely on itself. Thus, the effect of the Five-Year Plan was "immeasurable." It would make the Soviet Union "entirely self-sufficient" and "independent of the caprices of world capitalism." Russian power was the goal that Stalin eagerly embraced.¹⁶

The "anti-Soviet front" and the "increased" hostility of the United States were insufficient to deter Stalin from his course. Admittedly, there were dangers. But Lenin had demonstrated that the antagonisms among the capitalist powers could be exploited to Russia's advantage. That this remained the case was amply demonstrated in the Manchurian confrontation between Russia and China in 1929. Great Britain, America's principal rival according to the Soviets, thought the U.S. was undependable, and was displeased by Stimson's efforts to intercede in the crisis. The Japanese, although opposed to communism

¹⁶This reading of Stalin is consistent with Robert C. Tucker, Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality (New York: Norton, 1973). In addition, consult Sylvia R. Margulies, The Pilgrimage to Russia: The Soviet Union and the Treatment of Foreigners, 1924-1937 (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1968); Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 15, 1933; and Soviet Union Review, XI (February, 1933), p. 31.

and fearful of the possibility of a future Sino-Soviet rapprochement, supported Russia's rights on the CER. This led to a series of talks between Japanese and Soviet diplomats in 1930, which the Russians thought would ease temporarily their political and military burden in East Asia. The fact that Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. resumed formal diplomatic relations in October 1929 also reassured the Kremlin. Considering the "inherent contradictions" among England, Japan, and the United States, the Soviets assumed that they had offset Stimson's initiative, whatever its intent, as well as increased their leverage with the English and the Japanese. In addition, the skillful diplomacy of Karakhan and Litvinov had by late December put Washington on the defensive. Stimson publicly and privately maintained that the State Department's efforts had been merely to awaken worldwide public opinion to the dangers of the conflict and the implications that war would have on the treaty system created during the 1920s. His performance was uninspired; it was an unconvincing explanation of U.S. involvement in the Russo-Chinese dispute. It failed to convince the Soviets, who thought that China might rely on U.S. support to delay or disrupt the Moscow conference scheduled for early 1930.¹⁷

A number of other considerations also affected Russia's view of the international situation at this time. The Soviet Union's

¹⁷ Lensen, The Damned Inheritance, pp. 83-124; A. Pevtsov, "Iaponiia i sovetsko-kitaiskii konflikt," Mirovoe khoziaistvo i mirovaia politika, 1930, pp. 77-82; Coleman to Stimson, January 9, 1930, State Department files, 761.94/419; Wiley to Stimson, January 29, 1930, Ibid., 861.00/11414; and Stimson's press statement, December 4, 1929, FRUS, 1929, II, 388-389. The Russian fear that U.S. involvement would be used by the Chinese to delay agreement with the U.S.S.R. was born out by diplomatic conversations held between U.S. and Chinese officials in 1930. See Nelson Johnson to Stimson, February 24, 1930, FRUS, 1930, II, 299.

relationship with the Weimar Republic continued to serve the interests of both countries, despite the potential impact of the Young Plan and the implications of a possible German-Polish rapprochement. Furthermore, the Kremlin found that its dealings with Mussolini's government were proceeding normally, a useful counterpart to the worsening relationship which existed between the U.S.S.R. and France. Nothing on the international scene was of such magnitude to persuade Stalin to forego his commitment to rapid industrialization.

More important, there was the Kremlin's view of the depression. Considering the presuppositions of the Soviet leaders, it was understandable that they would concentrate on the advantages that they thought would accrue to the U.S.S.R. from the economic collapse of the western powers. And this was exactly what occurred. The Kremlin anticipated that the depression would make capitalist businessmen eager to increase their trade with the Soviet Union. The Soviets also saw the depression as proof of the end of the capitalist stabilization of the postwar period and as confirmation of the theses of the Sixth Comintern Congress. In particular, the actions of the tenth plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in July 1929 and the speeches of Stalin to the representatives of the American CP in Moscow in May, all seemed to be vindicated. And, since the "closest connection" was recognized between the "domestic policy of the ruling classes" of the capitalist states and "their external policy," it was assumed that imperialistic rivalries would be aggravated by the depression. Additional opportunities would be available for Soviet exploitation. "New revolutions are possible without new wars,"

Zinoviev wrote in March 1930, "but new wars are not possible without new revolutions." Finally, the economic prostration of the capitalist states was a propitious occurrence which the Soviet government could use to convince its people that the economic policies of the Kremlin were indeed the correct ones.¹⁸

It became evident that the Soviets had estimated correctly when they anticipated that Soviet-American trade would not be adversely affected by the diplomatic events of 1929 and 1930. The stock market crash and the depression reenforced the commitment of many U.S. businessmen to the trade links which had already developed between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Others also began to view the Soviet Union favorably. This development was encouraged by certain American political leaders who saw Russia as a vast, virtually untapped market. It was further augmented by the work of S. G. Bron, head of the Amtorg Corporation, as well as by Bogdanov, Bron's successor, who, according to the State Department, was held in high regard in Soviet Russia. The results were impressive.¹⁹

In 1929 Soviet orders in the United States were approximately three times those of the year before. In 1930 American exports to

¹⁸Inprecor, July 3, 1930, 549-554; July 10, 1930, 575-588; and July 17, 1930, 608-615. As has already been noted, F. W. B. Coleman and Louis Sussdorff, Jr., American diplomats at Riga, Latvia, were reporting these developments in 1930; see State Department files, 711.61/184 to /188, and 761.00/177 to /181. Zinoviev's observations are contained in his article "On the Connection between Domestic and Foreign Policy" published on March 15, 1930 in Bol'shevik.

¹⁹Saul G. Bron, Soviet Economic Development and American Business: Results of the First Year under the Five-Year Plan and Further Perspectives (New York: Horace Liveright, 1930); Borah Papers, General Office File, Library of Congress, Container 325; and Wiley to Stimson, January 29, 1930, State Department files, 861.00/11414.

Russia neared one hundred and fifteen million dollars, up more than fifty percent from a comparable period in 1928. Final trade statistics for 1930 showed the United States to be the chief source of Soviet imports. And in 1930 and 1931 the U.S.S.R. was the largest purchaser of American agricultural and industrial equipment. According to J. M. Budish and Samuel S. Shipman of the Economic Division of the Amtorg Trading Corporation, the Soviet Union had become by 1931 the eighth best market for American exports. Also, the balance of trade between the two countries was overwhelmingly in favor of the United States, amounting to more than three hundred and ninety-four million dollars from 1923 to December 31, 1930. What many Americans had been telling Hoover in 1929 about the "enormous potential buying power" in Russia and the "keen desire" of the Soviet government "to cultivate and adopt, as far as possible" America's industrial techniques seemed to be correct.²⁰

Russia's efforts to increase its trade with the U.S. were paralleled by the activities of the Comintern, which used the depression to support its commitment to the "united front from below." The literature of the period reveals the usual harangues. The "process of the capitalistic development of America," it was announced, had brought forth "an army of its grave-diggers." Similar statements were reshaped in the early 1930s to reflect the conditions which accompanied the depression. Then, the American workers were called forth to do battle

²⁰Nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut monopolii vneshnei tor-govli, Torgovye otnosheniia SSSR s kapitalisticheskimi stranami (Moscow, 1938), p. 59; J. M. Budish and Samuel S. Shipman, Soviet Foreign Trade: Menace or Promise? (New York, 1931); and S. R. Bertron to Hoover, November 20, 1929, Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Russia, Hoover Library, Container 993.

with "the united front of the employers, the state, the American Federation of Labor and the social fascists." The American CP was ordered to coordinate the struggle with the other workers of the world "against the menace of war, against the Young Plan, in defense of the Soviet Union." The American CP was also to work not only against US imperialism but to support "the right of self-determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt," an idea which, if nothing else, revealed the absurdity of the Comintern's approach.²¹

The Soviets recognized that America's communists were of limited value at this time. The U.S. was as yet unready for revolution, despite Moscow's observations to the contrary. Preoccupied with what it perceived to be more significant developments in Europe, particularly in Germany, the Comintern supported a line of argument which was considered important by a relatively small number of Americans. The "united front from below" would prove more useful to many of America's political leaders, who blamed the civil disturbances caused by the depression on communist subversion. This was not nearly as important to Stalin, however, as the fact that the depression documented his foresight in revising the theses of the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1929. As leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and thus of the world revolutionary movement, his views on the decline of capitalism had been given a significant fillip by the depression.²²

²¹Inprecor, March 1, 1929, 202; June 14, 1929, 605-608; and September 4, 1929, 973-978. See also Pravda, December 31, 1929.

²²Concerning the "communist threat" to America's institutions and its political significance, read Edgar Eugene Robinson and Paul C. Edwards (eds.), The Memoirs of Ray Lyman Wilbur, 1875-1949 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), pp. 561-562; William R. Castle, Jr. to

Finally, the Kremlin found the collapse of the western economies useful insofar as it could be manipulated to distract the attention of the Soviet people. Accompanying this campaign were revelations about foreign threats, real and imagined, which were developed to impress Soviet workers with the need for diligence and sacrifice. To reinforce these efforts Stalin staged a series of public trials reminiscent of the Shakhty affair of 1928. The so-called Industrial Party became the center of attention in late 1930. In March 1931 a group of prominent Menshevik economists were tried as saboteurs and wreckers. In the spring of 1933 several British engineers employed by the Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Company were charged with undermining the Russian economy. In each case, internal considerations were preeminent, that is, the success of the Five-Year Plan and the increase in Stalin's political power far outweighed whatever deleterious effects these events had on the world's view of the Soviet state.²³

III

In the fall of 1929 Molotov spoke on the international position of the U.S.S.R. at a party conference of the Moscow industrial district.

Frank Kellogg, November 21, 1932, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 15; Communism--Correspondence, 1929-1933, Presidential Papers-Subject File, Hoover Library, Container 108; Herbert Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: The Great Depression, 1929-1941 (New York: Macmillan, 1952), pp. 225-232; and Donald Lisio, The President and Protest: Hoover, Conspiracy, and the Bonus Riot (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1974), pp. 54-64 and 87-91.

²³A convenient and brief description of these trials can be found in H. Montgomery Hyde, Stalin: The History of a Dictator (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1971), pp. 280-288. Countless examples of American diplomats documenting the Soviet penchant to use crises in the West for internal advantage are evident in the State Department's records. Another instance is Edward Brodie to Stimson, April 10, 1931, 711.61/212.

After analysing the current political situation overseas, he turned his attention to a recent American publication that reflected the views of Herbert Hoover, William Green of the American Federation of Labor, and Owen Young of the General Electric Company. The penchant of these Americans to perceive stability in the U.S. marketplace intrigued Molotov. More important, there was their inclination to argue that business, government, and organized labor were able to resolve whatever problems affected the American economy as well as any difficulties that might arise. Reflecting his own position in the internal debate between Stalin and the Right Opposition, Molotov rejected these American notions as "an empty illusion." "'Organized capitalism,'" he emphasized, had "never existed, and never can exist on earth."²⁴

Molotov's observations were of little interest to Hoover. As Secretary of Commerce he had been convinced that the U.S. had an opportunity to extend its political and economic maturity. As president he thought that the administrative, fiscal, and monetary skills previously developed would solve, if judiciously applied, the domestic problems that his administration might encounter. Preoccupied with the depressed agricultural industry, he did not think the inventory recession of late 1929 would hinder the accomplishments of his presidency. The new-found cooperation of which he had spoken in his inaugural address reflected a commitment to and a belief in the associational ideas which he thought proved effective throughout the New Era. Restraint, cooperation, self-help, governmental support through public spending, the maintenance of confidence in the integrity of the currency, and the stability of the

²⁴Inprecor, October 4, 1929, 1210-1213.

dollar through balanced budgets were the ingredients essential to immediate recovery and future prosperity.

Nevertheless, the "new race" failed the challenge of the depression. Hoover's administration proved unable to prevent a catastrophic rise of unemployment, mounting corporate bankruptcies, and the collapse of prices that characterized these years. More than an immediate failure, it revealed the weaknesses which the New Era had obscured. The Republicans in the 1920s had recognized the significance of U.S. exports to domestic prosperity. But the trade restrictions that they imposed did not facilitate the long-term stability of an evolving international economic system. The international economy demonstrated in the early 1930s that it was unable to deal simultaneously with America's creditor status, U.S. protectionism, the problems of debts and reparations, and the support given to a gold exchange standard by the United States and some of the more powerful economies of western Europe. Similarly, the massive increase of autonomous spending in the U.S. in the 1920s did not resolve the problems of many of its industries. Textile, railroad, and coal companies had not shared fully in the prosperity of the postwar decade. The decline in construction, the recession, and the stock market crash of 1929 aggravated these difficulties. The impact of the Federal Reserve's policies, the primitive understanding of economics by the American people, and the unwillingness of Hoover to utilize completely the institutional tools at his disposal combined to accelerate the decline.

Unwilling to accept the analysis of his Secretary of the Treasury that the fiasco would continue until the excesses with the

system had been "liquidated," Hoover turned his attention overseas in 1930 and 1931. The international situation, he maintained, was responsible for America's deepening economic crisis. It was commonsensical, therefore, to alleviate some of the pressures on foreign governments. Accordingly, he initiated a one-year war debt moratorium, and assumed that he had done more than his share in promoting international recovery. Despite his efforts, the economic collapse continued. England took the pound off gold in September 1931 at nearly the same time that Japan enlarged its role in Manchuria. Incensed, the president denounced these moves, and reaffirmed his view that the most important function of his administration was to divorce America from the malevolent policies of some of the great powers and to concentrate on those internal programs which, he insisted, were synonymous with American liberalism.

Motivated by domestic political and economic considerations, Hoover's search for external causes for the internal problems faced by the United States was accompanied by an equally noteworthy development. An increasingly influential coalition of political and economic leaders thought that a resolution of specific domestic dilemmas could be achieved by adjusting America's foreign policy. As William Borah wrote throughout these years, Soviet Russia was "the greatest potential market for American manufactured goods in the world." Recognition, he thought, would "double or treble" America's trade with that country. It would also help to resolve some of Europe's outstanding problems. Moscow's complete integration into the political and economic system created after the First World War was considered imperative, a conclusion shared by many other Americans. Recognition, moreover, would hasten

the modification of communist theory, which, Borah emphasized, used the hostility of the Hoover administration to its internal advantage. The president's anti-Soviet policy was "utterly incomprehensible."²⁵

As the depression's effects became clearer Borah received additional support from U.S. business. International Harvester, Deere and Company, Caterpillar Company, Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company, Case Tractor, Cleveland Tractor, American Locomotive Company, International Paper, Westinghouse, American Tool Works, and General Motors were some of the corporations which had dealt successfully with the U.S.S.R. by 1929. Technical assistance contracts had also been signed with Ford, International General Electric, DuPont de Nemours, Sperry Gyroscope, and Radio Corporation of America. Admittedly, there had been difficulties in the arrangements negotiated. American and Soviet ships paid six times the regular port charges when delivering products to the other's ports. Washington prohibited the entry of Soviet gold into the United States. Problems that occurred over patents, copyrights, and contracts were difficult to resolve because of the absence of consular officials in both countries. Despite these complications, however, Soviet-American trade had grown substantially.²⁶

²⁵ Borah to S. Stanwood Menken, November 25, 1930, General Office File, Borah Papers, Container 304; Borah to John Eddy Franklin, December 11, 1930, Ibid., container 325; Borah to Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman, December 26, 1930, Ibid.; Borah to J. D. Carr, April 11, 1931, Ibid.; Borah to Henry Orson, May 20, 1931, Ibid.; and Borah to Consolidated Machine Tool Corporation, January 9, 1932, Ibid., Container 349. Also, Stimson Diary, July 27, 1932.

²⁶ Consult Bron, Soviet Economic Development and American Business; Budish and Shipman, Soviet Foreign Trade: Menace or Promise?; Wilson, Ideology and Economics, pp. 49-132; and Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment, pp. 101-129 and 211-239.

When this trade plummeted in 1932 at the same time that these corporations were struggling with the disastrous consequences of the worldwide depression, their support for resolving the problems which existed between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. increased. Mistakenly assuming that the drop in Soviet purchases in 1931 and 1932 was related to Washington's refusal to extend diplomatic recognition (an assumption, it should be noted, that the Soviets did much to encourage), these companies intensified their pressure on the U.S. government to act. They were supported in these efforts by exporters, importers, steamship companies, and several banking firms in New York and San Francisco. The American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, some members of the National Association of Manufacturers, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce backed a substantive change in the bilateral relationship which had evolved. The continuing obduracy of Hoover's administration was perceived to be contrary to America's interests.²⁷

The State Department noted this transition, particularly among "representatives of highly conservative commercial and financial institutions where there was no question of direct radical influence." The U.S.S.R., many executives remarked to State Department officials, was conducting one of the most significant human experiments in history. These businessmen agreed that there was little chance that such a development could succeed. In reaching this conclusion, they reflected

²⁷Memorandum on American-Russian Trade, June 24, 1932, by the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, Borah Papers, General Office File, Container 349. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 27, 1932, February 2, 1932, February 12, 1932, March 8, 1932, June 20, 1932, July 15, 1932, and August 15, 1932. See also Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy, pp. 25-48, and Alexander Gumberg to Borah, August 13, 1931, Borah Papers, Container 326.

their own view of human nature, and the need for a profit motive to insure high levels of industrial production. Recognizing that the tenets of Marxism-Leninism were completely inappropriate to America's institutions, they indicated, nonetheless, that some aspects of Stalin's program might be imitated. Specifically, the Soviet Union's commitment to a definite policy, the Five-Year Plan, attracted a great deal of attention in Hoover's last years as president.²⁸

Others in America also reassessed their perceptions of the U.S.S.R. As unemployment reached above fifty and sixty percent in some of the major urban industrial centers of the U.S., thousands of the unemployed looked enviously toward the Soviet Union. Hundreds of letters flooded Borah's Washington office. Long identified with promoting recognition of the U.S.S.R., the Senator was besieged with requests to find employment for those with the skills and inclination to work on the great industrial projects of the Soviet Union. Communist ideology was probably of little interest to most of these men and women. An American engineer, W. R. Pender, who had worked for Electric Bond and Share, wrote to Borah on April 22, 1931. "One may think it strange," Pender maintained, that many of America's "best engineers" are unemployed in the U.S. and are willing to travel to the U.S.S.R. "Instead of

²⁸Division of Western European Affairs, February 13, 1931, State Department files, 711.61/201. Memorandum by Assistant Secretary of State J. G. Rogers, May 5, 1931, *Ibid.*, 711.61/223. Also, consult W. R. Castle to Eliot Spalding, January 28, 1931, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 8, and Roy Howard to Hoover, August 2, 1932, Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Russia, Container 994.

begging," however, "honest work" is preferable to charity. Many others did not think "it strange." Pender's letter was typical.²⁹

The Soviet "model" was also reevaluated within America's liberal community. During the 1920s liberals had stressed the social and psychological characteristics of Soviet experimentation. Russia's economic ideas, although interesting, were often ignored. This was the case despite the liberals' disenchantment with the political shift to the right which highlighted the New Era. The depression changed their focus, and the applicability of planning again received their attention. In January 1931 Edmund Wilson published in The New Republic his "appeal to Progressives." He argued that, if a liberal program of social planning and control meant anything, it had to mean socialism. American progressives "must take Communism away from the Communists, and take it without ambiguities or reservations, asserting emphatically that their ultimate goal is the ownership of the means of production by the government."³⁰

Wilson was not alone. John Dewey, George Counts, and many others who had traveled to the U.S.S.R. sought to Americanize the Soviet experiment. In 1930 Dewey explained that the technological, economic, and political changes of modern life had altered the meaning of conventional individualism. By 1931 he had joined with Paul Douglas, who had organized the League for Independent Political Action in 1929. Both supported the idea of a new political party that would promote economic

²⁹W. R. Pender to Borah, April 22, 1931, General Office File, Borah Papers, Container 326.

³⁰Edmund Wilson, "An Appeal to Progressives," New Republic, LXV (January 14, 1931), 234-238.

planning without the abuses that characterized the Kremlin's implementation of the First Five-Year Plan. George Counts also contributed to this movement, which attempted to reconcile the traditional commitment to individualism with the exigencies of economic concentration and to deal with the ideals of democratic society along with the benefits and disadvantages of advanced capitalism.³¹

Dewey, Douglas, and Counts accepted the challenge of the Soviet Union and supported economic planning to deal with the disaster of the great depression. They were opposed by those who detested communism and the Soviet Union. Troubled by the collapse of the U.S. economy, many Americans including congressmen, labor leaders, religious groups, and influential businessmen denounced the U.S.S.R., which, they thought, threatened the United States directly and indirectly. At stake was not only the immediate problem, the depression, but also its impact on the political and economic system of the United States. Fearful that America's commitments to political liberty, constitutional government, and capitalist modes of production and distribution would be undermined by the introduction of ideas which were identified with European socialism and fascism, they sought to maintain traditional values. Although willing to update their ideas to meet the demands of American industrialism, they revealed in their response to

³¹ John Dewey, Individualism Old and New (New York, 1930) and "Policies for a New Party," New Republic, LXVI (April 8, 1931), 203-205. Paul Douglas, The Coming of a New Party (New York, 1932). Hoover had confided to Stimson that the president thought that Borah was seeking to align Progressive Republicans and some Democrats into a third political party. See Stimson Diary, November 25, 1930.

Russia and the depression an essentially conservative desire to maintain America as they knew it.³²

On July 25, 1930 the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, Seymour Lowman, prohibited the entry of a shipment of Soviet paper pulpwood into the United States. He argued that it had been produced by convict labor and thus violated the provisions of the tariff act of 1930. He also recommended that an investigation determine whether the Soviets were dumping manganese ore, coal, and timber on international markets.³³

Lowman's actions brought to the general public's attention two of the economic problems which characterized Soviet-American relations in the early 1930s and which aroused the feverish activity of those most inclined to oppose Russia either for ideological or economic motives. Complaining bitterly about unfair competition, for example, the American Manganese Producers' Association acted immediately, and demanded that Washington stop Russia from dumping manganese on the American market. Matthew Woll, representing the five hundred thousand members of the Wage Earners' Protective Conference, revealed that much of the Soviet economic system depended on forced labor. Textile producers were also indignant, presumably because of the "threat" of Soviet cotton exports. So too were anthracite mine owners and the

³²Wilson, Ideology and Economics, and Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment give an adequate overview of the thinking of these individuals and groups.

³³Filene, Americans and the Soviet Experiment, p. 231.

United Mine Workers, who joined together temporarily to argue against Soviet shipments of coal.³⁴

In the next several months the debate in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. about the nature of Soviet-American economic relations intensified. Charges of Soviet dumping published in important American trade publications brought forth countercharges from U.S. businesses which would be hurt if Washington imposed an embargo on Soviet goods. In August Lowman wrote to William Pittenger, a Minnesota congressman, that the U.S. would vigorously implement the law "where applicable." But there was a problem. Treasury officials recognized that the depression had lowered the prices of agricultural commodities and raw materials. It was also understood that agricultural prices had fallen lower and faster than the prices of manufactured goods. That Russia had to sell greater quantities of agricultural products in order to pay for the industrial machinery and other equipment needed for the Five-Year Plan was readily accepted in Washington. Dumping was not necessarily, therefore, in the Soviets' interests. Many American businessmen, however, particularly those in the lumber industry, rejected the logic of the argument. In spite of the fact that Lowman and other governmental officials thought that some U.S. industrialists were exaggerating the impact of Soviet imports on the domestic market, the Treasury Department imposed additional restrictions on trade with the U.S.S.R. in November.³⁵

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 231-232.

³⁵ Lowman to Pittenger, August 7, 1930, Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Russia, Hoover Library, Container 993, and Lowman to Morris Sheppard, September 4, 1930, Ibid. Also available in container

At the same time Russia's newspapers ridiculed the whole notion of Soviet dumping as well as the contention that forced labor existed in the Soviet Union. "Nothing but a base lie, an abominable slander" read one appeal from lumbermen of the Soviet northern region. The Deputy Commissar for Trade branded all such charges as "ridiculous and unscrupulous." Pravda on September 29, 1930 emphasized that the capitalists were striving to distract attention from their own domestic failures. Unfortunately from the Soviet point of view, the verbal and editorial rejoinders that labeled the dumping charges as "fairy tales" did not prevent the implementation of trade restrictions, not only in the United States, but also in France, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania, and Belgium.³⁶

In October the Council of People's Commissars directed the Commissariat for Trade to initiate retaliatory measures against governments participating in any economic boycott of the U.S.S.R. A defensive action, this measure was understandable in the context of the diplomatic and economic maneuvers of late 1930. Russia's interests, however, were thought to be served most completely by an end to the outbursts of economic nationalism that retarded Russia's industrialization. In May 1931 Litvinov submitted a draft protocol of economic nonaggression to a special commission of the League of Nations.

993 are numerous letters from U.S. business leaders; see, for example, Burruss Land and Lumber Company to Hoover, August 20 and August 25, 1930.

³⁶Pravda, September 29, 1930. Inprecor, October 30, 1930, 1016-1018, and April 9, 1931, 366-367. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, June 15, 1932.

The Soviets sought to preclude all covert and overt acts of economic warfare. The Americans disdainfully dismissed the Soviet proposal.³⁷

The tensions between the two countries were aggravated by other developments. The Soviets attempted to sell short in wheat on the Chicago market in the fall of 1930. Asked by Hoover for an appraisal of this situation, Stimson advised caution. The Secretary of State thought that the matter could be dealt with quietly, without arousing public concern. The legacy of his contretemps with the Soviets over Manchuria in 1929 had had its effect. The president, however, increasingly irritated by the events of the preceding months and encouraged by Arthur Hyde, his Secretary of Agriculture, publicly denounced the Russian maneuver.³⁸

That Hoover had erred soon became apparent. Partly an attempt to reassure the right wing of his own party, the president's decision played right into the hands of congressional conservatives, who recognized the political advantages involved in a close scrutiny of the role of the U.S.S.R. in the U.S. depression. In fact, Hamilton Fish headed an investigation which in the last months of 1930 highlighted what it perceived to be Soviet threats to America's institutions. His committee carefully analysed the Trade Union Education League organized by William Z. Foster in 1922, and identified it as the American branch of the Red International of Labor Unions. Of additional interest were the Trade Union Unity League (T.U.E.L.'s successor organization), the

³⁷Maxim Litvinov, Vneshniaia politika SSSR: rechi i zaiavleniia, 1927-1935 (Moscow, 1935), pp. 224-228. FRUS, 1931, I, 605-607.

³⁸Stimson Diary, September 18 and 19, 1930.

Young Pioneers of America, the Young Communist League, the attempted infiltration of the U.S. armed forces, and the American Civil Liberties Union, which, the committee maintained, was "closely affiliated with the communist movement in the United States." Based on their studies and the weight of the sworn testimony that had been accumulated, Fish and his supporters recommended enlarging the power of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, strengthening the immigration laws to prevent the admission of communists, amending postal and interstate commerce laws to prevent the spread of written materials advocating revolutionary socialism, and declaring illegal the Communist Party of the United States. Furthermore, the committee recommended that Congress consider imposing embargoes on Soviet goods heretofore imported into the U.S.³⁹

It was in this atmosphere that the State Department undertook a review of Soviet-American relations in early 1931. Stimson had advised the cabinet the previous November that the U.S.S.R. "was taking the small discretionary steps taken by the Treasury and by the Department of Agriculture as merely the first attempt towards general embargo" of all Soviet trade with the United States. Stimson did not think an embargo was in America's interest. And he assumed that the president was still willing to foster economic links between the two countries while avoiding diplomatic recognition. By April, however, it was clear to the Secretary of State that Hoover "was getting more and more

³⁹U.S., Congress, House, Investigation of Communist Propaganda, 71st Cong., 3d Sess., 1931, Rept. 2290. Also, Stimson Diary, December 15 and 16, 1930, February 9, 1931, and February 10, 1931.

vigorous against Russia," even though the president "still adhered to the policy of doing business with her."⁴⁰

Hoover's hostility toward the U.S.S.R. increased throughout the remaining months of his administration. Although the expansion of Japan's power in Manchuria later in 1931 and 1932 caused several members of the State Department to conclude that diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union might be advisable, it was insufficient to alter the president's thinking. Hoover maintained that much more was at stake than using recognition to affect peripherally the possible actions of the Japanese in East Asia. Besides, his appraisal of America's role in the western Pacific did not rely even slightly on a connection with the U.S.S.R.⁴¹

Interested in maintaining the American System, the president was concerned with the inclination of many Americans to borrow the collectivist notions of Europe. The willingness of liberals and many progressives to apply Soviet ideas to America's problems had to be discounted. In June 1931 Hoover addressed the Republican Editorial Association of Indiana. He sought to rally the support of those who distrusted Russia, which, he remarked, was "struggling to redeem itself from ten years of starvation and misery." Referring to the "demand

⁴⁰Stimson Diary, November 25, 1930 and April 28, 1931. In addition, consult Robert Kelley to John Wiley, March 9, 1931, John Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Franklin Roosevelt Library, Container 1.

⁴¹The Soviet and American policies toward Europe and East Asia in the early 1930s are examined in the next chapter.

that we produce" a plan for the future of the U.S., Hoover stated that this was "an infection" from the Soviet Union. He would have none of it.⁴²

Pressures mounted, however, as the depression deepened. Most disconcerting of all was the Democratic Party's nomination of Franklin Roosevelt for the presidency. Roosevelt's campaign speeches in 1932, Hoover thought, revealed the New York Governor's intention to pour a mixture of "socialism and fascism" into American life. The Democratic nominee's observations at Oglethorpe University in May and at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco in September supposedly reflected the holistic approach of Rexford Tugwell and other members of the Brains Trust. Their ideas, Hoover assumed, meant reliance on the power of the central government, the abnegation of voluntarism, and the rejection of America's commitment to cooperative competition.⁴³

Although not raised specifically as a campaign issue, Russia ran like an undercurrent through Hoover's statements on the significance of the campaign. On October 31, 1932 the president reminded the American people that the election was "a contest between two philosophies of government," a confrontation between "free men" and the efforts of others to achieve through a "New Deal" the "regimentation of men." Supporting

⁴²William Starr Myers (ed.), The State Papers and other Public Writings of Herbert Hoover (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1934), I, p. 581.

⁴³Hoover, Memoirs: The Great Depression, pp. 329-343. Additional material on domestic politics and the presidential campaign can be found in the Stimson Diary, March 16, 1932, July 9, 1932, July 26, 1932, July 27, 1932, and August 5, 1932. The correspondence between Hoover and Roosevelt is in Presidential Papers-Individuals, Franklin D. Roosevelt files, Hoover Library, Container 1060.

his traditional view that "ordered liberty" and "equality of opportunity" were the hallmarks of American society, Hoover reemphasized his belief in "voluntary cooperation within the community." He insisted that American "liberalism" was "a force truly of the spirit proceeding from the deep realization that economic freedom cannot be sacrificed if political freedom is to be preserved."⁴⁴

It was elementary to the president: "Production based on private initiative has proved the very mother of plenty." True, there were difficulties of overexpansion and depression. America was, nevertheless, infinitely superior to Stalinist Russia. "After fifteen years of trial," Hoover wrote early in 1933, "that system has never produced in a single year an adequate supply of even the barest necessities in food and clothing for its people." Hoover remained steadfast: recognition of the U.S.S.R. served no useful purpose. Its "moral stigma" would have been immense; its economic advantages "largely mythical." The shift toward collectivism in America needed no additional stimulus.⁴⁵

IV

"Every new generation," Stalin insisted, "meets certain conditions which already exist in a definite form when that generation is

⁴⁴Herbert Hoover and Calvin Coolidge, Campaign Speeches of 1932 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, 1933), pp. 167-196.

⁴⁵William Starr Myers and Walter H. Newton, The Hoover Administration: A Documented Narrative (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 317-320. Also, Chapter XXI of an untitled manuscript by William R. Castle, Jr., Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Containers 28 and 29.

born. And great men are worth something only insofar as they are able to understand these conditions, to understand how to change them." Convinced that he was the true "follower of Lenin" and that Hoover represented moribund capitalism, Stalin had embarked on Russia's new course. Lenin's New Economic Policy had been swept away. The gradualist approach of the Right Opposition had been defeated, although powerful, if scattered, support for this position remained alive even within the Politburo. Stalin's understanding of the "conditions" of his generation meant the centralization of power in governmental bureaucracies. It meant massive change in the party-state's ideology and the end of the revolutionary experimentation of the 1920s. The egalitarianism which existed before and after Lenin's death in education, law, and familial relationships was discarded. Early Soviet history, Stalin maintained, indicated that "mildness only undermines the fortress of Soviet power."⁴⁶

The Bolshevik party was seriously shaken by the scope and intensity of Stalin's ideas. Moderates like Kirov, Kuibyshev, and Ordzhonikidze, who had supported the Stalinist line against the Right, were wary of the short-term and long-term implications of the General Secretary's plans. Although limited and extraordinarily difficult to trace based on existing historical materials, opposition within the party's leadership to Stalin's excesses was evident throughout the early and mid-1930s. The Politburo, reflecting these fears, had presumably convinced or pressured Stalin into the temporary halt of the collectivization drive in March 1930. Later that year the premier

⁴⁶ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, June 5, 1932.

of the Russian Republic, Sergei Syrtsov, and the head of the Transcaucasian party organization, Beso Lominadze, who was also a member of the Central Committee, distributed memoranda sharply critical of Stalin's tactics. Proponents of rapid industrialization, they were shocked by the catastrophic consequences of Stalin's attempts to overcome all obstacles forcibly. By 1932 the deposed Moscow secretary Mikhail Riutin, aided by several Bukharinists, including Meretskii and Slepkov, assaulted the whole Stalinist program. Stalin, they argued, was "the evil genius of the Russian revolution."⁴⁷

Derisively labeling the moderates as "liberal," Stalin retained sufficient support within the highest levels of the party to overcome his domestic political opposition. The struggle between the Stalinists and the moderates, however, was not finally resolved until the trials and purges of the late 1930s. In order to marshal the necessary forces to insure his political supremacy, Stalin could not afford the distraction of foreign war. Russia's economic development was also inadequate for a prolonged conflict with any great power. Peace was essential.

In the last years of the Hoover administration the Soviet approach to the United States, therefore, revealed a changing script, but familiar themes. First, there was diplomacy via the personal interview, a tool Stalin employed with consummate skill. "We have no special respect for everything American," Stalin remarked to Emil

⁴⁷Roy A. Medvedev, Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), pp. 65-191, and Cohen, Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution, pp. 329-347.

Ludwig in 1931. "But we respect American efficiency in everything--in industry, in technique, in literature, in life." Furthermore, despite the fact that the United States was an advanced capitalist state, its "customs of industry" and its "habits of production contain something of democracy," which cannot be said of the "old European capitalist lands, where the arrogant spirit of feudal aristocracy still survives." Praise indeed. Yet Stalin's observations were simply a continuation of that which had previously been stated throughout the 1920s. In fact, many of these same points were made in Stalin's interviews with Walter Duranty and Hugh Cooper in 1930 and 1931 respectively. Duranty, a newspaper reporter, and Cooper, in 1931 the president of the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, reported to State Department personnel that improvement in Soviet-American relations was Russia's aim. Typically, Stalin had emphasized commercial arrangements. Political recognition, he had stated to Cooper, would be suitable only if mutual trust and sound business conditions existed between both countries.⁴⁸

Next, although direct contacts were limited, Soviet diplomats met in 1931 and 1932 with U.S. officials to discuss the outstanding problems between the two nations. Invariably, the Soviets bluntly identified what was in Washington's interests. Karskii, for example, the Soviet ambassador in Lithuania, argued repeatedly that the policies of the Hoover administration were counterproductive. He maintained

⁴⁸ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, June 5, 1932. Robert Kelley to John Wiley, January 9, 1930, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, and Wiley to Kelley, January 5, 1931, Ibid. Wiley to Stimson, January 29, 1930, State Department files, 861.00/11414, and memorandum by Assistant Secretary of State Rogers, May 5, 1931, Ibid., 711.61/223. Stimson Diary, June 3, 1931.

that America's trade restrictions and Washington's charges about labor conditions in the U.S.S.R. were "suicidal." Reflecting the successfully negotiated trade agreement with Germany in April 1931 (which eased considerably the Soviet Union's need for foreign credits and loans), the Soviet ambassador remarked that Russia would turn away from American markets to place its orders in Europe. As far as U.S. charges about communist propaganda and Soviet interference in U.S. internal affairs were concerned, he dismissed these as irrelevant considerations, pretexts used by Washington to avoid treating substantively the significant issues which separated the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Admitting that the Comintern would continue its support of the "united front from below," Karskii indicated that U.S. police forces could restrain its effects within limits acceptable to the American government.⁴⁹

Accompanying the efforts of Stalin and Soviet diplomats to influence the character of U.S.-Soviet relations were the articles published by the Comintern and the Soviet press that were bitterly critical of Hoover's administration. Partly a response to the American president's antipathy to the U.S.S.R., Russia's newspapers vilified America's aims and revealed the perfidy of its intentions. Particularly interesting was the supposed U.S. effort to encourage a second military intervention of the Soviet Union. Hoover, it was reported, had sanctioned in 1930 and 1931 the invasion of the U.S.S.R. by the French. The creation of the Federal Farm Board under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929, it was argued, was proof of this assertion.

⁴⁹ Fullerton to Stimson, April 28, 1931, State Department files, 711.61/213; and Fullerton to Stimson, November 19, 1931, Ibid., 711.61/233.

America's agricultural commodities would provide the necessary food-stuffs for the invading force. Prices would rise naturally as the Americans broke out of the depression through the sale of the stockpiled goods. If further verification of the anti-Soviet intentions of the Farm Board was needed, it was pointed out that Alexander Legge, the erstwhile president of International Harvester, had been appointed its chairman. And Soviet readers were reminded that International Harvester had lost forty million dollars in Russian investments as a result of the Soviet nationalization of American property in 1918.⁵⁰

All of these activities demonstrated the Soviet Union's continuing attempts to correlate different strains of revolutionary socialism, propaganda, and political realism into an admixture constantly updated to serve the goals of the Soviet state. Assuming a dynamic nexus between domestic and foreign policies, the Soviets accepted that the United States was preoccupied with the preservation and extension of the power of its "ruling classes," internally as well as internationally. They also assumed that peaceful coexistence as a practical matter was inevitable for an extended period of time in the postwar period. Thus, it was commonsensical to associate Russia with America, for this would increase the Soviet Union's influence, prestige, and maneuverability in a relatively hostile international environment.

The depression confirmed for the Soviets the validity of their analysis. The Manchurian crisis of 1931 and 1932 reinforced it, as did

⁵⁰ Pravda, April 9 and April 24, 1931. Coleman to Stimson, April 14, 1931, State Department files, 711.61/209; Brodie to Stimson, April 10, 1931, Ibid., 711.61/212; Coleman to Stimson, April 30, 1931, Ibid., 711.61/211; and Cole to Stimson, June 5, 1931, Ibid., 711.61/218.

the political developments in Germany. Limited cooperation with Washington when U.S. and Soviet interests were similar was justified. The logic of the argument seemed irrefutable. And yet, Hoover's reading of the depression and its effects had led to different conclusions. The dialectical complications which characterized the relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. had been intensified rather than resolved by the events of the early 1930s.

CHAPTER IV

VERSAILLES DENIED

"I don't remember a time, even during the worst of the war, when there was such a widespread and deepseated feeling of helplessness in Europe." The American ambassador in Belgium, Hugh Gibson, forwarded this assessment to Castle and Hoover in the fall of 1931. It was not an isolated appraisal. The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, William Borah, commented in a similar vein in a letter to the lawyer and peace activist, S. O. Levinson, on January 15, 1932. A prevalent feeling existed, Borah maintained, that European nations were incapable of dealing effectively with the problems of war debts, arms reduction, and reparations, that they were "trifling . . . with temporary expedients," and that a catastrophe would surely ensue if the United States followed their "shortsighted, intolerant, revengeful" approach to international affairs. Secretary of State Stimson also shared this sense of pessimism. After the state visits of the Italian Foreign Minister, Dino Grandi, and the French Premier, Pierre Laval, in late 1931, he had grave doubts about Europe's ability to resolve the problems that were the legacy of the First World War.¹

¹Gibson's letter to Castle, October 7, 1931, was forwarded to Hoover, October 22, 1931, Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Diplomats, Hugh Gibson, Hoover Library, Container 995. See also Borah to Levinson, January 15, 1932, Levinson Papers, University of Chicago

Despite considerable efforts and some success the great powers had failed by the early 1930s to reconcile their conflicting national demands. France, determined to retain military superiority over Germany, vigorously supported the status quo and balked at revision of the peace treaties without political guarantees from Great Britain and the United States. Germany unwaveringly demanded Gleichberechtigung (equality of rights) as the internal fabric of the nation disintegrated and a succession of governments led ultimately in January 1933 to the appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor. Great Britain assumed the role of "sincere friend," promoted appeasement between France and Germany, and refused to add new commitments to those made in the treaties of Versailles and Locarno and in the Kellogg-Briand Pact.²

Complicating the European situation was the Kwantung Army's seizure of Manchuria in 1931. Unilateral military action had supposedly been made imperative by the depression and the steps taken by China to abridge Japan's national interests. Following the humiliation of the Mukden government in the Sino-Russian dispute of 1929, Chang Hsueh-liang had sought to construct railroad lines to compete with the

Library, Container 8, and Stimson Diary, November 13, 1931, November 18, 1931, and January 5, 1932.

² An American diplomat's view of French policy can be found in Edge to Hoover, June 9, 1931, Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Diplomats, Walter Edge, Ambassador to France, 1931-1933, Container 995. Concerning Germany's demand of Gleichberechtigung, a British War Office memorandum of March 1, 1932 indicated that it was "military weakness" that was "at the root of the German demand for equality of treatment in the sphere of armaments." See E. L. Woodward and R. Butler (eds.), Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, second series, III (London, 1948), pp. 602-605. Hereafter DBFP. For further amplification of England's position see Sir John Simon's conversation with Tardieu, February 24, 1932, DBFP, ii, III, 507-510, and Simon to Rumbold, March 30, 1932, Ibid., 514-515. Also, Stimson Diary, April 20 and 23, 1932.

South Manchuria Railway. An illegal act, according to the Japanese, Chang's railroad scheme accompanied a Chinese boycott of Japanese goods. Heavily dependent on foreign trade, Japan's economy had already been impaired by the worldwide depression, and Tokyo viewed these developments as intolerable. Furthermore, the growing economic power of the U.S.S.R. and the continuing presence of the Soviet Special Far Eastern Army had revived Japan's fear of communism. The possibility that the Kremlin might seek to create a buffer state in Manchuria similar to the Soviet-dominated Mongolian People's Republic had been another consideration. That the depression inhibited interference by the U.S. and the other great powers made the shift from political to military action that much more acceptable.³

The Soviets and the Americans surveyed the decaying peace system, and their reactions to it reflected the distinctive economic, political, ideological, and institutional approaches of both nations to the problems of the postwar period. The United States supported the sanctity of treaties, and yet conceded that their revision was not only possible but indispensable to lasting peace. The Kremlin, on the other hand, ridiculed the agreements that had evolved among the imperialist countries and admitted freely that even the nonaggression pacts signed by the U.S.S.R. were merely temporary expedients. The United States

³ A survey of these East Asian developments may be found in Lensen, The Damned Inheritance, pp. 180-211; Dorothy Borg and Shumpei Okamoto (eds.), Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese-American Relations, 1931-1941 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973); James B. Crowley, Japan's Quest for Autonomy: National Security and Foreign Policy, 1930-1938 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966); Ernest R. May and James C. Thomson, Jr. (eds.), American-East Asian Relations: A Survey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972); and Armin Rappaport, Henry L. Stimson and Japan, 1931-1933 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

relied partially on moral pressure and the impact of world public opinion to secure its goals, while the Kremlin proclaimed self-confidently the inevitability of the dialectic. The United States, a proponent of liberalism and democratic order, sought to cooperate with other nations within a system of international law, while the Soviet Union viewed foreign affairs from a perspective that supposedly transcended the hypocrisy of capitalist legality.

The beginning of the disintegration of the Versailles peace in Europe and of the postwar settlement in East Asia from 1931 through the early months of 1933 accentuated these differences. The political and economic considerations which were the ingredients of the foreign policies of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were thus constantly reworked in terms of Japan's aggression in Manchuria and in terms of the multi-lateral efforts of the European powers to preserve the peace. The forum which brought these interactions into stark relief was the World Disarmament Conference of 1932, the most conspicuous and representative example at this time of the institutional and political inability of the powers to overcome the problems which undermined European stability.

Significantly, neither the differences which existed between Washington and the Kremlin nor the collapse of the postwar peace system precluded the possibility of effective, if limited, Soviet-American cooperation. The American Relief Agency's role in alleviating Russia's famine in 1921 and 1922 had revealed the limits of ideological hostility and the impact of changing perceptions of national self-interest on decision-making. This lesson had not been lost on Russian, American, European, and Asian leaders, who struggled to update national policies

to fit shifting economic and political needs. The paradox of Soviet-American relations was but one element in the efforts to reconcile the interdependence and rivalry of nation states in the generation after the First World War.

I

Considerable speculation had accompanied the Japanese support of the U.S.S.R. in the Sino-Soviet dispute in Manchuria in 1929. John C. Wiley, the American chargé d'affaires in Berlin, reported that Walter Duranty had informed him that the idea was "germinating in Moscow that an eventual Russo-Japanese 'Monroe Doctrine' in respect to China may later be developed." F. W. B. Coleman, an American diplomat stationed in Riga, Latvia, speculated in January 1930 that the Kremlin's decisions in the crisis had been "shaped by secret negotiations with Japan." This had not been the case, although Soviet diplomats were impressed by Japan's support. In April Alexandr Troianovskii, the Soviet ambassador in Tokyo, forwarded his assessment of Japanese intentions to Moscow, and argued that closer ties with Japan were not only possible, but beneficial. Later described by Joseph Grew as "the least obnoxious specimen I've seen among the Bolsheviks," Troianovskii sought to persuade those in the Narkomindel who were apprehensive about the direction of Japan's foreign policy.⁴

⁴Wiley to Stimson, January 29, 1930, State Department files, 861.00/11414. It should be noted that Robert Kelley and other U.S. diplomats at times thought that Duranty "ought to come out for fresh air," that is, that his assessments of the U.S.S.R. were frequently obscured by the Soviet atmosphere. See Kelley to Wiley, January 9, 1930, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Franklin Roosevelt Library, Container 1. Also, Coleman to Stimson, January 9, 1930, State

On June 13, 1930 Karakhan informed Troianovskii that the U.S.S.R. was interested in the "maintenance of normal, peaceful relations" with Tokyo. The Soviet government appreciated "the loyal conduct" of the Japanese "at the time of the particular intensification at the beginning of this year of the anti-Soviet campaign in various countries." Yet, when "speaking of relations with a capitalist and imperialist country," the word "friendship" must be understood "in a highly qualified and relative sense." In order to satisfy Japan, Karakhan assumed that the U.S.S.R. would eventually be asked to waive "our very substantial and real interests in the Soviet Far East" as well as to give the Japanese "the possibility of entrenching themselves in the Maritime region." This was impossible. It would "whet Japanese appetites and would widen the area of eventual misunderstandings and collisions."⁵

Although reports of a Soviet-Japanese alignment in Manchuria continued, no such relationship existed in September 1931. The impressive gains that the U.S.S.R. had achieved in 1930 in northern China were suspect from Japan's point of view. Rumors that Moscow intended to sell to China its interest in the Chinese Eastern Railway and the distribution of duty-free Russian goods in Manchuria had also antagonized the Japanese. Moreover, although delayed by Chinese intransigence, the convening of the Sino-Soviet conference in Moscow in late 1930 reaffirmed in the minds of a number of Tokyo's political and military leaders the possibility of a rapprochement between China and

Department files, 761.94/419, and Grew to Wilson, February 25, 1933, Hugh R. Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 2.

⁵Karakhan to Troianovskii, June 13, 1930, DVP, XIII, 344.

the Soviet Union. This prospect, albeit extremely unlikely considering the internal Chinese political situation, was regarded as a lamentable complication that might unduly limit Japan's role in East Asia.⁶

Obscured from view because of an initial Soviet-Japanese agreement to curtail public discussion of the bilateral talks undertaken in the fall of 1931, Moscow's response to the actions of the Kwantung Army, although cautious, was more intense than the western powers realized at the time. The treaty of Portsmouth, negotiated between tsarist Russia and Japan with the assistance of Theodore Roosevelt, had been violated. Russia's economic interests in Manchuria and along the Chinese Eastern Railway were jeopardized. Depending on the extent of Japan's military activities, Russia's borders were threatened, and the Maritime region endangered. Ignoring the advice of Voroshilov, the Soviet Minister of War, who favored some type of military action, the Politburo reemphasized its "peace policy" at the same time that Karakhan and Litvinov pressured the Japanese ambassador in Moscow, Hirota Koki, to explain Japan's intentions. Particularly significant from the Narkomindel's point of view were the increased activities of the White Russians in the Far East. The appearance in Mukden of the "well-known bandit," Grigorii Semenov, immediately after its seizure by the Japanese was especially disconcerting. Memories of Semenov's role in the Allied intervention in Siberia during and after World War I were rekindled. So too was the role of U.S. military involvement in Russia's Civil War, a topic recently discussed by both Soviet and

⁶Consult Lensen, The Damned Inheritance, pp. 169-171; Izvestiia, February 14, 1932; and Soviet Union Review, X, March, 1932, p. 60.

American diplomats following the publication in 1931 of General William Graves' account of America's Siberian Adventure.⁷

Despite its assumptions about the inevitability of a Japanese-American confrontation, the Soviet government, unsure about the extent of Japan's immediate ambitions, and confused about the initial reactions of the western powers, pursued several different themes concurrently. First, the "anti-Soviet front," a characterization that the Kremlin inveterately adopted to identify any international development not to its liking, remained the mainstay of Russia's public response to the crisis. The Soviet press had contained as late as August references concerning America's interest in a second military intervention of the U.S.S.R. And the Moscow Workers News had reported on September 9 that Hoover had recently stated that his life's "ambition" was "to crush out Soviet Russia." Following the initiation of military action in Manchuria by the Kwantung Army, the Soviet Union emphasized that "a new constellation of imperialist powers" had evidently developed to achieve a "redivision of the world." Led by Washington, this "constellation" supposedly included Japan and France with Germany and Italy in subordinate roles. The Kremlin insisted that this temporary Japanese-American

⁷Read DVP, XIV, 529-533, 542-43, 548-551, and 559-561. For observations on Russia's peace policy, consult Inprecor, November 12, 1931, p. 1045 and January 7, 1932, pp. 5-11. Also, Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 2, 1932. The Soviet military position can be found in Harriett L. Moore, Soviet Far Eastern Policy, 1931-1945 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), p. 16, and John Erickson, The Soviet High Command: A Military-Political History (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1962), p. 335. Also read Cole to Stimson, December 31, 1931, State Department files, 761.00/217, and the review of Graves' book by U.S. diplomats in 861.00/11478 1/2 to 861.00/11502.

rapprochement had been precipitated by the success of Russia's Five-Year Plan and the importance of Soviet interests in China.⁸

Consistent with past themes, the Kremlin also announced in Pravda on September 26 that the Manchurian incident would "inevitably lead to the greatest aggravation of imperialist antagonisms." Even the "new constellation of imperialist powers" would presumably disintegrate as Europe and America sought to claim "their share of the booty." Within a week, Pravda announced in yet another lead article that American "finance capital" was seriously divided. Certain U.S. business interests were striving to unite China under the Nanking government. Others were supporting the Japanese. American direct and portfolio investment in Japan, it was readily conceded, far outweighed U.S. investments in China. This supposedly explained the hesitancy of Washington's response to Japan's aggression.⁹

Understandably from its point of view, the Soviet government continued its barrage of propaganda about capitalist hypocrisy, aggression, and the implications of the "anti-Soviet front." Simultaneously, the Special Far Eastern Army was reinforced at the same time that the Russians assured the Japanese that the Kremlin had no intention of interfering or of providing the Chinese with military supplies. Moscow also refused to call to the attention of Japan and China their

⁸Coleman to Stimson, September 4, 1931, State Department files, 711.61/225, and Coleman to Stimson, September 18, 1931, Ibid., 711.61/226. More important, consult Earl Browder, Secret Hoover-Laval War Pacts (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1931), and Pravda, November 4, December 1, and December 2, 1931.

⁹Pravda, September 26, 1931 and October 3, 1931. Also, Inpre-
cor, October 1, 1931, p. 925 and October 8, 1931, p. 946.

"obligations" under the Kellogg-Briand Pact, a decision which was completely consistent with the Soviet position of 1929 and which distinguished Russia's approach from the one followed by the League of Nations and the United States in October 1931.¹⁰

More important, the Kremlin sought through private contacts with Americans in Europe to clarify Washington's position and to propose alternative courses of action. On November 19, five days before Pravda and Izvestiia denounced America's efforts to incite a Soviet-Japanese war, Hugh Fullerton, the U.S. chargé d'affaires in Kovno, Lithuania, wrote to Stimson concerning a recent conversation he had held with Soviet ambassador Karskii. War with Japan except under the most provocative conditions was out of the question, Karskii had emphasized. Its effects on the Five-Year Plan would be disastrous. To help to prevent such a development and to insure their mutual interests in the area, the Soviet ambassador had recommended that the U.S. offer diplomatic recognition of the U.S.S.R. at this time. It had seemed obvious to this Russian diplomat that after Manchuria the Japanese would seek to conquer the Philippines and that Japan would be victorious in this venture because of the absence of U.S. naval bases in the western Pacific. A Japanese-American war, according to Karskii, was inevitable, unless

¹⁰ Many U.S. diplomats assumed that the bombast emanating from Moscow revealed the weakness of the U.S.S.R. See, for example, Wiley to Kelley, December 22, 1931, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1. Other reports indicated that the Kremlin was eager to avoid a military confrontation with the Japanese. Read Johnson to Stimson, January 8, 1932, FRUS, 1932, III, 16-17. Also, Johnson to Stimson, January 22, 1932, Ibid., 45-46. Karakhan's observations on the Kellogg-Briand Pact which were made to Mo Te-hui can be found in DVP, XIV, 590-592.

the U.S. formed some kind of protective alliance with the U.S.S.R. governing the status quo in the Far East.¹¹

Washington discounted the Soviet argument about the inevitability of war between the United States and Japan. Hoover had recognized that Japanese actions had challenged the American view of the ability of public opinion to treat controversial issues, and that the Kwantung Army had overturned a status quo which was acceptable to Washington. The president, however, had no intention of preserving peace through force. Moreover, American military and naval forces were unprepared for war. Viewing the Nine Power Treaty of 1922 and the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 "solely as moral instruments," the president allowed the Secretary of State to marshal public opinion against the Japanese. Insofar as the threat to China was concerned, the U.S. had no interests of sufficient value to induce it to intervene. Hoover was content to rely on China's "transcendent cultural resistance." Japan's aggression would eventually be overcome.¹²

In October 1931 differences developed between Hoover and Stimson as the Secretary of State contemplated the possibility of imposing collective economic sanctions against Tokyo. Although

¹¹Fullerton to Stimson, November 19, 1931, State Department files, 711.61/233. Translations of the articles in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* can be read in Cole to Stimson, November 27, 1931, Ibid., 711.61/231.

¹²Hoover's approach to the Manchurian problem can be followed in Presidential Papers-Foreign Affairs, Manchurian Crisis, Hoover Library, Containers 1022 through 1028. More specifically, the president revealed many of his ideas to his cabinet in the middle of October 1931. Read Hoover's memorandum in William Starr Myers, The Foreign Policies of Herbert Hoover, 1929-1933 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), pp. 156-159. Also, consult Stimson Diary, January 26 and May 22, 1932.

convinced by November that the situation in East Asia was in "the hands of virtually mad dogs," Stimson gradually accepted that the U.S. had to "either lie down and destroy all the peace treaties" or else had "to do the best we could with the force of public opinion and that alone." Thus the president, who sought to avoid antagonizing the Japanese, and the Secretary of State, despite their differences, moved inexorably toward a public statement of Washington's unwillingness to recognize Japan's gains in Manchuria. Opposed by Patrick Hurley, the Secretary of War, and by Stanley Hornbeck, chief of the State Department's Division of Far Eastern Affairs, the Hoover-Stimson doctrine was announced on January 7, 1932. Bryan's policy in 1915 and the non-recognition of the U.S.S.R. were presumably the precedents on which Hoover and Stimson relied. Soviet-American cooperation to thwart Japan's ambitions was not seriously considered.¹³

II

Primarily concerned with the U.S. depression and the undeclared war in East Asia, the Hoover administration shifted its attention fitfully early in 1932 to the World Disarmament Conference scheduled to convene in Geneva in February. After years of work in the Preparatory Commission the United States was willing to continue a general effort to

¹³Stimson Diary, November 7, 9, 13, 19, and 27, 1931. Also, January 3, 4, and 6, 1932 as well as January 26, 1932 and February 9, 1932. It should be noted that Hoover's administration had reviewed the stability of the Soviet regime in November 1931. Castle had concluded that the communist party was "firmly established." Not even the abandonment of the Five Year Plan, he thought, would have brought internal political upheaval. See Castle to Hoover, November 14, 1931, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 14.

disarm, but it announced repeatedly and unequivocally that political commitments to individual European governments would not be forthcoming. Hoover, obsessed with programs for economic recovery and with his own political position, did not want to arouse "the anguished cries of our isolationists" or go further than the debt moratorium announced in June 1931.¹⁴

The basic policies of the Soviet Union relating to Europe and disarmament were also unmistakable. Preoccupied with the work of socialist construction, the demands of the First Five-Year Plan, and Japan's actions in Manchuria, Moscow continued to pursue neutrality and nonaggression agreements as the best means available to secure diplomatically its western frontiers. On January 5, 1932 Finnish-Soviet negotiations commenced at Helsingfors, and a treaty of nonaggression was signed on January 21. Diplomats from Poland and the U.S.S.R. initialed a nonaggression pact in Moscow on January 25. A similar agreement with Latvia was concluded on February 5 in Riga. The pact initialed with Poland was the most important of the three. Unquestionably a significant step for the Soviet Union, it was also the first in a series of interrelated agreements which had to include

¹⁴For a complete record of U.S. participation in the disarmament conference, see Presidential Papers-Cabinet Offices, State, Division of Western European Affairs, Hoover Library, Containers 50 and 51. Some of Hoover's views of Europe can be found in Hoover to Castle, September 3, 1931, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 14. On May 4, 1932 Castle provided a public statement of the "president's inmost views" concerning Europe. Consult Nancy Hooker (ed.), The Moffat Papers: Selections from the Diplomatic Journals of Jay Pierrepont Moffat, 1919-1943 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 65-66.

France and Rumania. The shifting balance of political and economic power in Europe provided new opportunities for Soviet diplomacy.¹⁵

Concerning disarmament, the Soviet government had promoted various proposals which, it argued, best served Russia's changing internal and external interests. In 1916 Lenin had offered the classic Bolshevik description of "peace programs." He described them as a "deception of the people and a piece of hypocrisy." Any call for disarmament, therefore, was either a counterrevolutionary tactic or a pacifist illusion. Lenin followed this line faithfully until the Genoa Conference in 1922 when the Kremlin, reflecting the extraordinary political and economic repercussions of the Russian Civil War, abruptly changed its position. It subsequently demanded acceptance of universal disarmament as the only dependable means of security and peace. Throughout the years of the Preparatory Commission, Litvinov, then Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, advanced this idea. It was widely assumed that he would propose it again in Geneva in 1932.¹⁶

On February 2 Arthur Henderson, former Foreign Secretary of Great Britain and the chairman of the World Disarmament Conference, gaveled the assembled delegates from fifty-nine nations to order.

¹⁵These developments can be reviewed in Ovey to Simon, January 19, 1932, DBFP, ii, VII, 229-30; Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 27, 1932; Inprecor, February 4, 1932, 81-82; and Soviet Union Review, X, March 1932, p. 56.

¹⁶Eugene A. Korovine, "The U.S.S.R. and Disarmament," International Conciliation, No. 292 (September, 1933), 293-354; Walter C. Clemens, Jr., "Ideology in Soviet Disarmament Policy," Journal of Conflict Resolution, VIII (March, 1964), 7-22; Marina Salvin, "Soviet Policy toward Disarmament," International Conciliation (February, 1947), 43-111; and Walter C. Clemens, Jr., "Lenin on Disarmament," Slavic Review, XXIII (September, 1964), 504-525. Consult the bibliography for further entries on Soviet disarmament.

Opening four days after Japanese planes attacked the Chapei district of Shanghai, the first session was delayed one hour while the League Council debated the Manchurian issue.¹⁷

Neither the U.S. nor the U.S.S.R. expected a dramatic breakthrough. On January 5 Hoover had announced that the meetings in Geneva "would be of less than a primary concern" of the American government. Stimson, who still considered disarmament "a most important matter," thought it had become "rather a mockery" since the Manchurian Incident. There was "no question," according to Pierrepont Moffat, that East Asia was "the Secretary's real interest."¹⁸

In Russia Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, had as recently as January 30 ridiculed the "pompous surroundings of international conferences" before the first session of the Seventeenth Conference of the All-Union Communist Party. And Litvinov had privately expressed his sense of hopelessness concerning disarmament to the British Ambassador in Moscow a few weeks before. Furthermore, the Soviets expected the capitalist nations to reflect at Geneva the increased antagonisms exacerbated by the great depression. Thus France, mistress of Europe and guardian of the Versailles treaty

¹⁷John W. Wheeler-Bennett, The Pipe Dream of Peace: The Story of the Collapse of Disarmament (New York, 1935). The reader might find the following of interest. Samuel Hoare "asked the Afghans why, Afghanistan not being a member of the League, they had come to the disarmament conference. They told us that they were short of arms, and that they thought at a disarmament conference there would be a chance of picking up second-hand munitions cheap." Hoare is quoted in David Cornelius DeBoe, "The United States and the Geneva Disarmament Conference, 1932-1934," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1969), p. 19.

¹⁸Stimson Diary, November 6, 1931, and January 4 and 5, 1932. David DeBoe, "The United States and the Geneva Disarmament Conference," p. 13. Hooker, The Moffat Papers, p. 50.

system, would manipulate her satellites to bolster French political power in Europe; Germany, committed to a revision of the peace treaties, would prefer to rearm than achieve any serious multilateral military reductions; and Italy, concerned with reducing French military power in the Mediterranean and in Africa, would presumably follow the erratic course suggested by the antithetical remarks made by Mussolini on disarmament and the imminent glory of the new Rome. Concerning Japan and the United States, the former was sending an enormous delegation to Europe to plead that uncertain conditions made disarmament impossible, and the latter, while professing with "pacifistic eloquence" a commitment to peace, was, according to the Kremlin, going forward with the construction of a colossal new fleet.¹⁹

Nonetheless, the Soviet Foreign Commissar was ordered to Geneva to head the Soviet delegation, since participation still had many advantages. First, the capitalist "disarmament" proposals were to be exposed as a subterfuge to mask increased armaments. Second, the U.S.S.R. was to propose again its own plan for universal disarmament, which was certain to attract great support from a worldwide audience. Third, a Soviet presence at Geneva would prevent the western powers from blaming the failure of the conference on the absence of the Russians. And fourth, there was the possibility that Litvinov might be

¹⁹Read Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 27, 1932 and February 7, 1932; Ovey to Simon, January 14, 1932, DBFP, ii, VII, 227-228; and DVP, XV, 75-76.

able to turn the conference into an international inquiry to discuss Japanese aggression.²⁰

Three days after the opening plenary session André Tardieu, the French Premier, startled the assembled delegates by distributing a plan that called for an international police force to prevent war or to suppress it if it should break out. Delivered several days before the scheduled start of the formal working sessions, it was an effort to derail any serious contemplation of disarmament until after acceptance of the French conception of security.²¹

Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union was favorably impressed by Tardieu's presentation. On February 9 Hugh Gibson, the acting chairman of the American delegation, assured the French that their plan would be examined with an "open mind." But it was obvious that Washington had no intention of supporting it. The animus of Hoover toward the French and French political aspirations was well known. Also, members of the American delegation thought the plan completely unrealistic and totally unacceptable to Germany. For the time being, at least, American diplomats, impressed by the conciliatory position of the German government, did not want the conference blocked by French obduracy.²²

²⁰Consult the introduction written on January 18, 1932 by A. Lunacharsky in The Soviets' Fight for Disarmament (London: Martin Lawrence, 1932), pp. 1-10.

²¹An overview of the French plan is available in Adelpia Dane Bowen, Jr., "The Disarmament Movement, 1918-1935," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1956). Particular attention should be given to chapter seven.

²²Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 12, 1932. Soviet Union Review, X, April 1932, 75-78. Stimson Diary, March 9, 1920, June 3, 1932, and June 23, 1932.

Maxim Litvinov formally addressed the Geneva conference on the afternoon of February 11. He belittled the efforts previously made toward disarmament, rejected the French proposal of February 5, and introduced the Soviet disarmament program. His rejection of the French plan was expected. The Soviets grasped as easily as the Americans that a new international army would fall under French military control, and the Kremlin, notwithstanding the ongoing Franco-Soviet negotiations concerning a nonaggression agreement, wanted nothing to do with it. Instead, the Foreign Commissar proposed "the road of universal, complete disarmament" as the only reliable means to guarantee peace.²³

During the following weeks Litvinov spoke repeatedly in support of the Soviet position, often listing the reasons why no other approach had any real chance of success. He derided the French proposition that security must precede disarmament. He argued that international organizations and pacts were insufficient to prevent war. He rejected the notion that the force of public opinion alone could deter any nation from aggression, an observation which was a direct slap at America's foreign policy. Campaigns of chauvinism and fear, he insisted, organized and nourished by those who profited from war, could mislead the masses, making public opinion often "more impotent" than the international agreements that had already failed. To a group of American peace activists in Geneva on February 20, Litvinov admitted that there was a place for moral rearmament, but he emphasized that it could never be a

²³Gibson to Stimson, February 11, 1932, FRUS, 1932, I, 32-33. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 17, 1932. Inprecor, February 18, 1932, 113-116. Izvestiia, February 12, 1932. The complete text of Litvinov's speech can be read in DVP, XV, 98-111.

substitute for actual disarmament. So long as there were armed forces, he announced, there would be faith in their use.²⁴

Suffering no illusions that the initial Soviet proposal would be accepted by the conference, Litvinov proceeded to outline an "infinitely less ambitious" approach. He proposed the destruction of the most aggressive types of weapons including tanks, heavy long-range artillery, ships over ten thousand tons displacement, aircraft carriers, heavy bombing planes, and all means and apparatus for chemical, incendiary, and bacteriological warfare. The Soviet delegation also recommended an across the board proportional reduction of armaments as the most impartial method of arms reduction, and, therefore, the one method most likely to succeed. Invariably, Soviet diplomats stressed a reduction of fifty percent for the great powers and slightly different limitations for the smaller nations.²⁵

Generally, the Soviet program was viewed as the usual Bolshevik propaganda, a demagogic effort to disrupt the work of the conference and to manipulate public opinion into thinking that the U.S.S.R. was really interested in political accommodation. It had all been heard before during the meetings of the Preparatory Commission, and it had been rejected by most nations, including the United States, as impractical. Moreover, it was assumed that the Soviet Union, no matter what

²⁴Soviet Union Review, X, April 1932, pp. 78-81. Inprecor, March 3, 1932, 181-182. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 27, 1932. DVP, XV, 127-134.

²⁵Consult Gibson to Stimson, February 25, 1932, FRUS, 1932, I, 48-49. The specific provisions of the Soviet disarmament scheme may be read in DVP, XV, 115-120.

its commitment to disarmament had been heretofore, was by 1932 primarily interested in its own military preparedness and not in any international agreements with the western powers.²⁶

These assumptions were accepted by the American government. Herbert Hoover remained steadfast in his antipathy to Soviet Russia, a fact that Boris Skvirsky constantly brought home to the Narkomindel in his despatches from Washington. Stimson, who had more than once remarked that he did not care whether Russia was a republic, monarchy, or dictatorship, analysed the Soviet disarmament program and discarded it. He had no use for Soviet propaganda, and he rejected any proposal that would seriously reduce the effectiveness of the American navy, already regulated by the provisions of the Washington and London naval treaties. Also, many diplomats in the State Department, particularly in the Division of Eastern European Affairs, were convinced that the U.S.S.R. had no interest in resolving the problems left by the Versailles treaty or easing the political tensions in Europe.²⁷

Following an intensive study of the Soviet disarmament program, the Division of Eastern European Affairs concluded that Moscow's

²⁶ A review of the fate of earlier Russian disarmament proposals can be undertaken in Bowen, "The Disarmament Movement, 1918-1935," pp. 145-157; Ronald E. Swerczek, "The Diplomatic Career of Hugh Gibson, 1908-1938," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1972), pp. 221-222; FRUS, 1929, I, pp. 66 and 71-72; and FRUS, 1931, I, p. 472.

²⁷ Several of Skvirsky's observations in early 1932 are contained in despatches forwarded to the Narkomindel. See DVP, XV, 69-70 and 260. A memorandum of a conversation between Henry Stimson and Colonel Frederick Pope of the Nitrogen Engineering Corporation is also of interest. Consult State Department files, 861.01/1757. Significant information on the U.S. view of disarmament and arms limitation is available in Stimson Diary, February 18, 1932, April 19, 1932, April 21 and 29, 1932, May 14, 1932, and June 7, 1932.

proposals were a "peculiar combination of the two basic policies of the Bolshevik regime." First, the Soviet peace program was interpreted as perhaps the most important form of the Soviet Union's policy of "peaceful co-existence." This policy was geared to obtain a "breathing space" in order to build up Soviet power, to consolidate Russia's domestic and international position, and to prepare for the ultimate tests of strength between the Soviet and capitalist systems. The Soviets presumed, according to the study, that the longer the breathing space, the stronger the U.S.S.R., and thus the greater the chances for victory. Second, the Russian disarmament proposals were recognized by Robert Kelley and others as examples of agitation and propaganda, which were used to promote the spread of communism abroad. This was facilitated by the sweeping and somewhat utopian nature of the Soviet proposals as well as by the consistently sarcastic manner in which the plans of the non-communist nations were treated. For proof of its analysis, the State Department relied on communist publications and editorials in the Soviet press which regularly referred to the "possibility of peaceful co-existence . . . right up to the day when history does its work."²⁸

Although the United States had not been expected to take an active part in the Geneva conference, Hugh Gibson proposed a nine point program that indicated a moderate advance over other American proposals previously submitted to the Preparatory Commission. Distributed on February 9, the American program called for prolonging the

²⁸The Division of Eastern European Affairs memorandum may be read in State Department files, 861.44 Litvinov, M.M./15. Particular attention should be given pages 34-54.

existing naval arrangements concluded at London and Washington. It also supported the total abolition of submarines, effective measures to protect civilian populations from aerial bombing, the total abolition of lethal gases and bacteriological warfare, special restrictions for tanks and heavy mobile guns, and a possible limitation on military expenditures, something the United States had previously opposed.²⁹

The provisions of the plan put the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in agreement on many points. Both nations, for example, denounced aerial, gas, and bacteriological warfare, and both favored the elimination of submarines. The Kremlin, however, preferred to pursue private contacts with American diplomats, while publicly ridiculing Gibson's speech as an elaborate and hypocritical gesture designed to mask the real objectives of American imperialism. The Soviet press also emphasized that the declamations of peace by the United States were "drowned by the sound of the hammers in the naval dockyards," and that actual policy was more graphically reflected in the New Year Manifesto of the American Navy League and in the statement of an American admiral, who supposedly remarked that what was needed was "more money, more ships and more and faster aircraft." Soviet publicists, moreover, revealed large increases in the American military budget (something which was demonstrably untrue) that demonstrated the prevailing contradictions among the capitalist powers. The United States, supposedly driven by the economic crisis, its need for colonies, and the antagonism of the British Empire,

²⁹Stimson Diary, January 18, 1932 and February 8, 1932. Hooker, The Moffat Papers, p. 54.

was condemned for its efforts to "kick up dirt in the eyes of the people" and "to shroud in pacifist smoke preparations for war."³⁰

The Soviet reaction underscored how the perception of capitalism's development specifically shaped Russia's interpretation of diplomatic events. The American disarmament program, for example, was viewed as an attempt to abolish the submarines with which the Imperial Japanese navy could endanger American fleets and to preserve the aircraft carriers which would improve the tactical position of the United States in the western Pacific. That the Japanese opposed these American plans fit neatly into the Soviet Union's conception of an American-Japanese rivalry, aroused by economic competition and by the hostility endemic in two advancing capitalist states.³¹

Although the Soviet perspective provided accurate insights into diplomatic developments, it, nevertheless, led the Soviets into grave misjudgments. The Narkomindel, for instance, anticipated that the actions of the Japanese military would drive the United States to take direct action in East Asia, something the Americans had no intention of doing. Moreover, the Kremlin maintained that the Anglo-American rivalry was the chief contradiction in the capitalist camp at the same time that Stimson was actively seeking to cement Anglo-American cooperation. The nature of the Bolshevik regime with its controlled press and the supremacy of one party had resulted in a distorted view

³⁰Read Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 17, 1932; Z. Lippay, Behind the Scenes of the "Disarmament Conference" (Moscow, 1932); and Armin Rappaport, The Navy League of the United States (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962), pp. 135-156.

³¹Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, April 8, 1932.

of the American government and its foreign policy. It was a distortion not easily overcome.³²

III

In the spring and early summer of 1932 the underlying differences between the Soviet and American views of the disintegration of the Versailles peace were revealed anew. In April Stimson journeyed to Europe to talk with the British about a joint policy in East Asia, to see whether anything could be done to accelerate the pace of the Geneva Disarmament Conference, and to promote America's commitment to European political reconciliation. Based on his conversations with Tardieu, Bruening, and MacDonald, Stimson quickly realized that France remained as determined to secure acceptance of its demands for security as was Germany in insisting on equality of rights. The internal politics of both countries conspired against accommodation. The world's situation, Stimson thought, was "like the unfolding of a great Greek tragedy." Although "we could see the march of events and know what ought to be done," the nations seemed "powerless to prevent" those events from leading to their "grim conclusion."³³

Stimson's dramatic description of European conditions was of little interest to the Russians, who were preoccupied with the other reason that had led the Secretary of State to Geneva. Stimson was

³²On February 2, 1932 Litvinov argued in a despatch to the Nar-komindel that the unrestrained insolence of the Japanese navy might provoke the Americans into resolute action. See DVP, XV, 75-76. Anglo-American "cooperation" is discussed extensively in Stimson Diary, January 19, 24, and 25, 1932 and February 10, 1932.

³³Stimson Diary, March 29, 1932 and April 9, 15, 16, 17, 19, 26, and 28, 1932.

determined to secure "a world judgment against Japan," a development which the Kremlin eagerly supported. Beginning in December 1931 the U.S.S.R. had noted the stiffening attitude of Washington toward Tokyo. At the same time the creation of Manchukuo, the financial losses incurred by the Soviets in the operation of the Chinese Eastern Railway, and the activities of the White Guards were forcing the Kremlin to come to a decision. Unable to rely completely on the luxury of a policy of nonrecognition, the Russians sought to convince Stimson to use U.S. political recognition of the U.S.S.R. as a warning to Japan. Contemplating the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway to Tokyo, Moscow sought to offset through an American connection a possible Japanese conclusion that Russia's retreat from Manchuria revealed inherent weakness.³⁴

Concurrently, the Soviet press renewed its condemnation of Japanese aggression during Stimson's European tour. And arguing that a Russo-Japanese war would be indirectly attributable to America's nonrecognition of the U.S.S.R., Karl Radek approached Norman Davis on April 23 to discuss the possibility of a meeting between the U.S.

³⁴Walter Duranty informed the State Department that the Kremlin had been encouraged by Stimson's letter to Borah in late February 1932. See Wiley to Kelley, March 21, 1932, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1. Stimson's view of the significance of Japanese actions in Manchuria in 1932 may be surveyed in Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), p. 258. Also, the Secretary of State continued throughout the last year of Hoover's presidency to press his ideas on European diplomats. See, for example, Claudel to Herriot, July 29, 1932, Documents Diplomatiques Francais, 1^{re} Serie, I (Paris, 1964), pp. 135-136. Hereafter DDF. In addition, Henry to Herriot, August 10, 1932, DDF, i, I, 163-167, and Henry to Herriot, September 17, 1932, Ibid., 342-343. The Russian position can be examined in Pravda, December 17 and 18, 1931. Also, the telegrams from Skvirsky and Litvinov to the Narkomindel on April 21, 1932 in DVP, XV, 260-261.

Secretary of State and Russia's Foreign Commissar, who were both then in Geneva. Although Stimson declined Radek's invitation, this did not forestall further Soviet efforts. Early in May a Russian press official, Vladimir Romm, contacted Davis as well as Admiral Hepburn and General Simonds, all of whom were accredited U.S. representatives to the disarmament conference. Romm argued that, even if Hoover's obstinacy precluded formal recognition of the Soviet Union, an exchange of unofficial political observers would be viewed by the Kremlin as an acceptable first step.³⁵

Stimson, who had returned to Washington, took the entire matter under review. Both Hepburn and Simonds thought that U.S. personnel stationed in Russia "would be of considerable value to the army and navy, particularly from an intelligence standpoint." Davis, who had sought to persuade the Secretary of State in April that he had been responsible for Hughes' decision to retain nonrecognition in the Harding administration, had become convinced that the Soviets had "abandoned largely, if not entirely, their policy of bringing on world revolution." Noting the recent speech of U.S. Senator Joseph Robinson, which called for the recognition of the U.S.S.R., Davis stated that, although personally unwilling to "go that far," he would certainly support "an exchange of unofficial representatives."³⁶

³⁵ Inprecor, April 28, 1932, p. 370. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, April 18 and 23, 1932. Izvestiia, April 15 and 18, 1932. Pravda, April 16, 1932. Trud, April 17, 1932. DVP, XV, 275-276. Stimson Diary, April 24, 1932. FRUS, 1932, III, 704. Cole to Stimson, April 1, 1932, State Department files, 711.61/248.

³⁶ Information concerning Romm's conversations with Davis, Hepburn, and Simonds is available in a letter from Norman Davis to Stimson, May 24, 1932, Norman Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 54.

Searching for instruments in addition to the Nine Power Treaty and the Kellogg-Briand Pact to demonstrate America's displeasure with Japan, Stimson might have been inclined to adjust the character of Soviet-American relations in the summer of 1932. He knew he could count on considerable support from those interest groups which had increased their pressure on the U.S. government during the depression to discard its policy of nonrecognition.

Often willing to entertain diplomatic gestures that were more symbolic than substantive, Stimson was restrained by the president and the official assessment of the Far Eastern Division of the State Department. In 1932 Hoover was in no mood to alter his approach to the U.S.S.R. And even though Kelley, Rodgers, and other U.S. diplomats admitted privately that recognition might have a salutary effect on the problems with which the U.S. had to contend in the western Pacific, Hornbeck had concluded that the disadvantages of recognition outweighed its benefits. Such a move, Hornbeck insisted, would be interpreted in Tokyo as an attempt to frustrate Japanese ambitions. It would imply a "willingness to favor one wrong-doer in order to coerce another." It might strengthen the position of the Japanese military.³⁷

The Kremlin, convinced by the summer that their latest drive for recognition had been rebuffed, denounced the U.S. in a series of

³⁷ On May 26, 1932 Stimson informed the Italian Ambassador in Washington that he opposed recognition until "Russia gave some real assurance" that "each nation was entitled to manage its own domestic affairs" without outside interference. See State Department files, 861.01/1754. The private observations made by Kelley and Rodgers to Boris Skvirsky were reported to Moscow on April 21, 1932 and June 4, 1932; consult DVP, XV, pp. 260, and 351-352. Hornbeck's extensive memorandum on recognition and the Far East may be read in State Department files, 861.01/1785.

editorials. In addition, the Soviet government decided to go forward with the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The negotiations which Troianovskii had undertaken with a Japanese industrialist in the spring were shifted to Moscow in August. Hirota and the Narkomindel began the delicate process of completing a settlement acceptable to both countries.³⁸

The attack on the United States in the Soviet press coincided with the culmination of one phase of the World Disarmament Conference. In fact, it occurred almost simultaneously with the Soviet rejection of a disarmament scheme which had its origins in Washington, and which the Kremlin had sought to manipulate to its advantage.

Unwilling to reverse the U.S. policy toward the U.S.S.R., Hoover had decided in the spring of 1932 that an opportune time existed to launch a limited diplomatic offensive of his own. Motivated by a desire to make a significant contribution to disarmament, to cut federal expenses by reducing the military budget, and to make it more difficult for European nations to default on their debts, the president devised a program of "an entirely new order." Hoover, disgusted with the "oratorical futilities" of the Geneva conference, supported a one-third reduction in worldwide military forces, a proposition which Stimson initially thought had come from "Alice in Wonderland."³⁹

³⁸ Inprecor, June 2, 1932, pp. 480-481, and June 30, 1932, pp. 589-590. Also, Cole to Stimson, June 10, 1932, State Department files, 711.61/251. Troianovskii had spoken with Yamamoto Jotaro in March 1932 and later with Fujiwara Ginjiro, president of Oji Paper Manufacturing Company. The memorandum by Karakhan of his conversation with Hirota about the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway is available in DVP, XV, 510-511.

³⁹ Herbert Hoover, The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: The Cabinet and the Presidency, 1920-1933 (New York, 1952), pp. 338-358. Stimson

Ironically, Hoover's idea bore striking resemblance to the Soviet proposals for the proportional reduction of armaments. This similarity the president refused to recognize, but it was one the Kremlin was eager to point out. Soon after Hugh Gibson had completed his reading of the new American initiative, Litvinov addressed the conference. True to form he sarcastically thanked the Americans for the opportunity to respond to a definite proposal. It was enough to assure everyone, he averred, that the delegates had assembled in Geneva "not as tourists and not as curiosity seekers hunting for rumors" about disarmament. It had become obvious, Litvinov maintained, that only the principle of proportional reduction, which retained the existing relative strengths among the nations, had a chance of adoption. Any proposal that upset that balance would "render the work of the conference absolutely sterile." For these reasons the Soviet Foreign Commissar welcomed the Hoover proposal, "in the main."⁴⁰

Pursuing American political recognition to offset the expanding power of the Japanese, the Kremlin attempted to promote the similarity of the Soviet and U.S. proposals as yet another step toward the possibility of an eventual rapprochement between the two countries. This was directly in line with the Soviet policy of seeking "temporary allies" among the capitalist powers. Moreover, Hoover's proposal was interpreted as an American effort to seize the diplomatic initiative in

Diary, May 22, 24, and 25, 1932. Also, Stimson Diary, June 21, 1932 and FRUS, 1932, I, pp. 215-218.

⁴⁰Soviet Union Review, X, July-August, 1932, 164-165. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, June 30, 1932 and July 5, 1932. Inprecor, June 30, 1932, 590, and July 7, 1932, 603-604. Pravda, July 2, 1932.

Geneva. From the Soviet point of view it seemed clear that the United States wanted to test the strength of what Moscow maintained was an English, French, and Japanese collaboration in the Far East. If this led to increased divisions among the western powers, there would be new opportunities for Soviet political gains.⁴¹

The Russians had ignored for the most part that Hoover's plan was also directed as a liberal genuflection to disarmament, which was to weaken the argument that he had sold out to political reactionaries in his domestic programs. When the Kremlin was convinced that Hoover was primarily interested in his plan's domestic repercussions, Pravda branded it a "caricature of the Soviet Union's disarmament project." Again, Moscow declared the whole conference a fiasco. After months of discussions it was clear that each power was seeking only to increase its own armaments while striving to reduce those of others. The end result, according to the Soviet press, was the accentuation of the inequality and antagonisms of the imperialist camp.⁴²

An American diplomatic shooting star, the Hoover disarmament program appeared unexpectedly and disappeared almost as suddenly. Lacking great power support, the plan was combined with new British

⁴¹For additional information on Soviet efforts to increase the possibility of American recognition, consult Cole to Stimson, June 5, 1932, State Department files, 711.61/218. The French continued to deny that any deal had been struck with the Japanese concerning Manchuria. See, for example, FRUS, 1932, III, 157, 174-175, and 428.

⁴²Stimson frequently discussed the importance of domestic politics on Hoover's perception of foreign policy decision-making. Read Stimson Diary, March 16, 1932, July 9, 26, and 27, 1932, and August 5, 1932. Russia's position was made especially clear in Pravda, July 2, 1932.

disarmament proposals first offered by Stanley Baldwin to the House of Commons on July 7. Reduced to generalities, both plans were lumped together and submitted to the Geneva conference as the Benes resolution, which was overwhelmingly approved on July 23, 1932.⁴³

Only the U.S.S.R. and Germany rejected it. Angered by the omission of any reference to equality of rights, Germany denounced the resolution and indicated that no German representatives would attend forthcoming meetings until its demands were met. The Soviet Union, siding with its Rapallo partner, noted that no substantive change had occurred in European affairs. France was still mistress of Europe; the Versailles system remained intact; the capitalist camp proved unable to deal with the economic crisis; and the United States offered no suitable alternative to the German alignment. Accordingly, Litvinov proposed amendments definitely meant for propaganda, and then he voted "for disarmament, but against the resolution."⁴⁴

IV

Despite the superficial similarities which existed in the technical proposals of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., the meetings at the Geneva Disarmament Conference had failed to contribute significantly to the normalization of relations between both countries. Furthermore, in the summer and fall of 1932 Washington was naturally preoccupied

⁴³Consult DBFP, ii, III, 609-617 for the Baldwin disarmament policy and the Benes resolution. Also, Stimson Diary, June 23, 1932.

⁴⁴Stimson Diary, July 22, 1932. Rumbold to Simon, July 21, 1932, DBFP, ii, III, 587-588. Soviet Union Review, X, September-October, 1932, 183-189. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, July 25, 1932. Inpre-cor, July 28, 1932, 675-676. For additional information on the English, French, and German view see DBFP, ii, III, 589, and DDF, i, I, 227-233.

with the U.S. presidential election, a contest between the Republican incumbent, who was perceptibly shaken by the disintegration of America's economy, and the Democratic party's nominee Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose ideas, according to Hoover, were too closely associated with the collectivist notions of Europe and Russia.

Considering the relatively quiescent situation which had evolved in East Asia following the creation of Manchukuo, the diplomatic issue which attracted the attention of Washington and the Kremlin at this time was the political tension aroused by an increasingly bellicose Germany. Typically, the perceptual and practical responses of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. reaffirmed the apposite, if substantially different, views of the Versailles peace system which both countries sustained. More important, the events of late 1932 elicited an almost stereotypical demonstration of the chasm which existed between Washington and Moscow in terms of foreign policy decision-making. Russia, preoccupied with the Five-Year Plan, had increasingly come under the control of Stalin's "revolution from above." Centrally managed and relatively indifferent to Russian public opinion, the U.S.S.R. continued to test its assumptions about the antagonisms among the imperialist powers and to work with its "temporary allies" during the extended postwar period of peaceful co-existence. The American government, restrained by diverse political constituencies, remained a creature of a quadrennial fixation, the presidential election, which was both this system's strength and its weakness.

After its rejection of the Benes resolution, the Kremlin sought to extend its policies of nonaggression and neutrality. It was

relatively indifferent to the collapse of the Bruening and von Papen governments, and notwithstanding the minatory speeches of General Kurt von Schleicher, it assumed that new opportunities would be created if Germany chose to rearm. France, in particular, had become convinced that Germany was rapidly returning to a regime of militant autocracy similar to that of 1914. Poland had also become increasingly apprehensive. Thus Litvinov pressed forward the Narkomindel's negotiations with both of these powers. On July 25, having decided not to wait for the completion of the Russo-Rumanian talks, Poland signed the nonaggression pact initialed with Soviet Russia in January. In addition, responding to German demands, the wavering of Great Britain, and the refusal of the United States to put in writing a consultative agreement, France went ahead with a Soviet nonaggression pact soon after Germany rejected new French disarmament proposals published on November 14, 1932.⁴⁵

Understandably, considering the potential threat from the Japanese and the enormous strain on Russia induced by the rapid pace

⁴⁵Russia's analysis of the Lausanne Conference may be followed in Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, June 20 and 30, 1932, and July 15 and 20, 1932. Interesting despatches that reveal European developments in these months are Rumbold to Simon, August 4, 1932, DBFP, ii, IV, 20-23; Rumbold to Simon, August 22, 1932, Ibid., ii, IV, 100-101; and Campbell to Simon, August 23, 1932, Ibid., ii, IV, 101-102. Also, Francois-Poncet to Herriot, July 12, 13, and 27, 1932, DDF, i, I, 17-21, 28-29, and 102-103. Herriot's opinions are available in his despatch to French Ambassadors in Rome, London, and Washington on August 31, 1932; see DDF, i, I, 242-243. For information concerning the nonaggression pacts, consult: Inprecor, August 4, 1932, 701-702, and December 1, 1932, 1135; Soviet Union Review, X, December 1932, 233-235, and Soviet Union Review, XI, January 1933, 3-6; and, Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, September 25 and October 20, 1932. Also, Campbell to Simon, September 27, 1932, DBFP, ii, VII, 244-45, and DDF, i, II, 53-61, 91-95, and 282-285.

of its industrialization, the Kremlin, despite these agreements, proceeded cautiously. The Comintern was ordered to make a vigorous attack on the domestic problems of the Polish government. The Foreign Commissariat also moved to strengthen Russia's ties with Germany. In fact, there were those in the Soviet government and in the Comintern who favored an exclusive Russian alignment with Berlin and who reviewed somewhat skeptically Litvinov's emphasis on Russia's cooperation with France and even Great Britain. By September 1932 the Rapallo connection was publicly reaffirmed when Tukachevsky traveled to Germany to participate in military maneuvers, to renew an expiring intelligence agreement, and, in the eyes of some French diplomats, to conclude a military alliance.⁴⁶

America's approach to Europe was considerably different. Relatively pleased with the European status quo and thus willing to facilitate the reasonable demands of the great continental powers, particularly France and Germany, the United States supported European reconciliation, an approach Washington identified as a distinct improvement over what it perceived to be Moscow's opportunism. America's policies, however, were complicated by the efforts undertaken to resolve publicly the economic and political considerations which were the basis of its foreign policy. Although this distinguished the U.S. from the U.S.S.R., the restraints imposed often induced

⁴⁶The Communist International, ii, IX, August 1, 1932, 471-477. Also, Chautemps to Herriot, September 28, 1932, DDF, i, I, 394-395; Payart to Herriot, October 19, 1932, Ibid., i, II, 493; Payart to Herriot, November 4, 1932, Ibid., i, I, 664-665; Dejean to Herriot, November 19, 1932, Ibid., i, II, 30-31; and Laroche to Herriot, December 7, 1932, Ibid., i, II, 174-175.

short-term distortions which were assumed to be politically necessary. Compared to the Soviets, however, who controlled their press and who deliberately distorted foreign affairs for internal purposes, Washington's actions were seen simply as temporary expedients not in the least comparable to the actions of the Kremlin.

By early September the United States had become convinced that Germany intended to abrogate the military clauses of the Versailles treaty, a development that did not trouble the U.S.S.R. at this time. Stimson, although preoccupied with the presidential campaign, shifted his attention to this "new very dangerous sore spot in the world." He moved to support the French, who, he thought, had acted with "unusual magnanimity" in the reparation settlement made at Lausanne in July. According to the Secretary of State, the Germans were showing bad psychology and bad timing. "The old Prussian spirit," he maintained, was again on the rise. Stimson and Castle proceeded to inform German diplomats that any unilateral, public cancellation of the military provisions of the Versailles treaty "would be received with deep disfavor" in the United States, and would probably turn public opinion "strongly against Germany."⁴⁷

When the American press revealed that the United States was supposedly working in cooperation with France to deny Germany equality of rights, the public's response to U.S. involvement in European political problems was sharply critical. Hoover "almost had a fit over it." Worried about his chances in the presidential election and the

⁴⁷Stimson Diary, September 6, 7, 8, and 15, 1932. Castle sought to reassure the French of America's "support"; see Henry to Herriot, September 1, 1932, DDF, i, I, 248-250.

possible loss of the German vote, the president drew up a note stating that the United States was not a party to the Versailles treaty or any of its limitations. Stimson considered this a "flat misstatement." The military clauses of Part V of the treaty of Versailles had been incorporated in the peace treaty signed by the United States and Germany in 1921. Hoover, however, overruled him. Stimson was forced to explain this discrepancy to foreign diplomats, particularly the French, who said they understood the pressures of a presidential campaign.⁴⁸

Concerning the German threat to rearm unilaterally, months of negotiations by France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States resulted in an agreement made public on December 11, 1932. France declared its willingness to grant to Germany "equality of rights in a system which would provide security for all nations." Germany promised to return to Geneva and the work of the World Disarmament Conference. As usual the Soviet Union had been excluded from the secret negotiations, and American participation was downplayed. Stimson had warned Norman Davis, who participated in the five power discussions, to shun controversy. The appearance of an active American role in the settlement of European problems, the Secretary of State concluded, would only "raise the devil with our irreconcilables over here." It was a development he preferred to avoid.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Stimson Diary, September 16, 18, and 20, 1932. Also, Henry to Herriot, September 21, 1932, DDF, i, I, 356. The French, it should be noted, assumed that the U.S. would not change its policy toward the U.S.S.R. in the last months of Hoover's administration. See, for example, Dejean to Herriot, July 19, 1932, DDF, i, I, 57-59.

⁴⁹Stimson Diary, October 3, 1932.

The General Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments reconvened in Geneva in early February 1933. Recent developments revealed the rapid political changes overtaking the world. On January 30 Adolf Hitler had been appointed Reich Chancellor by President von Hindenburg. In the United States, Franklin Roosevelt had won a decisive victory in the presidential election. Notwithstanding Stimson's efforts to reassure European statesmen about "the untried and rather flippant young man" who was to succeed Hoover, there was some anxiety about the future course of American foreign policy. In the Soviet Union, Molotov reaffirmed before the Central Executive Committee the "special relationship" which existed between Soviet Russia and Germany. Nevertheless, there was some apprehension over the appointment of Hitler, and Litvinov, troubled by the political unrest in Germany, continued to press for greater accommodation with France.⁵⁰

Changes in the alignment of powers were also displayed in Geneva. On February 6, 1933 the Soviet Union submitted to the disarmament conference a declaration of the rights of man as well as a definition of aggression. After all the years that the U.S.S.R. had participated in the disarmament negotiations, this was the first Soviet initiative taken seriously by participating nations. France and many

⁵⁰Stimson Diary, August 11, 1932. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 30, 1933. Soviet Union Review, XI, March 1933, 52-55.

other countries, particularly in eastern Europe, supported the Russian proposal.⁵¹

How the rapid changes in Europe would be reflected by the United States was of considerable significance, and the question arose whether there would be any change in America's policy toward the U.S.S.R. In February Stimson might again have been considering recognition of the Soviet Union, but the president demurred. In a letter to an old friend, Hoover, depressed by the state of the U.S. economy, wrote that "without qualification" private enterprise had shown itself infinitely superior to the "failure" of the Soviet Union. Admittedly, there were faults in the American system, "for humanity is not without faults." But whatever the limitations of capitalism, it had done much more than the communist system, particularly the oppressive state controlled economy of Stalinist Russia. Hoover was adamant. Recognition was impossible.⁵²

As far as the disarmament conference was concerned, the American delegation had become troubled by the "overwhelming expression of sentiment in favor" of the Soviet proposal defining aggression. Gibson

⁵¹Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 15, 1933. The Soviet declaration of the rights of man and the definition of aggression can be followed in detail in State Department files beginning with 761.0012 (Aggressor)/1. Also, Inprecor, February 23, 1933, 195; Soviet Union Review, XI, March 1933, 55-58; and Laroche to Paul-Bomcour, January 15, 1933, DDF, i, I, 451-453. An extensive memorandum providing the background of the Franco-Soviet agreements is available in DDF, i, I, 118-122.

⁵²Hoover to Arch W. Moore, February 17, 1933, quoted in William Starr Myers and Walter H. Newton, The Hoover Administration: A Documented Narrative (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 317-318.

spoke out forcibly against it during the meetings of the Political Commission in March.⁵³

A professional diplomat and Hoover's close friend, Gibson had dealt at great length with Soviet representatives and Soviet proposals during his years as an American delegate to the disarmament negotiations. Reacting to the widespread talk in the months following Roosevelt's election that some change might be forthcoming in Washington's approach to the U.S.S.R., he thought the United States would need a hardheaded realist to investigate the whole problem. It was for this reason that he wrote to Colonel House on February 17, 1933, reminding him that any investigation of the Soviet Union should include a careful inquiry to determine "whether the Soviet regime is an enlightened form of government or a vicious tyranny." It was necessary, Gibson continued, to decide whether the United States could "better prove our love of liberty and our friendship for the Russian people by granting recognition now or by withholding recognition until essential reforms are brought about."⁵⁴

Gibson belonged to that large group of American diplomats who despised Soviet Russia, its ideology, and the political and economic excesses of its government. The State Department, particularly Robert Kelley and the Division of Eastern European Affairs, accepted this argument and opposed recognition as needlessly strengthening a government inimical to the United States.

⁵³Gibson to Hull, March 10, 1933, FRUS, 1933, I, 29.

⁵⁴The letter from Gibson to House, February 17, 1933, is available in the Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., Container 34, Folder 60.

Increasingly, however, there were those in the U.S. Senate, the diplomatic corps, and American political life who differed with this analysis. A number of congressional leaders, including Senators Robinson, Pittman, Wheeler, Brookhart, Cutting, Johnson, and LaFollette, wanted the policy of nonrecognition discarded. Nelson Johnson, the American Minister in China, contended that no settlement was possible in East Asia without the inclusion of Soviet Russia. And William Borah, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who had been working for the recognition of the U.S.S.R. for years, argued vigorously that communism would be "cured" once brought into close contact with capitalism, an idea that also flourished in the minds of some European diplomats who favored greater cooperation with the U.S.S.R.⁵⁵

Furthermore, Franklin Roosevelt's interview with Walter Duranty, the Moscow correspondent of The New York Times, and the trips of William C. Bullitt to Europe and Moscow in the summer and fall of 1932 convinced many that the president-elect was going to recognize the Soviet Union. The economics of the great depression and the undeclared war in East Asia had made such a move politically feasible. Whether the ideological rigidity of Hoover's administration was to be replaced by a haphazard, intuitive approach that would be equally unsatisfactory was not as yet a concern.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Nelson Johnson to Stimson, January 13, 1932, FRUS, 1932, III, 26-27. Also Johnson to Stimson, September 7, 1932 and December 16, 1932, Ibid., IV, 229-231 and 436-437. Stimson Diary, July 27, 1932. Dejean to Herriot, July 19, 1932, DDF, i, I, 57-59.

⁵⁶ Bullitt to Wehle, December 3, 1932, Louis Brandeis Wehle Papers, Franklin Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York, Container 16. In addition, read Orville H. Bullitt (ed.), For the President-Personal and Secret: Correspondence between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt (Boston: HMC0, 1972), pp. 15-33.

In the U.S.S.R. there was no thought in early 1933 of altering the Kremlin's policy toward the United States. Soviet diplomats continued the pursuit of American recognition. If that were impossible, an exchange of unofficial representatives suited Russia's commitment to a temporary Soviet-American alignment. Baffled by several aspects of America's overseas initiatives, Moscow remained convinced that no change was probable in the last months of Hoover's presidency. Not surprisingly, the Soviets watched carefully for any sign of Franklin Roosevelt's intentions. The Kremlin presumed that Hoover's defeat had been an expression of discontent with his "irresolute foreign policy." It also stated that because of this Roosevelt would proceed with "greater aggressiveness," presumably in support of U.S. interests in Europe and Asia. The Kremlin anticipated that this "aggressiveness" might be used to bolster Russia's security. With considerable interest, Moscow awaited the inauguration of the new American president.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Skvirsky to the Narkomindel, June 4, 1932, DVP, XV, 351-352. Pravda, November 10, 1932. Inprecor, November 17, 1932, 1098-1099.

PART TWO

CHAPTER V

ANOMALY REMOVED?

Woodrow Wilson's last Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby, announced the diplomatic nonrecognition of Soviet Russia in 1920. Sustained by three Republican administrations, this policy was overturned within nine months of Roosevelt's inauguration. Maintaining that the problems which separated the U.S. and U.S.S.R. were "serious," but not "insoluble," the American president wrote to Mikhail Kalinin in October 1933. The "difficulties between great nations," Roosevelt stressed, "can be removed only by frank, friendly conversations." It was time to end the "abnormal relations" which existed between the two countries.¹

Roosevelt's initiative, heartily endorsed by the Kremlin, reflected the president's repudiation of the nonrecognition of the U.S.S.R. In his view it had been an exercise in futility. A significant adjustment in American foreign policy, this initiative followed by several months Washington's willingness to accede to Rumania's claims to Bessarabia, a decision avoided by postwar Republican administrations.

¹Roosevelt to Kalinin, October 10, 1933, DVP, XVI, 564-565.

Practical diplomacy and the longstanding Soviet efforts to attain de jure recognition by the American government had prevailed.²

Excepting the "gentlemen's agreement" on debts, a vaguely drawn and imprecise document which would cause considerable difficulty for both powers in the mid-1930s, the negotiations in Washington in the fall of 1933 satisfied the public demands of both the American and Soviet governments. A watershed in their interwar relationship, recognition verified through written agreements yet another level of cooperation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.³

Its significance, however, was immediately and improvidently proclaimed. Those in America and Russia, who had argued that trade between the two countries would flourish, insisted vigorously, if mistakenly, that the needs of the Russian and American economies had been well-served. Soviet diplomats, mindful of the Japanese threat to the

²Kalinin to Roosevelt, October 17, 1933, Ibid., 565. Izvestiia, October 21, 1933, and Pravda, October 21, 1933. Also, Cole to Hull, October 24, 1933, State Department files, 711.61/294, and Cole to Hull, October 27, 1933, Ibid., 711.61/319. The views of European powers concerning the possibility of recognition can be reviewed in State Department files, 711.61/316, /318, /329, /392, and /393. Some of the more interesting documents and observations on the Bessarabian question are: FRUS, 1930, III, 801-807; FRUS, 1932, II, 503-508; and Stimson Diary, April 13, and August 27, 1931.

³For the agreements signed by Roosevelt and Litvinov in November 1933 read President's Official File (hereafter OF) 220, Container 1, Roosevelt Library, and DVP, XVI, 641-655. Writing from the S.S. American Legion on November 18, Cordell Hull, Roosevelt's Secretary of State, maintained that the arrangements concluded in Washington between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. demonstrated "the marked progress possible in all international dealings" when there is "the mutual disposition and will to approach serious world problems in a friendly and fearless spirit." See State Department files, 711.61/357. Despite the assertions in his memoirs that he favored recognition, Hull's view of this issue in 1933 is unclear. Read Franklin Roosevelt to Hull, August 7, 1933, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 34, Folder 63, and Robert E. Bowers, "Hull, Russian Subversion in Cuba, and Recognition of the U.S.S.R.," Journal of American History, LIII (December 1966), 542-554.

Soviet Union, delighted in the prospect of cooperation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in East Asia. And Litvinov, writing to the president on November 22, reinforced this theme, noting that the "joint efforts" of Washington and the Kremlin would "add a creative factor in international affairs." A reminder to Tokyo of recognition's potential importance, the Soviet Foreign Commissar's contention received additional corroboration. Roosevelt, avoiding specific reference to the western Pacific, calmly noted in a letter to Litvinov on November 23 that the "cooperation of our governments in the great work of peace should be the cornerstone of an enduring friendship."⁴

Notwithstanding the years of hostility separating both countries since the First World War, the White House and the Kremlin permitted the agreements of 1933 to be interpreted as serving the interests of the U.S., the U.S.S.R., and the international environment in which both nations functioned. Although an intriguing hypothesis, it was deceptive. The conversations of Soviet and American officials in Washington had failed to resolve the underlying tensions between the two governments. More important, they were not meant to. This was not the failure of Roosevelt's administration. It was not a function of ineptitude in the negotiations. It was not due to the machinations of Bolshevik political leaders equipped to adjust their actions in terms of a current reading of Marxist-Leninist ideas. The ideological, political, institutional, and economic elements which animated Soviet and

⁴Read Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, November 25, 1933 and March 17, 1934. Also, State Department files, 711.61/312, and Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy, pp. 153-175. Litvinov to Roosevelt, November 22, 1933, DVP, XVI, 675. Roosevelt to Litvinov, November 23, 1933, OF 220, Roosevelt Library, Container 1.

American foreign policy decision-making remained in conflict. The relevance of domestic priorities conditioned by internal and external developments continued to nurture those areas that had heretofore vitiated the relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

Continuing into the mid-1930s, therefore, was the diplomatic instability which had undermined the relationship of these two countries. Its character was shaped by the ever changing political and economic developments affecting the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. In America this included Roosevelt's approach to the depression, the rising New Deal party system, and the president's political opposition. The Democratic and Republican efforts to arouse public condemnation of the New Deal's programs circumscribed Roosevelt's foreign policy initiatives. The deep-seated fear of socialism and/or communism, which had done much to shape the "middle-class" orientation of America's accommodation to industrial capitalism, pervaded the maturing relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. In Russia, the Second Five-Year Plan, the period of reconciliation which accompanied the Seventeenth Party Congress, the assassination of Kirov, and the intensification of Stalin's "personality cult" molded Moscow's view of international affairs. This view, moreover, was increasingly buffeted by a series of threats, both real and imagined, emanating from Europe and East Asia. Finally, the maneuvering of the great powers, particularly the reactions of England, France, Germany, and Japan to the collapse of the Versailles peace, induced adjustments in the foreign policies of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. affecting dramatically their appreciation of the purposefulness of Soviet-American cooperation.

I

Roosevelt attacked what he thought were the causes of the U.S. depression immediately after his inauguration. His commitment to the recovery and reform of the American economy was deeply felt, essentially pragmatic, and always political in its formulation and implementation. A Progressive Democrat interested in preserving American capitalism by ridding it of its worst abuses, the president initiated the first phase of the New Deal as an exercise in business-government cooperation. This was consistent with Wilson's efforts in the First World War. The trade association movement which had accompanied America's industrialism and which had been promoted during the 1920s also functioned as a suitable vehicle to raise prices and to induce recovery. That these developments coincided with Roosevelt's maneuvers to recognize the Soviet Union were fortuitous and significant.

In June the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) marked the capstone of the First Hundred Days. This law empowered a National Recovery Administration (NRA) to oversee the preparation of codes of fair competition for more than seven hundred of America's industries. Greeted initially with enthusiasm by many U.S. businessmen, the codes represented the continued supremacy of the private sector in determining its own future. Partly offset by the provisions which supported unions' efforts to organize workers, the business community's support of Roosevelt's administration rose with each new increase of the Federal Reserve Board's index of industrial activity.⁵

⁵ Ultimately a failure, and by 1934 a political nightmare, the NRA revealed the resilience of American capitalism. One measure in

Organized labor, gravely weakened by its inability to unionize mass production industries in the 1920s, also supported the NIRA. The limits of craft unionism, the effects of welfare capitalism, and the weight of the depression led many union leaders to clutch eagerly at the government's support of collective bargaining and unions' rights. The failure of labor to exploit sufficiently the advantages of Wilson's War Labor Board had had its impact. The shift away from traditional conceptions of voluntarism accelerated. Federal support would increase unions' legitimacy, reducing the effectiveness of the charges that organized labor was inherently "collectivist," and thus dangerous.⁶

In addition, there were those who were willing to dismiss free enterprise as hopelessly anachronistic, a denial of the obvious technological future. Irritated by the power given to America's industries through the codes of "fair competition," but encouraged by

Roosevelt's New Deal, it demonstrated that the crude Marxian analysis invariably projected by Stalin was an inappropriate measure of America's socio-economic development. Ignoring temporarily fiscal and monetary "solutions" to the depression, the president sought to chastise the "financial element" in the country, which he thought had "owned the government ever since the days of Andrew Jackson," without antagonizing the rest of the business community. The effects of these efforts on his foreign policy should not be minimized. See Roosevelt to Edward M. House, November 21, 1933, in Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), FDR: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), I, pp. 371-373.

⁶ Among its other problems in the 1920s, organized labor suffered from the nativist upsurge of the New Era. Constantly combating the efforts to link labor with indigenous radicalism and communism, the AF of L supported the Republicans' policy of the nonrecognition of the U.S.S.R. It continued to do so during the presidential election of 1932. Even in 1941, when Roosevelt sought to swing the country behind the Soviet Union, the hesitancy of union leaders was obvious. Notwithstanding the work of Radosh and others, the nuances in the relationships of labor, democratic politics, and Soviet-American relations have yet to be adequately explored.

the provisions within the NIRA for a Public Works Administration, the proponents of national economic planning supported Roosevelt's efforts to increase the government's control of the U.S. economy. Mindful of Roosevelt's observations at Oglethorpe University and at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco in 1932, the adherents to a technocratic design for America's future hoped to promote through the New Deal widespread support for the social management of the American society. A dramatic increase in the power and effectiveness of the federal government, they argued, would overwhelm the stubborn resistance of a private sector, dominated by oligopolistic industries, which had outlived much of its usefulness. The lessons of the Russian "experiment," americanized to fit national patterns of development, and incorporated with a purported understanding of the implications of science on society generally, would make the New Deal a true instrument of reform and modernization.⁷

A quintessential example of Roosevelt's approach to domestic politics, the NIRA acted as an umbrella under which disparate groups huddled temporarily. It coordinated commitments to competitive capitalism, private planning and industrial collaboration as well as a readiness to increase the government's control of the marketplace to sustain maturing perceptions of the public interest. It represented the

⁷The bibliographical essay at the end of this work will deal more completely with this theme. Two books of interest may be noted immediately: Rexford G. Tugwell, Roosevelt's Revolution: The First Year-A Personal Perspective (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1977), and David F. Noble, America by Design: Science, Technology, and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1977). Also, the proponents of planning were most important in terms of the antagonisms which they aroused and which affected dramatically the Americans' perceptions of the relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

president's assumption that the chief executive was a "broker" among powerful interests, reconciling the legitimate demands of different constituencies. It was politically astute, and frequently opportunistic. It had forced together disparate interests which subordinated momentarily differences in foreign policy, while waiting to achieve internally their view of economic recovery. That it both served and undermined the president's approach to the U.S.S.R. was not immediately apparent.⁸

Gradually, the pattern of the early New Deal revealed that Roosevelt intended to operate within the boundaries of traditional progressivism. A disappointment to the proponents of national economic planning who, incidentally, were eager to discard the policy of the nonrecognition of the Soviet Union, it reminded them of the "ghost of populism." Disassociating himself from the extreme laissez faire and feudalistic ideology of the South, the president listened attentively to Felix Frankfurter and other supporters of Brandeisian ideas. The competitive marketplace was to "direct" the U.S. economy, and thus the government would intervene only when necessary. The shift to a planned economy advocated by many would be spasmodic, attempted only in the direst circumstances, and then only temporarily.⁹

⁸Read Tugwell's collected essays in In Search of Roosevelt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972). The observation on opportunism and astuteness should not be read as my approbation of the view of the 1930s exemplified by Bell, Schlesinger, and Johnpoll.

⁹In addition to In Search of Roosevelt, read Tugwell's The Art of Politics (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1958). Tugwell correctly identified the New Deal as lingering "at an arrested stage for years, unwilling to name the sacrifices of private privilege necessary to a general security achieved by social management." He also pinpointed Roosevelt's predilection to give to "majority support" a

Several of his campaign speeches to the contrary, this was generally consistent with Roosevelt's efforts as governor of the state of New York. In 1930 he had written to Henry Goddard Leach, the editor of the Forum, indicating that "State control or Federal control" to alleviate the problems of the depression would be "moral cowardice." It would lead the United States "straight for the type of government now in effect in Russia and Italy." Mussolini and Stalin "were not distant relatives," the governor had argued; they were "blood brothers." America's "conception of representative government," he maintained, would prevail, but it had to be based on economic freedom.¹⁰

Roosevelt, along with Wilson and Hoover, identified this freedom with private property, the sanctity of contracts, and the concept of free labor. The New Deal, although a significant increase in federal authority, fit comfortably in the wake of previous administrations. That so much confusion existed over whether this was the case was a function of Roosevelt's approach. It also complicated foreign policy decision-making, including his efforts to cooperate with the U.S.S.R.

Many businessmen who had been confused and troubled by the president's campaign speeches were reassured, at first, by his legislative proposals. The Economy Act and the Truth in Securities Act, for example, were indications that his commitment to a balanced budget was real and that federal regulation would evolve within reasonable limits.

"value it cannot have." Tugwell's view of populism, however, was misguided. A more recent and superior evaluation, although emotionally laden, is Lawrence Goodwyn, Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement In America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).

¹⁰Roosevelt to Henry Goddard Leach, December 11, 1930, FDR: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, I, p. 163.

The authorization of the Tennessee Valley Authority was perhaps an ominous development, a precursor of a drastic long-term increase in the management of the marketplace by federal bureaucracies. Yet the TVA was a familiar project, promoted by various Progressives throughout the 1920s. Preoccupied with maintaining the recovery which had begun with Roosevelt's administration, and reassured by legislation that seemed to affirm the traditional character of Roosevelt's programs, the business community was not inclined to see the recognition of the Soviet Union as a lever which would be turned inward on the domestic marketplace, a support for any sustained shift toward government ownership of the means of production.¹¹

Also noting carefully Roosevelt's inclination to recognize the U.S.S.R. were the union leaders who had opposed any alteration of America's policy toward the Soviet Union throughout the 1920s. Indeed, Matthew Woll of the American Federation of Labor continued to press the administration against recognition. During the summer months, however, organizers spread out throughout the coal fields of West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Section 7a of the NIRA became the tool of massive unionizing efforts that saw hundreds of thousands of workers join the ranks of U.S. labor unions. Invariably difficult, these efforts were

¹¹A survey of business periodicals in 1933 reveals the hostility aroused by the proponents of national economic planning. References to the inadequacies of the U.S.S.R. were also numerous. The activities of the American Liberty League in 1934 and 1935, which are discussed in the next chapter, further confirmed the enmity that part of the business community held for the Soviet Union. In 1933, however, this hostility was not sufficient to deter the president from thinking that he could achieve "a majority" in support of his initiative to the Russians. See, for example, Linda Keller Brown, "The Rise of Business Opposition to Roosevelt" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1972).

often successful because of federal intervention. Hugh Johnson's NRA initially watched to insure that the workers' rights were maintained. The codes of fair competition were dependent, it was argued, on management's acceptance of collective bargaining. Labor's insistence that its interests promoted industrial capitalism was sustained. Vigorously opposing a presidential initiative to the U.S.S.R. remained a secondary consideration.¹²

Roosevelt's handling of America's foreign relations also contributed to the generally favorable reception given Washington's approach to the U.S.S.R. On August 9, 1920 Roosevelt had remarked that the United States was faced with a choice. America could live "as a hermit nation, dreaming of the past" or it could recognize that "modern civilization" had become "so complex and the lives of civilized men so interwoven with the lives of other men in other countries as to make it impossible to be in this world and not of it." By 1933, gaining in maturity, less inclined to follow his earlier enthusiasms for the doctrines of Mahan and the ideas of Theodore Roosevelt, and cognizant of the domestic limitations on his diplomatic policies, the president accepted that neither the great powers nor the American people were ready to make the United States "the arbiter on matters of peace and war" throughout the world. That Washington's contribution to international peace and order would be significant was, of course, never in

¹²Read OF 142, American Federation of Labor, 1933-July, 1941, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: March-December, 1933; James P. Johnson, "Drafting the NRA Code of Fair Competition for the Bituminous Coal Industry," Journal of American History, LIII (December 1966), 521-541; Ellis W. Hawley, The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly: A Study in Economic Ambivalence (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966); and Irving Bernstein, Turbulent Years (Boston: HMC, 1969).

doubt. Retaining much of the Wilsonian idealism of his youth, Roosevelt attempted to distinguish U.S. policy from the alternatives vying for supremacy in international affairs. An anti-imperialist, he supported nonintervention in Latin America. A proponent of Philippine independence, he rejected European colonialism. A capitalist, he repudiated the economic and political heresies of socialism and communism.¹³

His ideas were essentially a continuation of the Hoover-Stimson foreign policy. Roosevelt accepted Washington's nonrecognition of Japan's gains in Manchuria. He eagerly supported disarmament "to the fullest extent." He reaffirmed America's interest in close collaboration with England and France, and he recognized the "moral obligation" that the victors of the First World War had in terms of their fulfillment of the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. Having supported Hoover's arms embargo proposal and having extended temporarily the willingness of the U.S. to consult with other powers when peace was threatened, the president mixed nationalist and internationalist concerns in a jerky and inconclusive way that confused Europeans and Asians alike. Equally circumscribed by the depression and domestic

¹³Roosevelt's observation in 1920 was made during his acceptance of the vice-presidential nomination of the Democratic party. See Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), FDR: His Personal Letters, 1905-1928 (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1948), p. 501. Also, Roosevelt to House, April 5, 1933, FDR: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, I, p. 343, and Lowell T. Young, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and Imperialism," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, 1970). Young maintained that "idealism--and not economic considerations--was the primary motivating factor" in Roosevelt's foreign policy after 1928. Fortunately, he continued by stating that this idealism was "often severely restricted" by the president's "concept of the national security."

political complications, a more interventionist foreign policy, the president assumed, was automatically precluded.¹⁴

Even the disintegration of the World Economic Conference in the summer of 1933 (despite Roosevelt's earlier view that it would be of the "utmost importance") had not seriously damaged his cause internally. His willingness to sacrifice the degree of international stability that might have been achieved through the stabilization of currencies in order to raise domestic prices reassured those who might have doubted the president's capacity to sacrifice the interests of the international community when domestic considerations seemed to require it. The approach to the Soviet Union was simply to excise a diplomatic anomaly. It was not a precursor of some dramatic shift toward the reemergence of Washington's support for the discredited principles of the balance of power. The new diplomacy and its reliance on economic expansion and cooperative competition were not to be replaced by political involvements which might entangle the U.S. in overseas war.¹⁵

¹⁴Roosevelt to Norman Davis, November 26, 1932, Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 51. Roosevelt to Davis, August 30, 1933, Ibid. Hugh Wilson to Cordell Hull, May 18, 1933, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 34, Folder 60. Norman Davis to Hull, September 5, 1933, Ibid., Container 34, Folder 63. Hull to Davis, September 20, 1933, Ibid. Lindsay to Simon, January 30, 1933, DBFP, ii, V, 748-751. Claudel to Paul-Boncour, January 11, 1933, DDF, i, II, 414-417. Also DDF, i, II, 684-686. Roosevelt's entry for the Edward Bok peace award in 1923 should also be reviewed; see Eleanor Roosevelt, This I Remember (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), pp. 353-366.

¹⁵Roosevelt to Norman Davis, November 26, 1932, Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 51.

II

Even before undertaking the legislative programs which would reassure certain groups that the New Deal was well within the political mainstream, the support of and reasons for recognition seemed overwhelming to the incoming president. Nothing in the months that led up to his meetings with Litvinov persuaded him otherwise.

Early in 1933 the United States Chamber of Commerce organized a committee to tour the U.S.S.R. and to analyse the long-term implications of Soviet-American trade. In January The New York Times reported that twenty-two U.S. Senators favored recognition. The Friends of the Soviet Union supported petition drives and organizations in local communities to bring the question to the public's attention; cooperation with trade unions and fraternal organizations was another avenue of their approach. The United States Board of Trade and the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce called for diplomatic relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Financial interests swarmed into Washington with various credit schemes and other devices to accelerate the trade which, they thought, could exist between the two countries if recognition by the U.S. were forthcoming.¹⁶

¹⁶Hull to Roosevelt, March 27, 1933, OF U.S. Tariff Commission, Roosevelt Library, Container 7, Folder: Miscellaneous Reports-A, B,C. Hull's letter included a memorandum from the Office of the Economic Adviser concerning Russian imports, particularly asbestos. The conclusion was that Russia's imports did not involve unfair competition. Additional information is available in the President's Personal File (hereafter PPF)-907, Bertron, Roosevelt Library, which revealed the continuing efforts of the members of the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce to influence America's approach to the U.S.S.R. A general review of the other events mentioned can be found in Browder, The Origins of Soviet-American Diplomacy, pp. 75-98.

To encourage the prorecognition forces in the United States Litvinov emphasized in a speech to the World Economic Conference on June 14 that the removal of discriminatory measures and the extension of long-term credits to the U.S.S.R. would induce the reexamination of Soviet import needs. The expansion of trade would measurably aid world economic conditions, he continued, and perhaps blunt the momentum that economic nationalism had achieved following the implementation of protectionist tariffs in a number of countries. At the same time Amtorg approached the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and revealed that it was willing to purchase seventy thousand bales of surplus American cotton. It was a small, but nonetheless exciting, offer considering the enormous oversupply of this commodity then glutting the American market.¹⁷

Many who were close to the president also supported Roosevelt's inclination to repudiate nonrecognition. In the months following his inauguration, they pressed the disparate themes that had convinced them that a change in Washington's policy served America's political and economic interests. In July William C. Bullitt, who had been appointed an Assistant Secretary of State, insisted that close diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union might restrain Japan from new acts of aggression in East Asia. In September Oscar Johnston, the Director of Finance for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, argued that the "enormous

¹⁷DVP, XVI, 343-348, 352-353, 481-482, and 524. Jesse Jones to Roosevelt, June 24, 1933, OF 220a, Roosevelt Library, Container 4, Folder: Russia, 1933. Jesse Jones to Henry Morgenthau, June 27, 1933, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Container 243, Folder: Russia. Finally, read Robert E. Bowers, "American Diplomacy, the 1933 Wheat Conference, and Recognition of the Soviet Union," Agricultural History, XL (January 1966), 39-52.

stocks" of excess agricultural commodities in the United States had to be "materially reduced," and that Washington should make every effort "to sell them to the U.S.S.R." On the afternoon of October 13 Raymond Robins, identified with numerous postwar liberal causes, including the outlawry of war campaign, met with the president, and discussed the guarantees that the U.S. could probably receive from the U.S.S.R. concerning freedom of worship for Americans in Russia. Soviet noninterference in America's internal affairs was also perceived to be a necessary prerequisite if a stable relationship between the two countries were to have any chance to evolve.¹⁸

Intrigued by Roosevelt's view of the Soviet Union, particularly the president's enthusiastic response to Irina Skariatina's recently published volume, First to Go Back: An Aristocrat in Soviet Russia, Robins eagerly supported the letter forwarded to Kalinin in mid-October. So did a great many others, inside and outside the administration. On October 21 America's ambassador in Mexico, Josephus Daniels, the erstwhile Secretary of the Navy in Wilson's administration, wrote to his "dear chief" concerning the U.S.S.R. Daniels reminded the president of the Russian naval demonstration in New York during the American civil war. He recalled Thomas Jefferson's letter to Dashkov in

¹⁸ Bullitt to Roosevelt, July 8, 1933, President's Secretary's File (hereafter PSF) Subject, Roosevelt Library, Container 156, Folder: London Economic Conference. Memorandum for Reconstruction Finance Corporation by Oscar Johnston, September 22, 1933, Morgenthau Papers, Correspondence, 1933-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 243, Folder: Russia. Raymond Robins to Roosevelt, October 14, 1933, in Edgar B. Nixon (ed.), Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), I, p. 428. Tugwell, In Search of Roosevelt, pp. 307-309. Borah to Robins, November 8, 1933, Borah Papers, Library of Congress, General Office File, Container 371, Folder: Russia, 1932-1933.

1809, which argued that the "common interest" of Russia and America "in the rights of peaceable nations" gave both powers "a common cause in their maintenance." Daniels also indicated that if Washington could "maintain official relations with Mussolini's autocratic rule in Italy and the Hitler dictatorship in Germany," there was "no insuperable reason why we should demand that Russia set up a government of our type before extending recognition." Within two weeks this last point was reemphasized by Felix Frankfurter, who had already influenced significantly Roosevelt's domestic legislative program. "Apart from the beneficial economic consequences," Frankfurter wrote, "the termination of the hostile and anomalous relations between Russia and the United States may, in view of the new constellation of powers, be of really momentous significance to the world's peace." There was no doubt in Frankfurter's mind that Germany and Japan were "moving on converging lines," and that Roosevelt should discount "the politically myopic opponents" of his Russian policy.¹⁹

Whether "myopic" or not, the opponents of recognition were substantial, and the president moved deftly to outmaneuver them. In July Robert Kelley, the chief of the State Department's Division of Eastern European Affairs, had argued in a lengthy memorandum that "the establishment of harmonious and truthful relations with the Soviet Union" depended on Russia's "abandonment" of its "revolutionary aims"

¹⁹ Raymond Robins to Roosevelt, October 28, 1933, OF 220, Roosevelt Library, Container 1. Irina Skariatina, First to Go Back: An Aristocrat in Soviet Russia (New York: Blue Ribbon Books, 1933). Josephus Daniels to Roosevelt, October 21, 1933, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 61, Folder: Mexico, 1933-1935. Felix Frankfurter to Roosevelt, October 29, 1933, PPF 140, Felix Frankfurter, May 1933-December 1933, Roosevelt Library, Container 1.

as well as the termination of those "activities designed to bring about the realization of such aims." A cogent argument detailing a capitalist's revulsion at the practical significance of "communist" dictatorship, Kelley's memorandum, if accepted in its entirety, would have hindered Roosevelt's approach to the U.S.S.R. Instead, the president, conceding the theoretical accuracy of Kelley's ideas, thought that it was unrealistic to assume that Soviet Russia would repudiate its own revolution. As Daniels would write on November 18, "our stupid attitude of wishing to dictate domestic policies to other countries as the price of recognition has done us no good." America's presumptuousness would deny the United States the advantages of diplomatic contacts with the Kremlin, and these contacts might facilitate the cause of world peace. Swayed by reports of the putative successes of the First Five-Year Plan and intrigued by the excessively sympathetic account of Russia written by Skariatina, Roosevelt sympathized with the Kremlin's commitment to the industrial growth of the U.S.S.R. Even if the excesses which were reported of the communist regime were accurate, the president did not think that recognition meant American approbation of Soviet tactics. Working through Bullitt, Skvirsky, and Henry Morgenthau, then the Farm Credit Administrator, Roosevelt avoided Kelley's Eastern European desk by contacting the Russians outside the normal State Department channels. In November, when Kelley seemed ready to accept the failure of the State Department's conversations with Litvinov, Roosevelt intervened personally, bridging to his own satisfaction the differences which separated the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.²⁰

²⁰The most significant of Kelley's memoranda can be found in State Department files, 711.61/287 3/4, 861.44 Litvinov, M.M./15,

Supporting Kelley in his opposition to the Soviet Union, although for somewhat different reasons, were Maxwell Hamilton and Stanley Hornbeck of the State Department's Far Eastern Division. Concerned that recognition would damage Japanese-American relations unnecessarily, they advised the president early in his administration that the reasons against recognition still outweighed those for it. Their conclusions were grounded in the fear that the Japanese military might use an American rapprochement with the Soviet Union to aggravate existing tensions in the western Pacific. Eager to curtail any impetuous gesture by the new president, Hamilton and Hornbeck were absorbed with what Joseph Grew, the U.S. ambassador in Tokyo, termed the "whole East Asian dilemma." This dilemma, according to Grew, required America to reconcile "a most complicated antithesis between the ethical and the practical." It had become relatively clear that Japan would in all probability eventually guarantee to Manchuria an administration of peace, safety, and prosperity, at the same time that it would act "as a staunch buffer against the spread of bolshevism eastward." Communism, Grew had argued, was already "overrunning China like a forest fire", and it would have rapidly "overrun Manchuria too, if the Japanese had not taken a hand." The problem of course was to reconcile these arguments with "ethical considerations" and the "absolutely essential determination of the world to safeguard the sanctity of treaties." It seemed to be "an insoluble problem," particularly unnerving to U.S. diplomats resolutely

361.11/4089 1/2, 461.11/198 1/2, 811.00B/1608, 800.51W89 U.S.S.R./13 3/4, 861.01/1981 1/2, and 861.51/2622 1/2. Daniels to Roosevelt, November 18, 1933, PPF 86, Josephus Daniels, 1933-1938, Roosevelt Library, Container 1. Also, DVP, XVI, 108, 210, 352-353, 524, and 544-545.

opposed to another world war. Every effort, Hornbeck and Hamilton insisted, should be undertaken to convince the Japanese that recognition was in no way an attempt to pressure Japan.²¹

Notwithstanding his well-known sympathy for the Chinese, the president had no intention of needlessly exacerbating relations with Tokyo. He reassured the Far Eastern Division that he recognized the importance of Japan as America's most important trading "partner" in East Asia, and that he did not intend to move beyond the Hoover-Stimson doctrine announced in January 1932. Besides, recognition did not mean an alliance between Washington and the Kremlin. There would be no effort in his administration, he asserted, to restrict Japan's legitimate national interests. Disinclined to support militarily America's commitment to an Open Door in East Asia, Roosevelt, moreover, was determined to secure the independence of the Philippine Islands. It was a traditional plank in Democratic party platforms, and it would be a clear indication of the character of U.S. policy for the western Pacific.²²

²¹Hornbeck to Hull, March 24, 1933, State Department files, 861.01/1872. Also, Grew to Hull, August 14, 1933, *Ibid.*, 861.01/1949; Maxwell Hamilton's memorandum of October 6, 1933, *Ibid.*, 761.94/646; Hornbeck's memorandum of October 11, 1933, *Ibid.*; Hanson to Hull, October 23, 1933, *Ibid.*, 711.61/364; and Hornbeck to Hull, October 28, 1933, *Ibid.*, 711.61/333. Hornbeck of course did not seek active cooperation with the Japanese. See, for example, his rejection of a U.S.-Japanese anti-war pact in Hornbeck to Hull, October 7, 1933, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 35, Folder 64. Extensive segments of Grew's diary were forwarded to Hugh Wilson. Consult Grew to Wilson, February 11, 1933 and September 16, 1933, Hugh R. Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 2, Folder: Joseph C. Grew.

²²Foreign observers had noted that the American public was far less interested in East Asia than it had been. See, for example, Claudel to Paul-Boncour, January 21, 1933, *DDF*, i, II, 493. Japan's response to US recognition of the USSR can be read in Grew to Hull, December 1, 1933,

Accompanying these efforts to overcome the bureaucratic opposition to the U.S.S.R. was a series of decisions and policies which reduced the effectiveness of most of the outspoken critics of the Soviet regime. The hatred of America's Catholics for "atheistic Russia" was softened by the president's determination to gain recognition of the religious rights of Americans in the Soviet Union. The American Legion's disapproval of the U.S.S.R. was partly disarmed (more by accident than design) by the president's increase in defense spending, particularly his efforts to build up the U.S. Navy to the limits allowed under the Washington and London naval treaties. The opposition among many business and union leaders to direct loans to the Kremlin was so overwhelming that it could not be ignored. Controlled credits, Roosevelt assumed, would be tolerated both by the Soviets and by Matthew Woll and others opposed to the direct funding of Russia's modernization.²³

Unwilling to satisfy the demands of the producers and manufacturers of asbestos, lumber, matches, and manganese, who complained

State Department files, 711.61/445. In addition to his support of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934, Roosevelt opposed retaining a naval base in the Philippines after independence. Consult the president's memorandum to the Secretary of the Navy, May 3, 1935, PSF, Departmental Roosevelt Library, Container 78, Folder: Navy Department, September 1933-September 1936. See, also, Roosevelt's memo to Morgenthau, December 6, 1934, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: The President, 1933-1934.

²³R. Walton Moore to Hull, November 27, 1933, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 35, Folder 65. Matthew Woll to Roosevelt, September 18, 1933, OF 142, American Federation of Labor, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: March-December 1933. A survey of more than three hundred papers was undertaken by the Division of Current Information of the State Department for the thirty days prior to October 19, 1933. Its results are available in the R. Walton Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 18, Folder: Russia-October 1933.

bitterly about Soviet dumping and who demanded a continuation of the restrictions imposed during Hoover's administration, Roosevelt moved to obscure the entire issue of protectionism versus freer trade. Arguing that it was "just as much our diplomatic duty to encourage a nation to sell to us as it is to encourage a nation to buy from us," the president matter of factly appointed proponents of overseas dumping of U.S. commodities to important positions in his administration. The reciprocal trade program closest to Hull's Wilsonian view of international peace and security was delayed until 1934, while Roosevelt watched the contending forces struggle to achieve supremacy within the bureaucracy and among the more important trade associations throughout the nation.²⁴

Finally, Roosevelt sought to insure as far as possible that recognition did not become a divisive interparty issue. Significantly, this did not prove especially difficult in 1933. First, in addition to Stimson, several Republican leaders had been willing to admit that recognition "might have a good effect on the Far Eastern situation." Moreover, William R. Castle, Jr., Hoover's Undersecretary of State, had reviewed the entire situation in late 1932. He had then revealed to the Republican president that "the issue of propaganda" was "discounted by a large number of the intelligent people of the country." The problems over the debts owed to private interests, he had maintained,

²⁴Of interest is Alexander Gerschenkron, "Soviet Policies Versus International Cartels: Four Historical Case Studies," Slavic Review, XXXIII (March 1974), 69-90. Roosevelt to Claude Bowers, July 11, 1933, FDR: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, I, pp. 357-358. A recent and clear, if undistinguished, account of the Hull-Peek controversy is available in Dick Steward, Trade and Hemisphere: The Good Neighbor Policy and Reciprocal Trade (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1975), pp. 31-61.

could also not be manipulated to any party's advantage; they had long since "been pretty well wiped off the books." Although invariably associating many of Roosevelt's ideas with the dangerous collectivist notions which the Republican president detested, Hoover had decided not to use Russia as a major issue in the presidential campaign. Shrewdly, neither had Roosevelt.²⁵

Still, Republican hostility to the Soviet Union remained a consideration. The letters of Hoover and Castle in February and March 1933 reaffirmed the intensity of their feelings concerning collectivism, the corruption of the Soviet government, and the wretched living conditions which existed in the U.S.S.R. and which were attributed to the failures of communism. Hoover had also privately made clear his growing hostility to the New Deal. Its programs, he maintained, were a threat to "American individualism", and national planning was a "disease" detrimental to a marketplace economy. Failure to negotiate successful agreements with the Soviets would prove unfortunate, considering the evolving Republican antipathy to Roosevelt's legislative proposals. Even more damaging would be America's recognition of Russia followed by a sharp deterioration in Soviet-American relations.²⁶

²⁵ Stimson Diary, January 9, 1933. Castle to Hoover, August 17, 1932, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 14, Folder 123: Herbert Hoover, 1927-1934. William Borah, the Progressive Republican who had long advocated recognition of the Soviet Union, was completely ignored by the president. Consult Borah to Jacob Billikopf, September 16, 1933, and Borah to Robins, November 8, 1933, Borah Papers, Library of Congress, General Office File, Container 371, Folder: Russia, 1932-1933.

²⁶ Castle to Frederick Eberhardt, March 3, 1933, State Department files, 661.1115/535. Castle to Reverend Morris S. Lazaron, February 3, 1933, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 8, Folder 62. Hoover to Arch W. Shaw, February 17, 1933, The Hoover Administration, pp. 317-320. Hoover to Ralph Arnold, December 18, 1933, Post-presidential Papers, Individual, Hoover Library, Container 267, Folder 2081.

In this regard, Roosevelt was particularly fortunate, at least at first. Fearing the consequences of a Russo-Japanese war in the Far East, the Kremlin was prepared to make a number of assurances which, compared to other agreements made between the U.S.S.R. and capitalist countries, were highly favorable to the American government. Next, Hoover, despite his conclusion late in 1933 that events were all driving in one direction, "toward more and more chaos," decided that it was inadvisable to make any "public expressions of any kind until the present administration has had a full chance to make or break its program." Furthermore, the American public, immersed in the depression and the efforts of the New Deal to remedy America's economic disintegration, was for the moment indifferent to foreign policy in general and to the Soviet Union in particular.²⁷

America's response to the letters exchanged between the president and Litvinov demonstrated the success of Roosevelt's political planning. Isolated denunciations from Hamilton Fish and scattered editorials in conservative newspapers, which derided the agreements, substantiated that Roosevelt had created a delicately balanced and

²⁷ Interestingly, Litvinov assured the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. on December 29, 1933 that "the absence of any sacrifices whatsoever on either side--guarantees to a considerable extent the further strengthening" of Soviet-American relations. The Soviet Commissar's speech is available in Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 6, 1934. Hoover to Anthony Czarnecki, November 27, 1933, Post-presidential Papers, Individual, Hoover Library, Container 306, Folder 2495. Also, Hoover to Percival Baxter, October 2, 1933, Ibid., Container 273, Folder 2143. General observations on American public opinion are dangerous, but Roosevelt was comforted by reports that recognition was favored by southern and mid-western states. It should be noted that the president's support in 1932 had come primarily from the south and west. Review the William Phillips memorandum of October 19, 1933, OF 220, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Russia, 1933-1940.

widespread support among disparate interest groups for established relations with the Soviet Union. Yet it was this delicately balanced coordination of different constituencies which attested to the subtlety, indeed, the disingenuousness of much of the president's approach. As captivated by the "enjoyment of the science of politics for its own sake" as he was for using "political action" to "achieve real gains" for the American people, Roosevelt had packaged recognition in as palatable a way as possible. The fact that a majority had thought that it would increase trade between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. was temporarily useful, even if the president was not as concerned with trade as with other matters. The willingness of others to see its impact on East Asia, or Europe, was a suitable demonstration of practical politics, and it fascinated him. That it might lead to future problems remained a concern. But the pragmatic skills employed to create a temporary coalition of interests could be used again. Specific goals were to be achieved. The struggle had been a political one, something the president readily understood and definitely relished.²⁸

III

Roosevelt's decision to recognize the U.S.S.R. had been motivated primarily by his assessment of the long-term implications of American involvement in world affairs. The president was preoccupied with gradually incorporating the Soviet government into the system of states which had emerged after the war. This system, affected by the conflicting aims of powerful empires, of revolutionary movements, and of

²⁸Eleanor Roosevelt, This I Remember, p. 52.

democratic nations relatively content with the existing distribution of economic and political power was thought to be an adequate environment in which Washington could promote gradual, evolutionary change. The exclusion from this equation of the Soviet Union was impractical, and in the main, impolitic.

In mid-December 1933 William C. Bullitt went to Moscow as the first U.S. ambassador to the U.S.S.R. At the same time the State Department reviewed the possibility of transferring private American credits in Germany in exchange for long-term obligations of the Soviet government. The advantages of a private corporation set up to deal directly with the Soviet trade monopoly and guided by American diplomatic personnel were also debated, as was the prospect of an export-import bank maintained by federal authorities. Simultaneously, the State, War, and Navy departments analysed the implications of a Russo-Japanese war, while the Treasury department prepared to revoke previous directives concerning the importation of Soviet gold as well as the restrictions which had been imposed on a number of Russia's export commodities, including lumber, matches, and asbestos.

Bullitt, who had earlier remarked that he thought that first-rate U.S. ambassadors in China and Russia "might to a large extent control their common actions or at least prevent their acting in a way of which we disapprove," was overwhelmed by his reception in Moscow. Kalinin was not, he concluded, the "simple-minded peasant" he had thought. Rosengoltz, Commissar of Foreign Trade, proved highly intelligent and seemingly eager to promote Soviet exports of manganese to U.S. manufacturers. So too Mezhlauk of Gosplan, who emphasized the

commitments of the Second Five-Year Plan to light industry and the significance of importing American machine tools of all kinds to facilitate Russia's industrialization. Introduced to Krestinsky, Karakhan, Sokolnikov, and Rubinin, members of the Soviet foreign commissariat, Bullitt was impressed by their expertise and enthusiasm in promoting friendlier and substantive relations with the United States. Conversations with Molotov, Voroshilov, and Stalin confirmed in the ambassador's mind that the Kremlin's leadership was highly skilled, forthright, and very much interested in developing worthwhile relations with Roosevelt's administration. Somewhat shaken by the fact that while speaking with Stalin he had sensed that he "was talking to a wiry Gipsy with roots and emotions beyond my experience," Bullitt, nonetheless, suppressed this feeling. Exuberant and enthusiastic, he eagerly maintained that his mission had laid the groundwork needed to advance solid ties between Washington and the Kremlin. Indeed, nothing in Moscow had dissuaded the ambassador from thinking that American diplomats would be able to influence significantly Soviet foreign policy, not only in terms of the specific issues affecting Soviet-American relations, but also in terms of European and Asian problems.²⁹

²⁹ Bullitt to Roosevelt, July 7, 1933, PSF Subject, Roosevelt Library, Container 156, Folder: London Economic Conference. Also State Department files, 123 Bullitt, William C./32 and Marriner to Hull, December 24, 1933, 500.C001/895. Bullitt to Roosevelt, January 1, 1934, in Orville H. Bullitt (ed.), For the President-Personal and Secret: Correspondence between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt (Boston: HMC0, 1972), p. 66. American diplomats often demonstrated a high degree of anti-Semitism in their reporting of conversations with Soviet officials. Bullitt was no exception. See, for example, Bullitt to Moore, June 14, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934.

Returning to Washington early in January 1934, Bullitt reiterated to the president his appraisal of the major themes developed by Soviet leaders. Molotov had stressed that the U.S.S.R. sought to avoid military confrontations in order to work on the domestic reconstruction of the country. Voroshilov and Stalin had pressed for the shipment of thousands of tons of steel rails which, they argued, would enable Moscow to double track the trans-Siberian railroad, thereby reducing the likelihood of war with Japan. Insisting that the visit of an American naval squadron to Vladivostok or Leningrad would be of inestimable value, Litvinov had promoted the benefits of a multilateral nonaggression pact of the principal powers of the western Pacific, including the United States. The Soviet Foreign Commissar had further revealed that the Kremlin was pursuing greater cooperation with the French, that the distinct possibility existed that the U.S.S.R. would join the League of Nations, and that some kind of defensive alliance between Paris and Moscow might be the outcome of extensive negotiations scheduled throughout the year. An attack on the U.S.S.R. by Poland or Germany, or a combination of the two, Litvinov had maintained, was unlikely. But a Russo-Japanese war, which dragged on for several years, would offer an opportunity which Hitler and Pilsudski would probably exploit.³⁰

Bullitt also reported that despite the generally optimistic projections of Rosengoltz and Mezhlauk, Litvinov had emphasized that he did not think that the U.S. could expect an enormous increase in trade with the Soviet Union, unless long-term loans and credits were

³⁰Ibid.

forthcoming. Reflecting the different emphasis of the Second Five-Year Plan, Litvinov, contradicting what he had stated in June at the World Economic Conference, had revealed that the U.S.S.R. was not interested at this time in a large export and import trade. Self-sufficiency, he had maintained, was a political and economic necessity of the Soviet state.³¹

In the early months of 1934 the president and his advisers worked out their approach to the U.S.S.R. in terms of the European and Asian problems which would directly affect Washington's interests. A consensus was readily achieved concerning Moscow's entry into the League of Nations. Litvinov had already "explained" that this step was necessary if France and Russia were to be able to initiate a regional agreement for eastern Europe without contravening the Locarno pacts of 1925 and without arousing unnecessarily the suspicions of the German government. Confident that if Europe could be "freed from the tyranny of fear that now" gripped it, the whole world would "experience a confidence and tranquility" which would do much to ameliorate the outstanding differences among the powers, Roosevelt thought that the Soviet Union's admission into the League would be a stabilizing development. The political isolation of any state, particularly of the U.S.S.R., tended

³¹Ibid. Also, Izvestiia, February 10, 1934, and J. V. A. MacMurray to Hull, March 13, 1934, State Department files, 861.00 Congress of the All-Union Communist Party, XVII/3.

to exacerbate the postwar territorial and ideological aspirations of a number of states, already encouraged by Hitler's rise to power.³²

There remained of course the fact that Russian communism was committed to the destruction of capitalism, and that the Kremlin's political maneuvering revealed its willingness to use one power to offset the threats emanating from another. Committed to salvaging those elements of the treaty of Versailles which reflected American interests, the U.S. had little inclination to become trapped in the maze of European political machinations. Restrained by a domestic antipathy to European "entanglements," even those most inclined to support an internationalist position maintained that the U.S. should avoid any complications that might lead to war. Cooperation, including working whenever possible with the U.S.S.R., remained Roosevelt's policy toward Europe. But this did not entail specific political commitments. It did not have to. Washington was already convinced that it had done more than its "proportionate share" and that it had been "honestly unselfish in working for European peace."³³

³²Read Hugh Wilson to Hull, May 16, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4 General Committee/905 for an analysis of Russia's switch from universal to regional agreements. Additional material on the drift of the U.S.S.R. toward the League of Nations can be found in Breckinridge Long to Hull, December 5, 1933, State Department files, 500.A15A4 General Committee/684, and Long to Hull, June 1, 1934, *Ibid.*, 500.A15A4/2552. Roosevelt's statement on "tranquility" is available in Roosevelt to Norman Davis, August 30, 1933, Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 51.

³³Roosevelt to Norman Davis, August 18, 1933 and August 30, 1933, Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 51. On September 30 the president wrote to Ramsay MacDonald. Roosevelt indicated at this time that he thought that the "insane rush to further armaments in Continental Europe" was "infinitely more dangerous than any number of squabbles over gold or stabilization or tariffs."

In many ways the situation in East Asia was more difficult, if not more important. Japan's expanding military presence in China made the Kremlin amenable to a number of U.S. suggestions during the negotiations over recognition. It was assumed that as long as this threat existed it would provide a lever which the United States could employ if necessary. More important, a number of efforts had been made to persuade the Soviets that the United States had no intention of becoming involved in a war with Tokyo. That the Kremlin seemed content, according to Bullitt, with America's willingness to exert its "moral influence" to maintain peace in East Asia meant that the U.S. could expect reasonable gains at minimal cost.³⁴

A more complex problem, however, had to be resolved. This involved Washington's response to a Russo-Japanese war, an eventuality the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) thought might occur "at a not too distant date." Reviewing the developments of the previous several years, the ONI insisted in January 1934 that internal forces were pushing the Japanese government toward war. Moscow's commitment to communism was repugnant to the Japanese. The Soviet Union's "valuable fishing grounds off Siberia" were a "very considerable source" of Japan's food supply, a dependency many in Tokyo thought should be overcome. Soviet "propaganda" in China and Mongolia was also viewed by

³⁴Marriner to Hull, December 24, 1933, State Department files, 500.C001/895. Bullitt to Roosevelt, January 1, 1934, in Bullitt (ed.), For the President-Personal and Secret, p. 73. Wiley to Kelley, August 25, 1934, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936. Bullitt to Moore, March 29, 1934, and Moore to Bullitt, April 10, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934.

Tokyo as "a serious force opposing Japanese dreams of political and commercial supremacy in Asia."³⁵

Evidence existed, according to the Navy Department, that Japan's preparations for war with the Soviet Union were accelerating. Convinced that a limited war with the U.S.S.R. offered fairly good prospects of success, the Japanese army had supposedly augmented its forces in northern Manchuria. And Japan's munition and airplane factories were reported to be "working at maximum normal speed." In fact, Tokyo had already incited the White Guards against the Soviet officials at Harbin, and Major General Doihara, "Japan's agent provocateur [sic] par excellence," had been transferred into the area. Significantly, the weather in early spring favored extensive military operations. The cumulative impact of the rumors and of the longstanding concern with Japan's aggression in Manchuria prompted a review of the alternatives available to Washington at this time.³⁶

The ONI assumed that the Japanese would concentrate their naval forces in the western Pacific and that no effort would be made to blockade the Baltic, the Black Sea, or the Red Sea. It also assumed that the Japanese army would confine its military operations to eastern

³⁵ ONI memorandum on "pertinent factors in the Soviet-Japanese situation," January 31, 1934, in Admiral W. H. Standley to Bullitt, February 3, 1934, PSF Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 59, Folder: Japan, 1933-1934.

³⁶ Ibid. Litvinov had asked the Americans to intercede with Great Britain in the event of a Russo-Japanese war. The Soviet Commissar wanted both England and France to refrain from extending financial aid to Tokyo. Moore wrote to Hull on December 29, 1933 supporting the Soviet position. See Moore to Hull, December 29, 1933, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 35, Folder 67.

Siberia, particularly Primorskaya, Amur and eastern Outer Mongolia. It admitted that "any intervention in a Russo-Japanese war by the United States or Great Britain" was "an unattractive proposition."³⁷

Admiral Standley, the Chief of Naval Operations, pressed these views on Ambassador Bullitt as well as the president. He was supported in this effort by the War Department, which had reached similar conclusions. Maintaining that a decisive victory for either the U.S.S.R. or Japan would be detrimental to the United States, Lt. Colonel F. S. Clarke of the War Plans Division outlined early in 1934 the options available to Washington. He opposed extensive American financing of either belligerent in a Russo-Japanese war, and he insisted that any loss of imports from the Soviet Union or Japan would be beneficial, inducing a rise in domestic price levels. He assumed that the Japanese navy would be likely to violate the neutrality of the U.S. and that if Washington sought to maintain its neutral rights this "would very probably lead to war." More important, "such a war would be started under wholly unfavorable strategic conditions for the United States, and under no circumstances could the result be worth the cost." The risk of confrontation, he maintained, could be avoided if the U.S. curtailed its neutral rights. Every effort should be made, he insisted, "to expedite the complete withdrawal of the United States from any control over or responsibility for the Philippine Islands." If that were impossible, and if war began between Russia and Japan,

³⁷ Ibid.

then Washington "should immediately though unostentatiously begin to assume a posture of strategic readiness. . . ." ³⁸

Although numerous differences existed among the federal departments involved in analysing this question, the conclusions invariably adopted revealed the understanding that the U.S. had "no vital interest at stake in the Far East." The trade which had developed was important, but not essential. America's concern was simply to promote the principle of peace and to prevent, if possible, the domination of the western Pacific by the Japanese. Since neither China nor the U.S.S.R. was an immediate threat, and since Tokyo had already "embarked on a course of imperialistic expansion," the best means available to achieve Washington's goals was "to help China toward internal improvement by peaceful processes," and to help the U.S.S.R. "in the same sense." Every effort was to be undertaken which would "discourage overdevelopment of the military spirit in Japan" as well as to prevent the "abuse by that country of the military power" which it possessed. ³⁹

If, despite every precaution, war broke out between Moscow and Tokyo, Washington intended to call the attention of the belligerents to their obligations under the Kellogg-Briand Pact. America's neutrality would be announced at the same time that the U.S. maneuvered

³⁸ Ibid. Also, "Policy of the United States as a Neutral in a Russo-Japanese War" by Lt. Colonel F. S. Clarke, War Plans Division, War Department, March 1, 1934, military records, National Archives, 3834 War Plans Division.

³⁹ Hornbeck presented his division's evaluation in an extended memorandum on January 31, 1934. His personal assessment, appended to a copy of the memo on February 2, 1934, was that "indications point away from rather than toward" a Russo-Japanese war "in the immediate future." These materials are available in PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 59, Folder: Japan, 1933-1934.

toward the other great powers, especially Great Britain, which would be interested in maintaining "the principle of the freedom of the seas." After these initial steps there was some confusion over exactly what actions should be taken. A possibility existed that Washington would find it "essential to throw in its resources and influence and possibly its military strength on the side of the Soviet Union." Most diplomats, however, including Bullitt, thought that "the best insurance against the United States being drawn into a war between Japan and the Soviet Union" was "a large navy," a step Roosevelt was prepared to take following the collapse of the disarmament talks.⁴⁰

By early February the imminence of war in East Asia receded, and the State Department concluded that a Russo-Japanese conflict might not begin until 1935, if ever. Greater attention, therefore, was given to completing the arrangements for a final resolution of the debts owed to the U.S. by the Kremlin. To facilitate this and to prepare for the expected increase in trade between the two countries, the Secretary of the Treasury announced in January the revocation of three outstanding

⁴⁰ Ibid. Bullitt to Roosevelt, February 5, 1934, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 59, Folder: Japan, 1933-1934. The possibility that the U.S. would move toward Great Britain was complicated not only by America's efforts to redefine neutrality, but also by the possibility that England might wish to maneuver toward Tokyo. By late 1934 Roosevelt was sufficiently disturbed by this prospect that he told Davis to warn the English government that the U.S. would "approach public sentiment" in the Dominions if England sought to align itself with Japan. Consult Roosevelt to Davis, November 9, 1934, Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 51. Another interesting position of the president was expressed to Davis on October 5, 1934: "I cannot approve, nor would I be willing to submit to the Senate of the U.S. any new treaty calling for larger navies." This letter is also available in Davis Papers, Container 51. For a most thorough treatment of naval disarmament in the mid-1930s, consult Stephen E. Pelz, Race to Pearl Harbor: The Failure of the Second London Naval Conference and the Onset of World War II (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

departmental orders. A letter was forwarded to the Director of the Mint rescinding the prohibition imposed in late 1920 on the importation of Soviet gold. Treasury Department order 44620, which dealt with the use of convict labor in the production of Soviet lumber and its sale on the American market, was vacated. Restrictions imposed on Soviet matches in May 1930 were also removed; investigations had revealed that there was insufficient evidence to warrant such action.⁴¹

Concluding that "none of the accepted principles governing international commerce" applied when one state relied on a foreign trade monopoly and the other relied on private individuals, Washington also established an export-import bank. The initial enthusiasm for a private institution and then for a mixed corporation of private and public investors had waned. Established in February, the bank was intended to reduce the potential tensions which might evolve between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. It would allow the American government to use its economic power to induce the Kremlin to forego efforts to disrupt international trade. This suited Robert Kelley in particular. Pointing to the commercial convention signed by Russia and Persia in October 1931, Kelley had argued that the Kremlin, if left unchecked, would encourage trading arrangements with other countries which would discriminate against America's interests. He had also become convinced that the bank would reduce unnecessary political pressure from influential businesses which might not understand that trade would

⁴¹Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, 1, p. 5.

frequently have to be subordinated to the more significant, noncommercial aspects of America's foreign policy.⁴²

On February 20, 1934 the Americans presented to Alexander Troianovskii, the Soviet ambassador in Washington, a U.S. proposal which reflected its reading of the "gentlemen's agreement." Arguing that the Soviets owed one hundred and fifty million dollars, the State Department outlined a repayment period of twenty years with interest accruing at five percent per annum. The principal and interest would be repaid through an additional ten percent interest charge imposed on loans and credits from the U.S. government or any of its nationals. Bullitt remarked to the Soviet ambassador that the U.S. devaluation of the dollar under the Roosevelt administration made the one hundred fifty million dollar figure very reasonable: "We should insist on the payment being not a penny less."⁴³

⁴²Read the memo of Kelley on Soviet-American trade, July 1933, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 67, Folder: Russia, 1932-1933. Also, memo of the Near Eastern Division, March 1933, Presidential Papers-Cabinet Offices, State, Hoover Library, Container 50, especially pages 31-38; Moore to Phillips, December 7, 1933, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 18, Folder: Russia, December 1933; OF 198, Government of Germany, 1933-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: 1933-1934; Kelley's memorandum of October 16, 1933, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Container 243, Folder: Russia; and Kelley's memo to Moore, February 23, 1934, in memo from Moore to Hull, February 23, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Container 6, Folder: Export-Import Bank. One might also wish to consult Frederick C. Adams, Economic Diplomacy: The Export-Import Bank and American Foreign Policy, 1934-1939 (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1976), especially pages 98-128.

⁴³Roosevelt's memorandum of November 15, 1933 in For the President-Personal and Secret, p. 52. Bullitt to Hull, February 10, 1934, State Department files, 800.51 W89 U.S.S.R./22 1/2. Moore to Bullitt, March 3, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934. Also Troianovskii's early dealings with Roosevelt's administration in January and February, 1934; see DVP, XVII, 31-32 and 57-58.

Although Troianovskii showed little irritation at Bullitt's observation on devaluation and the debt, the Soviet response to the American offer was sharply critical. Litvinov complained that the "gentlemen's agreement" had not dealt at all with any interest on the debt itself. His understanding of the arrangements negotiated in Washington was that loans would be provided which the Kremlin could use for purchases in the United States or elsewhere.⁴⁴

The Soviet objections were dismissed. Kelley, Moore, Phillips, Bullitt, and Roosevelt were willing to admit that the "gentlemen's agreement" had not referred to interest on the debt. Also, the word loans had been used when credits had been meant. Nonetheless, the conversations between Soviet and American diplomats, they insisted, had made the U.S. position clear. "Astonished that Litvinov should talk about a direct loan" to the U.S.S.R., the president informed the State Department that he "did not favor it," and that it "would not receive the sanction of Congress."⁴⁵

⁴⁴ American diplomats quickly decided that Troianovskii's activities in Washington would be "largely of a window dressing variety." See Moore to Bullitt, March 19, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934. Litvinov to Troianovskii, March 14, 1934, DVP, XVII, 179-182. Also, DVP, XVII, 193-195, 226-227, 321-322, and 394-396. A review of some of the developments on Soviet trade can be undertaken in Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, June 2, June 9, August 18, and September 27, 1934.

⁴⁵ Kelley to Bullitt, March 17, 1934, State Department files, 461.11/394. Memoranda of the conversations between Troianovskii and Hull on March 26 and April 16, 1934 can be read in Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250. Also, Moore to Bullitt, March 3, 1934 and March 19, 1934, as well as Moore's memoranda of March 16 and July 16, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folders: Bullitt, 1934 and Russia, 1934-1940.

Although it noted the improving economic relationship between the Soviet Union and other capitalist countries, including Sweden, France, and Great Britain, the State Department decided to press its case. Kelley had argued that since the First World War the U.S. had become a great creditor nation with worldwide financial activities. Washington had a profound interest, therefore, in the legal principle "that a new government is responsible for the financial obligations contracted" by its predecessor. Besides, American financial assistance was "one of the most effective weapons we have to obtain from the Soviet government some measure of conciliation in reaching a solution of outstanding problems." Hull had reached a similar conclusion, reasoning that the U.S. should use "every available means of exerting pressure" on the Kremlin to gain a settlement favorable to Washington. So too had Bullitt, who had forewarned Litvinov in November that the Johnson bill, which would prohibit the purchase or sale in the United States of obligations issued by any government in default to Washington, was certain to pass the legislature in 1934. "Any absurd offer of settlement" from Moscow, the American ambassador maintained, would mean that the Russians would be "unable to obtain one penny of credit from either the government or any private corporation or individual in the United States."⁴⁶

⁴⁶Wiley maintained that the improvement in Anglo-Soviet relations was "perhaps one of the most significant developments in Soviet foreign policy for some years." Wiley to Kelley, July 27, 1934, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936. Kelley memorandum, October 25, 1933, State Department files, 861.01/1968a. Kelley to Phillips, September 25, 1933, FRUS: The Soviet Union, p. 14, and Hull to Roosevelt, September 21, 1933, Ibid., pp. 12-13. Bullitt to Roosevelt, November 15, 1933, State Department files, 711.61/353a. Moore to Bullitt, March 19, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934.

In the early months of 1934 the State Department emphasized what it thought was its decisive advantage. Convinced that the U.S.S.R. needed American financing, every effort was made to persuade the Russians to accept the U.S. proposals. Even though the Johnson Act, passed by Congress and signed by the president in April, had provided a loophole for the Export-Import Bank, the bank itself prohibited any transactions with the Soviets until the debt problem between the two nations was resolved satisfactorily. In March Hull informed Troianovskii that Washington was considerably surprised and disappointed by the Litvinov interpretation of the debt agreement. The Secretary of State did not hesitate to indicate "that it would perhaps be best to bring all commercial and financial relations to a standstill until there could be a clarification of these misunderstandings." In Moscow Bullitt revealed to Litvinov that he intended to ask Roosevelt to disband the bank unless Moscow abandoned its position.⁴⁷

Bullitt assumed that the U.S. had several "allies" within the Kremlin. The Russians' need of machine tools was extensive, and Soviet statements concerning their admiration of America's technological efficiency were still a commonplace. The Second Five-Year Plan's emphasis on technique and increasing the productivity of the Soviet worker did nothing to lessen Bullitt's estimate that the economic relations which

⁴⁷ Hull to Bullitt, March 19, 1934, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 67, Folder: Russia, 1934. The record of the Hull-Troianovskii conversation of March 26, 1934 is available in Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250. Moore's letters to Bullitt on March 16, March 19, March 26, and May 25, as well as his letters to Roosevelt on May 5 and May 8, 1934 may be read in Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934. Also, Troianovskii to NKID, April 5, 1934, DVP, XVII, 238, and the Soviet record of conversations between Bullitt and Litvinov in DVP, XVII, 241-245.

could exist between the two countries would be sufficient to sway the Kremlin toward the American position. Relatively optimistic in the spring of 1934 that Litvinov's obduracy would be overcome, the ambassador was particularly interested in attempting to exploit the Red Army's fears of a Japanese attack in eastern Siberia. The condition of the trans-Siberian railroad, he continued to emphasize, would be aided measurably by American rails and expertise. The conversations between the ambassador and the Commissar for Defense, Voroshilov, as well as the extensive talks between the U.S. military attaché, Philip Faymonville, and officers of the Soviet High Command stressed the need of mechanizing Soviet forces. The importance of the advanced technical and industrial foundation necessary for modern warfare was a persuasive argument, and Wiley and Bullitt thought that the Red Army constituted, in their words, "an excellent counter-irritant to Narkomindel obstructionism."⁴⁸

Although there were a number of indications that the problems could be resolved, the disagreements in the debt talks continued throughout the summer. The size of the debt, the role of the Export-Import Bank in overseeing Soviet purchases in the United States, and the level of the interest rates remained the stumbling blocks. A further

⁴⁸ Bullitt to Hull, April 16, 1934, State Department files, 761.94/734. Bullitt to Hull, July 27, 1934, *Ibid.*, 711.61/500. Bullitt to Hull, July 23, 1934, *Ibid.*, 761.00/245. Bullitt to Moore, June 14, 1934 and June 29, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934. Faymonville's messages to the War Department can be traced through Record Group 165, National Archives, 2037-2014/1, 2037-2014/2, 2037-2019/1, and 2515-D-142/1. Bullitt to Roosevelt, May 18, 1934, in Bullitt (ed.), For the President-Personal and Secret, pp. 87-88. Wiley to Kelley, July 27, 1934, Wiley Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diplomatic files, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936.

complication concerned the number of years which the U.S.S.R. would have to repay the new obligations undertaken with the Export-Import Bank. The Soviets proposed on August 24 that the U.S. extend credits totaling two hundred million dollars, half of which would be in short-term commercial credits, the other half in the form of a twenty year financial credit for the purchase of U.S. goods. The Kremlin indicated its willingness to accept a rate of seven percent interest on both types of credits. The Export-Import Bank would be allowed to control the financial arrangements.⁴⁹

The Soviet negotiators argued that the machinery and industrial equipment that was of interest to them could only be financed over an extended period of time. The American inclination to demand repayment in five years was completely unrealistic, according to the Russians, considering the problems faced by the Soviet economy and the pressures exerted by the continuing depression on many of the world's markets. Favorable treatment of Washington's demands, moreover, might affect adversely the Soviet Union's relations with other powers. England, France, Germany, and a number of other countries had large claims outstanding against the U.S.S.R., and the Narkomindel was wary of jeopardizing benefits possible from these relationships in exchange

⁴⁹ Moore assured Hull that Troianovskii had been informed that the U.S. "did not intend to make a loan to his Government under any form." Moore to Hull, September 7, 1934, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 37, Folder 78. The messages between the NKID and Troianovskii in August, 1934 can be traced in DVP, XVII, 529-532, 534-535, 565, and 570-571.

for American cash and Washington's willingness to use its "moral influence" to preserve the peace.⁵⁰

The American negotiators were unimpressed. Hull warned Troianovskii that if a settlement could not be achieved it would be "better to dissolve the Bank and drop the matter entirely, accepting the consequences which such an action would entail." The State Department announced in late summer that it was "not possible to be optimistic that any settlement" would be reached, and Assistant Secretary Moore indicated that the U.S. had gone as far as it intended to go in terms of making concessions. To do otherwise, Moore maintained, would be "an unthinkable sacrifice of the public interest." In Moscow, Bullitt remarked to Soviet officials that the collapse of the debt talks "might well be a death blow to the development of really friendly and intimate relations between our countries." Certain matters, Kelley wrote to Samuel Harper, had not been "settled as rapidly as we had hoped."⁵¹

A number of initiatives were launched from within the American government to break this impasse. First, there were the memoranda of John Wiley, an American diplomat stationed in Moscow, and second, there were the efforts of the president, who pressed Moore repeatedly

⁵⁰The conversation between Krestinsky and Bullitt on September 21, 1934 that developed some of these points is available in DVP, XVII, 603-606.

⁵¹A precise rendering of the proposals and counterproposals in the debt negotiations can be reviewed in Frederick Adams, Economic Diplomacy, pp. 112-123. Moore's statement to the press, September 6, 1934, State Department files, 800.51 W89 U.S.S.R./120. Bullitt to Hull, September 27, 1934, FRUS: The Soviet Union, 149-150. Bullitt to Hull, October 5, 1934, Ibid., 155-156. Kelley to Samuel Harper, June 3, 1934, Samuel Harper Papers, University of Chicago Library, Chicago, Illinois, Container 18, Folder 36.

throughout the summer for a final settlement of the debt negotiations. Arguing that his ideas were an attempt "to clarify points of view and not to propose or even to influence policy," Wiley maintained that it did not "serve our interests in the slightest to adopt an attitude of outraged innocence." He reminded Kelley that the term loans had been used synonymously with credits, that the Treasury Department in the fall of 1933 had been in a state of transition, and that "the pressure of more important things," that is, the domestic legislation of the New Deal, had permitted "Litvinov to argue his thesis, sincerely or insincerely, without much danger of being successfully refuted." Accepting that "domestic considerations in the United States" would "probably exert a decisive influence on any decision of policy which may be reached," Wiley insisted that a number of other variables should be taken into account if the Soviet position were to be understood. He was particularly interested in the policies of France and in offsetting the inclination of U.S. diplomats, who had begun to argue that "good faith" was lacking in the U.S.S.R. "to an extent that might make it better for us not to do any Soviet business at all."⁵²

"French influence" was "very great in Moscow" at this time, Wiley emphasized. Paris wanted to "keep the defaulting nations in a united front against the United States." The "czarist bond holders in France" were also legion, well-organized, and "could always exert considerable pressure on the French government if some other nation were

⁵²Wiley to Kelley, August 14, 1934, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936.

to receive a settlement which they themselves were not getting." The delicate negotiations surrounding the proposed Eastern Locarno and the possibility of a Franco-Soviet defensive alliance were other considerations that Moscow and Paris kept foremost in mind. This had become especially evident following the bellicose statements of Germany since 1933, the collapse of the special links between the Reichswehr and the Red Army, and the German-Polish ten year nonaggression pact announced in January 1934.⁵³

Convinced that the Kremlin would yield in respect to controlled credits and that it would eventually accept the American view of the capital amount of the Soviet payments, Wiley tentatively suggested that the U.S. revise its position and enter into negotiations on "a new and altered basis." The Soviet economy had become "progressively more and more independent of the outside world." He doubted "very much whether the Foreign Office or the civilian side of Soviet industry consider trade with and credits from the United States as terribly urgent or particularly indispensable." The Red Army was admittedly interested in close contacts with the United States, and the Soviet government was inclined to "leave nothing undone for political reasons to effect good relations" with Washington. But the relaxation of Russo-Japanese tensions which accompanied the negotiations for the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway and the build-up of Soviet forces in the Far East had

⁵³Wiley to Bullitt, November 26, 1934, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 2, Folder: Russia, 1934-1935-Ambassador Bullitt. Bullitt to Moore, September 8, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934. Litvinov's observations on the German-Polish nonaggression pact can be followed in State Department files, 761.00/239 and /245, and 761.94/734.

made the Kremlin less apprehensive. Moscow's European policies were also enormously complicated, and although eager to include the U.S. in support of an Eastern Locarno, Soviet leaders were not foolish enough to rely on America's indirect influence to combat the possibility of a military conflict with one or more of the great European powers.⁵⁴

Although absorbed with domestic problems and content to let the state, commerce, and treasury departments resolve the issues left by his conversations with Litvinov, Roosevelt accepted much of Wiley's argument. He also did not want the relationship with the U.S.S.R. to damage his domestic political position. Even before Wiley's initiative, he had urged Kelley, Moore, and Bullitt to get results. Amtorg had been pressuring Peek concerning the Soviet Union's willingness to place orders for tin, lead, copper, airplane motors, rails, and cotton. Jesse Jones of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation also held numerous conversations with Soviet trade personnel. Furthermore, a number of U.S. exporters were becoming "exceedingly restive, and were "trying to place responsibility" for the delay in the debt settlement on Roosevelt's administration. By April, the president was inclined to "go much farther" than his Assistant Secretary of State "in modifying the original debt proposals." In May Moore wrote to Bullitt emphasizing this point: "Speaking very personally I think the President is most anxious that an agreement should be reached, and will take a very liberal view of any proposal you can extract from Litvinov." In the following

⁵⁴Wiley to Kelley, July 27, 1934, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936.

months Roosevelt continued to support any kind of reasonable settlement.⁵⁵

Willing to forgo any mention of the Kerensky debt in the final arrangements and inclined to use much of the Soviet payment for the settlement of private claims, the president did not, however, intervene personally with the Soviet Foreign Commissar as he had done in November 1933. To understand this, it is necessary to review the domestic political pressures which did so much to shape his foreign policy. Those exporters eager for trade with the Soviet Union, although willing to bring their point of view to the State Department's attention, did not think it in the public interest to interfere with the U.S. negotiations with the U.S.S.R. They were generally willing to follow the lead of the American government, assuming that Washington was better prepared to integrate evenhandedly all of the elements which had to be considered in foreign policy decision-making. In addition, the businessmen who sought extensive commercial arrangements with the Russians were relatively few compared to those in the business community who would "bitterly resent" any arrangement which provided a straight loan to the Soviet trade commissariat. Willing to press this point of view on Washington, they reemphasized what had already been carefully noted by the president the previous November. A survey of the editorials of hundreds of newspapers had revealed that, albeit many favored recognition, a great number were vigorously opposed to direct loans or

⁵⁵Moore to Bullitt, March 3, March 26, April 24, May 4, May 8, May 25, June 4, and July 2, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934. Also, A. C. Dutton to Hull, June 21, 1934, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 36, Folder 76, and the Hull-Troianovskii conversation of July 30, 1934, Ibid., Container 61, Folder 250.

uncontrolled credits to the U.S.S.R. These views carried weight in the U.S. Congress, and Roosevelt could "not afford," according to Moore, "to antagonize this definite public sentiment." There was also the consideration that the general public condemned the default of the European nations on their debts from the First World War. "The general thought," Moore indicated to Bullitt in June, was that "we are being made a sort of punching bag by all the other countries." The passage of the Johnson Act in April and the increasing attention to the ideas of the "new neutrality" made "capitulation" by Roosevelt to the Soviet Union a difficult path to tread.⁵⁶

Moreover, the president had few allies within the bureaucracy. Wiley did not represent any major center of State Department support for moderating the approach already adopted. In fact, Wiley had been seriously concerned when he had written his memorandum that he would be perceived as "going pro-Bolshevik in a big way." Faymonville, the military attaché in Moscow, was rapidly gaining this reputation, a consideration which would adversely affect his career. In any case, Wiley shared the view that the Narkomindel was deliberately obstructing the negotiations, that the Red Army could be used to persuade the Kremlin to alter its position, and that the Soviet economy, despite the

⁵⁶ Moore to Bullitt, May 1, June 18, July 2, July 9, August 6, August 13, and August 28, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934. Moore to Hull, May 14, 1934, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 36, Folder 74. The pressure from businesses hostile to the U.S.S.R. can be followed in part in: OF 60, U.S. Tariff Commission, Roosevelt Library, Miscellaneous Reports, 1933-1942, Container 9, Folder: Matches; OF 61, Tariff Matters, Roosevelt Library, Miscellaneous Reports, 1933-1945, Container 6, Folders: "M" Manganese and Matches; and OF 61 Tariff Matters, C, 1933-1945, Container 2, Folder: "C" Coal.

protestations of its leaders, needed the technology and expertise that the Americans could provide. He did not push his views forcibly.⁵⁷

Perhaps even more important than these developments, however, were the repercussions which the New Deal had aroused by 1934. In September James True, who had been writing about communist influence on Roosevelt's administration since early spring, established America First, Incorporated. This organization to promote "American values" and to denounce Roosevelt's efforts to "socialize" the country was not an isolated development. George W. Christians, who had founded the Crusaders for Economic Liberty, led his White Shirts in 1934 in support of capitalism and to prevent the rise of communism in the U.S. under Franklin Roosevelt. William Wirt, the superintendent of schools in Gary, Indiana, testified that he had been told of the efforts of the "regimenting radicals" of the New Deal to prevent recovery as the first step toward revolution. And Walter Steele and other members of the American Coalition of Patriotic, Civic, and Fraternal Societies insisted before the McCormack-Dickstein committee that the Roosevelt administration was a threat to the constitution and political liberty in America.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Bullitt thought Wiley "first-rate on diplomatic matters," but also one of "the most pettily selfish human beings that I know." Moore maintained that Wiley's "indolence and distaste of routine show that he lacks the qualities that are very essential to one occupying his position." Consult Bullitt to Moore, June 22, 1935, and Moore to Bullitt, April 18, 1935, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1935. Also, Wiley to Bullitt, January 31, 1935, and Wiley to Kelley, February 9, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 2, Folder: Russia, 1934-1935 and Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936.

⁵⁸ Read George Wolfskill and John A. Hudson, All But the People: Franklin D. Roosevelt and His Critics, 1933-1939 (London: Macmillan Company, 1969), especially, pp. 93-105.

Separated from these groups, many of which represented the extreme fringes of American politics, and considerably more significant was the growing opposition of men like Al Smith and John W. Davis, both of the president's party, and of Herbert Hoover, the Republican ex-president who had refused initially to attack the New Deal. The confidence of the business community which was emerging concurrently with the economic recovery, the hostility to what was perceived by many to be the inordinate preoccupation of New Dealers with social regimentation, and the clumsiness and ineptitude of the National Recovery Administration were developments which might be molded into a powerful force capable of precluding Roosevelt's reelection in 1936. Working to bring this about, Hoover lashed out publicly throughout 1934, denouncing the disastrous character of Roosevelt's legislative program. The "domain of liberty," Hoover insisted, "can be defined by virtue, by reason, by the common will, and by law. It cannot be defined by arbitrary power." Committed to the Constitution, a "sound financial system," and "true liberalism," Hoover and his supporters repudiated what they thought was a "challenge" to American liberty. The blue eagle of the NRA became a Soviet duck, and Roosevelt in the minds of many became the demagogue willing to overthrow the American system.⁵⁹

Sustained by conclusions that the presidential election of 1932 had been "a revolution without guns" and that much of the unrest had been induced by the communists, Roosevelt's opponents were irksome,

⁵⁹ Consult Joan Hoff Wilson, Herbert Hoover: Forgotten Progressive (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975), pp. 209-221, and Herbert Hoover, The Challenge to Liberty (New York: Scribner's, 1934). The implications of the evolving antipathy to the New Deal and its effect on Soviet-American relations is dealt with more fully in the next chapter.

and would become even more so if they gained in strength. Yielding entirely to the Soviet interpretation of the "gentlemen's agreement," therefore, would not have helped the president's interests. The Roosevelt-Litvinov Letters had already served his immediate purpose, which was to excise the anomaly of nonrecognition. The U.S. economy had also rebounded from the depths to which it had fallen in the early months of 1933. It had responded to changes in Washington's monetary policies and it had confirmed in the president's mind that adjustments in foreign trade were not the quickest, most effective means to accelerate internal development. Essentially optimistic that the problems of Europe and Asia could be resolved peacefully, Roosevelt shared with other progressives and with many U.S. diplomats the conclusion that a distinction could be made to exist between economics and politics. This was an error the Kremlin, despite its reliance on the Marxian dialectic, was never inclined to make.⁶⁰

IV

Moscow viewed many of the early developments of Roosevelt's administration with equanimity. The initial U.S. approach to European problems announced by Norman Davis in late May 1933 was greeted enthusiastically, although the president's support of MacDonald's disarmament proposal was dismissed as misguided. Roosevelt's admonition that nations forego sending military personnel across foreign borders reminded the Soviet government of its own definition of aggression debated

⁶⁰Castle to Frank Kellogg, November 21, 1932, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Container 15, Folder 128: Frank B. Kellogg, 1925-1939.

earlier that year in Geneva. That Roosevelt was seeking to "avert a disastrous outcome of the developing contradictions between the imperialist powers" was to be expected. That the inflationary measures of the New Deal would fail to create the overseas markets that the Russians assumed were needed by America's powerful industries was also readily understood. In fact, the continuing economic debacle of the Western economies augmented the Soviet view that the Russian economy would play a pivotal role in the future negotiations of the Kremlin and the capitalist countries. It further corroborated the legitimacy of the Bolshevik revolution, the Kremlin's belief in the decline of the bourgeois democratic states, and the importance of completing the five-year plans.⁶¹

From the Soviet Union's perspective American diplomatic recognition was "a victory of common sense," and proof of "the iron logic of historic events." An act of the greatest international significance, it created "a correlation of forces with which adventurous groups would have to reckon." America, Stalin asserted, had been "considered in various countries as the bulwark of all anti-Soviet tendencies." But even it had recognized that it was illusory to think that it could continue to ignore normal relations with the U.S.S.R. The collapsing disarmament conference, the problems that had developed in the western Pacific, the success of the Bolshevik revolution, and Washington's own search for a "planned economy" had supposedly created

⁶¹ Izvestiia, May 21, 1933. Pravda, May 21, 1933. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, July 20 and July 25, 1933.

an irresistible momentum that led to Roosevelt's initiative. The "settlement" of the outstanding problems which separated the two states had been the result. Recognition, the Kremlin argued, was a victory for the Soviet policy of peace.⁶²

Whether a victory or not, America's approach to the U.S.S.R. did not obscure the Kremlin's perceptions of the uninspired record of Washington's European policies. This was particularly the case in terms of Moscow's realization that a counterbalance to the Third Reich was for the moment indispensable. Bullitt's observations in December 1933 had reaffirmed the unwillingness of the U.S. to concern itself unduly with Europe's political problems. The hypercritical domestic response to the statements of Norman Davis in May concerning America's role in preserving the peace had preceded Roosevelt's disruption of the World Economic Conference that summer. Both had indicated the nationalistic preoccupation of the American government. Moreover, the U.S. had supported throughout the 1920s controlled trade expansion, had promoted systematic direct investment by American private enterprises, and had extended its economic power through corporate and financial organizations whose efforts did not entail formal diplomatic linkages. The Dawes and Young plans, denounced by the Kremlin as failing efforts to sustain the temporary postwar capitalist stabilization, had been an additional corroboration of Washington's attempts to achieve European economic supremacy without the burden of direct

⁶²Cole to Hull, October 24, October 27, and December 1, 1933, State Department files, 711.61/294, /319, and /433. See also 861.00S.R. 3/29, 861.00S.R. 18B/1, and 861.00S.R. 10/12. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, July 25 and November 25, 1933. Izvestiia, November 20, 1933. XVII s'ezd vsesoiuznoi kommunisticheskoi partii (b). 26 ianvaria-10 fevralia, 1934 g.: stenograficheskii otchet. Moscow, 1934.

political and/or military responsibilities. Unfortunately from the Soviet Union's viewpoint, these economic policies, although significant, were palpably insufficient in combating the threat of German aggression. Instead, political agreements to inhibit German expansionism were perceived to be the most advantageous avenue to pursue. Not unexpectedly, this type of agreement was also more acceptable to other European powers absorbed with the meaning and significance of Hitler's rise to power.

Following the extension of the Soviet-German treaty of Berlin in May 1933, and preceding Germany's repudiation of the disarmament conference and the League of Nations in October, the Narkomindel completed arrangements with a number of European and Middle Eastern nations. U.S. recognition of the U.S.S.R. was but one of the "victories" of Soviet foreign policy in 1933. In the summer Rumania, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Estonia, Poland, Latvia, Iran, Afghanistan, Lithuania, and Czechoslovakia signed conventions with the Soviet Union defining what they meant by aggression. Major gains for the Russians, these pacts helped to accelerate the drift of certain countries, especially Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, toward de jure recognition of the Kremlin. In addition to these developments, which had been eagerly sought by the U.S.S.R., the Spanish government agreed to exchange diplomatic representatives with Moscow in July, and in September a nonaggression pact was signed with Italy. Even more significant, following the collapse of the Four Power Pact (which would have aligned Great Britain, Italy, France, and Germany), the English government lifted its embargo on Soviet goods and participated in the negotiation

of a new commercial treaty which reduced the Anglo-Soviet tensions precipitated by the Metro-Vickers trial earlier that spring.⁶³

Most important of all, there was the evolving policy of France. In May, the same month that the treaty of Berlin had been extended, the French parliament ratified the Franco-Soviet nonaggression pact of 1932. In August Eduard Herriot, the former premier, toured the Soviet Union. In September, a similar journey was undertaken by Pierre Cot, the French Aviation Minister. Simultaneously, negotiations between Paris and Moscow continued over commercial matters of interest to both countries.⁶⁴

In the fall serious political conversations began between the Quai d'Orsay and the Narkomindel. Cognizant of Britain's ambivalence to continental problems and the growing fissures among France, Poland, and the Little Entente, both powers discussed the prospect of some type of mutual assistance agreement. Rejecting by December a bilateral pact between Paris and Moscow, Paul-Boncour and Litvinov settled on a multilateral arrangement which would include Germany and other nations, including Belgium and Czechoslovakia. Disinterested in sustaining French political hegemony in Europe, and disinclined to irritate Berlin, the Soviet Union sought to maintain a balance of power within Europe

⁶³ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, September 25, 1933, November 7, 1933, and January 6, 1934. Breckinridge Long to James Roosevelt, October 25 and October 31, 1933, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 58, Folder: Italy-Breckinridge Long, 1933-1936. State Department files, 761.65/46 to /51, and 761.0012 (Aggressor) /2 to /57. The Italian nonaggression pact was typical of many the Soviets signed; read DVP, XVI, 494-496. Also, Pravda, September 3, 1933, and Izvestiia, December 16, 1933.

⁶⁴ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, September 15, 1933. Consult DDF, i, V, 234-236 and 436-437 for some of the details of the Franco-Soviet commercial negotiations.

which would preclude any coalition of capitalist states eager to initiate a second military intervention of the U.S.S.R. A draft declaration between Poland and Russia, which purported to demonstrate their mutual willingness to consult each other in the event of any threat to the independence of the Baltic states, was also accepted in principle by the middle of December.⁶⁵

Washington was not involved in any of these negotiations, although the Kremlin recognized that the U.S. would be of some indirect use in Europe if it could be persuaded to reduce French fears of German aggression. The Kremlin's efforts to accomplish this proceeded along two distinct lines. First, Litvinov "expressed the hope," according to Bullitt, that the United States would "give its public endorsement of the Eastern Locarno proposal." The American ambassador was assured that this agreement would, if at all possible, include Germany and Poland. It would be complemented at a later date by a Mediterranean Locarno which would be attached to the Balkan Pact and would include Italy, Turkey, Greece, Spain, and a number of other countries. England would be urged to give a kind of moral support to the latter agreement in view of its control of the straits.⁶⁶

⁶⁵An eclectic list of some of the documents that trace the negotiations between Moscow and Paris in 1934 includes: DDF, i, VI, 258-262; DVP, XVII, 73-88, 99-101, and 140-142; and for late 1933, DVP, XVI, 593-596, 689-694, and 772-774. In addition, read William Scott, Alliance Against Hitler: The Origins of the Franco-Soviet Pact (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1962).

⁶⁶Of particular interest are State Department files, 740.0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/1 to /180. Even more important are the instructions from Litvinov to Troianovskii and the conversations between Bullitt and the Soviet Foreign Commissar throughout July 1934. Consult DVP, XVII, 431-432, 460-461, 466-468, 469-476, and 478.

Bullitt reported to Hull in July 1934 that Litvinov's endeavor to elicit a favorable American response had presumably been prompted "more or less as a joke." Every opportunity, the ambassador averred, had been taken to convince the Soviet Foreign Commissar that Washington had no intention of becoming actively involved in any of the multi-lateral political agreements discussed in these years. More important, the U.S. ambassador indicated that the Eastern Locarno would probably fail to materialize because of the hostility of the German and Polish governments. Pilsudski still dreamed, Bullitt maintained, that a Soviet-Japanese war would give Poland an historic opportunity to extend its control over Lithuania, and perhaps part of the Ukraine. Berlin also had no intention of tying itself to such an agreement, and Britain's support was a chimera, considering its view of European developments. There was every indication, in fact, that the British "may sooner or later acquiesce" in German expansion eastward, an event which the British embassy in Moscow would look upon "with sympathy."⁶⁷

By September 1934 Rubinin, a Soviet diplomat stationed in Moscow, informed Bullitt that Russia had given up its efforts to secure an Eastern Locarno. Instead, the Soviet government was proceeding with the Franco-Soviet mutual assistance agreement, which many American diplomats viewed apprehensively. The prospect of a Franco-Russian military alliance was, according to Hugh R. Wilson, "a thought which

⁶⁷ Bullitt to Hull, July 20, 1934, State Department files, 740.0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/15. Wiley to Kelley, October 18, 1934, and March 16, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936. Wiley to Hull, February 6, 1935, State Department files, 761.00/253.

gives profound concern." Wilson assumed that it would throw the Poles and the Germans together, that it would risk the rupture of the Little Entente, and that "such an alliance would jeopardize, if it did not definitely terminate, British support of French policy" in Europe. Kelley maintained that the Russians were striving to increase "the power and prestige of the Soviet state" by exploiting the differences among the capitalist powers. He thought their efforts insincere, self-serving, and dangerous to the precarious stability which then existed in central and eastern Europe. Absorbed with the faltering debt negotiations, Bullitt delighted in the prospect that the French might go off the gold standard if the agreement between Paris and Moscow failed to materialize. The U.S.S.R., the ambassador thought, would then become much more inclined to settle the debt questions in favor of the American proposals.⁶⁸

The possibility existed, however, that a mutual assistance agreement, unencumbered by military articles, might prove beneficial. Uninterested in any military intervention of the Soviet Union, and irritated by the British policies toward disarmament as well as by London's approach to Japan and Germany, Washington was in no mood to intervene to block an agreement, or series of agreements for that matter, which might preclude a European conflict. The admission of the

⁶⁸ Bullitt to Hull, September 25, 1934, State Department files, 740.0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/56. Hugh Wilson to Hull, September 22, 1934, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 37, Folder 78. Kelley to Hull, January 14, 1935, State Department files, 751.61/170. The Friends of the Soviet Union published articles denouncing the idea that France and the U.S.S.R. were negotiating a military alliance. Consult examples in State Department files, 761.00/252. Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, 3, p. 205.

Soviet Union into the League of Nations in September and the implications of a Franco-Soviet agreement on inhibiting the Japanese from making war on the U.S.S.R. in East Asia were developments which might accrue to America's advantage.

Although not a "joke," Litvinov's efforts to secure U.S. support for an Eastern Locarno were secondary to another approach, which dealt with the transformation of the Disarmament Conference and the inclusion of the United States in a new "peace conference" to treat major problems affecting European politics in the mid-1930s. Following a speech by Norman Davis on May 29, 1934, Litvinov reiterated in a long exegesis of Soviet foreign policy the need for total disarmament if the political problems faced by the world's nations were to be resolved. Critical of Germany and intimating that the various arms proposals of other countries were selfishly motivated, the Soviet Commissar recommended that the disarmament machinery established at Geneva be transformed into a "permanent peace conference." This would facilitate, Litvinov maintained, the consideration of the Soviet definition of aggression as well as an analysis of which sanctions might be applied against an aggressor. It was understood that "military measures not acceptable to all states" would never be pursued. Separate regional pacts of mutual assistance for those nations interested in the security of particular areas would also be examined. The conference would sit as a permanent body for the prevention of war.⁶⁹

⁶⁹Litvinov's speech of May 29, 1934 is available in DVP, XVII, 352-360. In addition, read Norman Davis to Hull, May 29, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4 General Committee/930.

Russia's proposal had been made necessary, Litvinov argued, because the League of Nations was an institution incapable of effective action. It was too "straightly bound by its statutes," particularly Articles XII, XV, and XVI. It had been created when war in the immediate future was unlikely, and it did not represent the interests of all the great powers. It had failed as an instrument to achieve worldwide disarmament. Its importance in maintaining peace had been seriously impaired.⁷⁰

On June 3 Litvinov submitted a draft resolution to the General Commission detailing his ideas. The emphasis remained on the "establishment of agreements and the adoption of decisions and measures creating new guarantees of security." The "adoption of any preventive measures likely to prevent armed conflicts," the "supervision of the execution of the conventions and decisions of the conference," and immediate "consultation in the event of a violation of international treaties for the maintenance of peace" were all incorporated in the Soviet proposal. The American government was officially notified of Russia's initiative on June 28.⁷¹

Following an examination of Litvinov's ideas, the State Department rejected them. Its analysis indicated that membership in

⁷⁰ Litvinov, May 29, 1934, DVP, XVII, 359. Litvinov's speech to the League of Nations on September 18, 1934 is also of interest. Read DVP, XVII, 593-601. He maintained at that time that "collaboration" among nations was a "principle" which was not "unacceptable to the Soviet state and its ideology." A competent survey of this material is Lowell R. Tillet, "The Soviet Union and the Policy of Collective Security in the League of Nations, 1934-1938," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1955).

⁷¹ The Soviet Union's draft resolution is found in DVP, XVII, 366-368.

the envisaged "peace conference" would obligate the U.S. in ways which were unacceptable. Participation meant "the examination of all questions affecting the peace and security" of the signatories, including, for example, the Polish corridor and the Saar plebiscite. It meant "recommending agreements for nonaggression" and "keeping the performance of these agreements under observation." Consultation in the face of threatened hostilities was expected as was the application of the "moral, economic, or other" measures approved by the participants to reestablish peace. Assuming that the Russian proposal would be dropped once the U.S.S.R. joined the League of Nations, the State Department ignored it.⁷²

Its "hydra head" reappeared again, however, in September. Litvinov continued to press the proposal on the Disarmament Conference at the same time that he spoke with Bullitt in Moscow and with Wilson in Geneva. Reporting to Hull in early October, Bullitt repeated Litvinov's principal argument: "the chief interest of the other powers in establishing such a conference would be to obtain the participation of the United States" in European political concerns. Convinced that "ultimate war in Europe was inevitable" and that "there was not one government in Europe, even the French, which was ready to do anything real to preserve peace," Litvinov insisted that "he felt that there was nothing for the Soviet Union to do except to strengthen the Red Army in every way possible and rely on the army to protect the Soviet Union

⁷²The most effective way of coming to grips with the State Department's view is to read the extensive memorandum prepared by Pierrepont Moffat of the Division of Western European Affairs, December 28, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4 Permanent Disarmament Commission/84.

from attack." The "few millions that we might pay you on a debt settlement," Litvinov remarked, might better be used for "tanks and guns." He did admit, however, that "some hope of preserving peace in Europe" was possible, if his idea for a "permanent peace conference" were adopted.⁷³

On the evening of November 20 Litvinov dined with Hugh Wilson, and after several desultory observations on British disarmament policy and the tensions which continued to exist between Moscow and Tokyo, the Soviet Foreign Commissar restated the Soviet Union's interest in supplanting the Disarmament Conference. The Kellogg Pact lacked provisions for implementing its renunciation of war, Litvinov maintained, and "some form of implementation should be devised." The machinery of the League of Nations was "too cumbersome"; its "step by step procedure to sanctions . . . frightened not only the United States" but many League members as well, including Great Britain. Since Washington was reluctant to become involved too intimately with the League, it was essential "to devise something whereby the United States would consult with the rest of the world if there were a real threat to peace." Reminding Wilson that he and Roosevelt had discussed "the possibility of showing a united front on the part of the whole civilized world against the unruly ambitions of Germany and Japan," Litvinov asserted that a permanent peace conference would be indispensable in coordinating the

⁷³Bullitt to Hull, October 5, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4/2588. Wilson to Hull, September 27 and October 4, 1934, *Ibid.*, 500.A15A4/2584 and /2589. Pierrepont Moffat to Norman Davis, October 8, 1934, Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 2, Folder: "Arms Manufacture." The conversations of Bullitt, Litvinov and Krestinsky on September 21, September 26, and October 10, 1934 are contained in DVP, XVII, 603-606, 612-615, and 632-634.

"united public opinion among the sober nations of the world." It would facilitate the taking of "such measures as might be necessary to hold the unruly" countries "in check."⁷⁴

Unconvinced, Wilson reminded Litvinov that "the American people were profoundly interested in the disarmament movement," but that they "firmly refused to concern themselves" with European squabbles. "The experience of over a year ago when he had worked with France and Great Britain in the endeavor to find a basis of agreement which might be acceptable to Germany" had aroused enormous public indignation in the U.S. This antipathy to European problems had, if anything, increased, fanned by the depression, the Nye Committee, and the defaulting of the European powers on the debts owed Washington since the First World War.⁷⁵

Bullitt had also concluded that there was "certainly no need for an immediate" reply to the official notification of the General Commission concerning Russia's conference proposal. Confident that the U.S. intended to avoid the "mess" of European politics and that there was no need to indicate to the Soviets that Washington might accede to

⁷⁴ Wilson to Hull, November 21, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4 Steering Committee/47. Pierrepont Moffat to Kelley, Hornbeck, and Phillips, December 4, 1934, *Ibid.*, 500.A15A4/2618. It is altogether probable that Litvinov misunderstood Roosevelt's observations in November 1933. The president had been taking every occasion to remark that he thought Lippmann's statement that ninety-two percent of the world sought peace, while only eight percent (Germany and Japan) sought to disrupt that peace was particularly significant. See, for example, Roosevelt to Robert Bingham, November 13, 1933, in Elliott Roosevelt (ed.), FDR: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, I, 369-370, and Litvinov to the NKID, November 17, 1933, DVP, XVI, 658-660.

⁷⁵ Wilson's memorandum in Pierrepont Moffat to Kelley, Hornbeck, and Phillips, December 4, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4/2618.

such a proposal in order to get the U.S.S.R. to accept the U.S. reading of the "gentlemen's agreement," the ambassador saw little reason to support the Soviet position. Norman Davis, Pierrepont Moffat, and Cordell Hull agreed, with the Secretary of State hoping that the idea would die of "inanition."⁷⁶

Nevertheless, Hull was unwilling to antagonize the Soviets needlessly, and he expressed as late as December 1934 "my interest in any proposal of this or like nature" in his conversations with the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Washington. Preoccupied with the significance of disarmament and its impact in Europe and East Asia, the State Department was busily promoting a convention on the manufacture of arms. A reflection of Washington's assumption at this time that a consideration of disarmament "in its broader phases would not only be useless, but actually dangerous," this convention was what Hull had meant when he had indicated in September that the U.S. was "desirous of taking all feasible and practicable steps toward promoting peace." The Russians, although seeking to put behind them as rapidly as possible their long-standing commitment to universal disarmament, did not respond negatively to the American initiative. Still, it was obvious to Litvinov that Germany was "a mad dog that can't be trusted." Japan's aggression in Asia was also manifestly evident, the Amai "doctrine" earlier that spring revealing the extent of Japan's designs for the western Pacific.

⁷⁶Review State Department files, 800.51 W89 U.S.S.R./140; Norman Davis to Hull, October 9, 1934, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 37, Folder 79; Davis to Hull, November 14, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4/2604 (also, /2605 and /2589); Hull to Amdelgat, November 21, 1934, Ibid., 500.A15A4/2610; and Pierrepont Moffat's memorandum, December 4, 1934, Ibid., 500.A15A4/2618.

America's refusal to come to terms politically and militarily with these developments accentuated Moscow's suspicions about Washington's intentions, reemphasized its fear about the possibility of an anti-Soviet war, and reconfirmed the conclusion that the U.S.S.R. should be able to stand alone, economically and militarily, whenever possible.⁷⁷

This last determination had been reinforced by the unwillingness of the United States to enter a bilateral or multilateral non-aggression agreement for the western Pacific, and its refusal to rush through the economic package which would better prepare the U.S.S.R. for war with Japan. The French were of little value in East Asia, despite their territorial interests. Anglo-Soviet relations could not "boast of stability or permanence," although some improvement had been noted with Great Britain since the spring of 1933. Neither the fact that Japan was "morally isolated throughout the world" nor the negotiations begun with the Manchukuoan delegates over the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway precluded Japanese military ventures against Russia in the Far East. Litvinov, therefore, had pressed the Roosevelt administration for some type of political and/or military demonstration that would restrain the Japanese while the U.S.S.R. built up its power in the Maritime provinces. Willing to exclude China from any agreement

⁷⁷Memoranda of the conversations among Hull, Neymann, and Skvirsky are available in State Department files, 500.A15A4 Permanent Disarmament Commission/82 to /83, and DVP, XVII, 717-719. Hull's press statement, September 27, 1934, State Department files, 500.A15A4 Permanent Disarmament Commission/78. Wilson to Hull, September 27, 1934, Ibid., 500.A15A4/2587. Hull to Amdelgat, October 15, 1934, Ibid., 500.A15A4/2591. Davis to Hull, October 22, 1934, Ibid., 500.A15A4/2594. Davis to Hull, November 7, 1934, Ibid., 500.A15A4/2600. Also, State Department files, 500.A15A4 Steering Committee/471 to /475; DVP, XVII, 753-755; and Wiley to Bullitt, March 5, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 2, Folder: Russia, 1934-1935-Ambassador Bullitt.

concluded among Tokyo, Washington, and Moscow, and arguing that the eventual recognition of Manchukuo was inevitable, the Narkomindel was disgusted by the refusal of the U.S. to act in concert with the Soviet Union. Washington's limp response to the Amau doctrine, which had initially thrilled the Soviet Foreign Office because of its presumed effect on the American government, and the rhetorical commitments to an open door by Roosevelt's administration were interpreted in the course of time as manifestations of America's continuing hostility toward the U.S.S.R.⁷⁸

Not unexpectedly, these developments sustained the Kremlin's conclusion that Russia's international position was dependent primarily on the internal transformation of Russian society. Soviet foreign relations, Molotov argued early in 1933, were essentially a function of "our internal growth," that is, "the growth of the forces of Soviet power." An assertion repeated frequently throughout the 1930s, its significance was defined in terms of the results of the First Five Year-Plan. What the capitalists had labeled as the "insane fantasy" of the Kremlin was publicly trumpeted as a huge success. Socialism, Molotov insisted before a joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, had "gained a decisive victory." Collectivization had been accomplished "in the main." The Dnieper Hydroelectric

⁷⁸The communications among Litvinov, Yurenev, and Troianovskii that are of interest can be found in DVP, XVII, 33-34, 69-70, 160-164, 190, 303-305, and 687-692. Also, Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 6, 1934; Bullitt to Hull, March 13, 1934, State Department files, 711.6112 (Aggressor)/1 and /8; Bullitt to Hull, March 14, 1934, Ibid., 761.00/239; Bullitt to Hull, April 22, 1934, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 67, Folder: Russia, 1934; and Moore's memorandum of March 16, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1934.

the White Sea Canal, the Ural-Kuznetsk combinat on the Siberian taiga, and the enormous productive facilities constructed at Magnitogorsk were the proof, according to Soviet leaders, of their arguments. Moreover, the Soviet Union's "colossal industrial development" paralleled a "catastrophic drop in the industrial output" of the capitalist countries. The "success" of the economic planning of the Soviet economy was apparent; its importance obvious in terms of "the consolidation of our internal and international position."⁷⁹

Reviewing these developments early in 1934, Stalin, the archetypal proponent of the "Russianness of Leninism," addressed the assembled delegates of the Seventeenth Party Congress. The U.S.S.R., he maintained, "stands alone like a rock, continuing its work of socialist construction and its struggle for the preservation of peace." He was not surprised that "bourgeois pacifism" was "now dragging out its miserable existence." He insisted that Fascism, particularly in Germany, was "a sign of weakness of the bourgeoisie," and that Western politicians had demonstrated their inability "to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy." Admitting that some improvement had been noted in the capitalist economies in 1933, he stated that the international economy was characterized by the intensification of the struggle for markets, the disinclination to support free trade, currency wars, and confrontations over the dumping of industrial and agricultural goods. The aggressive steps of Japan in Asia and Germany's rejection of

⁷⁹ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 5, 1933, January 20, 1933, January 30, 1933, February 17, 1934, and June 2, 1934. Pravda, February 9, 1933. Izvestiia, February 8, 1933.

the League of Nations also made war probable. And it seemed relatively clear that a new war would "undoubtedly unleash revolution" which would "put in question the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries."⁸⁰

Typically, Stalin cautioned that even with war the "end" of the bourgeoisie was not "predetermined." The "victory of the Revolution never comes by itself," he remarked. "It must be prepared, and must be won", and "only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare and win it." To insure that Russia was able to exploit capitalist confrontations Stalin reemphasized the importance of securing the economic and political power of the Soviet Union. This would enable the Kremlin to wield a strong military force which would protect the U.S.S.R. and help extend Russia's influence if a favorable opportunity presented itself. More important, it would help to dissuade either a combination of European powers or Japan from concluding that their internal or international problems could be resolved by acts of aggression against the U.S.S.R.⁸¹

To insure the continued success of the Soviet Union's approach, the Kremlin adopted a more reasonable set of goals in its Second Five-Year Plan. At the same time it argued that the "struggle for the victory of socialism was inseparably linked up with the peace

⁸⁰Read Robert C. Tucker, Stalin as a Revolutionary, 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973), p. 248, and XVII s'ezd vsesoiuznoi kommunisticheskoi partii (b). 26 ianvaria-10 fevralia, 1934 g.: stenograficheskoi otchet. Moscow, 1934. Also, Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 3, 1934.

⁸¹Ibid.

policy pursued by the Soviet government." By 1933 the U.S.S.R. announced that it was not interested in any big new tasks of a quantitative order. The Second Five-Year Plan, according to Molotov, would be "mainly devoted to the complete and efficient utilization of the new enterprises" developed in the early 1930s. The most immediate goals, Grinko insisted, were to master "the new technique," increase the productivity of labor, and cut the costs of production. These views were supported by Rosengoltz, the Soviet Commissar of Foreign Trade, who emphasized that Russia sought self-sufficiency, a justifiable aim considering the "capitalist encirclement."⁸²

The Soviet government had also moved to ameliorate some of the excesses undertaken between 1930 and 1932. The collection of agricultural commodities was placed on a more regular basis. By spring 1933 the repression of the peasants had moderated. Furthermore, Stalin had addressed the All-Russian Congress of Leading Kolkhoz Workers, and had announced that it was his wish to make all collective farmers prosperous. It was an extraordinary speech considering the General Secretary's part in the massive losses incurred because of the agricultural policies which he had previously supported.⁸³

Concurrently, a joint resolution of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission directed that all "unreliable and unstable" elements be removed from the party's ranks. This was to insure

⁸² Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 20, 1933, November 15, 1933, January 6, 1934, and January 13, 1934.

⁸³ A competent survey of these developments can be found in Adam Ulam, Stalin: The Man and His Era (New York: Viking Press, 1973), pp. 358-379.

a continuation of "iron proletarian discipline." Double-dealers, degenerates, and careerists were removed, and replaced by new members drawn primarily from the "intelligentsia." The moderate Stalinists like Kuibyshev and Kirov, who might have disagreed with the pace of the planning undertaken by the U.S.S.R., had as little inclination as Stalin to witness the weakening of the party. It was, after all, the instrument of socialism in Russia.⁸⁴

America's recognition of the Soviet Union, of course, had no direct impact on these decisions. Indeed, the Kremlin was quite content to let U.S. diplomats struggle with the significance of the Seventeenth Party Congress. Moreover, the impact of the purges in Russia on America's public opinion was ignored. U.S. officials were left to ponder the implications of what they thought was Stalin's political shift to the right and the opposition this engendered, a confrontation which Wiley and Bullitt assumed represented a debate between "Sovietism and Communism." Even after the assassination of Kirov in December 1934 and the bloody reprisals which followed it, Stalin did not worry excessively about its international repercussions. Arousing apprehension internally by creating and exploiting visions of foreign threats, and the possibility of capitalist interference in Russia's domestic political affairs were tools unhesitatingly employed by the General Secretary. The rise of Germany and a bellicose Japan made this approach that much more effective. The animosities precipitated externally, a result of Soviet

⁸⁴T. H. Rigby, Communist Party Membership in the U.S.S.R., 1917-1967 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 197-209. Wiley to Kelley, October 18, 1934, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936.

perceptions and the internal demands of Stalin's efforts to achieve and to maintain political supremacy, were a reasonable price to pay.⁸⁵

V

Working through temporary alignments with capitalist powers, the Kremlin had sought the maintenance and extension of Soviet power. Early in 1935 Molotov summarized before the Seventh Congress of Soviets exactly what this "expediency of cooperation" had entailed. Every effort had been made to diffuse the threats from Germany and Japan, the "extreme imperialist wirepullers" which were "openly talking of new predatory wars." Reassurances of "our deep respect for the German people" accompanied assertions that Russia had "no other wish than to continue further good relations" between Moscow and Berlin. Despite the theories of the Nazis, and the hysterical anti-Soviet outbursts of Hitler, trade relations between the two countries were still being pursued, capped by an agreement between Kandelaki and Schacht, which, Pravda unabashedly claimed, was "in accord with the policy of supporting and strengthening universal peace." In dealing with the Japanese, Molotov assured the assembled delegates that the Kremlin was demonstrating "patience and the requisite compliance," and that in the

⁸⁵J. V. A. MacMurray to Hull, December 16, 1933, State Department files, 861.00-Congress of the All-Union Communist Party, XVII/1. Cole to Hull, June 16, 1934, Ibid., 861.00-Congress of the All-Union Communist Party, XVII/6. The efforts of Wiley and Bullitt to understand Kirov's murder are available in State Department files, 861.00/11572 and 861.00/11575 through /11579. Also, read the Phillips memorandum, November 2, 1933, Ibid., 711.61/320; Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, December 6, 13, 27, 1934 and January 3, 1935; and Bullitt to Wiley, January 7, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 2, Folder: Russia, 1934-1935-Ambassador Bullitt.

negotiations concerning the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway the Soviet position was "dignified yet flexible." More important, and definitely more comforting to the delegates, was the assurance of the Assistant Commissar of Defense, Tukhachevsky, who revealed the increases in the Special Far Eastern Army and the fact that the border fortifications in eastern Siberia had been completed by late 1934.⁸⁶

In the months following the Seventh Congress of Soviets, other pieces of the Narkomindel's strategy fell into place. The "intended rapprochement" with France, which had "a favorable soil for development" considering European conditions, culminated in a mutual assistance agreement between Paris and Moscow. Stable relations with the Baltic countries were reaffirmed, with the U.S.S.R. willingly recognizing (for the moment) "the integrity and complete economic and political independence of these countries." Closer ties had also become possible with Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, and by late spring Benes traveled to Russia, following the completion of a mutual assistance agreement between the Kremlin and Prague. Finally, in spite of the military superiority which the Russians had developed over the Japanese in the contested areas of northeastern Asia, the Soviet Union relinquished its control over the CER. The Kremlin remained convinced at this time that war with Japan was not in its interests.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 17, February 7, 10, 14, 24, March 28, and April 18, 1935. U.S. diplomats assumed that Russia might sacrifice its "rapprochement" with France if better arrangements could be worked out with Germany; see Wiley to Hull, February 9, 1935, State Department files, 761.00/255.

⁸⁷ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 7, 28, March 21, April 4, 18, May 9, 23, June 13 and 20, 1935. In addition, consult State Department files, 761.0012 (Aggressor)/66 to /78; Wiley to Hull,

This support of the international status quo was simply a tool to preclude Russia's involvement in a war that would disrupt the transformation of the Soviet state. Collective security, therefore, was acceptable insofar as it promoted Soviet perceptions of "peace." This self-serving orientation did not, of course, mean that the U.S.S.R. opposed war among the Western states. If the security of the Soviet Union could be enhanced by such a development, so much the better. Accepting that confrontation was inherent in its view of the "capitalist encirclement" of the U.S.S.R., and maintaining that pacifism and collaboration were not hallmarks of the Soviet leadership, the Kremlin maneuvered amidst the debris of the collapse of the postwar capitalist stabilization. In this regard, the United States was not nearly as important in 1935 as it had been in 1933. Considerable progress had been made with Britain, France, and Czechoslovakia. Every effort had been made by the Soviet government to minimize the outstanding difficulties between Moscow and Germany and Japan. Since it was "impossible to get the United States to involve itself in any effective way in international affairs in Europe or the Far East," there "was not much to be gained," the Soviet Foreign Office insisted, "by courting the favor" of Roosevelt's administration.⁸⁸

February 6, 1935, Ibid., 761.00/254; and Wiley to Kelley, April 30, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936.

⁸⁸Cole to Hull, September 20, 1933, State Department files, 761.0012 (Aggressor)/31. Bullitt to Hull, October 26, 1935, Ibid., 711.61/574. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 6 and March 14, 1935. Wilson to Hull, February 12, 1935, State Department files, 500. A15A4 Permanent Disarmament Commission/91. Also 500.A15A4 Permanent Disarmament Commission/99.

Predictably, the Americans had also been disappointed by the developments in Soviet-American relations. First, the expansion of trade between the two countries had not occurred. Pointing to the opposition of the Soviets to controlled credits and the "general cussedness" of the Russian negotiators, the State Department placed the blame entirely on the Soviet Union. Irritated by the results of the president's idiosyncratic approach to foreign policy decision-making, and convinced that Bolshevik leaders were exemplars of deceit and double-dealing, many U.S. diplomats thought that the United States had been badly used by the Russians. It confirmed their previous dislike of the Soviet Union, and it supported their conclusion that dealings with Russians should be kept in their professional hands, isolated as far as possible from presidential interference and the vagaries of public opinion.⁸⁹

The behavior of the Soviet Foreign Commissariat had also been particularly exasperating. Litvinov, having achieved America's diplomatic imprimatur, was not, the State Department concluded, as interested in U.S. support as he had led Washington to believe. Convinced that Russia's Foreign Commissar seemed "to be without any conscience whatever," Moore, for example, derided Soviet promises as meaningless, and pointed to the continued activities of the American Communist Party in addition to the problems over debts as proof of his assertion. Even Wiley argued that Litvinov was "conducting a pretty active anti-American

⁸⁹Wiley to Bullitt, February 6, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 2, Folder: Russia, 1934-1935-Ambassador Bullitt. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, February 14, 1935.

campaign." By early 1935 a consensus evolved among U.S. diplomats in Washington and Moscow that it was extremely difficult to accomplish "anything constructive" with the Soviet Foreign Office. Its "blend of vanity, petty shrewdness, and profound stupidity" was "overwhelming."⁹⁰

Finally, there was an increasing disposition to view warily the growth of Soviet power and its effects on international affairs. The "approaching conflict," Wiley maintained in April 1935, would "in the final analysis be between Bolshevism, Fascism, and Democracy." By "maneuvering among the positive and negative forces which dominate conflicting German, French, Italian and British policies," the U.S.S.R. might "eventually see" its enemies "confounded and her own allies fall like ripe fruit from their capitalist tree tops." Bullitt concurred, assuming as he did that "one cannot be optimistic about the future of European civilization." Unless "the states of Europe stop fighting each other or the Soviet Union is defeated in war," the U.S.S.R. would become, Bullitt insisted, "a juggernaut" which would be able to "sweep the continent" within "the next fifteen years." It was a disquieting prospect.⁹¹

⁹⁰Felix Cole to Hull, June 16, 1934, State Department files, 861.00-Congress of the All-Union Communist Party, XVII/7. Wiley to Bullitt, March 5, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 2, Folder: Russia, 1934-1935-Ambassador Bullitt. Wiley to Kelley, March 16, 1935, *Ibid.*, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936. Moore to Hull, March 5 and June 5, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 18, Folder: Russia, 1934-1940. Moore to Bullitt, July 9, 1934, in Orville Bullitt (ed.), For the President-Personal and Secret, p. 92. Bullitt to Moore, September 8, 1934, *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

⁹¹Wiley to Kelley, April 2, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936. Bullitt to Moore, June 2, 1935, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1935.

Interestingly, Roosevelt did not seem as concerned. Enormously intrigued by the arrests and executions following Kirov's murder, and probably willing to agree with Wiley that the Soviet point of view internally had "gone entirely lunatic," Roosevelt took into account various other considerations. He had been impressed by the argument that "no generalization on the Soviet Union can have more than momentary validity." Discounting the perennial pessimism of Washington's ambassador in Berlin about European conditions, he had accepted, in part, Dodd's conclusion that "American-English-Russian cooperation" was necessary to preclude another world war. That the Russians had begun "to fear that they had drawn a busted flush" with the French, despite the mutual assistance agreement recently undertaken, complicated the picture. So too did the fact that Wiley and many others assumed that the German army would cut through Russia "like a knife through butter" in any European confrontation. It was preferable, the president assumed, to continue to seek through contacts with the Kremlin the leverage that might be of significance in the future. Whether the opponents of the U.S.S.R. in the United States, horrified as they were by the developments following Kirov's death, would be able to persuade him in the context of domestic and international developments to jettison his efforts to cooperate with the Russians was not immediately evident. That such a possibility existed was obvious, not only because of the internal hostility aroused by the New Deal, but also because of the difficulties over debts and propaganda that had marred the months following recognition. The approaching presidential election would be another consideration. For the moment, however, the

president was relatively confident that his approach to the U.S.S.R. would not have to be sacrificed to appease his domestic political and bureaucratic opponents.⁹²

⁹²Wiley to Kelley, January 18, 1935, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Correspondence with the Division of Eastern European Affairs, 1934-1936. Bullitt to Hull, October 2, 1934, State Department files, 861.01/2102. Wiley to Hull, January 3, 1935, Ibid., 861.00/11586. Bullitt to Hull, May 5, 1935, Ibid., 861.00/11603. William Dodd to Samuel Harper, January 16, 1934, Samuel Harper Papers, University of Chicago Library, Container 18, Folder 23. Dodd to Harper, February 15, 1934, Ibid., Container 18, Folder 23.

CHAPTER VI

DETERIORATION

The Seventh Comintern Congress in 1935, the U.S. presidential election in 1936, and Roosevelt's inclination to work with any power interested in maintaining peace amidst the rapidly disintegrating European political situation shaped America's view of U.S.-Soviet relations from 1935 through 1938. These developments reemphasized the differences between Washington and Moscow, and reaffirmed the distinguishing characteristics of the pluralistic political system versus the controlled environment of the single-party state.

In Russia in these years Stalin moved against all possible centers of opposition to his regime. A Bolshevik who interpreted international affairs and the proposals of the Western powers in terms of his unique reading of the interests of socialism and communism, the General Secretary changed the nature of the Russian revolution. His version of the internal priorities of the U.S.S.R. was preeminent. It promoted industrialization, increased the strength of Russia's armed forces, and, paradoxically, both strengthened and weakened the position of the Soviet Union in world affairs. It also sustained Zinoviev's observation of 1930, which argued that the connection between domestic and foreign policies becomes particularly manifest in a revolutionary epoch.

I

The "wolves" were "beginning to crowd in and bark again," according to Joseph Davies, who wrote to Roosevelt in December 1935, several months before his appointment to replace Bullitt as the U.S. ambassador to the U.S.S.R. Father Charles Coughlin, the "radio priest" who had supported the revaluation of gold and the remonetization of silver, and who had proclaimed that the New Deal was "God's Deal," had become increasingly disenchanted with Roosevelt's administration. The prospect that Coughlin would join with the Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith and Dr. Francis Townsend troubled the president's political advisers, particularly James Farley, who persuaded Roosevelt to meet with Coughlin early in 1936. As had been the case in their past encounters, the most recent at Hyde Park the previous September, the strained conversations held at the White House on January 8 resolved nothing, except to remind the president of his personal dislike of the "padre." By the summer Coughlin, a supporter of the Union Party and the presidential aspirations of William "Liberty Bill" Lemke, led a chorus of those who denounced Roosevelt's New Deal and its alleged communist ties. In July, the weekly journal Social Justice, the principal organ of Coughlin's views, maintained that the "sleek-bodied, honey-tongued New Dealers have made love to the filthy untouchables from Moscow." A reference to the support given the administration by Earl Browder and the American Communist Party, this attack provided the theme around which many of the president's opponents coalesced.¹

¹Davies to Roosevelt, December 31, 1935, President's Personal File 1381, Roosevelt Library. Sheldon Marcus, Father Coughlin: The

Later described by Coughlin as "a viper" and "a leech," as well as "anti-Christian, anti-Semitic and anti-God," Gerald L.K. Smith joined in the assault on the New Deal. A powerful, convincing speaker, Smith denounced the "damnable tyranny" of that "sick man." He pointed to the "pink, bureaucratic, socialistic, pro-communist clique" which supposedly surrounded the president, and he captivated the thousands of Americans who flocked to his speeches with the argument that the New Deal was a transparent communist plot. He, too, supported Lemke in 1936, and he sought to lead the "Share Our Wealth Society," the southern phenomenon established in 1934 by the liberal, obstructionist, and flamboyant Huey Long of Louisiana. Whether these activities could be effectively coordinated with Coughlin's National Union for Social Justice was a question of some significance to Roosevelt's administration.²

In addition, Republicans and disaffected Democrats joined in the fray, revealing their sympathy for the political "solutions" of the past and their dread of alternative policies even indirectly associated with socialism or communism. On January 16, 1936 Herbert Hoover criticized Roosevelt's agricultural policies in a speech at Lincoln, Nebraska. He recalled his own plans for the voluntary cooperation of U.S. farmers, aided by the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929. He decried the social and economic regimentation which had been nurtured

Tumultuous Life of the Priest of the Little Flower (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), pp. 98, 104, 106, and 194.

²Marcus, Father Coughlin, p. 105. T. Harry Williams, Huey Long (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1969), pp. 699-700. George Wolfskill and John A. Hudson, All But the People, pp. 107-109.

by the New Deal, specifically by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. Emphasizing traditional tenets of American capitalism, he reminded his audience that without economic freedom political liberties would be forfeit. To corroborate this point he referred to the fate of Russia's farmers, who had grudgingly supported the Bolsheviks. Eager to seize their chance because of the promise of land, these Russian peasants had renounced "the newborn Democracy" of the Kerensky government. Although temporarily satisfying, their decision had led to the debacle of the early 1930s and to "the choice of Siberia or the collective farms." The parallel with the United States, he maintained, was unmistakable. Roosevelt's administration had sacrificed "freedom," America's "most precious heritage," so that "this generation might escape its responsibilities." A call to political sanity and a demand for the rejection of Roosevelt's reelection, Hoover's speech sought to rekindle the traditional Republican support of midwestern farmers for the Republican Party.³

Within two weeks of the former president's address, Al Smith, the Democratic presidential nominee defeated by Hoover in 1928, spoke at Washington's Mayflower Hotel. An audience of business leaders had gathered under the auspices of the American Liberty League, organized in August 1934 by Jouett Shouse, a former executive chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Smith had already broken with the president, as had many of the others in the ballroom. They were fearful

³ Hoover quoted in Ray Lyman Wilbur and Arthur Hyde, The Hoover Policies (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), pp. 173-180.

of the fiscal and monetary policies of the administration and the disregard for the constitutional guarantees of property and free enterprise which had contributed, they argued, to America's growth. Dismayed by the fact that the New Deal seemed to be selling "our American birthright for a mess of Communistic pottage," Smith insisted that the United States was faced with a choice. "There can be only one capital," he proclaimed, "Washington or Moscow. There can be only the clear, pure, fresh air of free America, or the foul breath of communistic Russia. There can be only one flag, the Stars and Stripes, or the flag of the godless Union of the Soviets. There can be only one national anthem, The Star Spangled Banner or the Internationale."⁴

An emotional, indeed, hyperbolic plea, Smith's speech was applauded enthusiastically that January evening in 1936. So too were the observations of Hoover, Coughlin, and the myriad other critics of the New Deal who categorized Roosevelt's legislative program as a variation on a communist theme. Whether motivated primarily by a sense of patriotism and by fear of the disintegration of American "values," or whether simply exploiting opportunistically the predilection of many Americans to detest political exercises identified with socialism, the critics of Roosevelt's administration were invariably aided by the actions of the Soviet government.⁵

⁴Wolfskill and Hudson, All But the People, pp. 162-166. Oswald Garrison Villard, "Al Smith--Latest Phase," American Mercury, XXXIV (February, 1935), p. 148.

⁵Numerous Soviet violations of the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreements had been noted throughout 1934. See, for example, Mrs. F. E. Grant to Roosevelt, February 25, 1934, State Department files, 711.61/490. Also, Moore to Hull, March 5 and June 5, 1934, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 18, Folder: Russia, 1934-1940.

During the latter half of the president's first term, Soviet leaders reemphasized the unique character of the Bolshevik cause, a topic which annoyed Hoover and the other protagonists of the superiority of American capitalism. The successes of the Five-Year Plans were glorified as Stalin continued to concentrate on the internal needs of the Soviet state. Recognizing that the German threat was real, but not immediate, and that Japan's interest in Siberia had been temporarily dulled by the Franco-Soviet mutual assistance agreement, the power of the Red Army, and Moscow's willingness to sell its share of the Chinese Eastern Railway, Stalin emphasized the importance of Soviet self-sufficiency. To do otherwise, he insisted, would be disastrous. The "foundations of socialism" would be undermined. Russia, "technically weak and dark in respect to culture," would lose its independence. It would be "converted into an object in the game between imperialist powers," a captive of the bourgeoisie. Several capitalist states, he asserted, would prove useful in Russia's transformation, and this was one of the reasons why the Kremlin supported the League of Nations and the promotion of peace through collective security. Later these commitments could be discarded, a view certain to antagonize Moscow's numerous detractors in the United States.⁶

Even though Stalin's speeches received only limited circulation in America, the convening of the Seventh Congress of the

⁶ Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 17, February 14, and May 16, 1935. Several of Stalin's speeches, including one at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites, are available in A. Fineberg (ed.), Soviet Union, 1936 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1936), pp. 3-44. Also, Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 1, January 9, and January 22, 1936.

Comintern in the summer of 1935 generated enormous public interest in Soviet-American relations. Browder's part in promulgating the policy of the popular front also substantiated a principal theme of the opponents of the USSR: the Kremlin was an untrustworthy, dangerous, infinitely wily adversary. Litvinov's pledges to Roosevelt in 1933 had been cavalierly ignored, they insisted, as the Soviet government demonstrated anew its treachery. Dismissing the argument that the Comintern's efforts were a defensive reaction governed by the Soviet Union's treaty arrangements with France and Czechoslovakia, Roosevelt's critics demanded a repudiation of Moscow's perfidy. Horrified by the "radical" direction of the New Deal's economic policies, they were disgusted by Browder's subservience to the Kremlin. "The Red and Roosevelt revolutions" were an intolerable combination. They were grave threats to American liberty.⁷

The speeches, articles, and interviews of Russia's leaders in the early months of 1936 also reaffirmed the ruthlessness of the Kremlin. In an address delivered to the second session of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. on January 10, Molotov, the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, reiterated the reasons for "the rapid

⁷Matthew Woll, Ralph Easley, Governor Earle, the Military Order of the World War, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion were especially vigorous in their insistence that Washington break relations with the U.S.S.R. See New York Times, June 23, 1935, 6:4; July 31, 1935, 16:3; August 4, 1935, 18:1; August 26, 1935, 14:1; September 2, 1935, 2:2; September 7, 1935, 4:1; September 8, 1935, 32:5; September 18, 17:1; September 20, 1935, 11:3; and September 26, 1935, 1:3. Also, Wall Street Journal, August 27, 1935, 4:2; Chicago Tribune, August 27, 1935, 10:1; and San Francisco Examiner, August 7, 8, 20, and 26, 1935. Bullitt to Hull, August 31, 1935, State Department files, 711.61/551. Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes: The First Thousand Days, 1933-1936 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1953), pp. 428-430.

rise in the standard of living of the working class and the collective farm peasantry." It was due, he asserted, to "the liquidation of capitalist elements" within the Soviet Union, that is, "the abolition of parasites that live at the expense of the people." Noting that "the petty-bourgeois mentality" was still "very strong" and that "elements" which were hostile to the Bolsheviks' aims had not yet "entirely disappeared," Molotov indicated that the "liquidation" of the Kremlin's internal enemies would continue.⁸

Within days of Molotov's speech, Karl Radek reemphasized these ideas in Izvestiia. The "building of socialism," he noted, was "the basis for our national defense," and it "creates the power which will crush all the attempts of the enemy to disrupt our great work." Recapitulating Molotov's generalizations on foreign affairs, Radek included the assertion that the Soviet Union's participation in the League of Nations did not mean that the U.S.S.R. had adopted "the political line of the League or of the capitalist powers belonging to it." A restatement of the primacy of domestic considerations in determining Russia's foreign policy, it distressed those who supported the Soviet Union because of its professed interest in peace. It fueled, moreover, the antipathy of the Kremlin's traditional American opponents. Radek, it was argued, had merely confirmed the undependability of the U.S.S.R.⁹

⁸ Molotov's speech may be read in Henderson to Hull, January 11, 1936, State Department files, 711.61/589.

⁹ Izvestiia, January 12, 1936. Henderson to Hull, January 13, 1936, State Department files, 711.61/590. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, January 15, 1936. Criticisms of the Soviet Union from the First Baptist Church to the New York Board of Trade are available in State Department files, 711.61/546 to /597.

Even more irritating was Stalin's interview in March with Roy Howard, the president of the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain. Notwithstanding his observations about the "friends of peace" and their instruments of public opinion, particularly the League of Nations, the Soviet dictator averred that capitalism was "the chief war menace" of the day. Warming to his task he noted calmly (and mendaciously) that there was "no justification whatever" for the widespread concern that the Soviet Union, if given the opportunity, would force its political theories on other nations. "If you think that Soviet people want to change the face of surrounding states, and by forcible means at that, you are entirely mistaken," he insisted. As for the accusations that the U.S.S.R. sought to bring about a world revolution, Stalin dismissed these as "the product of a misunderstanding." The Bolsheviks, he maintained, "never had such plans and intentions."¹⁰

Stalin also stressed that Moscow had "fulfilled, and will continue to fulfill" the agreements signed by Roosevelt and Litvinov in November 1933. He rejected the argument that the Seventh Comintern Congress had violated these arrangements. He referred to the presence in America of Russian White Guard emigrants who were carrying on propaganda within the United States against the U.S.S.R. He did not expect Washington to deport them since that would encroach upon the right of asylum proclaimed by the United States. He did not understand, however, why Americans should expect the Kremlin to do that which they had no intention of doing themselves. As far as the speeches of

¹⁰ Fineberg (ed.), Soviet Union, pp. 47-58. New York Times, March 5, 1936, 16:2 and 20:4. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, March 11, 1936.

Browder and Darcy were concerned, Stalin insisted that he did not remember them. No matter, even if they had called for the overthrow of the American government by force, these statements had been made by U.S. citizens, leaders of a political party which existed legally in the United States. "It would be quite wrong," Stalin maintained, "to hold the Soviet government responsible for the activities of American communists."¹¹

Finally, Stalin praised the work proceeding on the new Soviet constitution, and extolled the existence and extent of individual liberty in the U.S.S.R. "Our society consists exclusively of free toilers of town and country--workers, peasants, intellectuals. Each of these strata may have its special interests and express them by means of the numerous public organizations that exist." More important, "we did not build this society in order to restrict personal liberty but in order that the human individual may feel really free. We built it for the sake of real personal liberty, liberty without quotation marks." Furthermore, "real liberty can exist only where exploitation has been abolished, where there is no oppression of some by others, where there is no unemployment and poverty, where a man is not haunted by the fear of being tomorrow deprived of work, of home and of bread." It was difficult to imagine, Stalin concluded, in an obvious reference to America's continuing depression, "what 'personal liberty' is enjoyed by an unemployed person, who goes hungry, and cannot find employment."¹²

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid. An analysis of the Soviet view of law is available in Bullitt to Hull, March 19, 1936, State Department files, 761.00/269. Stalin's observations were particularly effective in influencing the

A bravura performance, Stalin's interview confirmed the suspicions of those the Kremlin preferred to identify as "fascists." It sustained the advocates of Russian social and economic democracy who were cheered by the draft of the new Soviet constitution. And it irritated many of America's diplomats who stressed the limited possibilities inherent in Soviet-American relations.

The perceptions of William C. Bullitt had been drastically altered by the events of 1935, and he swung his support behind a position which became increasingly anti-Soviet, though not anti-Russian. Bullitt had informed Roosevelt in the weeks before the opening of the Seventh Comintern Congress that he had been striving to convince the Kremlin that a "gross and insulting" violation of previous pledges made to the U.S. would be disastrous to Soviet interests. Personally offended by the Soviet Union's handling of the Congress itself, and incensed by the cynicism of Litvinov and the arrogance of Radek, the American ambassador had been astonished by Moscow's inept management of its relations with the United States. The conclusion inevitably drawn from these developments had been reported to the president: "To speak of 'normal relations' between the Soviet Union and any other country" was "to speak of something which does not and will not exist." Moreover, Washington "should not be surprised by any action" that the Kremlin might take. Its capriciousness as an associate in the difficult problems which engulfed Europe and Asia had been made especially clear.¹³

American Left. So too was the publication in 1935 of Sydney and Beatrice Webb's Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?

¹³ Bullitt to Roosevelt, July 15, 1935, and Bullitt to Moore, July 15, 1935, in Orville H. Bullitt (ed.), For the President: Personal and Secret, pp. 130-135. Also, Bullitt to Hull, March 4, 1936, State Department files, 124.61/105.

Throughout the early months of 1936, when the attacks on the Roosevelt administration increased because of its supposed sympathy for communism and/or socialism, Bullitt deluged Washington with a series of important despatches. He revealed anew the intensity of his burgeoning antipathy toward the U.S.S.R. and he discounted the Kremlin's most recent efforts to "cultivate more friendly personal relations" with America's diplomats stationed in Moscow. Familiar with Cordell Hull's views on the restoration of world trade, Bullitt reminded the Secretary of State that the Soviet Union was "totally opposed in both principle and policy to the rebuilding of the capitalist world and, therefore, to the rebuilding of international trade." Indeed, there was every reason to believe that the Soviet trade monopoly would be "used as a weapon to achieve the political and economic aims of the Soviet government." In addition, it was clear that the Kremlin intended ultimately "to produce such economic misery and chaos in the rest of the world that revolutionary movements" would eventually follow. Since Europe and Asia were racing toward "mass murder and destruction," Bullitt supported Hull's efforts to "build a basis for sanity in the Americas." A "moment may come," Bullitt believed, "when the rest of the world, except the Soviet Union, will follow the American example."¹⁴

In the weeks before his transfer to Paris Bullitt summarized his current reading of the U.S.S.R., a view that gained wide publicity among U.S. diplomats and among those groups interested in the Kremlin.

¹⁴ Bullitt (ed.), For the President: Personal and Secret, pp. 144-163. Bullitt to Hull, February 17, 1936, State Department files, 711.61/594. Bullitt to Hull, April 7, 1936, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 39, Folder 89.

The Russians, he maintained, had "never created a civilization." They had as yet to emerge "wholly from the status of barbarians," and "progress in this unhappy land" had "always" been made "by spasmodic and dreadful jerks." This helped to explain why the Russian people accepted "so resignedly the present regime." Writing that the "peoples" of Russia "have never known anything but tyranny and suffering, and that human dignity and character have always been conspicuous by their absence," Bullitt insisted that the only way to understand the U.S.S.R. was "to consider communism as a religious movement," and to view the Soviet Union as "a godless theocracy, if such a contradiction in terms may be permitted." The "belief in world revolution" was "at the core" of their "faith," and the Bolshevik leaders "were ready to sacrifice not only all other men to the triumph of their faith but also themselves." For "those who have been nurtured in the tradition of Greece, Rome, and the Church," the ideas of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin were "absurd." Their views ran "counter to all that scientists have been able to tell us about the nature of man." Ominously, their overall aim was "not only to destroy the institutions and liberties of our country, but also to kill millions of Americans." He concluded by highlighting one of Washington's dilemmas: to deal with such men would be extremely difficult; and the U.S. should be wary lest it "slay our heritage in attempting to defend it."¹⁵

Not unexpectedly, Bullitt's ideas received wide acclaim in the State Department. Kelley advised Hull that Bullitt's conclusions

¹⁵ Bullitt to Hull, April 20, 1936, State Department files, 861.00/4-2036.

concerning the impossibility of really friendly relations with the Kremlin "would be concurred in by most competent observers of Russian affairs." The ambassador's assumptions on Moscow's manipulation of trade were also "well-founded"; and "with respect to commercial relations," it was "pretty generally realized now by businessmen of all countries, as a result of experience, that it" was "not possible to build up trade relations with the Soviet Union on a stable basis." The Undersecretary of State William Phillips agreed, noting that Bullitt's despatches were "remarkable" and that they should be "highly commended."¹⁶

Hugh Wilson and Hugh Gibson, American diplomats stationed in Switzerland and Belgium, also shared in the hostility directed toward the U.S.S.R. Both were conservative, with close ties to the Republican Party, who found the "radicalism" of the New Deal distasteful and inimical to the principles on which a strong America had evolved. With the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War on July 18, 1936 and with the participation of the Soviet Union in support of the Loyalists, Wilson thought that "the prejudices set up this summer . . . have intensified to an alarming degree the cleavage of classes and the danger of widespread disturbances." Reviewing the international developments since late 1934 Wilson concluded that Litvinov "had invariably taken a position which endangered not only internal but international peace." Despite its pleadings concerning "the noblest grounds of democracy among

¹⁶Kelley to Hull, May 26, 1936, *Ibid.*, 861.01/2120; Kelley to Hull and Moore, March 5, 1936, *Ibid.*, 711.61/597; and Kelley memorandum, August 10, 1935, *Ibid.*, 761.00/260. Kelley dismissed Stalin's observations to Roy Howard concerning world revolution as "pure sophistry," and "quite untrue."

states and fidelity to treaties," the Soviet delegation to the League of Nations had "thrown its influence repeatedly for decisions which endanger the peace of Europe." A proponent of European reconciliation, Wilson did not think that Moscow's efforts to strengthen the League Covenant would succeed. Nor should they, for it was "inconceivable" that reform could be undertaken until Germany and Italy were "in a state of mind in which they can in some degree participate." Wilson's willingness to exclude Russia from many of the developments which he thought necessary internationally paralleled his interest in the repudiation of Roosevelt at the polls in 1936. Then and later, he remained terrified of class conflict, whether in the U.S. or Europe. Political order and the rights of private property remained the underpinnings of his views.¹⁷

The opinions of Kelley, Bullitt, Wilson, and Gibson were widely known outside the bureaucracy. In addition, other events in 1936 gave support to those who detested the Soviet Union and who thought that this hostility would prove useful in the presidential campaign of that year. First, the support of the American Communist Party for several of the themes of Roosevelt's presidency heightened the sensitivity of the political right to the direction of the New Deal and to those who accepted it. Disdainful of the Soviet designation that they were fascist simply because they defined economic and political liberty

¹⁷Wilson to James C. Dunn, October 9, and November 16, 1936, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 1, Folder: James C. Dunn. Hugh R. Wilson, Diplomat between the Wars (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1941). Ronald E. Swerczek, "The Diplomatic Career of Hugh Gibson, 1908-1938" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1972).

differently from Stalin and the communists, many conservative Republican and Democratic politicians shuddered at the prospect of another four year term for the president. The memories of 1935 had lingered. The social security legislation, the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, the recurring budget deficits, and the monetary policies followed by the administration might be only the beginning of more disastrous policies. The rejection of the National Industrial Recovery Act by the U.S. Supreme Court was greeted enthusiastically, but was no assurance that Roosevelt's plans would be denied in the future. The passage of the National Labor Relations Act had demonstrated the power which Roosevelt still maintained after three years in office. If tying the president's administration to the communists would reduce his chances of reelection, so much the better.¹⁸

Second, the revulsion in the U.S. which had accompanied the executions following Kirov's murder was regenerated in the summer of 1936. Between August 19 and August 24 the first of the Moscow show trials of the late 1930s took place. Zinoviev, Kamenev, and fourteen of their alleged accomplices revealed to the Soviet public and to the world the extent of their "treachery," including how they had plotted murders, and why they had sold themselves, with Trotsky's compliance, to foreign powers. The links in the long chain from the "Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Center" to the "Right Oppositionists," to the

¹⁸Frank Kellogg to William Castle, June 23, 1936, Castle Papers, Hoover Library, Correspondence, Container 15, Folder 128: Frank B. Kellogg, 1925-1939. The Daily Worker invariably labeled Roosevelt's record "inadequate," and it delighted in attacking "the Hearst-Liberty League crowd and their stooge, Landon." Read Daily Worker, October 1, 1936, 4:2; October 3, 1936, 4:1; October 7, 1936, 4:1; October 10, 1936, 4:2; October 19, 1936, 6:1; November 4, 1936, 6:1; November 5, 1936, 6:1; and November 7.

Red Army, and to all the other victims of the great purges initiated by Stalin were slowly, but inexorably forged. Confused, amazed, disgusted, many Americans were again revolted by the political developments in Russia which seemed to verify the often repeated observations of the opponents of the U.S.S.R.¹⁹

No wonder, therefore, that new demands were heard for breaking diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. In 1935 the Hearst press had helped to lead this movement. In 1936 it was augmented by Democrats, irritated by the New Deal and willing to use the election year atmosphere and the denunciations of the Soviets by Republicans and others to redefine the ties which had been established in 1933. On September 26 John W. McCormack, an influential Catholic congressman from Massachusetts, wrote the president a lengthy letter detailing his ideas about the coming election. Coughlin and his followers, McCormack emphasized, were "sullen, discontented and bitter." They were "using any argument that they think will appeal to the hearer." These men were "making a strong attack" on the administration because of "your alleged sympathy for communism." The fact that this "may be absurd" did not prevent it from influencing "many votes." To counter these developments McCormack recommended that Roosevelt announce that the United States was "no longer bound by the terms of a

¹⁹New York Times, August 22, 1936, 3:6; August 23, 1936, 1:6, 7:12; IV, 8:5; August 24, 1936, 1:2 and 3:4; and August 26, 1936, 20:1. San Francisco Examiner, August 20, 1936, 1:5 and 12:1; and August 26, 1936, 12:1. Henderson to Hull, August 18, 1936, State Department files, 861.00/11629. Henderson to Hull, September 1, 1936, Ibid., 861.00/11636. Cole to Hull, September 9, 1936, Ibid., 861.00/11640. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, August 26 and September 2, 1936. Pravda, January 27, 1937. The views of liberal journals can be ascertained in James K. Libbey, "Liberal Journals and the Moscow Trials of 1936-1938," Journalism Quarterly, LII (Spring 1975), 85-92 and 137.

treaty which the Soviets" had already "repudiated." In "this single stroke you will be relieved of all charges of secret sympathy with the Soviets, sponsors for Communism." No "single act," McCormack concluded, "will bring you such a volume of support as this notice to the world of your abhorrence of Communism." More important, it would be particularly effective among Catholic voters in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, and Illinois.²⁰

The president had been increasingly irritated by Coughlin and his supporters. He had noted the opposition of the Hearst press, and had never failed to think that somehow it could be brought around to his corner. He had duly noted the recommendations of McCormack, and had been thoroughly briefed by Kelley, Bullitt, and others on the internal developments within the U.S.S.R. He had also accepted that the aims of the Soviet state were antithetical to American democracy and to the type of international political order he desired. Yet, while willing to "ignore" the Soviet Union in the months prior to the election, he had no inclination to damage unnecessarily the difficult relationship which had evolved with the Kremlin during his administration.

This decision reflected the assessment that Landon would be defeated and that the international situation had already been undermined by the Italo-Ethiopian war, the remilitarization of the Rhineland, and

²⁰ John W. McCormack to Roosevelt, September 26, 1936, President's Personal File 4057, Roosevelt Library. Also, McCormack to Hull, November 9, 1937, State Department files, 711.61/626. The president had ignored the U.S.S.R. during most of the campaign. See Henderson to Wiley, June 30 and August 8, 1936, Wiley Papers, Roosevelt Library, General Correspondence, Container 7, Folder: Loy W. Henderson.

the Civil War in Spain. Although Farley had sought to get the president to meet Coughlin again during the summer, Roosevelt rejected the idea. The alliance among the "radio priest," Gerald Smith, and Francis Townsend was a bizarre political ménage à trois. It was incapable of swinging large blocks of votes despite the reputed size of the National Union for Social Justice and the enormous numbers who listened to Coughlin's radio broadcasts. The Union Party and the presidential candidacy of North Dakota congressman William Lemke were also jokes. They offered no substantive threat to his administration. A similar conclusion had evolved concerning the American Liberty League. It had failed to achieve widespread support, and its tactics had alienated many voters who were offended by the arrogance of wealthy businessmen complaining bitterly about the inequities of the New Deal.²¹

The Republican Party, moreover, was divided. Hoover and the Republican hierarchy had frequently quarreled, and the former president never failed to denounce those who continued to propound the hypothesis that America needed an economic system based on laissez faire. Also, Hoover had little interest in aligning himself with Jouett Shouse, Al Smith, John W. Davis, and John Raskob, Democrats affiliated with the American Liberty League. The fact that Irene Du Pont viewed Hoover's stand on inheritance taxes as socialistic revealed the distance between

²¹Gallup measured Roosevelt's popularity throughout 1936. Read George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971, I (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 9-44. Also, George Wolfskill, The Revolt of the Conservatives: A History of the American Liberty League, 1934-1940 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962).

the Republican progressive and conservative businessmen willing to bankroll political movements hostile to social reform.²²

Additional developments which weakened the New Deal's opposition in 1936 were the president's careful handling of current legislative matters and the vacillation of many powerful business leaders who detested Roosevelt's administration. Alfred Sloan, for example, was a member of the American Liberty League and president of the General Motors Corporation. He denounced the regimentation and growth of government under the New Deal. Yet the recovery of General Motors reflected the enormous increases in purchasing power which was affected directly by the fiscal and monetary policies of Roosevelt's administration. Winthrop Aldrich, too, supported the Republican presidential nominee. He detested communism, and rejected Stalin's economic programs as barbaric. But as president of the Chase National Bank, he did not wish to sacrifice the arrangements which had developed with the Soviet Union. These contracts had been very profitable, and they might be adversely affected by any significant alteration in America's approach to the U.S.S.R. Even Hoover had become convinced by June that the "swing to the left" was "all over in this country. We have beaten it

²²In a letter to William J. Gross, Herbert Hoover asserted that "this country has never had a laissez faire system and would not survive with it." See Hoover to Gross, June 25, 1935, Post-Presidential Individual, Hoover Library, Container 335, Folder 2780. Also, Hoover to DuPont, November 12, 1936, Ibid., Container 314, Folder 2593, and Hoover to Charles Dawes, September 1, 1934, Ibid., Container 307, Folder 2521.

by public opposition," he insisted, and he thought that Roosevelt would "now re-summon Thomas Jefferson and walk carefully."²³

Most important, Roosevelt's confidence was grounded in the "success" of the New Deal. Despite its limitations and egregious failures, Roosevelt's administration had induced the greatest period of sustained economic expansion in U.S. history. Growth rates exceeded ten percent per annum, and the assorted indices that measured industrial activity and national income moved toward the high levels achieved in the late 1920s. Complaints of social regimentation were numerous. A widespread distrust of large government continued, laced with a traditional fear that the abnegation of individual rights would be a calamity of enormous historical significance. The record of achievement, however, was evident to the farmer, laborer, and small businessman. The irritation of consumers and others was overwhelmed by the realization that prosperity meant improvement for everyone eventually. A Republican restoration under Landon, even if it were willing to adopt some of the techniques used by Roosevelt, might prove unable to maintain the recovery. Farley was correct; the few polls indicating a Republican victory were in error. The "wolves" were tearing themselves apart, leaving the administration relatively untouched.

Of less significance but also of great interest in affecting the president's policy toward Russia was his view of the Soviet Union's place in international affairs. Despite the early enthusiasm

²³Wolfskill and Hudson, All But the People, pp. 145, 157, 161, and 167. John Morton Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Crisis, 1928-1938 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1959), pp. 175-176. Hoover to Boris Bakhmetoff, June 17, 1936, Post-Presidential Individual, Hoover Library, Container 269, Folder 2109.

in the beginning of his administration that peace could be maintained, Roosevelt had become increasingly pessimistic throughout 1935 and 1936. Although exaggerating when he wrote to Norman Davis indicating that he was more concerned about world affairs than "domestic problems," including his own reelection, Roosevelt struggled in these years to "save Western civilization." Feeling "very helpless to render any particular service to immediate or permanent peace at this time," the president spoke out as much as he dared "not only for the record but in order to solidify the forces of nonaggression." Convinced by early 1936 that "the whole European panorama" was "fundamentally blacker than at any time" in his life, the president refused to limit his options by restricting the already strained relationship between Moscow and Washington. Russia's position in world affairs was also too important to ignore. Despite appearances to the contrary, the distinct possibility existed of an alliance among England, Germany, and Japan. Russia would be squeezed between them, and dismemberment would be likely. The collapse of Stalin's government would not compensate for the enormous increases in the power of Germany and Japan. Severing relations with the U.S.S.R., therefore, did not serve current perceptions of U.S. national interests. It would have unnecessarily added to the influence of those in London, Berlin, and Tokyo who sought to incite their countries toward war with the Kremlin.²⁴

²⁴Roosevelt to Davis, January 14, 1936, in Roosevelt (ed.), F.D.R.-His Personal Letters, 1928-1945, I, pp. 544-545. Also, Roosevelt to Dodd, December 2, 1935, Ibid., pp. 530-531; Roosevelt to Jesse Straus, February 13, 1936, Ibid., pp. 555-556; Roosevelt to Dodd, April 16, 1935, Ibid., p. 475; and Roosevelt to Edward House, April 10, 1935, Ibid., pp. 472-473. Morgenthau Papers, Diary, 8:50-51, Roosevelt Library. Hull to Bullitt, August 30, 1935, State Department files,

Significantly, the State Department supported the president's position. Bullitt had assumed in July 1935 that Roosevelt would "roar with laughter over the idea of breaking relations" with the U.S.S.R. "on the basis of a mere technical violation of Litvinov's pledge." Although he had also assumed that a "gross violation" would oblige the president to act decisively, Bullitt had presented a solid case against the adoption of such a decision. Soviet purchases of U.S. goods would be reduced. It would be extremely difficult to bring about the resumption of formal diplomatic links with the Kremlin. There would be an "increased chance" that Japan would seize the opportunity to attack the U.S.S.R. And the "considerable decrease" in Moscow's prestige would also affect the delicate political balance which still survived in central and southeastern Europe. Even in 1936, when the American ambassador continued to argue that Moscow's chief aim was "to keep Europe divided," Bullitt recommended continuing contacts with the Kremlin. In a series of despatches he brilliantly caught the proper approach that the U.S. should adopt toward the U.S.S.R. Personal feelings and ideological hostility did not then preclude an insightful review of the character of Soviet-American relations.²⁵

As a practical matter, Kelley, Moore, and Hull agreed with Bullitt's assessment. The relationship which had evolved should be continued, and where possible, improved. Too intelligent to assume that

711.61/542 and 711.61/542B. Moore to Bullitt, September 3, 1935, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1935.

²⁵ Bullitt to Hull and Roosevelt, August 29, 1935, State Department files, 711.61/542. Kelley to Hull, August 2, 1935, Ibid., 861.00-Congress, Communist International VII/99.

any great change would occur in the immediate future, they emphasized limited economic agreements which were to serve the various internal interests of both countries. In July 1935 such an agreement had been negotiated. It doubled the dollar value of Moscow's annual imports from the United States. Renewed in 1936, it sustained those who insisted that Soviet-American cooperation was essential if peace were to be maintained. It also allowed Roosevelt to remind American businessmen critical of the U.S.S.R. that the Kremlin kept its commitments. It did not, however, bind the U.S. and the Soviet Union together. Powerful forces existed in both countries which opposed closer ties. Neither Washington nor Moscow, absorbed with domestic issues, intended to commit themselves to any initiative that might involve them directly in foreign war. Not even the political crises of the mid-1930s were sufficient to overcome these domestic inhibitions.²⁶

II

Early in 1935 John Wiley, then chargé d'affaires of the American embassy in Moscow, reported that the Kremlin might be willing to sacrifice a Franco-Soviet rapprochement for a satisfactory agreement with England and Germany on central Europe, armaments, and German

²⁶Moore to Bullitt, April 18, 1935, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1935. Moore to Roosevelt, June 14, 1935, *Ibid.*, Container 17, Folder: F. D. Roosevelt, 1934-1935, and Moore to Bullitt, July 16, 1935, *Ibid.*, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1935. Roosevelt to U.S. Senator Hattie W. Caraway, July 9, 1936, OF 61, Roosevelt Library, Tariff Matters M-R, 1933-1945, Container 6, Folder: OF 61 "M," Manganese. Roosevelt to Robert Mayer, President, American Cotton Shippers Association, September 25, 1936, in Edgar B. Nixon (ed.), Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs, III, pp. 443-444. Memo by Hull of conversations with Troianovskii and Mikoyan, October 12, 1936, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250.

re-entry into the League of Nations. "The present period in Soviet foreign affairs," he concluded, was "both liquid and decisive. A rebuff from France would result in the virtual isolation of the U.S.S.R." Agreements with England and Germany to resolve political problems, however, were illusory at this time. France and Russia signed their mutual assistance agreement in May 1935. The French Chamber of Deputies ratified it on February 28, 1936, despite the polarization of France's internal situation and the hesitancy of the Quai d'Orsay to antagonize the German government. Bullitt reported to Roosevelt on March 4 that the Bolsheviks were "extremely confident about their position in the world."²⁷

Bullitt's evaluation was an overstatement. The handling of the Italo-Ethiopian war by the "imperialist powers" had been, from Moscow's point of view, a disaster. Molotov's assertion that only the U.S.S.R. had adopted "a special position founded on principle" did not offset the real losses incurred. The sanctions imposed had been inadequate. The League of Nations had been weakened. The implications of the Hoare-Laval conversations had induced a "profound" disillusionment in the Kremlin. British-Italian alienation had also freed Germany to act in central Europe. The fact that the Japanese were "playing with fire" along Russia's far eastern borders added to the Kremlin's alarm. Although sufficiently strong to permit Stalin to announce to Howard that Russia would fight if Tokyo invaded Outer Mongolia, the Soviet government continued to fear a Russo-Japanese war which would allow Germany

²⁷Wiley to Hull, February 9, 1935, State Department files, 761.00/255. Bullitt to Roosevelt, March 4, 1936, in Bullitt (ed.), For the President: Personal and Secret, p. 148.

or Poland to exert military, political, or economic pressures along its western frontiers.²⁸

Hitler's remilitarization of the Rhineland on March 7 also enraged the Narkomindel. The military advantages of the Franco-Soviet pact were reduced enormously, and the prospect that England and France would willingly accede to German expansion in southeastern Europe again heightened Soviet insecurities. Equally disquieting was the civil war in Spain. The military aid given to Franco by the Germans and Italians reemphasized the character of their foreign policies. The further polarization of French politics weakened the strained ties which existed between Paris and Moscow. Pressure to aid the Loyalists grew precipitously, involving the Comintern in the support of international brigades, and requiring shipments of Russian military supplies to Madrid. The concomitant publicity opposing "communist expansionism" was detrimental to Russia's national interests. But, so too was the possibility that a Trotskyite regional government would be established around which Stalin's opponents could coalesce.²⁹

The Kremlin sought to deal with these developments in various ways. Convinced that Britain's role would be decisive in Europe and Asia, Moscow moved to improve its relationship with London. Disturbed by the prospect that the League would be reorganized and weakened,

²⁸ Henderson to Hull, January 11, 1936, State Department files, 711.61/589. Henderson to Hull, January 18, 1936, *Ibid.*, 761.00/265. Bullitt to Hull, February 21, 1936, *Ibid.*, 761.94/877. Hull to Grew, February 24, 1936, *Ibid.*, 711.61/594. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, March 18, 1936 and April 15, 1936.

²⁹ Bullitt to Hull, March 7, 1936, State Department files, 750.0011 Mutual Guarantee (Locarno)/373.

Litvinov revealed that Moscow would be willing to see the sanctions against Italy dropped, provided England and other members of the League concentrated on keeping Germany in check. In a series of speeches throughout the year the Soviet Foreign Commissar repeated the Narkomindel's familiar themes: Russia supported peace; the Franco-Soviet mutual assistance agreement was compatible with the Locarno pacts; and "history teaches that aggression and expansion are insatiable." The Soviet government also dispatched Radek to the Danzig suburb of Oliva to meet with representatives from Germany. The content of these conversations is unknown, but Stalin and other Soviet proponents of a German connection had no intention of ignoring the possibility of easing Russo-German tensions. Furthermore, the negotiations between Berlin and Moscow concerning a five hundred million mark credit were continued. Although Litvinov thought in March that Europe was closer to war than at any time since 1911, he did not see any reason why Hitler's harangues or the march into the Rhineland should preclude the continuation of economic contacts between the two countries. Finally, demonstrating Moscow's fear of becoming too involved in any confrontation that might precipitate war, the Kremlin approached the Spanish debacle with enormous caution. Its letter to Largo Caballero in December asking Madrid to eschew social radicalism was but one indication of Russia's concern.³⁰

³⁰ Henderson to Hull, February 13, 1936, State Department files, 761.94/873. Bullitt to Hull, February 17, 1936, *Ibid.*, 711.61/594. Henderson to Hull, May 26, 1936, *Ibid.*, 765.84/4628. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, March 4, 1936; March 17, 1936; May 13, 1936; July 8, 1936; September 9, 1936; October 7, 1936; and November 18, 1936. Warren Lerner, Karl Radek: The Last Internationalist (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), pp. 164-165. David T. Catell, Communism and the

The Kremlin's relationship with the United States was clearly not that important. Washington had refused to work with Moscow to restrain the Japanese. The "gentlemen's agreement" had proved a disaster. The Seventh Comintern Congress had set off an exaggerated U.S. response which highlighted the unsophistication of the American people and the inability or unwillingness of the White House to control domestic public opinion. The recently enacted neutrality legislation, the growing power of the "isolationists," and "the influence of reactionary and fascist inclined American circles" delimited the areas of cooperation between the two countries.³¹

The potential significance of a Soviet-American alignment, however, could not be ignored. Pavel Mikhailski, an old Bolshevik journalist who wrote for Pravda and Izvestiia under the pen name of Lapinski, approached American diplomats and stressed the importance of better relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Bogdanov, the former director of the Amtorg Trading Corporation, emphasized the advantages of establishing a bilateral "information system" which would facilitate exchanges "between scientific research institutes." And Troianovskii confided to Loy Henderson and Hull that he was opposing those in the

Spanish Civil War (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), and Catell, Soviet Diplomacy and the Spanish Civil War (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957).

³¹ See Molotov's speech of January 10, 1936 in Henderson to Hull, January 11, 1936, State Department files, 711.61/589. Also, Izvestiia, January 12, 1936.

Kremlin who were inclined to belittle the significance of the U.S. in world affairs.³²

Roosevelt noted these efforts, and largely ignored them during most of 1936. Probably amused and irritated by Moscow's insistence that he disassociate his administration from the "anti-Soviet views of the Hearst press," the president awaited the outcome of the November election. Then he pursued those ideas which he assumed would help to include Russia in the peaceful resolution of outstanding European and Asia dilemmas. In the early months of 1937 he supported Morgenthau's efforts to align the U.S.S.R. with the English, French, and American attempts to secure the international stabilization of currencies. He worked with the Russian ambassador to expedite the sale of arms to Moscow, specifically, armor plate and battleships. Disdainful of the State Department, and frequently resentful of the restraints imposed by professional diplomats, he permitted the purge of the Division of Eastern European Affairs. Finally, following the Marco Polo bridge incident in July, the American government ordered units of the Asiatic Fleet to Vladivostok, and in the fall of 1937 Norman Davis and Litvinov discussed ways of inhibiting Japanese aggression during the Nine Power Conference in Brussels.³³

³²Wiley to Hull, March 25, 1935, State Department files, 711.61/521. Bullitt to Hull, June 6, 1935, Ibid., 711.61/525, and Bullitt to Hull, June 22, 1935, Ibid., 711.61/527. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, May 23, 1935. Henderson to Hull, January 13, 1936, State Department files, 711.61/591, and Henderson to Hull, January 17, 1936, Ibid., 711.61/592. Bullitt to Hull, February 17, 1936, Ibid., 711.61/594.

³³This material is developed in Henderson to Hull, January 17, 1936, Ibid., 711.61/592.

These actions were undertaken for several reasons. The most important was the renewed flexibility which the president's reelection victory afforded. Convinced that his administration had acted within traditional limits of economic and political activity, Roosevelt viewed the results as a vindication of his policies. The American people had, at least for the moment, demonstrated their ability to distinguish between his supposed commitment to socialism and the real character of the New Deal. The new overtures to the U.S.S.R. would not, presumably, be misconstrued.

Furthermore, Assistant Secretary of State R. Walton Moore wrote to Roosevelt within weeks of the election, indicating that the Soviet Union had become "so very strong" that it was possible that neither Germany nor Japan would be inclined to "strike at her." This corroborated the stream of reports from Lieutenant Colonel Philip R. Faymonville, the U.S. military attaché stationed in Moscow.³⁴

Faymonville had had extensive conversations with the leaders of the Red Army. All had agreed that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were peaceful bystanders in a disordered world, both seeking to build up their internal economies, while endeavoring to remain immune from attack. Agreeing with Soviet military officers who viewed Europe as "an active volcano around whose crater France, Italy, Great Britain, and Russia were anxiously gathered," Faymonville had been favorably impressed by the gains in Soviet military capability since his arrival in 1934. He had noted their fears that the Anglo-German naval agreement

³⁴ Moore to Roosevelt, November 27, 1936, in Edgar Nixon (ed.), Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs, III, p. 512.

had begun to turn "the Baltic into a German lake." He had argued that Russia's entry into the League of Nations had made the U.S.S.R. "one of the anti-revisionist powers," a development relatively consistent with the "continued evolution" of the Soviet Union toward "greater individual liberty" and "a higher standard of living." He had emphasized the favorable military implications of the Seventh Comintern Congress, particularly its impact on consolidating the elements in Germany antagonistic to Hitler. Notwithstanding his conclusion that the Kremlin's inclination to use its military forces in central Europe remained "only a remote possibility," he had insisted that the Red Army was a valuable tool to restrain Berlin and to maintain the peace.³⁵

America's liberals and progressives (not yet disabused by the excesses of the great purges) also concluded that Russia's role internationally could be exploited to Washington's advantage. William Dodd, the progressive historian then serving as the U.S. ambassador in Germany, continued to press for cooperation with the Kremlin. He reminded the president that "much as one may be annoyed by the foolish Soviet propaganda" events in Germany and Japan had made it "increasingly necessary for democratic peoples to avoid breaks" with the U.S.S.R.

³⁵Faymonville to the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department, July 26, 1934, National Archives Record Group 165, 2037-2014/1. Despatches from August 1934 through October 1936 are available in 2037-2014/2, 2037-2019/1, 2515-D-142/2515-D-143/1, 2657-D-1035/1, 10641-333/24, 10058-342/279, 2271-D-84/3, and 2090-330/11. Faymonville's recommendations were considered too optimistic by the U.S. military attaché at Riga, Latvia, and too sympathetic to the U.S.S.R. by George Kennan and Charles Bohlen, American diplomats assigned to Moscow. See Major W. E. Shipp to M.I.D., War Department, November 23, 1935, NA RG 165, 2657-D-991/5, and James S. Herndon and Joseph O. Baylen, "Colonel Philip R. Faymonville and the Red Army, 1934-1943," Slavic Review, XXXIV (September 1975), 483-505.

Even more important were the views of Joseph Davies, who had been appointed to replace Bullitt as the new American ambassador in Moscow, and who offered Roosevelt a unique characterization of Stalinist Russia.³⁶

A lawyer, Wilson's Commissioner of Corporations, and a former chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, Davies was, by his own account, an "individualist." He supported "freedom in thought" and equality of opportunity. He was "a firm believer in evolution as against revolution", and he had enormous "faith in the Christian religion as indestructible and in the beneficences of our own form of government and our own way of life." A favorite of Roosevelt's mother and a member, with the then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, of the "Common Counsel Club" during the First World War, the new ambassador approached the U.S.S.R. sympathetically.³⁷

Despised by most of the professional diplomats assigned to the American embassy in Moscow, Davies found in the first months of his mission considerable evidence to substantiate why the United States should cooperate with the Kremlin. First, as he had expected, "human nature" was "working here the same old way." The "governing powers" had, "through necessity and for self-preservation, been compelled to abandon, at least temporarily, many of their communistic principles."

³⁶James K. Libbey, "Liberal Journals and the Moscow Trials of 1936-1938," Journalism Quarterly, LII (Spring 1975), 85-92 and 137. Dodd to Roosevelt, December 15, 1935, in Edgar Nixon (ed.), Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs, III, p. 122. Oswald Garrison Villard to Hull, September 9, 1935, State Department files, 711.61/557.

³⁷Joseph E. Davies, Mission to Moscow (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1941), pp. xi-xix.

Next, Stalin, "a simple man," showed himself to be "decent and clean-living," apparently "devoted to the purpose of the projection of the socialist state and ultimate communism," but "with sufficient resilience in his make-up to stamp him as a politician as well as a great leader." Also, Russia was already spending more for defense in the coming year than France planned to appropriate before 1940, and Moscow had indicated its willingness to refrain from inciting communist activities in China which might weaken the government of Chiang Kai-shek. Convinced that the state "had established its case" during the trial of Radek, Pyatakov, and others in January, Davies reiterated his belief that Russia would prove useful in maintaining peace, and that the United States would be foolhardy, considering Japanese and German pretensions, to ignore it.³⁸

The president could not help but be favorably impressed by the ambassador's reports. Roosevelt had never shared the economic prejudices of Hoover and the others who thought Bolshevik economics irrational. He had, in fact, a "genuine indifference to systems of all sorts." He was determined to reach certain objectives but was not committed to any methods for their attainment. Peace was essential, and the Soviet Union's support could be instrumental in preserving it. Certainly, Russia could not be ignored. Whether Stalin was "a simple man" as well as "decent and clean-living" was immaterial. Rather, the fact that he was a politician with "resilience" was much more important.

³⁸ Davies to Hull, February 17, 1937, State Department files, 861.00/11676. Davies to Hull, March 17, 1937, Ibid., 861.01/2124. Davies to Morgenthau, March 15, 1937, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, 60:95-96. Davies to Hull, March 5, 1937, PSF Confidential, Roosevelt Library, Container 31, Bound Despatches: Russia. Davies, Mission to Moscow, pp. 3-135.

Since diplomacy was invariably method more than policy, Roosevelt was confident that he could ascertain the appropriate way of dealing with Moscow. A proponent of the politics of personality, the president assumed, incorrectly as it turned out, that his previous experiences in domestic politics would more than adequately equip him to deal with the Soviet dictator.³⁹

Several other developments helped to nudge Roosevelt toward the U.S.S.R. after the election. On November 25 Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact. The Soviets who had known of the negotiations leading up to its announcement had hoped that the moderates in the Japanese government would prevail, preventing the agreement which had been spurred on by Ōshima Hiroshi and Joachim von Ribbentrop. Litvinov's denunciation of the pact before the Eighth Congress of Soviets as the continuation of the anti-Soviet maneuvers of an "anti-democratic bloc" failed to mask the fact that the entire recent trend in Soviet-Japanese relations had been unfavorably altered. This deterioration in the relationship between Moscow and Tokyo, the United States assumed, would make the Kremlin more amenable to Washington's suggestions.⁴⁰

Second, the French government was disintegrating. Since late August gold had been shipped in great quantities from France, weakening

³⁹Tugwell, In Search of Roosevelt, p. 117.

⁴⁰Henderson to Hull, December 22, 1936, State Department files, 761.94/944. Moscow Daily News, Weekly Edition, December 2, 1936 and December 9, 1936. Grew to Wilson, May 13, 1937, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 2, Folder: Joseph Grew.

its currency and complicating Blum's efforts to maintain his coalition government. Although committed to its traditional support of the international gold standard, Paris had joined with Washington and London to seek a multilateral arrangement to induce international monetary stabilization. After several weeks of negotiations a Tripartite Agreement had been signed on September 25. It had given international endorsement to French devaluation. Britain's base for managing the pound had been broadened, and the American price of gold had been accepted by the signatories for evaluating their currencies. Hailed privately as a major initiative of the United States, the trilateral agreement was thought to have done "more to relieve tension in Europe and give hope for a measure of stability in France, than anything else" undertaken in these years. Unfortunately, it had not resolved French financial problems, and pressures mounted for an additional devaluation of the franc.⁴¹

On January 23, 1937 Roosevelt wrote to Morgenthau and described for the Secretary of the Treasury a conversation he had recently held with Sir George Paish. There had been "an incident that occurred in 1885 or 1886," the president maintained, when Germany closed "its money markets to Russia." Since the Romanov gold supply was "insufficient to maintain" Russia's currency, the tsar's government approached the French. In "consideration of an alliance," Paris

⁴¹Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Crisis, 1928-1938, pp. 159-173. Robert Bingham to Roosevelt, October 7, 1936, in Edgar Nixon (ed.), Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs, III, p. 449. Also, Morgenthau to Roosevelt, September 29, 1936, Ibid., pp. 445-446; Dodd to Roosevelt, October 19, 1936, Ibid., p. 458; and S. R. Fuller to Roosevelt, October 22, 1936, Ibid., pp. 459-460.

placed a large gold credit at the disposal of St. Petersburg. The gold remained in France, and Russia serviced its debt over a number of years.⁴²

Whether Roosevelt's distorted review of the origins of the Franco-Russian alliance of the late nineteenth century prompted Morgenthau in the early months of 1937 to attempt to incorporate the Soviets in the Tripartite Agreement is impossible to confirm. Nevertheless, with the continuing political disorientation in France and with the idea that loans to Paris might help to stabilize the franc, Morgenthau decided to approach the Kremlin. On March 3 he concluded that the "large holdings of gold" in the U.S.S.R. "might make the sufficient difference to tide the French across the present crisis."⁴³

In April, May, and June a series of meetings were held between American and Soviet officials. Morgenthau sought to use monetary cooperation as a medium through which the U.S.S.R. would cooperate with the United States, France, and Great Britain against the fascist powers. Attempting to stop the decline in the international value of gold which had begun in April, the Secretary of the Treasury pressed for information on Soviet gold production, and emphasized the need for the reduction of that production and/or the regulation of Russia's sales of gold on the international market. Agreeing among themselves that "a stable gold market" was in the interests of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., they also discussed facilitating direct shipment of Russian gold to the

⁴²Roosevelt to Morgenthau, January 23, 1937, OF 21, Roosevelt Library, Container 3, Folder: Department of Treasury, 1935-1937.

⁴³Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, 57:233.

U.S. via an account which would be opened by the Russian State Bank at the Federal Reserve.⁴⁴

While these negotiations continued, the Undersecretary of State, Sumner Welles, informed Robert Kelley that the Division of Eastern European Affairs was to be disbanded. Its chief, the taciturn, scholarly Kelley who had been its director since 1924, was to be transferred to the American embassy in Ankara. Its library of Soviet affairs, perhaps the most complete in the United States, was to be turned over to the Library of Congress, and its "secret files" were to be "destroyed." Instead of a large group of trained specialists studying the U.S.S.R. and eastern Europe, Russian matters were henceforth to be the responsibility of one man assigned to the newly designated Division of European Affairs.⁴⁵

The "smell of Soviet influence, or strongly pro-Soviet influence somewhere in the higher reaches of government" was apparent to George Kennan, who was recalled from Moscow and assigned the Russian desk under Pierrepont Moffat. In fact, there was "strong evidence that pressure" had been "brought to bear from the White House." It had been evident that many in Washington disagreed with the Eastern European Division's "sharply critical view of Soviet policies and methods." Charles Bohlen, then in Washington, agreed with Kennan's analysis. The influence of Mrs. Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins, he

⁴⁴Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Crisis, 1928-1938, pp. 467-473. Also, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, 64:79-81 and 65: 371-375.

⁴⁵George F. Kennan, Memoirs, 1925-1950 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), pp. 84-86.

maintained, was probably instrumental in bringing about the dismemberment of Kelley's office.⁴⁶

Whether Kennan and Bohlen were correct in their assumptions, or whether, as Bullitt believed, these developments reflected a bureaucratic struggle between Sumner Welles, the new Undersecretary of State, and R. Walton Moore, who had had nominal charge of Kelley's efforts, was not as significant as the effects of this decision. Soviet diplomats who had lobbied against Kelley had achieved an important result. The role which the Division of Eastern European Affairs had played in Soviet-American relations had been terminated. Roosevelt, who had opted for a more sympathetic approach to the Soviet Union, would have one less obstacle to overcome in his efforts to cooperate with the U.S.S.R.⁴⁷

With the deteriorating situation in Europe and Asia the American government worked in late 1937 to coordinate the interests of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in order to prevent the military confrontations which both powers sought to avoid. On July 7 Hull met with Troianovskii. The Secretary of State inquired whether the Soviet Union wanted Washington to appoint a commercial attaché to the U.S. embassy in Moscow. A preliminary discussion of the prospects for the renewal of the commercial arrangements which had been negotiated in 1935 and

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 84-85. Charles E. Bohlen, Witness to History, 1929-1969 (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1973), pp. 39-41. Bohlen was less certain in 1973 that Hopkins and Mrs. Roosevelt were involved. A review of the Hopkins papers at the Roosevelt Library revealed nothing on this point.

⁴⁷ Bullitt to Moore, July 5, 1937, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1937. Moore to Bullitt, October 20, 1937, Ibid., Bullitt to Roosevelt, November 3, 1937, in Bullitt (ed.), For the President: Personal and Secret, p. 229.

renewed in 1936, Hull's conversation with the Soviet ambassador was one of a number of talks held in these months. In each instance Hull emphasized the need for international peace and order. True to his understanding of international economics, he pressed for reductions in tariff barriers, and a repudiation of economic nationalism which, he insisted, invariably reduced national standards of living. Hull lamented that each country was using "a microscope" in "looking about for penny advantages in cutthroat, bilateral trading, utterly oblivious and indifferent to the world situation either present or prospective." Referring in October to the fact that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. had "been standing apart in almost every real way on account of a trivial, measly insignificant item of indebtedness," Hull emphasized the impact this had on Japan, Italy, and Germany. The "desperado-inclined nations," he maintained, recognized that because of this the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were "burying their great combined moral influence for peace and order." Careful to note that Washington did not intend to use military force or economic sanctions, Hull sought Soviet aid in "the creation of a combination of all possible moral and other influences which would be calculated to outlaw war." Such a development would "exalt peace"; it would "make war utterly abhorrent."⁴⁸

Hull also facilitated Soviet efforts to arrange for the purchase of arms, specifically, the construction of a battleship for the Soviet navy. The U.S.S.R. had established in the United States

⁴⁸Hull's memoranda of conversations with Troianovskii on July 7 and October 26, 1937 are available in Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250.

a purchasing agency distinct from Amtorg. Managed by Russian Jews recently naturalized, the Carp Export and Import Corporation had been furnished with two hundred million dollars by the Kremlin. Initially it had been assisted by a commission of ten experts, Soviet naval officers and technicians, who were eager to have the parts for the battleship manufactured in the U.S. for later assembly in the Soviet Union. The need of export licenses and the close working relationship among the U.S. Navy, U.S. shipbuilders, and America's naval architects made Washington's cooperation essential. By September the economic, political, and military advantages of Carp's proposal were readily accepted not only by the firm of Gibbs and Cox, but also by the White House. A large battleship would be under construction for five years. If the U.S. were to become involved in a war, the vessel could be commandeered. Sizable sums of money would also be spent in "the heavy technical industries" of the U.S.; shipbuilding facilities would be expanded; and the advanced engineering incorporated in the Soviet vessel would be made available to the American government. Hull and Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Charles Edison, brought these plans for a "floating fortress" of sixty-two thousand tons, armed with eighteen inch guns and equipped with landing facilities for aircraft, to the attention of the president. Enormously impressed, Roosevelt approved the project.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Hull's memoranda of conversations with Troianovskii on November 16, 1936 and November 27, 1937 in Ibid. William Gibbs to Charles Edison, September 7, 1937, in Edison to McIntyre, January 15, 1938, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 78, Folder: Navy, January-February, 1938. Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes: The Inside Struggle, 1936-1939 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), p. 111. FRUS: The Soviet Union, 1933-1939, pp. 457-491 and 670-708.

Even more important than the effectiveness of international economic cooperation and Roosevelt's inclination to support Russia's purchases of armaments were Washington's efforts to support those Soviet Far Eastern policies which were consistent with America's interests. This involved the coordination of disparate elements, imperfectly perceived and constantly updated by changing patterns in domestic public opinion and in the foreign policies of the powers concerned. Specifically, it included an understanding of the Kremlin's approach to China and Japan, the response in the United States to the Marco Polo Bridge incident in July, and the restricted alternatives available to Washington and Moscow following the rapidly escalating Sino-Japanese war.

In early 1937 the Kremlin had considered working with the Chinese communists in creating a puppet state in northwest China which, with Outer Mongolia, Sinkiang, and Tuva, would have made Chiang Kai-shek "extremely uncomfortable." Despite the growing strength of the Soviet Union's military forces, however, this alternative had been rejected. In return for Chiang's opposition to Japan Moscow had spurned a strident "anti-Nanking line," and had adopted a much tougher approach to the encroachments of the Japanese. Still, faced by the prospect of war with Tokyo, the Soviet government had hesitated, and had continued to appease Japan whenever it had seemed necessary. The Kremlin's acceptance of the Soviet-Japanese fisheries agreement, despite the Anti-Comintern pact, had been one such indication. Even the more forceful approach of the Kremlin to the Amur incident in June and July had not masked the voluntary concessions which the Kremlin had

initiated. The trial of Tukhachevsky and the purge of the Far Eastern Army had made these concessions inevitable.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, the confrontation between Chinese and Japanese soldiers near Peking on July 7 deepened the Americans' sympathy for China, and hardened their resolve to avoid involvement in overseas war. They had been disillusioned by the inability of international public opinion to constrain Japan during the Manchurian Incident of the early 1930s, and they had been angered by publications which had argued that America's entry into the First World War had been induced by "merchants of death." The peace movement, moreover, actively opposed Washington's meddling in Asia, and the president was quick to appease this sentiment. Roosevelt, with the concurrence of the State Department, postponed discussions of Sino-American economic relations in the summer and fall of 1937, suspended temporarily a credit to the Chinese government from the Export-Import Bank, and vacillated on the extent to which his administration would protect American nationals threatened by the war.⁵¹

Concurrently, the Soviet government, despite its own cautious response to Japanese expansionism, demonstrated a willingness to support

⁵⁰Davies to Hull, February 4, 1937, State Department files, 761.93/1583. Davies to Hull, March 5, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.94/953. Davies to Hull, March 9, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.93/1588. Davies to Hull, March 26, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.93/1589. Henderson to Kelley, April 27, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.00/284. Kennan's memo in Henderson to Hull, April 30, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.94/965. Henderson to Hull, May 12, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.93/1593. Henderson to Hull, July 3, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.94/973. Also, Joseph Grew, *Ten Years in Japan* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944), pp. 211-229, and Hata Ikuhiko, "The Japanese-Soviet Confrontation, 1935-1939," *Deterrent Diplomacy: Japan, Germany, and the U.S.S.R., 1935-1940*, ed. James William Morley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 129-178.

⁵¹Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971*, I, pp. 69 and 72. Frederick C. Adams, *Economic Diplomacy*, pp. 226-229.

China wherever practicable. Limited military supplies were shipped to the Kuomintang, and a nonaggression pact was signed with Nanking on August 21. Although U.S. diplomats assumed that the nonaggression agreement was motivated primarily by the Kremlin's desire to preclude China's adherence to the Anti-Comintern Pact, there was no denying that China and the Soviet Union were "coming closer together." Also, Stalin terminated, for the moment, the purge of the Far Eastern Army, and Bliukher was returned to Asia as its commander, following his participation in the trial of Tukhachevsky and the other Soviet military commanders executed in June.⁵²

Convinced that America's east Asian interests would benefit from a "Japanese disaster," Roosevelt assumed that this possibility could be accelerated by a "rise in the strength of Russia and China" as well as "a revolt of the Japanese population against militarism." Davies agreed, concluding that "it would be a mistake to underestimate" the U.S.S.R. at this time. The Kremlin, he emphasized, had "the army well in hand", and "a large section of heavy industry" had "been placed under the direct administration of army control and discipline." Confident that it could defend itself "against military attack from either east or west or from both simultaneously," the Soviet government,

⁵²Henderson to Hull, August 26, 1937, State Department files, 761.93/1600. Stilwell to Adjutant General, War Department, September 7, 1937, NA RG 165, 2657-H-439/156. Grew to Hull, October 1, 1937, State Department files, 761.94/986. Nelson Johnson to Hull, October 14, 1937, *Ibid.*, 793.94 Conference/24. Davies to Hull, October 14, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.94/997. Maxwell Hamilton memorandum, October 26, 1937, *Ibid.*, 793.94 Conference/118B. W. D. Leahy to Roosevelt, December 3, 1937, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 78, Folder: Navy Department, 1936-1937. Henderson to Hull, December 7, 1937, State Department files, 761.94/1005. Henderson to Hull, January 21, 1938, *Ibid.*, 761.94/1015.

according to Davies, was also prepared to engage in "the boycotting of Japanese goods, the stoppage of credits . . . and direct aid economically and financially to China." Although precluded by domestic politics, these alternatives intrigued the president. The utility of boycotts and embargoes remained considerations despite their previous failures.⁵³

In the summer and fall of 1937 Washington pursued several avenues chosen, in part, because of Roosevelt's view of Russia's role in East Asia. In July the U.S.S. *Augusta* and four destroyers of the Asiatic Fleet visited the Soviet naval facilities at Vladivostok. In August Washington approved the Soviet protests concerning the Japanese violations of Russia's consulates at Tientsin and Shanghai. The Sino-Soviet nonaggression pact, at least in terms of its bolstering Chiang's opposition to Tokyo, was also greeted favorably. In October the president's quarantine speech gave indirect support to those nations, including the U.S.S.R., which were inclined to help restrain aggression and which sought to know the direction of Roosevelt's foreign policy. In November, the Brussels Conference exemplified the president's interest in arousing public awareness, internally and internationally, to the dangers ahead. And Norman Davis sought to persuade the Soviets that

⁵³ Roosevelt quoted in Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Crisis, 1928-1938, p. 481. Davies to Hull, October 31, 1937, State Department files, 793.94 Conference/151. Also, Faymonville to M.I.D., War Department, February 24, 1937, NA RG 165, 2037-1833/52; Faymonville to M.I.D., June 17, 1937, Ibid., 2037-1833/54; Faymonville to M.I.D., September 22, 1938, Ibid., 2037-1833/66; and Bullitt to Roosevelt, November 23, 1937, in Bullitt (ed.), For the President: Personal and Secret, pp. 232-238. Roosevelt had considered the possibility of the European powers implementing an economic blockade around Germany in 1935. Russia, presumably, would have been included.

the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. should cooperate with other powers "in a concerted effort to mobilize the moral force of the world in favor of a peaceful solution" to the Sino-Japanese war.⁵⁴

Considering the difficulties involved, the president found Russia's response acceptable, a confirmation of his commitment to the potential significance of an alignment between Washington and Moscow. In July a new trade agreement was signed with the U.S., increasing by one-third Soviet purchases of American goods in the coming year. Pravda and Izvestiia also hailed the visit of Admiral Yarnell. The "Pacific Ocean," Izvestiia maintained, "does not separate, but unites the two countries." And Pravda noted "with particular satisfaction" that Washington and the American public were "becoming more and more convinced that the principles of the indivisibility of peace and of collective security correspond to the interests of all peace loving states." In October Litvinov praised the moral significance of Roosevelt's quarantine speech, even though the Soviet Foreign Commissar stressed that words were insufficient. Finally, the Narkomindel grudgingly welcomed the Nine Power Conference "as an expression of collective security"; and Litvinov intimated to Davis that Russia was "prepared to do anything reasonable" to restrain Japan.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Davies, Mission to Moscow, pp. 207-258. Davies to Hull, October 18, 1937, State Department files, 793.94 Conference/47. Davies to Hull, October 22, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/84. Norman Davis to Hull, November 6, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/198. Memoranda of Norman Davis, November 4 and 8, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/282. Hull's memorandum of a conversation with Troianovskii, December 11, 1937, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250.

⁵⁵ Davies, Mission to Moscow, pp. 176-178. Izvestiia, July 29, 1937. Pravda, July 29, 1937. Davies to Hull, October 18, 1937, State Department files, 793.94 Conference/47. Also, 793.94 Conference/84,

The president's disinclination to become too involved in East Asia, a reflection of domestic restraints and the limited military power available to Washington, was paralleled by the caution of the Kremlin. Prepared to fight only for its own territory, Moscow shifted uneasily in its simultaneous efforts to forewarn and to appease the "aggressor states." Significantly, one of the principal differences between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. at this time was Washington's rejection of expediency in order to promote, no matter how falteringly, the sanctity of treaties, and the gradual, peaceful evolution of international developments. The Kremlin, on the other hand, publicly proclaimed its commitment to collective security, confident that military action would not be involved. Disdainful of fidelity to "contracts" in the Western sense, Soviet leaders intended to insure the Kremlin's interests. The appearance of cooperation with the United States, or with other powers for that matter, including Germany and Japan, was but one ingredient in the Soviet Union's struggle to remain independent of the capitalist states that surrounded it.

/198, and /282. Throughout the summer and fall of 1937 the Soviet press emphasized the successes of Russian aviation, including the trans-polar flights to the United States. One way to distract the attention of the public in the USSR to the purges, these flights were also promoted as further proof of the possibilities that could develop from Soviet-American cooperation. Direct air service between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. (via the Aleutians and the Soviet Far East) was recommended by the Soviet Foreign Office. It had also been one of Litvinov's suggestions to Bullitt in 1934. See, for example, the information on Soviet flyers in President's Personal File 39, Roosevelt Library, Container 1, Folder: Aeronautics, 1933-1944.

III

Preoccupied with the purges, Russia turned inward in 1936 and 1937. Nationalism, xenophobia, and executions intermingled, affecting diplomatic relations with the United States and the other great powers. Although the Narkomindel insisted that American diplomats were treated exceptionally well, the U.S. embassy reported that its effectiveness was severely constrained by the conditions in the U.S.S.R. Henderson was hesitant to "advance any final explanation for the weird developments" which were taking place in Russia. But he concluded that Stalin was "by nature" a "man of action," who "like Mohammed would be much more inclined to make converts at the point of the sword than to resort to the tedious process of trying to change human habits . . . by the application of psychological and sociological theories." What was certain, Henderson emphasized, was that the Kremlin was "engaged in a deliberate and successful effort to undermine any prestige and popularity which foreign envoys might otherwise enjoy in the eyes of the Soviet public."⁵⁶

R. Walton Moore, the recently "promoted" Counselor of the State Department, empathized with the concern of Henderson and other U.S. diplomats in Russia. Angered by the dissolution of the Division of Eastern European Affairs and irritated by the efforts of the Soviet

⁵⁶Faymonville to M.I.D., War Department, September 15, 1937, NA RG 165, 2657-D-1052/1. Faymonville to M.I.D., September 15, 1937, State Department files, 861.00/11730. Hull's memorandum of his conversation with Troianovskii, December 11, 1937, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250. Henderson to Hull, February 18, 1938, State Department files, 124.61/122. Davies to Hull, March 3, 1938, *Ibid.*, 124.61/123. Henderson to Kelley, April 29, 1937, *Ibid.*, 861.00/11702. Henderson to Hull, June 10, 1937, *Ibid.*, 861.00/11705. Henderson to Hull, October 2, 1937, *Ibid.*, 861.00/11734.

Union to blame Bullitt for the deterioration in Soviet-American relations, Moore wrote Messersmith several days before the opening of the Brussels Conference. Moscow's handling of foreign diplomats was unbearable, he averred. It was "so intolerable that there" was "hardly any value in maintaining an American Ambassador in Moscow." George Kennan, then assigned to the Russian desk in the Division of European Affairs, agreed. "The anti-foreign campaign being conducted" by the Soviet government had "reached the point where it" was "insulting and humiliating to any honest foreigner and particularly to representatives of foreign Governments." It was "a constant strain . . . on the self-respect and peace of mind of our people"; it complicated and hindered the work of the embassy; and it would be "carried just as far as the Kremlin thinks it profitably can be." The "only possibility" which Kennan thought would impress the Kremlin with Washington's displeasure "would be to postpone for the present, and until such times as conditions warrant it, the appointment of a new Ambassador to succeed Mr. Davies." This approach, moreover, had the added advantage of expressing American dissatisfaction "without damaging our own interests."⁵⁷

Although rejected by Messersmith in March 1938 "in view of the general situation in Europe," Kennan's recommendation epitomized

⁵⁷ Moore to Messersmith, November 2, 1937, Ibid., 124.61/119. Moore's memorandum of his conversation with Troianovskii on December 3, 1936, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 10, Folder: Memoranda of Conversations. Also, Hull to Henderson, January 19, 1938, State Department files, 124.61/118. Hull's memorandum of his conversation with Troianovskii, March 26, 1938, Ibid., 124.61/126. Pierrepont Moffat's memorandum of his conversation with Troianovskii, April 16, 1938, Ibid., 124.61/128. Kennan's memorandum, Division of European Affairs, March 24, 1938, Ibid., 124.61/130.

the limited capacity for cooperation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in the late 1930s. Vast differences in ideology, economics, politics, institutions, and perceptions vitiated the tentative, albeit important, cooperative efforts which had been undertaken by the American and Soviet governments at this time. A closer examination of Morgenthau's efforts to include the U.S.S.R. in the Tripartite Agreement bears this out. So too does a further review of the American naval visit to Vladivostok, Roosevelt's willingness to speed the sale of battleships to the Kremlin, and the various attempts at Soviet-American cooperation in the Far East.⁵⁸

There is no doubt that the Secretary of the Treasury worked to bolster the French with Soviet gold. Yet Morgenthau, who later remarked that the "Russians were like children about international finance," had been motivated by other considerations. As Farm Credit Administrator he had delighted in the help that he had given to the president in the recognition of the U.S.S.R. Frequently willing to bypass the State Department in order to implement foreign policies which the Treasury promoted, he had been convinced that Bullitt was probably responsible for many of the difficulties with the Soviet Union, and he saw another chance to impress the president with his ability. Politely dismissing the counsel of Herbert Feis, the State Department's economic adviser, and deliberately ignoring the problems surrounding the failed negotiations over the implementation of the

⁵⁸ Messersmith to Hull, Welles, Moore, Dunn, and Pierrepont Moffat, March 28, 1938, *Ibid.*, 124.61/130. Roosevelt also thought that Davies should continue somewhat longer in Moscow before moving on to Belgium. See Welles to Roosevelt, March 15, 1938, OF 20, Roosevelt Library, Container 13, Folder: Department of State, March-April, 1938.

"gentlemen's agreement," Morgenthau sought Russian cooperation as one more way to promote the power of the Treasury in governmental decision-making. The fact that George Harrison of the Federal Reserve would be appalled by the effort to align the U.S.S.R. with the Tripartite Agreement made this initiative even more appealing. Harrison's opposition to the Soviet Union was well-known as was the Federal Reserve's determination to dominate the government's monetary decisions, efforts which irritated Morgenthau. Indeed, the Secretary of the Treasury delighted in the prospects that he would be able to induce the Russians to promote a stable gold market advantageous to U.S. interests, that solid ties would evolve between the Russian State Bank and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, despite Harrison's antipathy, and that several prominent Republican bankers, who detested the New Deal, would find it necessary to support this initiative because of their own profitable ties with the Soviet government.⁵⁹

Notwithstanding the fervor with which Soviet diplomats projected Moscow's commitment to collective security, the Soviets showed little immediate interest in Morgenthau's ideas. This was not altogether surprising. The Kremlin had previously attempted to weaken the Tripartite Agreement. And the Comintern's support of the popular front did not preclude the French Communist Party from disrupting Blum's government. The willingness to promote a policy of "peace" did not signify the Soviet Union's ready acceptance of American definitions of

⁵⁹Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Crisis, 1928-1938, p. 473. Also, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, 64: 79-81; 65:371-375; 66:213; and 68:40-67.

security or American proposals to achieve it. Although Troianovskii replied cautiously to the Treasury's initiative, Umansky intentionally made the negotiations more difficult in his conversation with Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Wayne C. Taylor on April 29. The Soviet diplomat ridiculed the ineffectiveness of the New Deal. He maintained that another depression was likely in the United States within the next two years, and he insisted that the White House had erred egregiously when it had allowed the Johnson Act to pass the U.S. Congress. It was axiomatic, he emphasized, that the American interpretation of the "gentlemen's agreement" was in error, and he was not altogether certain whether American interest in increasing Soviet-American trade was sincere. By June, when the Soviet ambassador presented Moscow's official response, there was little doubt that not much was to be achieved. Admittedly, the Soviet Union was interested in a high price for gold, and was willing to sell gold for dollars. But Morgenthau's requests that the U.S. be kept informed of the extent of Soviet gold stocks and of Russia's gold production were completely unacceptable. These were domestic matters, Troianovskii maintained, and thus, beyond the bounds of legitimate American interest.⁶⁰

By July 1937 normal working relations had been established between the Russian State Bank and the Federal Reserve, a not inconsequential by-product of Morgenthau's initiative. But early transactions between the two institutions proceeded with difficulty. The Russians

⁶⁰Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Crisis, 1928-1938, pp. 173-176. Taylor's memorandum of his conversation with Umansky, April 29, 1937, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, 66:263-265. Also, Diary, 70:108-118; 73:24-28; and 74:24 and 61-62.

sought to use the Federal Reserve to purchase gold on the London market, and the Federal Reserve refused. It had no intention of acting as a middleman for the Soviet Union. It was willing to purchase gold shipped directly to the United States, but nothing more. By this time Morgenthau had lost interest in pursuing the idea of monetary stabilization with Russia's support. Other considerations had become more important, including European reconciliation, a development invariably accompanied by a diminution of U.S. interest in the U.S.S.R.⁶¹

The efforts of the Soviet government to purchase a battleship in the United States were a nightmare, as well as a lesson in the limits of presidential power. Sam Carp was the brother-in-law of Molotov, the Soviet Union's Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars. He was also a former operator of a gasoline station in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Entrusted with the two hundred million dollars appropriated for arms purchases in the U.S., he blundered badly. As a result, he "lost nearly a year of valuable time." In a letter to Hugh Wilson early in 1938, Joseph Green, the State Department's expert on arms and munitions, recalled Carp's peregrinations through Washington's bureaucracy. "Instead of presenting his proposals frankly and bluntly," Green wrote, "he began with all sorts of unnecessary and annoying maneuvers, apparently designed to prepare the ground. He was obviously so filled with the idea that he would be met with trickery and double-dealing that . . . he indulged in every conceivable variety of Oriental

⁶¹These transactions may be followed in Morgenthau's Diary, 78:149-167.

indirection to achieve his ends." Meetings with Green, Admiral Leahy, and major American shipbuilding companies had accomplished "exactly nothing, beyond antagonizing the shipbuilders and some of the principal officers of the Navy Department." Familiarity with Stalinist Russia had proved a poor substitute in handling the Americans.⁶²

Eventually Carp had delegated responsibilities to Scott Ferris, a prominent Democratic politician from Oklahoma, who had served several terms in the U.S. Congress. A friend of Cordell Hull as well as of the president, Ferris repaired many of Carp's earlier mistakes, and proceeded along lines which were likely to lead to the successful conclusion of his mission. The momentum he had generated, however, dissipated before the concerted opposition of naval officers opposed to any cooperation with "a communistic government." American shipbuilders interested in Carp's proposal were warned that their relationship with the Navy Department would suffer if they contracted with representatives of the Kremlin.⁶³

Roosevelt intervened personally to overcome the obstructionism of these "insubordinate officers," but to little avail.

⁶²Green to Wilson, May 5, 1938, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 2, Folder: Joseph Green. Sumner Welles to Marvin McIntyre, August 21, 1937, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 88, Folder: State Department, 1937. Martin Dies, The Trojan Horse in America (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1940), pp. 273-284.

⁶³FRUS: The Soviet Union, 1933-1939, pp. 480-483, 487-488, 672-673, and 675-677. Naval opposition to "communists" continued into World War II. In 1942 potential recruits were quizzed concerning their view of the Spanish Civil War. Proponents of the Loyalist cause were rejected. Members of the American Communist Party were also harshly dealt with. See Roosevelt to Frank Knox, May 4, 1942, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 82, Folder: Frank Knox; and Roosevelt to Knox, June 17, 1942, Ibid.

Notwithstanding the nominal support of the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Leahy, the initial efforts to begin construction of the battleship were effectively sidetracked by its bureaucratic opponents. As he would later remark to Marriner Eccles, Roosevelt thought that "the Treasury and the State Department put together" were "nothing as compared with the Na-a-vy. The admirals are really something to cope with," he insisted, "and I should know. To change anything in the Na-a-vy is like punching a feather bed. You punch it with your right and you punch it with your left until you are finally exhausted, and then you find the damn bed just as it was before you started punching."⁶⁴

Unaccustomed to American politics, although an admirer of American technology, Stalin probably attributed the delay in Carp's mission to presidential hypocrisy. "Vengeful and unforgetful of real or fancied slights, jealous, suspicious, crafty, hot-tempered and capricious," Stalin would find it difficult, indeed, impossible to believe that if the president wanted the battleship constructed for the U.S.S.R., he would be unable to impose his will on the American Navy, domestic architects, and U.S. shipbuilders. Certainly, Hull's explanations were ridiculous. Despite the Secretary of State's protestations that he "had conferred with every official, high and low who might have anything to do with the situation," his insistence

⁶⁴Read Roosevelt's marginal notes on the memorandum from Hull and Edison, June 8, 1938, OF 220, Roosevelt Library, Container 1. This reaffirmed the president's support. Also, William D. Leahy to Roosevelt, November 15, 1938, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 78, Folder: Navy, March-December, 1938. Roosevelt was quoted in Marriner S. Eccles, Beckoning Frontiers: Public and Personal Recollections (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1951), p. 336.

early in 1938 that he was unable to put "his finger on" what was holding things back was completely unacceptable.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, sharply critical evaluations of the Soviet Union had also been one outcome of the visit of units of the Asiatic Fleet to Vladivostok in July. In a letter to Leahy, Admiral Yarnell reported that "the visit of this force evidently has meant a great deal to these people." The Russians had made "considerable preparations"; and they seemed "quite friendly to the United States." Yet "the officials" were "a rather mediocre looking lot and if they have much ability it was not apparent." Disinclined to repeat the visit except at infrequent intervals, Yarnell noted that Soviet naval personnel were unnecessarily "secretive about any details of their defense or armed forces." Overall, he hoped that "God" would "save us from communism!" In his estimation the ingredients of the Kremlin's rule were obvious and detestable: "first, kill off all the intelligentsia of the country; second, destroy all churches and deny all religion; third, discourage family life; fourth, have one-half the people watch the other half."⁶⁶

Faymonville agreed, in part, with Yarnell's appraisal. It was "evident," the military attaché concluded, "that contact will have to be considerably extended before either group [i.e., U.S. and U.S.S.R. naval officers] makes the necessary allowances for the racial

⁶⁵Davies, Mission to Moscow, pp. 345-347. Henderson to Hull, June 10, 1937, State Department files, 861.00/11705. Hull's memoranda of conversations with Troianovskii, March 26 and May 18, 1938, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250. George E. Hudson, "Soviet Naval Doctrine under Lenin and Stalin," Soviet Studies, XXVIII (January, 1976), 42-65.

⁶⁶Yarnell to Leahy, August 1, 1937, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 78, Folder: Navy Department, 1936-1937.

characteristics, political system, physical traits, and national policy of the other." Sympathetic to the U.S.S.R., however, Faymonville advised the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department that most of the difficulties which existed between the U.S. and the Soviet Union were due to misconceptions. "It can hardly be repeated too often," he asserted, "that uninformed criticism of Soviet institutions by those who know little or nothing of the background which gave rise to Soviet institutions will serve no useful purpose."⁶⁷

Faymonville had little support in the U.S. Navy. Yarnell and other officers attached to the Asiatic Fleet had concluded that military cooperation with the U.S.S.R. was not necessary to restrain Japanese aggression. In fact, it was not an essential ingredient in any projected American effort to protect the limited interests of the United States in the Far East. This conclusion had been drawn despite the assumption by Yarnell that Japan "expects and possibly invites" a war with the Soviet Union, and that if Tokyo were successful there would be "a complete unbalance of forces in the Far East." Moreover, these developments, he had concluded, would affect "the destiny of civilization" and the future of "the white race."⁶⁸

Considering the stakes involved, Yarnell argued that Washington could best protect itself through a judicious use of the economic power at its disposal. The "gross extravagance" of the First World War,

⁶⁷Faymonville to M.I.D., War Department, August 17, 1937, NA RG 165, 2257-ZZ-244/1. Also, Faymonville to Lieutenant Colonel John B. Coulter, August 13, 1937, Ibid., 2257-ZZ-244/1a.

⁶⁸Yarnell to Leahy, November 7, 1937, in Leahy to Roosevelt, November 30, 1937, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 78, Folder: Navy Department, 1936-1937.

he insisted, "was responsible for the present economic dislocation throughout the world, and the United States is neither in a position nor of a mind to incur a repetition of such conditions." A war that the U.S. could wage successfully, one without the disastrous consequences that evolved in the 1930s, would be one of economic "strangulation." The Manchurian Incident, the Italo-Ethiopian war, and the neutrality acts had revealed that a policy of economic sanctions would be difficult; but under the intelligent guidance of the president, and with America's real national interests in jeopardy, it seemed the one most likely to secure the greatest gains at the least cost.⁶⁹

Roosevelt agreed, for Yarnell's ideas made "a lot of sense." They also reminded the president of his "article in 'Asia' back in the early 20s"; and they went along "with the word 'quarantine' which" he had "used in the Chicago speech" of October 5. Distressed by the connotations that surrounded "sanctions," the president sought an alternative word to mean the same thing. But more important, confident that the U.S. had at its disposal the economic leverage which would make Japanese encroachments on American interests "futile" in the long run, Roosevelt had a tool at his disposal which was unavailable to the Kremlin. Again, Washington's inclination to distinguish economics and politics, a phenomenon nourished by the widespread domestic antipathy to military confrontations, undermined closer ties between the United States and the Soviet Union. This was ironic considering the Kremlin's public insistence that Washington, Great Britain, and other interested

⁶⁹Yarnell to Leahy, October 15, 1937, in Leahy to Roosevelt, November 8, 1937, Ibid.

powers use economic warfare to control Japanese expansionism. That such activity could lead to war reduced Washington's inclination to employ it, just as it encouraged the Narkomindel to demand it.⁷⁰

Other distinctions and complications were also evident in the approaches of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to the Brussels Conference. Washington had decided that a truce in the Sino-Japanese war was in America's best interest. To achieve this the president sought to use publicity and moral suasion and to associate the United States with other powers to prevent its isolation should some more decisive step become imperative. The "primary function of the conference," therefore, was "to provide a forum for constructive discussion, to formulate and suggest possible bases of settlement, and to endeavor to bring the parties together through peaceful negotiation."⁷¹

Stanley Hornbeck agreed with this assessment, arguing that "on the one hand Japan must be restrained," but on the other it "must be given a sense of political and economic security." Since the latter alternative involved the prevention of the "use of force by other powers" against the Japanese and assurances concerning Japan's access to "sources of raw materials and to world markets," this implied some degree of Soviet-Japanese rapprochement. But this too was complicated by diverse considerations. The most important was that Russia was then

⁷⁰Roosevelt to Leahy, November 10, 1937, Ibid., Also, Norman Davis's memorandum of his conversations with Roosevelt, October 20, 1937, Norman Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 5.

⁷¹Hull to Davis, October 18, 1937, State Department files, 793.94 Conference/73c. Davis to Roosevelt and Hull, November 10, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/219. Davis memorandum, October 20, 1937, Davis Papers, Library of Congress, Container 5.

inclined to demand from the Western powers the use of sanctions and boycotts to bring the Japanese into line, while simultaneously the Narkomindel sought to avoid an unnecessary military confrontation between the U.S.S.R. and Japan. Moreover, the United States approved of the limited military support which the Kremlin was giving to the Chinese, for Washington was not in the least assured that Japan's military leaders would be subdued by moderates in Tokyo or the force of worldwide public opinion.⁷²

Against this background Washington had sought to convince Japan to attend the conference, a decision which the Kremlin had thought absurd. Since a resolution of outstanding problems also involved the British, this inevitably introduced European dilemmas, not the least of which was the continuing tension which existed between London and Rome. Efforts to include Italy at Brussels made sense in this context, both to Washington and to Great Britain, but not to the Kremlin.⁷³

⁷²Hornbeck memorandum, October 6, 1937, State Department files, 793.94 Conference/98. Lt. Cmd. H. H. Smith-Hutton to Yarnell, November 6, 1937, *Ibid.*, 761.93/1623. For a discussion of how and why different members of the State Department viewed the Sino-Japanese war, read Hugh Wilson to Grew, October 18, 1937, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 2, Folder: Joseph Grew. Morgenthau pressed for increased US aid to China. If it were not forthcoming, he saw China being pushed toward Russia and communism. See Blum, From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Urgency, 1938-1941, p. 61.

⁷³Davies to Hull, October 29, 1937, State Department files, 793.94 Conference/129, and Davies to Hull, October 31, 1937, *Ibid.*, 793.94 Conference/151. Also, Bradford A. Lee, Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1939: A Study in the Dilemmas of British Decline (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973); Anthony Eden, The Eden Memoirs: Facing the Dictators (London: Cassell, 1962), 523-546; and John Harvey (ed.), The Diplomatic Diaries of Oliver Harvey, 1937-1940 (New York: Martin's Press, 1970), 47-66.

"The crux of the matter," Izvestiia had emphasized, "certainly does not consist in abstract judgments regarding the violation of the Washington Treaty, but in the discovery of concrete measures for the suspension of the unlawful and criminal aggression" of the Japanese. To "invite aggressors for the discussion of the means of struggle against aggression" was ridiculous. These efforts would only produce "a replica of the London Committee of Non-Intervention in Spanish affairs," which had already proved completely ineffective. Italy's participation, moreover, was simply "in order to represent the interests of their ally," Japan, "as regards aggression and the violation of international treaties."⁷⁴

The conference and the events surrounding it substantiated Russia's fears. The United States indicated its willingness to work with the Soviet Union, but Norman Davis revealed by his actions the limits that were involved. He emphasized in conversations with Litvinov, Potemkin, and Rubinin that Moscow's demand for an economic boycott was completely unrealistic at this time. In addition, Davis confirmed that Washington might have accepted the exclusion of the Russians from the conference altogether, despite earlier estimates that the problems of the western Pacific could not be resolved without the participation of the U.S.S.R. Finally, in the meetings held to discuss the formation of a smaller investigating committee there was almost universal agreement that the Soviet Union had to be excluded. Russia's participation would only irritate the Italians and the Japanese. And, since the irritation of the Italians would hinder Britain's participation and

⁷⁴Izvestiia, October 28, 1937. Also, Pravda, October 28, 1937.

support, and since the importance of Japanese-American relations far exceeded the benefits of Soviet-American cooperation, the United States agreed with the majority, excluded the Russians from the committee, and sacrificed what minimal support Moscow's participation might have had in bolstering the Kremlin's deteriorating commitment to collective security.⁷⁵

The Brussels Conference, therefore, sustained the relative isolation of the Soviet Union. It intensified the Kremlin's preoccupation with self-sufficiency, and it allowed the U.S.S.R. to proclaim vigorously its commitment to peace, and to ridicule the failure of the Western powers to act decisively against aggression. It also permitted the Russians to argue to the Chinese that the Kremlin was doing the best it could, but that the unwillingness of others to act made it difficult for the U.S.S.R. to confront Japan alone. Finally, it helped to augment the power of Stalin, who utilized the "capitalist encirclement" as one of the justifications for the incredible slaughter he had ordered in the "interests of socialism."

IV

The pattern in Soviet-American relations established in the early years of Roosevelt's second administration continued throughout 1938. Domestic politics and the tensions in Europe and Asia made this inevitable. Hull argued that if Washington, Moscow, Paris, and London

⁷⁵Davis to Hull, November 9, 1937, State Department files, 793.94 Conference/281. Davis to Hull, November 10, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/ 282 and /283. Grew to Hull, November 16, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/247. Davis to Hull, November 16, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/259. Davis to Hull, December 16, 1937, Ibid., 793.94 Conference/347.

"had gone forward in the exercise of normal relations and in developing their combined moral influence for peace, the unpleasant experiences in both the Far East and in Europe would have been reduced at least fifty percent." The Narkomindel agreed, depicting many of the difficulties between both countries as "differences of interpretation" which should not have precluded close and friendly relations.⁷⁶

Despite Bullitt's earlier conclusion that the Russians would retire "behind their swamps," the U.S.S.R. continued to maintain those contacts with capitalist powers, including the U.S., which were potentially useful to the Kremlin. Although it created, according to Davies, "nothing short of a sensation" among the foreign diplomats in Moscow, Stalin's interview with the American ambassador in June should not have been altogether unexpected. On a number of previous occasions, Stalin had spoken with a representative of some group relatively friendly to the U.S.S.R. This instance was no exception. Besides, Davies was preparing to leave Moscow for a new assignment in Belgium, and the Soviet Foreign Office was concerned that Washington would appoint Hugh Gibson or some other "reactionary" to replace him.⁷⁷

Stalin's well prepared review of Davies's previous endeavors as Wilson's Commissioner of Corporations and as chairman of the Federal Trade Commission was to impress the American envoy, and it did. More

⁷⁶ Hull's memorandum of his conversation with Troianovskii, March 26, 1938, State Department files, 124.61/126. Also, read the extensive memorandum prepared by the Soviet embassy in Washington, April 28, 1938, Ibid., 124.61/134.

⁷⁷ Bullitt to Roosevelt, November 23, 1937, in Bullitt (ed.), For the President: Personal and Secret, p. 237. Davies, Mission to Moscow, p. 339. Davies to Roosevelt, March 3, 1938, PSF Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 68, Folder: Russia, 1937-1940.

to the point, the General Secretary praised Roosevelt and every indication that the United States might play a more constructive role in European affairs. He emphasized Russia's continued interest in the purchase of a battleship manufactured in American naval yards, and he indicated that he was confident that within the limits imposed by previous agreements with other powers, particularly with England and France, some kind of arrangement could be negotiated to resolve the problem of the Kerensky debt.⁷⁸

Although simply a restatement of the Kremlin's interest in a relatively stable relationship with Washington, Stalin's observations thrilled the American ambassador. Davies had become increasingly depressed that Europe "in all probability" would become "completely fascist with the exception of England and the Soviet Union." Convinced that "the isolation of Russia" was "probably more serious to the democracies of Europe" than it was to the U.S.S.R., he viewed Stalin's efforts as yet another indication of the Kremlin's willingness to work with the United States. Numerous developments, he maintained, revealed that "the leaders and the people" of the Soviet Union had "a tremendous admiration for President Roosevelt," and that Moscow sought to act more favorably toward Washington "than to any other nation." Considering the ways in which events were unfolding "in this cock-eyed world," Davies was "not sure but what the democracies of the world might not be damn glad some day to have the friendship and the power and the

⁷⁸Davies, Mission to Moscow, pp. 338-350.

devotion to peace which this Government could supply in case of another world crisis."⁷⁹

Roosevelt generally agreed with Davies's views. Yet the dissolution of the Division of Eastern European Affairs had not ended the critical assessments of U.S. diplomats who insisted that the U.S.S.R. was undependable. The purges had aroused the Hearst press again, as well as the hostility of Americans bewildered by the bizarre domestic political situation in the Soviet Union. The effect of the executions of the Red Army's top officers had had a profound effect on European capitals, diminishing even more any inclination in Paris and London to use Russia as an effective counterweight to Germany and Italy. Domestic politics, complicated by the recession, the president's attacks on business, and the congressional elections, also made expending political capital on the U.S.S.R. a dubious proposition. The experiences that the White House had had with the Tripartite Agreement and the differences between Washington and Moscow concerning the best approach to the Sino-Japanese war had further revealed the disagreements which separated the two countries. Committed to European reconciliation, Roosevelt knew that the U.S.S.R., partly of its own volition, and partly because of the attitudes of the major European governments, had, in fact, withdrawn more and more from treating the significant international problems of the day. Still willing to support Soviet-American

⁷⁹ Davies to Marvin McIntyre, April 4, 1938, President's Personal File 1381, Roosevelt Library, and McIntyre to Roosevelt, April 22, 1938, *Ibid.* Typically, Troianovskii was also "bubbling over with enthusiasm" because of Stalin's interview with Davies. See Hull's memorandum of his conversation with the Soviet ambassador, June 7, 1938, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250.

cooperation, Roosevelt and Stalin recognized that effective coordination of Russian and American interests would have to await a greater stimulus than the instability of European and Asian politics in the late 1930s.

CHAPTER VII

REPRISE

In late 1937 John Wiley completed an extensive memorandum on international affairs several months before his appointment as U.S. Minister to Estonia and Latvia. "The bewildered observer," he wrote, "may wonder with amazement why the great democracies, all hostile in greater or less degree both to Bolshevism and National Socialism, should not have anticipated the future by attempting long since" to induce Germany's expansion eastward. It "would have relieved the pressure on both the West and the South," and it would "have launched Germany on a long and arduous adventure which might have given the rest of the world a breathing spell for many decades." It also might "have provoked the end of Bolshevism; even that of National Socialism." "Either or both would not be entirely undesired in influential quarters in France, England, and elsewhere."¹

The answer to this question, Wiley concluded, was "both factual and psychological. France and England were incapable of declaring the Treaty of Versailles an unworkable instrument or of attempting to impose it by force of arms. The postwar collaboration of

¹Wiley to Hugh Wilson, December 4, 1937, Hugh R. Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 4, Folder: John Wiley, pp. 10-11. The memorandum was entitled "Europe: Past, Present, and Perhaps."

the great democracies," he believed, had "been entirely negative and subject to the swinging tide of domestic political considerations." Under these circumstances, "a sly compact whereby the plains of Eastern Europe might have been thrown open to German conquest was not feasible."²

Intrigued by the view that "the plots and counterplots" of Paris and London were "tactical, not strategic," Wiley reemphasized that "continuity and decision in the formulation of foreign policy imply authority." It was not surprising, therefore, that the democratic states were relatively unsuccessful in "'waging' peace. In peacetime, the formulation of foreign policy enters the field of domestic politics. It emerges emasculated by partisan processes." Thus, in the confrontations since the First World War "between passive democracies and aggressive dictatorships every action has been won by the latter." Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy, and Stalin's Russia controlled their press and implemented their foreign policies without many of the difficulties encountered in the United States, England, and France. Since there was no doubt in Wiley's view that the "democracies can wage war," the chief concern was whether England, France, and the U.S. would cooperate before it broke out. Wiley was not "sanguine" that this would occur.³

The developments in Soviet-American relations from 1938 through 1941 were a microcosm of the different themes and actions which were the basis of the interwar relationship of these two countries.

²Ibid., p. 11.

³Ibid., pp. 11 and 14.

They were also confirmation of Wiley's observations in 1937. Roosevelt was constrained by the complexities of the U.S. political system and the unwillingness of the American people to become involved in overseas war. The president was also committed to the success of the democracies, not only in their efforts to recover from the depression, but in their attempts to resolve the outstanding political and economic problems that had developed since 1919. A proponent of capitalism and liberal democracy, he was confident that the U.S.S.R., although a dictatorship, was committed to improving the living conditions of its people, and he believed that the Red Army would play a significant role in any European war against Germany. The domestic complications aroused by the widespread distaste for socialism and the manipulation of this fear by conservative politicians of both parties reemphasized the internal difficulties that would make close cooperation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. enormously difficult. The Nazi-Soviet nonaggression pact, Russia's invasion of eastern Poland, and the Winter War with Finland made that cooperation all but impossible. Nevertheless, the president balanced domestic pressures against the long-term political and military contributions that Russia could provide. This was a testimony to Roosevelt's skill. It was based in part on the fact that the American people viewed Hitler's Germany as the greater threat, and it reflected the conclusion of the White House that Russia would not be able to dominate the European continent for years to come.

Stalin on the other hand adjusted Russia's foreign policy to insure his own power, which he identified with the interests of the Soviet people, the Russian state, and the world revolutionary movement.

It was an identification which comes easily to dictators not restrained by the multiplicity of forces affecting democratic governments. His actions in these years were also confirmation of Miliukov's statement in 1933. The former Foreign Minister of Russia's provisional government of 1917 insisted that Soviet foreign policy could best be described in the following way: "On est prévenant avec les forts; on est arrogant avec ceux qui ne peuvent ni ne veulent nuire; on est servile avec dont on a peur." It was a far-sighted commentary, especially pertinent to the Kremlin's view of foreign affairs after 1939.⁴

I

James Clement Dunn, the State Department's adviser on political relations, completed a review of the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia several months after the Munich debacle. "Notwithstanding the statements of Litvinov at Geneva and the repeated assurances from Moscow that the Soviet Union would live up to its treaty commitments," Dunn concluded that "the actual position of the Soviet Union remained throughout a matter of uncertainty." The German embassy in Moscow had assumed as early as May 1938 that the Kremlin would not come to the aid of the Czechs. It was a view shared by the British and Japanese embassies too. The Soviet press, moreover, had taken "no steps to prepare the Soviet population emotionally or psychologically for war." It seemed obvious, Dunn maintained, that Russia had no intention "of embarking on a military adventure on a scale which would seriously

⁴Miliukov's depiction of the Soviet Union's foreign policy was brought to the attention of the State Department in Warrington Dawson to Hull, July 12, 1933, State Department files, 761.00/233.

weaken its military or economic power or which might weaken Stalin's grip upon the party and government." The "dissatisfaction . . . among all strata of the Soviet population, the serious crisis which obviously exists in [the] Soviet national economy, and the decline in the effectiveness and morale of the Red Army following the purging of a large proportion of its commanding personnel" made more decisive action improbable. Moscow had kept up "the pretense of supporting Czechoslovakia," and had "hoped," according to Dunn, that if war erupted the U.S.S.R. "would be the principal gainer as Communism . . . spread of its own force in the chaotic conditions which would follow."⁵

Alexander Kirk, the elegant and eccentric diplomat who replaced Henderson as the U.S. chargé d'affaires of the American embassy in Moscow, agreed with Dunn's assessment. Kirk also sought to advise Washington of the subtle changes developing in the Kremlin's foreign policy in the late winter and early spring of 1939. He forwarded to the State Department in February Charles Bohlen's evaluation of Stalin's Short Course. In addition to the obvious conclusion that this "history" was the "conscious glorification" of the General Secretary's policies and the vilification of the "counterrevolutionary aims and activities of his opponents within the Party," both Kirk and Bohlen were intrigued by a number of its sections. Heretofore the Bolsheviks had always described any military confrontation between capitalist states as an imperialist war. Now, "presumably in the light of recent events," the

⁵The one hundred and one pages of Dunn's memorandum on Czechoslovakia may be consulted in James C. Dunn to John C. Wiley, January 31, 1939, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 3, Folder: Estonia and Latvia, 1938-1941-Report on the Czechoslovak Crisis.

Soviet government defined "just wars" as wars of liberation, waged to defend the proletariat from foreign attack, to deliver nations from capitalist slavery, and to free colonies and dependent countries "from the yoke of imperialism." "Unjust wars" were characterized as those designed to conquer and to enslave free nations. It was clear to Bohlen that Stalin would decide which kind of war was being waged.⁶

Manuilski's report on the work of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the Eighteenth Party Congress in March was equally important in this regard. It followed closely the ideas laid down at the Seventh Comintern Congress in 1935, but this was not, according to Kirk, "the most significant portion" of his address. Instead, the Kremlin was again adapting its theoretical ideas to fit current political realities. The "central question engaging the attention of the Comintern and the Soviet government," Kirk maintained, was the probability of a new European war, and Moscow intended to insure itself of every possible support. Significantly, Manuilski reflected a public confidence in the ability of the U.S.S.R. to defend itself and to extend its interests. Capitalism, Manuilski stressed, was "moribund." It "will not save itself by counterrevolutionary war" against the Soviet Union. Rather, "it will only hasten its own destruction. The armed resistance of the Soviet people," he maintained, "will stir up the whole world of labor." It "will loose . . . a mighty movement of anti-fascist forces" which would overwhelm the capitalist

⁶ Kennan, Memoirs, 1925-1950, pp. 112-115. Bohlen, Witness to History, 1929-1969, pp. 57-66. Kirk to Hull, February 1, 1939, State Department files, 861.00 Party-All Union Communist/207.

aggressors and insure the inevitable triumph of the Kremlin and its proponents, the international proletariat.⁷

Also substantiating Kirk's assumption that significant changes were taking place in the Kremlin's view of international affairs were the observations of the leaders of the Red Army. On March 18 Mekhlis, the Assistant People's Commissar of Defense, stated that "should the second imperialist war turn its point against the first socialist state" Russia's armed forces were prepared "to carry military activity onto the enemy's territory and to fulfill our international obligations and multiply the number of Soviet republics." The time was not far off, Mekhlis continued, "when our army, international in its dominant ideology, in reply to the brazen onslaughts of the enemy, will help the workers of the aggressor countries to free themselves from the yoke of fascism, the yoke of capitalist slavery, and will liquidate the capitalist encirclement" which had isolated and threatened the Soviet Union since 1917.⁸

Of further interest was the article by Manuilski entitled "Stalin and the World Communist Movement," which appeared serially in Pravda on April 18, 19, and 20. Manuilski sought to magnify the personal role of Stalin as the sole and infallible leader of the workers of the entire world. He reaffirmed the program of the Seventh Comintern Congress, but characterized it as a tactical maneuver in the

⁷ This information is available in Kirk's extensive memorandum entitled "Recent Indications of Soviet Attitude Towards the World Revolutionary Movement." See Kirk to Hull, April 26, 1939, Ibid., 861.00 Party-All Union Communist/222.

⁸ Kirk to Hull, March 18, 1939, Ibid., 861.00 Party-All Union Communist/216. Also, Krasnaya Zvezda, April 8, 1939.

ongoing struggle between the Kremlin and the aggressor states. A "monolithic Communist International," he insisted, was essential. The immediate obedience of the member parties meant obedience to Stalin and the protection of the U.S.S.R. as the best guarantee for the final triumph of international communism.⁹

Kirk and Bohlen struggled to explain the direction of Moscow's foreign policy. Their contacts with Soviet diplomats had been sharply curtailed by the fear induced among Russians by the purges. The Kremlin had also continued to isolate foreign diplomats and to denigrate their position in the eyes of the Russian people. Still, in addition to the indications from the Soviet press about a change in Russia's commitment to collective security, there were a number of statements made by Stalin and his Foreign Commissar which made clear that a definite shift was under way. In late 1938 Litvinov had remarked that the Soviet Union did "not consider itself an integral part of the present world system." He had insisted that Russia's interest in the "slight cooperation" of recent years with the Western powers might be "withdrawn," unless England and France acted to restrain German expansionism. Stalin's speech to the Eighteenth Party Congress in March confirmed this theme. It reemphasized that the U.S.S.R. was disinclined to "pull somebody else's chestnuts out of the fire." It did not, however, indicate that Moscow had finally rejected its efforts to work with London and Paris. Even the removal of Litvinov in May did not convince U.S. diplomats that the U.S.S.R. intended to turn toward Germany. Even if the Kremlin thought this could be done, Bohlen, Hugh Wilson and others assumed that

⁹Pravda, April 18, 19, and 20, 1939.

Berlin would reject any such overture. An agreement between Germany and Poland against the U.S.S.R. seemed much more likely to occur.¹⁰

Kirk despised the Soviet leaders and their aims. He thought that Stalin hated "all our guts," and that "we poor boobs have been letting him play us for suckers for years." Cautious in his political reporting as he was flamboyant in his personal life, Kirk restrained Bohlen and the other American diplomats stationed in Moscow from jumping to conclusions. A Russo-German rapprochement was a possibility, but this was not emphasized in the embassy's reports to Washington. Instead, Kirk stressed the dangerous implications of the Kremlin's use of foreign communist parties on the internal stability of the capitalist states. Should the U.S.S.R. become involved in a war, he concluded, it would demand that the American CP and the other parties it controlled "direct their activities, legally or illegally, by direct or indirect methods for the defense of the Soviet Union and of its immediate interests." The "tactics and methods employed in the pursuance" of this end would vary. But it was clear that the effects "on the true interests or institutions" of the countries involved would be unfortunate, if not disastrous.¹¹

¹⁰ Bohlen traced these developments in Witness to History, 1929-1969, pp. 57-66. In addition, read Henderson's memorandum, May 4, 1939, State Department files, 861.01/2176, and Hugh Wilson to Hull, July 12, 1939, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 3, Folder: Cordell Hull.

¹¹ Kirk to Hull, September 30, 1939, State Department files, 861.00/11800. Kirk to Hull, April 26, 1939, Ibid., 861.00 Party-All Union Communist/222. Kirk to Wiley, March 23, 1940, Wiley Papers, General Correspondence, Roosevelt Library, Container 7, Folder: I-K.

Kirk's reports were a small part of Washington's review of international affairs early in 1939. Considerable attention had already been given to analysing the long-term implications of the Munich agreements and the Russian claim that the English had agreed to "sell out" Czechoslovakia months before the crisis in September. Adolph Berle, an Assistant Secretary of State, had concluded that "the British were quite willing to settle their difficulties at the expense of the Czechs," but that they "did not expect the process to go as far as it did." Intrigued by the "great campaign in England stressing the Russian danger," Berle was uncertain whether this was "politics or a real desire on the part of certain groups to begin a Fascist orientation." At the same time Hugh Wilson thought that Britain and France would acquiesce in German expansion in southeastern Europe, and perhaps the Ukraine. If it included other parts of the Soviet Union, and prevented a war among western European nations, so much the better. Others, including the president, insisted that "Berlin, Rome and Tokyo" had Paris and London "on the run," and that they would "press their advantage." The absorption of the remaining parts of Czechoslovakia in March by Germany and Poland corroborated the latter point of view. It also renewed interest in the repeal of the neutrality laws, which aroused Roosevelt's Republican opponents, and it refocused attention on the position of the U.S.S.R. and its role in the rapidly approaching European war.¹²

¹²Berle memorandum, November 4, 1938, Adolph Berle Papers, State Department Subject File, 1938-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 55, Folder: Berle memoranda, 1938-1944. Pierrepont Moffat to Hugh Wilson, October 5 and October 20, 1938, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 3, Folder: Pierrepont Moffat. Wiley to Bullitt,

Berle had concluded in 1918 that the treaty of Versailles "would be the direct and certain cause of further" conflicts, that it would place "irresistible pressure" on Germany and Russia to unite, and that "with the greatest resources of manpower, raw material, and technical, organizing ability in the world," they would be able to "defy the whole League." Much of what he had thought had come to pass, and in 1939 he was interested in interpreting the "soundings for an anti-German coalition" which were being discussed in Europe, and which "as always" included the "wholly incalculable Russian element." No longer as confident as he had once been in predicting the actions of different nations, he assumed in April that the U.S.S.R. did "not desire to mix up in Western Europe at all." Instead, Russia would prefer, he maintained, "to wait and foment a revolution" after a European war was over. Then the Soviets "really expect to pick the corpses of the whole lot."¹³

Sharing these views were many diplomats and military officers in Washington and in various posts throughout the world. Pierrepont Moffat had concluded that the U.S.S.R. was completely undependable in any venture that would involve sustained cooperation. William Bullitt, although more interested in guiding the actions of the French government

November 19, 1938, Wiley Papers, General Correspondence, Roosevelt Library, Container 6, Folder: William C. Bullitt. Hull to Bullitt, March 4, 1939, State Department files, 711.61/670. Hugh Wilson to Alexander Kirk, December 4, 1939, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 3, Folder: Alexander Kirk.

¹³ Beatrice Bishop Berle and Travis Beal Jacobs (eds.), Navigating the Rapids, 1918-1971: From the Papers of Adolph Berle (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), pp. 8, 11, and 12. Also, Berle memorandum, March 22, 1939, Berle Papers, State Department Subject File, 1938-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 55, Folder: Berle memoranda, 1938-1944.

from his post as U.S. ambassador in Paris, did not tire of his argument that Stalin was Satan. The Navy Department continued to obstruct the construction and/or sale of warships for the recently established Soviet naval commissariat. And Army officers, including Lt. Colonel E. Villaret, the U.S. military attaché in Belgrade, belittled the effectiveness of the Red Army and discounted Faymonville's optimistic appraisal of Moscow's intentions. Emphasizing that the performance of Soviet troops in their confrontation with the Japanese throughout 1938 and 1939 revealed the inadequacy of Russia's equipment and the low state of its troops morale, Villaret, for example, insisted that the Kremlin would "sign the death warrant of communism" if it dared to call for the total mobilization needed for a European war.¹⁴

In March the president assumed that the Germans would "go eastward"; that they would "not make any agreement with Stalin"; and that "the stresses and strains of taking in eastern Europe" would "make the going increasingly hard." Not surprisingly, he and his advisers discussed the possibility of "a Russian-American understanding," which was promoted, according to Berle, "chiefly by American liberals." The idea was quickly dismissed. "To contribute anything to the peace of the world," Berle noted, "such an understanding would have to include an agreement to act jointly, through military and naval actions, were war to break out." Since Russia could not act except in the Far East

¹⁴ Consult the note by Pierrepont Moffat attached to Kirk to Hull, November 25, 1938, State Department files, 711.61/666. Bullitt to Kirk, September 28, 1939, Hugh Wilson Papers, Hoover Library, Container 3, Folder: Alexander Kirk. Morgenthau Papers, October 3, 1939, Presidential diaries, volume 2, p. 317. FRUS: The Soviet Union, 1933-1939, 670-708. Nancy Hooker (ed.), The Moffat Papers, 283-286. Lt. Colonel E. Villaret to MID, March 23, 1939, N.A. R.G. 165, 2037-1833/73.

and along its western frontiers such an agreement would be a "defensive alliance, in which" the United States would "contribute the overwhelming majority of support." Furthermore, there was great doubt whether the Soviet Union could act at all, considering its internal situation, and it was widely believed that the Kremlin would use such an understanding as "an opportunity to forward" its "own type of political penetration" in eastern and central Europe. Even more important, Washington would "range against" it, "not only the so-called 'upper classes,' but that huge majority of people of the Western world who see little practical difference between living under a Russian or a Nazi tyranny." The whole idea, Berle concluded, was "as far out of the question as . . . an American-German alliance."¹⁵

Precluded by internal forces from taking a more positive stance, Roosevelt, nonetheless, sought to take some action for peace. In April he told Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau that he wanted "to write a letter to Hitler and Mussolini suggesting that they give sacred guarantees that they would not absorb any other countries in Europe." If "they were willing to give such guarantees," the president (according to Morgenthau) was prepared "to meet them at the Azores and sit around a table and discuss (1) disarmament and (2) world trade." On April 15 he told the Treasury Secretary to "keep your

¹⁵ Berle memorandum of his conversation with Roosevelt, March 16, 1939, Berle Papers, State Department Subject File, 1938-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 55, Folder: Berle memoranda, 1938-1941. Berle and Jacobs (eds.), Navigating the Rapids, p. 210. Roosevelt to the Chief of Naval Operations, March 13, 1939, PSF, Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 78, Folder: Navy-General Board (Joint Army-Navy), 1939-1940. Biddle to Roosevelt, April 18, 1939, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 65, Folder: Poland, April-June 1939.

fingers crossed. There is but one chance in five" that the plan would work.¹⁶

This was not the first of Roosevelt's "wild ideas." In 1934 he had favored a ten year multilateral nonaggression pact, which contained a puerile definition of aggression and assumed that trade would be cut off in the event of any violation of the agreement by a participating nation. In 1935 he had thought of the possible effectiveness of an economic blockade of Germany which would have made a direct military confrontation with land armies unnecessary. In 1937 he had resurrected a disarmament plan that presupposed scrapping all but defensive weapons, and he had informed Morgenthau that an economic boycott would be used against any nation that refused to comply with the decisions of the majority of nations convened at a disarmament conference. Then in 1938 he had intended to propose to the entire Washington diplomatic corps the principles which should govern the relations of states. Predictably, these had included a reduction of armaments, equal access to raw materials, and recognized laws of war.¹⁷

¹⁶The views of part of the political opposition which restrained the president can be traced in Hoover to Castle, April 10, 1939, Castle Papers, Correspondence, Hoover Library, Container 14, Folder: Herbert Hoover, 1933-1944. Also, Hoover to Castle, September 14, 1939, *Ibid.*, Container 14, Folder: 124-Herbert Hoover, 1935-1944, and Berle memorandum to Roosevelt, April 24, 1939, Berle Papers, State Department Subject File, 1938-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 66, Folder: Memoranda to F.D.R., April-December, 1939. In addition, read Morgenthau's observations on his conversations with the president, April 11 and 15, 1939, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Presidential diaries, volume 1, pp. 59 and 81.

¹⁷Read David Dilks (ed.), The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, 1938-1945 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1971), p. 36 for Cadogan's view of F.D.R.'s "wild ideas." Also, William Phillips to Pierrepont Moffat, October 22, 1934, State Department files, 500. A 15 A

George Kennan would later conclude that all of these schemes revealed Roosevelt as "a very superficial man, ignorant, dilettantish, with a severely limited intellectual horizon." Be that as it may, there is no denying that in the months before the Wehrmacht's invasion of Poland the president recognized the limited effectiveness of the Soviet Union, worked to bolster the democracies and prevent the outbreak of war, and concentrated on upgrading the public's awareness of the European crisis, while strengthening the U.S. economy in general and the American military in particular. As a practical matter, the content of Soviet-American relations remained much as it had heretofore.¹⁸

From his post in Brussels Davies reminded the president that "the only real assurance for peace was a realistic London-Paris-Moscow axis, now that the League of Nations" was "destroyed." The ambassador found it "perfectly amazing" that "the power and strength of the Soviet Government and Army is not accepted in spite of the overwhelming evidence that is at hand. When the house is burning," he concluded, "it seems so silly to be fearful of bringing in the Fire Department because the water might get your feet wet." Morgenthau, too, continued to think that Bullitt had been primarily responsible for the failure of the

4/2600 1/3; Pierrepont Moffat to Phillips, October 23, 1934, *Ibid.*, 500. A 15 A 4/2600 2/3; Roosevelt to House, April 10, 1935, in Roosevelt (ed.), *F.D.R.-His Personal Letters, 1928-1945*, I, 472-473; Davies to Roosevelt, June 10 and June 26, 1937, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 68, Folder: Russia, 1937-1940; John Morton Blum (ed.), *From the Morgenthau Diaries: Years of Crisis, 1928-1938*, pp. 459-467.

¹⁸ Kennan's observation was made in a "comment" on three articles by Robert Dallek, Alexander Dallin, and David Dilks on allied leadership during the Second World War. See *Survey*, XXI (Winter-Spring, 1975), p. 31.

"gentlemen's agreement." Together with Jesse Jones of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Secretary of the Treasury sought new ways to increase Soviet purchases of U.S. cotton and accelerate America's imports of Russian manganese. In June he asked Hull if the Treasury Department could proceed with new efforts to overcome the economic disagreements which separated the two capitals. Discounting Bullitt's conclusion that even a debt settlement would be of little significance, Hull agreed. And Morgenthau began a series of conversations with the Soviet ambassador. Hull also stressed in his talks with Umansky the importance of international trade and cooperation, and emphasized that the Soviet Union's dumping of certain chemical products on the American market aroused those business interests hostile to the Kremlin, making relations between both nations unnecessarily difficult.¹⁹

Even after the outbreak of the European war in September, moreover, there was little inclination to do more. Washington's commitment to avoid direct involvement in Europe's mess was overwhelming. The confusion over the extent and duration of the conflict also inhibited more dramatic overtures. By October, many in Washington, including diplomats in the State Department, thought that peace was "desired by all people and all leaders, including Hitler himself." The "phoney war" had begun, and what incentive existed to work with the U.S.S.R. had been shaken by the Soviet-German nonaggression pact, the invasion of eastern Poland on September 17, and the prospect that the U.S.S.R.

¹⁹ Davies to Roosevelt, June 8, 1939, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 33, Folder: Belgium, 1938-1941. Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, May 3, June 19, and June 22, 1939, 187:345; 197:255-258; and 198:170. Hull memorandum of his conversation with Umansky, June 17, 1939, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250.

intended to flood the U.S. with counterfeit money. New initiatives awaited future events as Washington concentrated on Roosevelt's efforts to repeal the arms embargo and to redefine America's approach to neutrality and international law.²⁰

II

The idealism and élan of the revolution as well as the dream of a classless society had been gutted by Stalin. In March 1938 he completed the destruction of most of the remaining Old Bolsheviks. Bukharin, Rykov, Rosengoltz, Grinko, Rakovsky and the other "conspirators" were tried and executed. The purges continued, but their pace slackened. The great public trials ended; the international situation grew more ominous; and the Kremlin decided to offset as much as possible the conclusion of the capitalist states that the U.S.S.R. had been gravely weakened by the internal political pogroms of the late 1930s.²¹

Stalin believed in the validity of historical materialism, and his domestic policies were to insure that his power was unassailable, and that he was recognized as Lenin's peer, the builder of a socialist state in the U.S.S.R. The disparities in achieving both these aims vitiated the Bolshevik ideology, created special classes,

²⁰Moore to Bullitt, October 12, 1939, Moore Papers, Roosevelt Library, Group 55, Container 3, Folder: Bullitt, 1939. Morgenthau-Roosevelt conversation, October 9, 1939, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Presidential diaries, volume 2, p. 333.

²¹Robert C. Tucker and Stephen F. Cohen (eds.), The Great Purge Trial (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1965). Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 253-279.

distinct from and superior to the proletariat, and induced a gradually evolving bureaucratization of Soviet decision-making that had less to do with the socialist millennium than it did with the power and privileges of certain segments of the Soviet government. Stalin's ideas also determined that his internationalism would be Moscow and Russian oriented. Not unexpectedly, he had defined an "internationalist" as one who was "unreservedly, unhesitatingly, and unconditionally ready to defend the U.S.S.R." The Soviet Union, he insisted, was "the base of the world revolutionary movement"; it was "impossible to defend and advance this movement without defending" Stalinist Russia.²²

The Kremlin's foreign policy in 1938 and 1939 is understandable in these terms. First, Stalin viewed the capitalist encirclement as a threat to the socialist experiment and thus to his own power. He had supported Litvinov and the policy of collective security in order to avoid the isolation of the Soviet state and because he assumed that it would prevent a war which would disrupt his plans for Russia's economic advancement. The Soviet response to the Anschluss, therefore, was sharp, but gave no indication that the U.S.S.R. planned to support any crusade against Hitler's Germany. Second, during the Changkufeng incident along the Soviet-Manchukuoan border in the summer of 1938, the Red Army employed strategic-size military units, mauled the overconfident Japanese forces, and reaffirmed the Kremlin's inclination to fight only if its own territory and specific interests were threatened. Third, in September Moscow deliberately informed both the Czechs and

²²Adam Ulam, Stalin, pp. 435-490. Robert C. Tucker, Stalin as Revolutionary, p. 248.

the French that it would live up to its previous agreements. Yet even if London and Paris had been willing to act, Soviet aid (if it had been forthcoming) would have been extremely slight. Access to East Prussia through Lithuania was viewed by all the military staffs of the European powers as too difficult. Moreover, the Rumanian railroads would have made the deployment of the Red Army a nightmare, and then, even if the Rumanian government would have allowed this to occur (which was not the case) Soviet forces would have been in eastern Czechoslovakia, far from the threatened border with Germany. Poland, of course, refused to consider permitting the use of its territory by the Soviet military. The debacle at Munich confirmed the Kremlin's conclusions that the British and French would not fight, but it did not alter appreciably Soviet foreign policy. Moscow had never intended to rely on any single power, or combination of powers for that matter.²³

In the fall and winter of 1938 and 1939 the Kremlin exploited brilliantly Lenin's dictum concerning the exploitation of the antagonisms of the capitalist states. In November Litvinov and Beck reaffirmed the Soviet-Polish nonaggression pact of 1932. In December, January, and February, Moscow projected the image of a strong power, confident that its most dangerous internal enemies had been destroyed, and that it was more than able to protect, forcibly if necessary, Russia's interests in Europe and Asia. In March Stalin ridiculed the

²³Adam Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 253-279. Also, Henderson to Hull, February 11, 1938, State Department files, 761.94/1017; Henderson to Hull, February 15, 1938, Ibid., 761.94/1019; Izvestiia, March 11, 1938; Davies to Hull, March 14, 1938, State Department files, 761.94/1033; Davies to Hull, March 14, 1938, Ibid., 740.00/323; Kirk to Hull, November 23, 1938, Ibid., 761.00/310; Faymonville to MID, October 5, 1938, N.A. R.G. 165 2657-D-1047/2; and Faymonville to MID, November 21, 1938, Ibid., 2657-D-1008/7.

foreign policies of the western states, and gave every indication that he was willing to respond favorably to proposals that would serve his determination to avoid war, or, if that were impossible, to see to it that the U.S.S.R. did not fight alone. His speech to the delegates of the Eighteenth Party Congress, therefore, was not simply an effort to appease the Germans and to move toward the Soviet-German nonaggression pact which would be completed later that summer. Indeed, Litvinov's removal in May and his replacement by Molotov was to ease negotiations with Berlin, but it did not presuppose that the Kremlin had finally and irrevocably repudiated a connection with England and France. In the summer of 1939 Moscow conducted negotiations with the British and French, and managed to elicit from Ribbentrop in particular a German initiative made necessary by Hitler's plans for Poland and the fears of the Wehrmacht's high command concerning a two front war.²⁴

Washington's involvement in these matters was peripheral. First, the prospect that Moscow would seek to use the U.S. to persuade London to take a more flexible approach to the U.S.S.R. had been made unnecessary by the extraordinary decision of Chamberlain's government in March. Following the final obliteration of Czechoslovakia, England and France offered to "lend . . . all support in their power" to Poland. This guarantee gave the Kremlin as much as it could expect for the moment, and it induced more than anything else the commitment to the Russo-German nonaggression pact in August. Second, several days after the signing of the agreement with Berlin, the Red Army sought to end the Nomanhan incident which had been festering since May. The Kwantung

²⁴Adam Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 253-279.

Army, which had badly underestimated Soviet strength, suffered serious losses, and Tokyo, angered by Berlin's cavalier treatment of the Anti-Comintern pact, sought to reduce tensions with the Soviet government. On September 15 an understanding was signed between Russia and Japan which eased the Kremlin's fears in the Far East, and allowed the Japanese army to concentrate its efforts in China. A precursor to the Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact of April 1941, this agreement had been achieved without Washington's help. Much had happened since 1934 when the Soviet government had tried to persuade Bullitt that even America's "moral" pressure on Tokyo would be significant as well as appreciated. It was further confirmation of Stalin's longstanding conclusion: Soviet interests were best protected by Russia's economic and military strength. That this coincided with Stalin's leadership of the party, the state, and the world revolutionary movement was a truism few in the U.S.S.R. were inclined to deny.²⁵

Unwilling to forsake the potential influence of any great power, however, particularly one as strong as the United States, the Kremlin continued to press those arguments which it had developed throughout the mid-1930s. In July 1938, while Litvinov castigated members of the State Department as reactionaries, whose fascist friends were hostile to the Soviet Union, several Soviet periodicals discussed the possibility of Anglo-American military cooperation in East Asia with the U.S.S.R. Spurred on by the Soviet-Japanese confrontation at

²⁵ Ibid. Faymonville to MID, October 27, 1939, N.A. R.G. 165, 2037-1833/70. Hata Ikuhiko, "The Japanese-Soviet Confrontation, 1935-1939," Deterrent Diplomacy: Japan, Germany, and the U.S.S.R., 1935-1940, ed. James William Morley (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 157-178.

Lake Khasan that summer, Moscow, according to Faymonville, was "more ready than at any time in her history to coordinate her defense plans in eastern Asia with those of other powers which do not approve of Japanese aggression."²⁶

In addition, Izvestiia, after the Munich settlement and after the U.S. congressional elections, discussed Roosevelt's efforts against the "lying campaign of the isolationists." It emphasized that the American president supported the indivisibility of peace, that the ideas of the "quarantine" speech of 1937 had not been put into effect because of internal pressures and the wavering policies of other capitalist countries, and that the United States had invariably been hurt by its dependency on Great Britain. Two opposing tendencies existed, the editorial continued. One supported isolationism, the other recognized that Washington could not avoid the orgy of aggression which, to a greater degree than before, threatened the American continent. Admitting that the Soviet-American relationship of the previous five years had not always been close, it concluded that events in Europe and Asia made it likely, indeed probable, that a further deepening of relations between the two countries was likely to occur in the months to come.²⁷

The editorial was in part prompted by the reports of Constantin Umansky, the Soviet chargé d'affaires in Washington. On November 11 he had surveyed for the Narkomindel the internal forces affecting

²⁶ Kirk to Hull, July 13, 1938, State Department files, 711.61/657. Faymonville to MID, July 13, 1938, N.A. R.F. 165 2657-D-1053/2. Faymonville to MID, September 22, 1938, Ibid., 2037-1833/66.

²⁷ Izvestiia, November 16, 1938. Also, Kirk to Hull, November 16, 1938, State Department files, 711.61/644.

Roosevelt's foreign policy, and the probable direction of Washington's response to German and Japanese expansionism in Europe and Asia. The increase in the strength of the Republican party, he maintained, would circumscribe the maneuvering room available to Roosevelt. An upsurge in isolationist propaganda was expected. The proponents of protectionism were also gaining in strength, and the speeches of Hoover and the work of the Dies Committee meant that it was doubtful whether the president would move toward the U.S.S.R. in any significant way. The "State Department's reaction to Far Eastern affairs" was also "far more languid than a year ago." Yet there were "no visible signs of preparation for a deal with the Japanese or any overt propaganda in favour" of such an accommodation. The successes of the Soviet military at Lake Khasan had also shattered the hopes of those Americans who "would have been on the side of the Japanese if they had given their expansionist drive an anti-Soviet direction." More important, Washington's armament programs were not jeopardized by the renewed vigor of the Republican party, and the "anti-fascist sentiment" throughout the country was "strong." The "post-Munich hangover," he emphasized, "has set in sooner than in Europe, and it is more universal in nature." The "relapse" toward isolationism was probably a temporary phenomenon. It "may evaporate quickly should the fascist aggression in Europe turn westwards."²⁸

Umansky continued to report to the Narkomindel throughout the first months of 1939 all improvements in the views of Americans toward

²⁸V. M. Falin et al. (eds.), Soviet Peace Efforts on the Eve of World War II, September 1938 - August 1939: Documents and Records, I (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1973), pp. 94-98.

the U.S.S.R. In March he noted the "tremendous growth of our prestige and of interest in us" following the Kremlin's denunciation of Germany's absorption of Bohemia and Moravia. His conversations with Hull in May and with the president in June were also reassuring. Roosevelt indicated his continuing efforts to secure a "democratic front" against Germany. The president also revealed his distrust of the French in general and of Bonnet in particular, and he recognized that the Soviet Union could not idly accept the "enslavement" of the Baltic countries. He had, in addition, assuaged Soviet suspicions about any possibility of a Japanese-American agreement in East Asia at the expense of the U.S.S.R.²⁹

At the same time the Soviet ambassador pursued the economic and military arrangements which had been part of Soviet-American relations in the latter part of Roosevelt's second administration. He complained about the inability of the Soviet government to complete the construction of a battleship and four destroyers in America's naval shipyards. He told Hull that the U.S. Navy was still causing problems, and indicated that naval officers, when they were willing to cooperate, were recommending obsolete equipment, claiming that newer designs were unavailable because of the "military secrets" which they incorporated. He also proposed that the United States purchase two hundred thousand tons of manganese from the U.S.S.R. in each of the next four years. This could be done, he believed, under the president's authority to spend one hundred million dollars for strategic raw materials. It

²⁹Umansky to NKID, March 21, 1939, Ibid., I, p. 269. Umansky to NKID, May 16, 1939, Ibid., II, p. 47, and Umansky to NKID, July 2, 1939, Ibid., II, pp. 122-123.

would alleviate some of the pressures precipitated by Russia's adverse balance of payments with the U.S., and it would bypass the difficulties left over from the still unresolved "gentlemen's agreement."³⁰

Umansky's efforts and the general inclination of both the Kremlin and the White House to sustain the limited, but potentially significant, relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. helped both countries surmount the tensions which did develop before September 1939. Even the Soviet-German nonaggression pact did not seriously undermine the reasons for retaining diplomatic contacts. The invasion of Poland on September 17, although denounced in particular by a majority of America's conservative newspapers and periodicals, was also viewed in terms of the conclusion that Hitler and Nazi Germany were the greater of these two totalitarian threats. Significantly, it was the speed with which Poland collapsed that led Moscow to adopt a series of decisions which enraged the U.S. public and persuaded Sumner Welles and other American diplomats to consider breaking relations with the Soviet Union.³¹

The extent of the Wehrmacht's success and the Kremlin's continuing fear that the capitalist countries, including England and France, might still decide to settle their differences and cooperate in a new war against the U.S.S.R. convinced Moscow that it would have to

³⁰ Hull's memoranda of his conversations with Umansky, June 17 and June 29, 1939, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250. Also, Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Diary, June 30 and July 5, 1939, 199:428-438, 201:87-89, 248, and 249.

³¹ Read Ralph B. Levering, American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, 1941-1945 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976), pp. 15-38. Also, Nancy Hooker (ed.), The Moffat Papers, pp. 279-286.

cement its tie with Berlin. A Russo-German war, of course, was probably inevitable, but Stalin wanted it delayed as long as possible. On September 28 new agreements were signed with Germany which temporarily made Russia a satellite in Berlin's expanding orbit of interests. Prepared heretofore to associate itself with capitalist countries, while exploiting its view of the antagonisms and contradictions among them, the Kremlin had never tied itself so closely to any country as it would to Germany between 1939 and 1941. It was a major departure in Soviet foreign policy, and it testified to the distance which the Russian revolution had traveled under Stalin's leadership in the 1930s.

After the destruction of Poland Soviet troops moved into Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, and negotiations commenced with Finland over the mutual cession of Soviet and Finnish territories, which the Kremlin claimed was necessary to protect Leningrad and Russia's control of the eastern Baltic. The negotiations failed, and the Red Army moved against the Mannerheim line in late November. The disastrous Winter War continued into March 1940, revealing the weaknesses of Russia's armed forces and verifying Moscow's interest in the creation of new Soviet republics. In June the U.S.S.R. completed its absorption of the Baltic states, ending their short-lived period of independence since the end of the First World War. Later that summer Moscow reclaimed Bessarabia from Rumania, and took over northern Bukovina too. In November Molotov refused to be persuaded by Hitler that Russia's main interest should be in the Asian subcontinent, and pressed for increased Soviet penetration of the Balkans and the eastern Mediterranean.³²

³²Wiley to Bullitt, October 12, 1939, Wiley Papers, General Correspondence, Roosevelt Library, Container 6, Folder: William C.

Soviet-American relations deteriorated sharply with these developments. Umansky denounced the statements of Hull and Roosevelt which were critical of Soviet actions. Molotov rejected as presumptuous Washington's efforts to prevent the outbreak of hostilities between Finland and Russia. The activities of U.S. diplomats in Moscow were further circumscribed, and customs problems mounted precipitously. The Narkomindel refused to allow American diplomats to question the officers and men of the City of Flint, a merchant ship captured by the German navy and escorted to the Russian port of Murmansk. The Kremlin, which had initially hesitated to change the Comintern's line, also decided to discard the policy of the popular front. Earl Browder and the American Communist Party lashed out at Roosevelt's administration. "The War Party of the American bourgeoisie is on the march," Browder asserted, "and Roosevelt stands at its head." "American neutrality has long become a myth." And "Wall Street" was preparing to take the U.S. into the "war to save the British Empire from collapse."³³

In September 1939 Washington concluded that, for the moment, "German-Russian domination from the Rhine to the Pacific" was "unchallenged," and that the prospects of a Russo-Japanese "nonaggression"

Bullitt. Wiley to Pierrepont Moffat, October 28, 1939, Ibid., Container 8, Folder: J. Pierrepont Moffat. Wiley to Pierrepont Moffat, January 15, 1940, Ibid. Max Jakobson, The Diplomacy of the Winter War (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961). Adam Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 280-313.

³³Bohlen, Witness to History, 1929-1969, pp. 88-105. George Kennan, Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), pp. 331-348. Hull's memorandum of his conversation with Umansky, February 1, 1940, Cordell Hull Papers, Library of Congress, Container 61, Folder 250. The difficulties with customs can be traced in PSF Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 68, Folder: Russia, 1937-1940. Earl Browder, The Second Imperialist War (New York: International Publishers, 1940), pp. 289-290.

pact would mean that Moscow and Tokyo "will divide China between them." Nevertheless, it responded cautiously. The imposition of an arms embargo following the Red Army's invasion of Poland was rejected. The circumstances were too close to those of the Sino-Japanese war. The developments in the Baltic countries in October were to be expected, and Roosevelt had already told Umansky that he understood the significance of this area to the Soviet Union. Hesitant to interfere in the Soviet-Finnish negotiations because he thought it would do "more harm than good," Hull, with the president's support, indicated in October and early November that Washington preferred a peaceful settlement of their dispute.³⁴

The American public's outrage over the Winter War brought additional pressure on the administration. The pro-fascist inclinations of the Finnish government were conveniently forgotten. The reasonableness of the initial Soviet demands, considering the exposed position of Leningrad, was largely ignored. Finland, America's newspapers emphasized, had continued to service its debt from the First World War, and Russia had again violated its pledges of nonaggression. The American Left was hard pressed to explain Russia's policies, and conservative writers and politicians used the recent developments in international affairs to attack the New Deal and to embarrass the president. In 1940 Martin Dies published a report to the nation, which pulled together

³⁴ Berle to Roosevelt, September 15, 1939, Berle Papers, State Department Subject File, 1938-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 66, Folder: Memoranda to F.D.R., April-December, 1939. Wiley to Hull, October 3, 1939, Wiley Papers, Diplomatic files, Roosevelt Library, Container 3, Folder: Estonia and Latvia, 1938-1941-Despatches from Riga. Nancy Hooker (ed.), The Moffat Papers, pp. 265-266, and 270.

the findings of his congressional committee. The Trojan Horse in America reemphasized the Soviet penetration of organized labor, the courts, the U.S. shipping industry, and numerous other organizations and institutions in the United States. Most important, it confirmed, in Dies' opinion, "the degree to which members of the Communist Party and their fellow travelers wielded their influence in Washington" in the years 1936 to 1939. The "situation," the congressman insisted, was "a close approximation to the People's Front in France." 1940 was an election year.³⁵

Not unexpectedly, Roosevelt spoke out against the U.S.S.R., gave "serious consideration" to curtailing shipments of gasoline and scrap iron to the Soviet Union, and viewed favorably the American Maritime Commission's recommendation that no ships be chartered to Russia. A "moral embargo" discouraged American shipment of aircraft and military equipment to the U.S.S.R., and the president was delighted and "amazed" when the Treasury Department reported no U.S. exports to the Soviet Union in the two week period beginning December 19. Roosevelt also intimated that he was considering breaking relations with the Kremlin, and in February 1940 he addressed the Communist front American Youth Congress and denounced the Soviet dictatorship. The president "disliked" Russia's "regimentation," "abhorred the indiscriminate

³⁵ Pierrepont Moffat to Wiley, January 29, 1940, Wiley Papers, General Correspondence, Roosevelt Library, Container 8, Folder: J. Pierrepont Moffat. Steinhardt to Hull, October 18, 1939, State Department files, 711.61/684. Ralph Levering, American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, pp. 15-38. Martin Dies, The Trojan Horse in America: A Report to the Nation (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1940), pp. 281-282.

killing" that marked its internal political maneuvering, and "heartily deprecated" its "banishment of religion."³⁶

Still, Roosevelt was accustomed to his political opponents attacking his administration for its supposed sympathy for the U.S.S.R. With seven years of experience, he had become proficient in side-stepping the brunt of their attack, first, by adjusting the New Deal to satisfy many of its critics, and second, by publicly denouncing the Kremlin for its excesses internally and internationally. He did this again in 1940. But, convinced that Nazi Germany was by far the greater threat to American interests, he refused to break relations with the Soviets, and he assumed that the weight of the Red Army would eventually become an indispensable component in the defeat of the Wehrmacht in Europe. Germany's successes in Belgium and Denmark, the fall of France, and the pressure on England in the summer and fall reemphasized Russia's significance. Not surprisingly, therefore, private discussions were held between Undersecretary of State Welles and Soviet ambassador Umansky in the months after the Russo-Finnish war. They

³⁶ Berle memorandum to Roosevelt, February 20, 1940, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 94, Folder: State Department-A. A. Berle, Jr. Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, December 1, 1939, Presidential diaries, volume 2, p. 366. Arthur Vandenberg to Hull, December 7, 1939, State Department files, 711.61/691. Roosevelt to Hull, December 22, 1939, Ibid., 124.61/144 1/2. Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, January 8, 1940, Presidential diaries, volume 2, p. 412. Roosevelt to Berle, January 27, 1940, PSF Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 94, Folder: State Department-A. A. Berle, Jr. Roosevelt to Berle, February 1, 1940, Ibid. Levering, American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, p. 36.

were difficult, and accomplished little; yet both powers recognized their importance.³⁷

By January 1941 the U.S. government was convinced that the Russo-German "alliance" would collapse. Welles informed the Kremlin of Washington's knowledge of Operation Barbarossa, and Roosevelt decided that it would be advantageous if the moral embargo were discontinued. Welles agreed: "On the whole, our negotiations with the Soviet Union have progressed favorably up to the present moment." Moreover, "the more friendly relationship which is beginning to exist is unquestionably of real advantage to this Government insofar as the Far Eastern situation is concerned." At the same time the president was pressing the Congress to provide legislative authorization for lend lease. Roosevelt, according to Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, was "waiting to be pushed" into the war.³⁸

III

In June 1941 the Wehrmacht invaded Russia. The impact on Soviet-American relations was immediate and profound. But it did not alter substantially the underlying characteristics of the relationship which had evolved in the interwar years. Washington and Moscow bowed to military necessity, overlooked or downplayed many of the problems

³⁷ John Lewis Gaddis, Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States: An Interpretive History (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1978), pp. 141-145.

³⁸ Read Barton Whaley, Codeword Barbarossa (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1973), pp. 37-41, 43-47, 68-69, and 106-107. Sumner Welles to Roosevelt, January 9, 1941, OF 220, Roosevelt Library, Container 2, Folder: Russia, 1941-1945. Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, May 17, 1941, Presidential diaries, volume 4, p. 929.

which separated them, and allowed current perceptions of national self-interest to dictate their decisions. Considering the adjustments already made in their foreign policies since the First World War, this was not especially surprising.

Roosevelt detested the type of government in the U.S.S.R. Dictatorship was regressive and arbitrary. It destroyed political diversity, internal debate, and economic and political freedom. He assumed that democratic governments, despite their inherent weaknesses, would emerge more powerful after the war. England and the United States, bound by historic and cultural ties, would promote the interests of representative government. Notwithstanding their differences, particularly those dealing with protectionism and the empire, London and Washington would oversee the reemergence of democracy in the defeated countries. France, Germany, Japan, and China would also contribute to postwar reconstruction and the rapid increase in international standards of living. The economic causes of war would be suppressed, and lasting peace promoted if not assured. Russia was too weak, he maintained, to dominate the European continent. Treated fairly, incorporated in the political and economic decisions of the war, given assurances about its security and postwar borders, the Soviet Union would find it to its advantage to cooperate. The rewards would be too much to ignore.³⁹

³⁹ Berle and Roosevelt on dictatorship, March 9, 1938, Berle Papers, State Department Subject File, 1938-1945, Roosevelt Library, Container 55, Folder: Berle memoranda, 1938-1944. William Roger Louis, Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978). Roosevelt to Fulton Oursler, June 25, 1941, PPF 2993, Roosevelt Library. Roosevelt to Admiral Leahy, June 26, 1941, PSF, Diplomatic, France, 1933-1942, Roosevelt Library, Container 41, Folder: France, 1941.

Roosevelt's adversaries questioned many of the president's ideas. Republicans had fought the New Deal and its reliance on federal authority to further domestic prosperity. They had denounced its regimentation and had feared the drift toward collectivism and away from individualism which had marked the 1930s. Opposed to the political and economic policies of the U.S.S.R., they had belittled Russia's commitment to collective security, had pointed to the purges as proof of the ruthlessness and brutality of Stalin's regime, and had denigrated the Soviet "experiment," particularly its efforts to collectivize Russia's agricultural industry, as a demonstration of the irrationality of the Bolsheviks' ideas. Angered by Roosevelt's inclination to work with Moscow, they had insisted that Washington's integrity would be damaged and American politics contaminated. Hugh Wilson, who had served briefly in 1938 as the U.S. ambassador in Berlin, supported this point of view. So too did Herbert Hoover, who as late as June 1941 was content to watch a Russo-German war while America prepared itself, militarily and economically, to project its interests on Europe after the confrontation was over.⁴⁰

Many State Department officers shared their concern. Berle advised Harry Hopkins in July to "tell the sentimentalists to watch themselves." He was terrified by "the extreme Anglophile view" of those who thought "that we should turn over everything to the Russians at once. They seem to think," Berle maintained, "that the Russians now

⁴⁰See, for example, Hoover to Will Durant, July 9, 1939, Post-Presidential Individuals, Hoover Library, Container 314, Folder 2596: Will Durant; Herbert Hoover, 40 Key Questions about Our Foreign Policy (Scarsdale, New York: The Updegraff Press, 1952); and Hugh R. Wilson, Diplomat between the Wars (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1941).

love them and will be in all respects a part of their train." Charles Bohlen and George Kennan were also skeptical of the approach of the White House to the U.S.S.R. Previous experience convinced them that Roosevelt might ignore professional advice for an intuitive approach, which, though momentarily satisfying, would be disastrous in the long run. Willing to support the Kremlin's efforts against Hitler, they sought to protect America's interests, and prevent a false sense of euphoria that might preclude a realistic settlement of the outstanding disputes which existed between the two countries.⁴¹

In addition, the Army, Navy, and F.B.I. were disinclined to support the U.S.S.R. in any extensive way. They tended to agree with Berle "that we treat the Russian situation for what it is, namely, a temporary confluence of interest." Colonel Gunther, who was in charge of the Russian desk of the Military Intelligence Division, was "very anti-Russian," and he reflected in his reports to the president the High Command's fears that supplies shipped to the Soviets would fall to Germany after Russia's expected defeat. The Navy and the F.B.I. also rejected "the Russian demand that we turn over our military secrets to her and give her engineers access to the plants making our" military weapons.⁴²

At the same time America's Catholics, angered by the Kremlin's suppression of freedom of religion, continued to voice their

⁴¹ Berle and Jacobs (eds.), Navigating the Rapids, 1918-1971, p. 374. Kennan, Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin, pp. 349-357.

⁴² Berle and Jacobs (eds.), Navigating the Rapids, 1918-1971, pp. 374-375.

dissatisfaction with Stalinist Russia. So did conservative leaders of organized labor, who despised the Bolsheviks' approach to trade unionism. Concerned about the recurring reports of a communist "underground" in the labor movement, William Green and other members of the executive council of the American Federation of Labor grew more apprehensive in June with the publication of Eugene Lyons's The Red Decade. An author and journalist, Lyons had had enormous success in 1937 with his Assignment in Utopia, a bitterly critical view of the Soviet Union and its policies. His portrayal in 1941 of those unions "where pro-communist and fellow-traveler leadership" was "influential if not actually dominant" was a powerful indictment. Green remembered the effects of the Red Scare on unions' memberships in the 1920s. He also recalled the dramatic gains secured during Roosevelt's New Deal. Inclined to support the administration's policies, he feared any action that would strengthen the view that organized labor supported the Kremlin and its avowed aims.⁴³

Accustomed to these pressures, the president acted accordingly. His response to the first months of the Russo-German war was recognition redivivus as he sought to combat this bureaucratic, institutional, and organizational opponents and struggled to promote what he maintained were America's interests. He complained about the hesitancy of the Army and Navy to supply Russia's military needs. He appointed Wayne Coy as his special representative who was to "use a heavy hand" if necessary to "get things moving." He used Morgenthau to

⁴³ Levering, American Opinion and the Russian Alliance, pp. 39-62. Eugene Lyons, The Red Decade: The Stalinist Penetration of America (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1941).

promote Moscow's interests in Washington as he had done in 1933, 1937, and 1939. He favored the negotiations between Umansky and Jesse Jones of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation concerning a five hundred million dollar loan to the U.S.S.R. He ordered Harry Hopkins to Moscow to ascertain more completely the Kremlin's intentions, thus bypassing what Hopkins believed was an "anti-Soviet clique" in the State Department.⁴⁴

Also, Faymonville was given greater responsibility in the War Department. Plans were revived to purchase Russian gold, and the larger problem of long-term financing of Soviet purchases was put off to a later date. Morgenthau thought it "a mistake at this time to bother Stalin with any financial arrangement" which might "take his mind off the war." In addition, the president sought to elicit the support of the papacy by stressing Washington's commitment to postwar disarmament and self-determination, and by arguing that Russia's position on freedom of religion might be changed "as a result of the present conflict." The Catholic vote remained a consideration, just as it had been in 1933, and as it would become in 1944, although then it would be further complicated by the fate of postwar Poland.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Roosevelt to Wayne Coy, August 2, 1941, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 68, Folder: Russia, 1941. Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, August 4, 1941, Presidential diaries, volume 4, pp. 951-954. Berle to Hull, August 4, 1941, Berle Papers, Roosevelt Library, Container 58, Folder: Cordell Hull, July-December 1941. Information on Jesse Jones and Umansky is available in PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 68, Folder: Russia, 1941. Roosevelt to Knox, August 30, 1941, PSF, Departmental, Roosevelt Library, Container 82, Folder: Navy-Frank Knox.

⁴⁵Harry Hopkins to Roosevelt, September 5, 1941, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 68, Folder: Russia, 1941. Morgenthau Papers, Roosevelt Library, Presidential diaries, volume 4, pp. 970-971,

The Kremlin's approach to the U.S. in the fall of 1941 also reflected the "lessons" learned from its dealings with Washington in the interwar period. The political and economic conditions which had heretofore pressed Moscow toward the U.S. were again in the ascendancy, heightened by the staggering success of the Wehrmacht's penetration of Russia. Characteristically, the Soviets sought America's support, but refused to delimit unnecessarily either their national or ideological aspirations for after the war. The Kremlin insisted that the U.S. accept Russia's definition of its immediate and long-term interests. It wanted Washington to approve the gains the Kremlin had managed to achieve since 1939, including Washington's acceptance of Soviet control of the Baltic states. Umansky complained vigorously about reactionaries in the State Department and the opposition of army and naval officers to contracts and weaponry that the U.S.S.R. maintained was essential to its war effort. Hopkins was greeted cordially, but Stalin had recovered from the collapse he had suffered in late June and early July, and he left no doubt in the American's mind that Russia would not surrender, that the Red Army would eventually defeat the Wehrmacht, and that Stalin and the communist party would retain power throughout the Soviet Union.⁴⁶

975, and 978. Roosevelt to Myron C. Taylor, September 1, 1941, PSF, Diplomatic, Italy, Roosevelt Library, Container 57, Folder: Italy, 1941. Roosevelt to Pope Pius XII, September 3, 1941, PSF, Diplomatic, Roosevelt Library, Container 70, Folder: Vatican-Myron C. Taylor, 1941.

⁴⁶Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1948), pp. 323-348. W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin (New York: Random House, 1975), pp. 3-123.

Washington and Moscow verified in these months the uncertainty which undermined Soviet-American relations and which derived primarily from domestic considerations directly and indirectly affected by a changing international environment. The aims of both powers were never identical except in short-term instances when economic, geo-political, or military developments induced a temporary period of strained cooperation. The Kremlin understood this, for it was a function of its view of the primacy of the internal interests of the Soviet state amidst the capitalist encirclement. So too did Washington, preoccupied with the viability of democratic government and the effectiveness of capitalist modes of production and consumption.

Nonetheless, the diplomatic instability which characterized their relationship did not preclude false hopes. This was especially the case in the White House, despite the fact that Roosevelt's view of Russia, though overly optimistic and superficial, was not naive. It also confirmed the difficulties faced by decision-makers struggling to identify the pattern of events before them. By 1941 the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. entered the cataclysm, which completed another phase of the transformation begun in the First World War. Both nations were propelled from peripheral, if important, positions of power to center stage, and a further redefinition of the confrontation of democratic and socialist states was made inevitable. Considering the record of the 1920s and the 1930s, such a development was anything but reassuring.

EPILOGUE

"The world is enveloped in sweeping economic, social and political forces unleashed by the Great War, by tremendous advances in productive technology, and by the failure of an economic system to advance apace with a growing sense of humanitarianism." This was the conclusion of two former members of Hoover's cabinet, who published a study of the Republican president's policies in 1937. The United States, they insisted, was involved in a clash of two opposing philosophies. The New Deal represented "a vast turn toward centralization of government," a turn "toward collectivism." Opposing it was an established view which relied on local government and the development of "voluntary cooperative action among free men."¹

This debate had, in fact, governed the political landscape in America not only during the New Deal, but also throughout the New Era. It was a function of the Americans' response to industrialism, to concentration of power in business, government, and labor, to the revolutionary upheaval induced by science and technology, and to the military confrontations encouraged by primitive nationalism. It was also, in part, a reflection of the increased restraints on individualism and freedom which seemingly denied Jeffersonian idealism, and which brought

¹Ray L. Wilbur and Arthur M. Hyde, The Hoover Policies (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. ix.

into constant question the meaning and significance of American capitalism. Most important, this debate affected the U.S. view of the U.S.S.R. An internal preoccupation, it was the prism through which Americans perceived the Bolshevik phenomenon.

Sharing a common concern for order and liberty, America's presidents sought to create an international environment conducive to their capitalist presuppositions. Wilson, for example, represented the libertarian wing of the Progressive movement. Southern, localistic, and traditional Jeffersonian and Jacksonian views of vested interests affected his perspective of internal and external developments. Loath to submit to the radical demands of native critics of U.S. capitalism and disconcerted by the abuses he believed were inherent in big business and big government, he promoted the internationalization of American laissez faire. It was an untimely preoccupation. Domestic structural, political, and economic developments had already made this position untenable. The make-up of the international community, even discounting the implications of the Russian revolution, also precluded the type of worldwide voluntarism which was necessary if this approach were to work.

The Republicans understood this, and it served them well in the 1920s. Representing simultaneously greater selfishness and realism in their perceptions of property and growth, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover emphasized a gradual amelioration of the problems of interdependence, not only among different interest groups in the United States, but also among the various foreign powers throughout the world. American "individualism" was redefined, and the Jeffersonian ideal of freedom from dependence was subordinated to the increased power afforded by industrial maturity. "Equality of opportunity" became the order of

the day. This was a shrewd strategy. It reflected the noblesse oblige of those in America who accepted their "social responsibility" and who worked to insure the rights of others. That this view was nativist as well as elitist was understandable. So too were the efforts made to identify these changes with a normal progression in middle class values and interests. Controlled trade expansion and the unwillingness to become embroiled unnecessarily in international political commitments were a logical by-product of this approach. The prosperity of the New Era allowed for gradual adjustments that seemed more successful than they were.

The depression altered, but did not destroy the ideas and policies accepted by politicians of both parties since the First World War. Indeed, considering the nature of the U.S. political system and the character of the interwar period, Roosevelt's combination of Wilsonian and Hooverian ideas vis-à-vis domestic and international problems was anything but surprising. Borrowing liberally from nationalist and internationalist positions and drawing on traditional views of the interrelationships among property, liberty, and growth, he formed a powerful political coalition of different groups coexisting in uneasy balance. Notwithstanding the hyperbole of popular debate, this coalition confirmed the narrowness of the political spectrum in which Americans operated. Even more important, its reconciliation of contradictory policies, which subscribed in one way or another to the capitalist ethos, proved to be a successful formula. It helped adjust the U.S. to the great responsibilities which its economic power and political instincts made inevitable. That it frequently infuriated Europeans and Russians alike was never a major consideration.

All of America's presidents since World War I maintained that the Soviet Union was a political and economic anomaly. All accepted the distinctive ideological differences between Washington and Moscow. All assumed the correctness of the capitalist's view of human nature, with its emphasis on self-reliance, the individual, and the wholesomeness of freely given cooperative action. Yet all perceived the Russian revolution from vantage points which were determined by their position within the progressive movement and by the type of international environment which existed when they made their decisions. For instance, Wilson initially belittled the Bolsheviks. His optimistic appraisal of the future of capitalism and the opportunities created by the First World War captivated his imagination. To assume that Lenin's regime would be able to sustain its ideas seemed ridiculous. Relatively content to let Bolshevism disintegrate on its own, he had interfered militarily in order to achieve a worldwide community, which, he believed, would best promote the interests of the New Freedom. After the Senate's rejection of the League, and after he returned to private life, he was less interested in the fate of the Soviet Union than he was in capitalism's ability to prevent new centers of irrational revolution. He continued to pursue domestic reform, assuming that it would promote stability and growth. Rejecting unilateral interventionism, he maintained that the perfection of the industrial order (with or without laissez faire) would undermine revolutionary socialism and would reveal the inappropriateness of its ideas.

Hoover agreed with Wilson that the Soviet government was a tragedy of "enthroned ignorance." Convinced that the U.S. could adapt

to the problems of modern-day life, as well as avoid the threats from radicals and reactionaries, he promoted the ideas of the New Era, basked in the prosperity it produced, and awaited the demise of the Soviet experiment. The internal conflicts among the Bolshevik leaders, the failure of their economic programs, and the unrest which spread throughout the agricultural industry following their efforts at collectivization confirmed his judgment that they could not succeed. Maintaining through trade contacts a connection with the Russian economy also made sense. It allowed the U.S. access to the Russian market, and it would prevent the domination of the Russian economy by other powers after the Bolsheviks were swept away. Even during the great depression of the early 1930s Hoover saw little reason to change his views. In fact, the disintegration of the New Era substantiated, he insisted, the validity of its ideas, and he interpreted it as another temporary and disheartening stage in the maturation of industrial capitalism. Despite the successes of the Soviet Union, Hoover continued to argue that Bolshevism was a perversion of human nature. The expedient gesture of nonrecognition became an article of faith, which permitted him to ignore the inability of American capitalism to overwhelm its competition in the international marketplace of ideas.

Dismissing systems generally, Roosevelt viewed Russia, the depression, and American politics in a practical way. More interested in means than ends, he downplayed inconsistencies while arguing the eternal verities of democratic government. Preoccupied with an international environment characterized by depression and war, he compromised. Recognition of Russia was commonsensical. It was not an approbation of its ideas. Cooperation with the U.S.S.R. was also logical and

understandable, considering its geographical position and the threats emanating from Germany, Italy, and Japan. Contacts with Americans, moreover, would incorporate the Soviets in the scheme of things that best reflected America's ideals. Tied to American technology, Castle's "windows" to the West would be kept open. The harshness of Stalin's regime would be ameliorated, and democratic ideas would penetrate and presumably flourish. Roosevelt's conceit was not atypical.

In each of these administrations, the president acted as the focus of disparate forces interacting within American society. Institutional, bureaucratic, economic, and political pressures caused changes in domestic policies and affected the ways Washington viewed the U.S.S.R., and the manner and timing of its approaches to Moscow. Although frequently disconcerting, this process confirmed the principles of liberal democratic government, highlighted the diversity and importance of internal debate, and induced the kind of "ideological thinking" which made relations with the U.S.S.R. difficult, but not impossible.

On its part, the U.S.S.R. was preoccupied with its reliance on Marxism and on a holistic view of political developments, which rejected diversity in favor of conformity. Repudiating private property as inherently abusive, and identifying liberty in collectivist rather than individualistic terms, the Soviets accepted the inevitability of conflict with bourgeois-dominated societies.

These ideas, however, were affected by the failure of worldwide revolution and by the incontrovertible fact that the Russian economy had as yet to achieve the industrial base needed for the socialist millennium. Adjustments were inevitable. They were made first by Lenin,

then by a collective leadership, and finally by Stalin. In each case the capitalist encirclement, the backwardness of the Russian economy, and the presuppositions of the Bolshevik leadership played an overwhelming part. Committed to the destruction of the bourgeoisie, the U.S.S.R. found itself forced to cooperate with the great powers in order to survive. That this survival was a direct threat to the existence of the postwar capitalist order and its reliance on private property and individual freedom made relationships extremely unstable. The fact that it also produced distortions in revolutionary theory and practice complicated the Kremlin's problems, aggravated the internal tensions among Russia's leaders, and discredited the infallibility of the Bolshevik movement.

Notwithstanding their differences, the United States and the Soviet Union affirmed in these years the interdependence of states. They mirrored the geo-political, military and economic characteristics of the interwar period, and they tolerated the practical compromises which "democrats" and "socialists" made to insure current readings of their respective national interests. Their relationship also exemplified the connection between domestic and foreign policies in an admittedly revolutionary epoch. Finally, it evolved in an era which reemphasized the particularity of historical development, and which, naturally enough, was indifferent to the success or failure of capitalist and socialist solutions to the problems it induced.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

This volume relied on private papers, diplomatic correspondence and memoranda, unpublished manuscripts, newspapers, and collections of documents prepared by the American, Soviet, French, and British governments. These sources, supported by extensive secondary reading, were the foundation for the hypothesis presented. No effort has been made to cite each source used or to discuss every book read for this study. Rather, it has been assumed that a thoughtful review of the essential elements needed to understand interwar Soviet-American relations would prove more beneficial.

Primary Sources: Manuscripts

Hoover Library

Hoover's Pre-Commerce Papers (Pre-Comm.) cover the years 1895 to 1921, and are particularly important for understanding his role in war relief and reconstruction from 1919 through 1923. Also, they contain significant materials dealing with his direction of the American Relief Administration in Russia. Accompanying these papers are the six hundred and thirty-two volumes devoted to his years as Secretary of Commerce (COF: Commerce Official; COP: Commerce Personal). These are essential if one is to comprehend the New Era and what Hoover meant by "individualism," American voluntarism, and cooperative capitalism.

His presidency is covered in Presidential Papers (Pres.), Presidential Press Releases (PPR), and Presidential Personal (PPF). His approach to the depression and to the Soviet Union in these years can be traced easily. His reaction to Roosevelt, the New Deal, and the U.S.S.R. in the 1930s is available in Post-Presidential General (PPG), Post-Presidential Individual (PPI), and Post-Presidential Subject (PPS).

In addition, the Hoover Library contains the correspondence and memoranda of a number of significant interwar political leaders as well as influential American diplomats who helped to shape U.S.-Soviet relations. Hugh R. Wilson was a conservative Republican who served the U.S. government at Berne and Geneva as well as at Berlin. Becoming an Assistant Secretary of State in the late 1930s, he exemplified the personal and professional distrust of the Kremlin which characterized the thinking of many U.S. diplomats. His contacts with other foreign service officers and with the Republican hierarchy provide worthwhile reading. So too do the papers of William R. Castle, Jr., Gerald P. Nye, Westbrook Pegler, and Ray Lyman Wilbur. Castle was Hoover's Ambassador to Japan and his Undersecretary of State. Their relationship was close and their correspondence continued throughout the New Deal. Nye represented the ideas of those preoccupied with internal matters. He grew more apprehensive about America's foreign policy during Roosevelt's administrations, and he helped curtail the initiatives which were discussed to restrain German and Japanese expansionism. Pegler was virulently anti-Soviet and his newspaper columns epitomized the "right" kind of thinking in America which weakened the prospects for prolonged cooperation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

Ray Wilbur was Hoover's Secretary of the Interior. He bitterly opposed the New Deal, and he argued forcibly the distinction between voluntary cooperation and regimentation, which became the prism through which much of the interwar relationship between Washington and Moscow was viewed.

Roosevelt Library

Little material exists on Russia in Roosevelt's papers as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, 1913-1920, in the Records of the Governor of the State of New York, 1929-1932, and in the Private Papers of FDR as Governor of New York. They do provide, however, a sense of his changing view of American foreign policy as well as his approach to domestic political and economic problems. Most important are his presidential papers, including the Official File (OF), the President's Secretary's File (PSF), and the President's Personal File (PPF).

Other important collections of private papers at Hyde Park which were consulted were: Henry Morgenthau Papers: Diaries and Correspondence; John Cooper Wiley Papers; Adolph A. Berle, Jr. Papers; Harry Hopkins Papers; and R. Walton Moore Papers. As Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau was involved with the economic side of the relationship with the U.S.S.R. He was also used as Roosevelt's personal representative when the president sought to avoid the "anti-Soviet" thinking of the State Department. Furthermore, his position at the Treasury Department provided the insights of the bureaucratic maneuvering which affected foreign policy decision-making in these years and which helped to explain some of the problems undermining the consistency of the U.S. approach to the Soviet Union. Wiley, Moore, and Berle served in the

State Department or in foreign posts throughout the 1930s. Their perspectives were especially significant, and their letters, despatches, and memoranda are essential reading if one is to understand the ideas entertained by both capitals in the interwar period. The Harry Hopkins papers are equally noteworthy, for they provide a review of the domestic programs and policies which the Roosevelt administrations promoted. They also help to explain the context of the debate between the proponents of the New Deal and those who decried it as a threat to American liberty.

Library of Congress

William Borah played an instrumental role in the 1920s opposing Washington's policy of nonrecognition. Norman Davis was familiar with the Russian emigrés who sought to influence U.S. perceptions of the Russian revolution, and he negotiated various arrangements with many of the most prominent Soviet diplomats of the Narkomindel. Cordell Hull was preoccupied as Roosevelt's Secretary of State with the character and effectiveness of Soviet-American relations in the 1930s. The papers of all three of these gentlemen are indispensable.

Of secondary importance are the collected materials of Key Pittman and Breckinridge Long. Pittman served as the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Long acted as the U.S. Ambassador to Mussolini's Italy. These papers flesh out the context in which the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. operated, but they are not essential. Of the two, the most revealing contributions were made in Long's diary of European developments in the mid-1930s.

University of Chicago

S. O. Levinson was a lawyer, a proponent of the outlawry of war campaign, and a noted peace activist in the 1920s. His correspondence was extraordinary in its range, if not in its depth. Reviewing these materials provides some understanding of the peace movement and its commitment to Russian recognition. The Samuel Harper Papers are also illuminating. A historian known for his work on Russia and the Soviet Union, Harper maintained many contacts with U.S. diplomats, including Robert Kelley and R. Walton Moore. He also communicated frequently with Soviet Ambassador Troianovskii and other officials of the Narkomindel. Less substantive than one might have wanted, these letters give the personal views of many of those involved in the decisions taken in Washington during Roosevelt's presidency.

Microfilm Editions

The presidential papers of Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge contribute to the student's understanding of the New Freedom and the New Era. In that regard, they are necessary reading. Also, the diaries of Henry L. Stimson, Hoover's Secretary of State and Roosevelt's Secretary of War, provide intriguing insights into Washington's approach to the great depression and the foreign policy issues it induced. They were most helpful, particularly in terms of Hoover's antipathy to the U.S.S.R.

Primary Sources: Documents

Unpublished

The National Archives contains the records of the Division of Russian Affairs from 1919-1922 and the Division of Eastern European Affairs from 1922-1937. The General Records, 1917-1940 include correspondence and memoranda dealing with the internal political and economic conditions in the Soviet Union. The diary of Indiana Governor James Goodrich is also available in this collection. Goodrich promoted Russian recognition in the 1920s, worked with Borah and Robins, and held extensive talks with Soviet leaders, including Stalin. In addition, a Diplomatic Secretary was assigned to the Undersecretary of State to investigate organizations and individuals in the U.S. and overseas who were suspected of subversive activities. The General Records, 1916-1928 of this office include correspondence and memoranda concerning the Comintern and its impact on American politics. This material is especially effective in detailing the anti-communist bias of a number of significant State Department officials.

Complementing these sources are the Department's decimal file. Some of the most important information needed for a study of Soviet-American relations can be obtained from the following: 711.61 (Political Relations with the United States); 761.00 (Political Relations with other states); 761.0012 (Aggressor) (Nonaggression treaties); 761.62 (Relations between Russia and Germany); 761.65 (Relations between Russia and Italy); 761.93 (Relations between Russia and China); 761.94 (Relations between Russia and Japan); 861.00 (Russian Political Affairs); 861.00B (Bolshevik activities and Communism in Russia);

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Published

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marred by careless editing and faulty translations. For every significant development in Soviet-American relations between 1929 and 1941, a review of American newspapers was undertaken to sense, in part, the reactions of different sections of the country. Completely unscientific in its approach, this review always included The New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Wall Street Journal, the San Francisco Examiner, and the Daily Worker. Notwithstanding its inherent weaknesses, this undertaking was invariably entertaining and highly informative. It constantly reemphasized the dangers which the historian, intrigued by the order of his explanations, must always recall.

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