BOOK REVIEWS

THE POLITICS OF CO-EXISTENCE : SOVIET METHODS AND MOTIVES. By Michael P. Gehlen. Bloomington & London : Indiana University Press. 1967. Pp. 344. $6.75.

Any study of human relations, whether on the personal, public, governmental, inter-governmental, national, or international plane, is essentially a study in conflict. Politicians, lawyers, military strategists, psychologists, and many others, must study and attempt to resolve different aspects of human conflict. To be realistic, if cynical, one should add the phrase "to their advantage." The study of internal and external politics is therefore essentially a study of conflict between ideologies, economies and personalities, whether individual or corporate, with the ultimate and immediate goal of gaining an advantage over another. It is a struggle for power, whether temporary or final.

One of the central conflicts which dominates the national and international scene today is the struggle between Communist and non-Communist entities. The aims of the Communist side, openly and persistently re-iterated by the first two Communist dictators, Lenin and Stalin, and rooted inextricably in the fundamental tenets of Marxist doctrine, have been the violent overthrow of opposing systems and the establishment of Communist world domination : the replacing of existing national and international structures by "a World Union of Soviet Socialist Republics uniting the whole of mankind under the hegemony of the international proletariat organized as a State." [1]

In recent years, however, developments within the Communist states concerning domestic, inter-state, and international affairs, pose the question as to the present nature of this struggle. Is it being fought in the same way, or is it being fought seriously at all?

On the one hand, optimistic observers take the position that the real conflict has ceased. The Communists are dividing, with the old order, represented by Soviet Russia, coming to the realization that the old goals are unrealistic in the light of present-day facts, and should be modified, or even abandoned, whereas the newer aspirants to Communism, represented by Red China, still believe in those goals and continue to strive for world revolution and domination. In short, such observers view the conflict now in

---

[1] VI CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, HANDBOOK OF MARXISM (E. Burns ed. 1935). M. GEHLEN, POLITICS OF CO-EXISTENCE : SOVIET METHODS AND MOTIVES at 309 n.14.

process as having become simply an ordinary struggle for immediate advantage such as forms the basic international relationship between any two or more states. They consider that Soviet Russia has mellowed, matured, and in so doing has abandoned her former aim of world control.

At the opposite extreme one finds those who re-iterate the monolithic nature of Communism, denying any alteration in the struggle between the Communist and non-Communist blocs. In their eyes, this struggle remains a death-battle, with no holds barred, with no changes made.

Mr. Gehlen's book examines this question and attempts to give an answer which will be in line with present-day facts and developments, and which will enable the uninitiated, and perhaps even the better informed, persons concerned with the international situation to perceive the true nature of the present relationships between Communist and non-Communist states and develop a realistic approach to such relationships in the future.

The book sets the stage with a bird's-eye view of the domestic setting for Soviet decision-making in the period following the death of Stalin. It illustrates the general composition of the Central Committee and goes on, in the second section, to trace and illustrate the emergence of the policy of "peaceful co-existence" and its justification or rationalization in terms of Marxist theory, contrasting this policy with the earlier "revolutionary" policy of Lenin and Stalin. In setting the stage for the subsequent discussion of the practical application of the new policy, the author sounds a preliminary warning which sets the trend for all his conclusions, namely, that although the methods may have changed, the primary objectives have not.

In the following sections, the author discusses the background and achievements of the policy of "co-existence" in its military, economic, political, and ideological aspects. These chapters emphasize the revolution in Soviet military strategy, which has in recent years been revised in the light of general technological and internal political developments, to de-emphasize the necessity or advisability of maintaining large forces for conventional warfare and to give ground to domestic problems and pressures and the application of the principle of "co-existence" to maintain the "balance of nuclear threats."

In discussing the military aspects of co-existence, the author provides brief studies of "risk-taking" in recent Soviet foreign policy, and of the Soviet interest in disarmament problems. These studies reveal an unwillingness of the Soviets to commit themselves to military action outside the party-states. The reliance upon verbal weapons indicates Soviet caution in avoiding direct military conflict, and the emphasis on disarmament, apart from its propaganda value, supports this. In short, from a study of the military side, the conclusion is that the Soviet goals have not changed.

A variety of factors, including internal pressure, present-day technological advances in the military art, and a realization of the delicacy and complexity of international policy-making, have forced a modification of ideology to rationalize the necessary utilization of changed methods to work towards these same goals. As Mr. Gehlen correctly states, the Soviets "cannot risk destruction by forgetting that they are Russians with national interests, customs, and values as well as Communists with international goals." [2]

The author considers the domestic economic problems and achievements of the Soviets, relating these, together with the preceding discussion of military strategy, to that side of the policy of "co-existence" which furthers the waging of economic and ideological warfare as another method of advancing Communist objectives. He discusses in some detail two aspects of economic warfare, namely, the Soviet foreign aid programme and the general politics of Soviet foreign trade, with some emphasis on the petroleum industry. He concludes that the Soviet successes in these areas have not been great. The foreign aid programme, for example, has not only failed to gain support and to foster imitation of Communist systems, but has created a heavy financial burden upon the Soviet economy. Currently, in his opinion, although designed with the ultimate purpose of destroying Western economy, the Soviet domestic economy and system of foreign trade is far from being in a position to do so, and is largely operating similarly to that of any other state.

The remaining chapters of this section go into the diplomatic and propaganda sides of Soviet ideological warfare. The author's conclusions are that the Soviets are well aware of standard political techniques, and are becoming rapidly more sophisticated in their use in the international arena. Furthermore, although the national and local Communist units existing in non-Communist countries by no means form monolithic blocs of subservient followers and supporters to the Soviets, and no Communist regime has obtained power directly through them, they do form a unique tool in the conflict-process, and can be relied upon as "outposts" amongst the enemy, able to agitate, relay information, and provide organizational frameworks for future Communist take-overs, while maintaining a high degree of contact between the world Communist movement and its directors in Moscow. The author stresses the elaborate propaganda programme operated by the Soviets, its aims and methods, both internal and external. This programme takes advantage of every medium, device, and opportunity to indoctrinate, agitate, boast, and to distort, in order to gain political, economic, and emotional support in the ideological conflict, to which the Soviets manifestly attach considerable importance and priority. Justly so.

---

[2] M. GEHLEN, *supra* note 1, at 153.

Finally, the author brings out, in a chapter on conflict within the system of Communist party-states, the fact that there exist serious disagreements between Soviet Russia and other Communist states, notably Red China.

He successfully dispels the myth of monolithic adhesion, the illusory nature of which has been aptly underlined recently by the example of the abortive attempt by Czechoslovakia to break with Muscovite policies, but makes it clear that diversity of internal interests and approaches do not necessarily break down other common interests and objectives of Communist systems of government.

One cannot argue with Mr. Gehlen's general thesis and conclusions. He states, in effect, that the answer to the question posed at the beginning of this review lies somewhere between the two extremist view-points. The Soviet objectives have not changed. But their methods have of necessity altered. Technological developments, domestic problems, the complex nature of international relationships, all have been recognized by the Soviet decision-makers, who have been forced to take them into consideration and have often modified their policies and approaches because of them. One cannot ignore changes in Communist attitudes and policies. But one should not view such changes as evidence of changes of heart. The fact that some Communist states have "liberalized" or are attempting to "liberalize" their internal structures, for example, does not mean that their masters have changed their basic ideas, especially in the non-domestic context. As Mr. Gehlen points out: "To expect the shifts in Soviet culture to result in the development of a liberal society is to expect far too much." [3]

If one can argue with Mr. Gehlen, it would be to suggest that in places he may have understated his case. To be blunt, despite internal changes in some Communist states, and the use of different, less bellicose tactics in the field of foreign affairs, the tenets of Communist doctrine have not changed in effect, but in manifestation alone. Even the internal changes have proved in some instances to a large extent illusory. Mr. Gehlen, for example, states: "The elimination of terror as the principal instrument of maintaining internal control and the modification of the techniques of rule to include the recognition of diverse groups with differing interests have required the reorganization and strengthening of the Communist Party." [4] The publication of the Chornovil documents [5] with clear evidence of secret trials and the use of terror to deny basic rights, coupled with the student protests in Poland, the military invasion and suppression of Czechoslovakia and the well-evidenced policy of destroying the literature, language and national identity of such countries as the Ukraine are in contradiction

---

[3] M. GEHLEN, *supra* note 1, at 299.

[4] M. GEHLEN, *supra* note 1, at 10.

[5] V. CHORNOVIL, PORTRAITS OF TWENTY CRIMINALS (1967). *See generally*, Svoboda, March 30, 1968, at p. 2; *also* Blake, *This is the Winter of Moscow's Dissent*, NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE, March 24, 1968, at p. 25.

of this statement. We should not allow ourselves to be lulled into a false sense of security, or entertain any misguided optimism, as a result of the "liberalization" or "modification" of the Communist, especially Soviet, techniques, whether internal or external.

Mr. Gehlen's style is crisp, clear and straightforward. His collection of footnotes and references at the end of the book is in this instance well-suited to the nature of the work, and adds to its general readability. It is a book which, being not excessively factual or technical, yet well-documented, well-constructed, and not lacking in depth of analysis, commends itself to the general reader, as well as to the specialist, and provides a short but very useful general work in the area of Soviet politics and international relations.

CHRISTOPHER GRANGER*

VIENNA CONVENTION ON CONSULAR RELATIONS. By Luke T. Lee. Leyden : A.W. Sijthoff. 1966. Pp. iii, 315. Appendices. Index. $8.75. Dfl. 31.50.

In 1961, Dr. Luke Lee published his *Consular Law and Practice* which could even then be regarded as the definitive work on international law in this field. Only two years later, the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations was concluded, effectively ensuring that Dr. Lee's book would in fact be the last word on the law as it had been. Now, he has brought out an entirely new work analysing and assessing the significance of the Vienna Convention. At the same time, he is able to point out that his call for increasing consular relations across the Iron Curtain has borne some fruit in the signature of consular conventions between the Soviet Union and the United States, and the United Kingdom and Japan, respectively, even though ratification has been somewhat delayed (pp. 7, 210).

Perhaps the most significant features of the Convention lie in the fact that it is multilateral and is the result of agreement reached by both old and new states, indicating that when the will is there—and convenience dictates—ideological differences tend to become less significant than diplomatic speeches sometimes suggest. At the same time, it shows how a consistent practice in the bilateral field may serve as the guide for the ultimate piece of codification. The Convention also recognizes, as does that on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, the increasing coalescence between the consular and the diplomatic function. In the past, views as to the extent of consular immunity have varied from absolute to nil, and Dr. Lee provides a useful summary of how these deviations have operated. He points out that the Convention finally effects a compromise, but suggests that since, unlike in the 1961 Convention, there is no immunity attached

* Of the Board of Editors.