RUSSIA
AND HER COLONIES

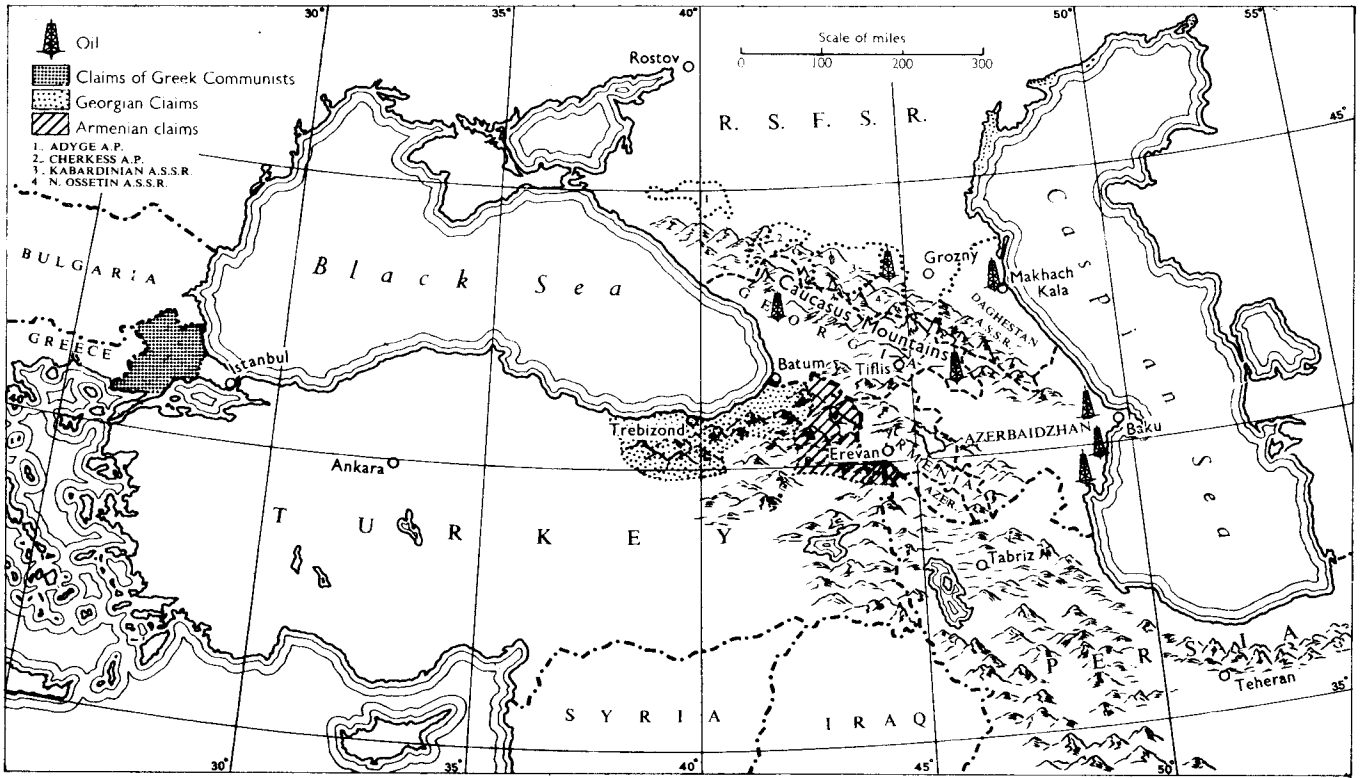
BY

WALTER KOLARZ

ARCHON BOOKS
1967

REPRINTED 1967 WITH PERMISSION
UNALTERED AND UNABRIDGED
FROM THE THIRD EDITION OF 1953

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG CARD NUMBER: 67-15926
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



CAUCASUS TRANSCAUCASIA AND TURKEY

PREFACE

The word 'colonies' is employed in this book as a common denominator for a large number of territories which enjoy either legally or factually a special status within Soviet Russia. 'Colonies' are first of all those ethnically non-Russian territories of the U.S.S.R. which, although not separated from the metropolitan country by sea, have a status similar to that of the overseas dependencies of any other power. These Russian colonies are situated in Asia, on the fringes of Europe and Asia and in the Far North.

The term 'colonies' is also extended to European countries or countries of predominantly European culture like the Ukraine, the Baltic States, Georgia or Armenia which have been reduced to colonial status by enforced dependence on the Moscow Government. Finally, as an exception rather than as a rule, the word 'colonies' is also used in its original sense for areas of settlement, mostly in reference to the colonization by Slavs of practically uninhabited territories.

No Soviet writer would speak of 'colonies' or of 'colonial policy' when describing the relationship between Moscow and the non-Russian peoples of the U.S.S.R. He would refer to *natsionalnaya politika* which is usually translated into English as 'nationalities policy'. This book uses 'nationalities policy' and 'colonial policy' in roughly the same sense. This does not mean that 'nationality' and 'colony' are identical. A colony is a territory and a nationality an ethnic group. Two or more nationalities may form part of one colony. In Soviet Russia itself two contradictory definitions of the word 'nationality' have been advanced. Some Marxist-Leninist theoreticians have maintained that a 'nationality' is on a lower level of development than a 'nation'. According to this explanation the Ukrainians, for instance, would be a 'nation' and the peoples of Daghestan only 'nationalities'. In the day-to-day work of the All-Union Communist Party and of the Soviet Government this distinction is not recognized and all non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union are identified as 'nationalities'.

The colonial problem of Russia cannot be viewed in isolation from the colonial problem presenting itself in other parts of the globe, for the struggle for the fulfilment of national aspirations among the colonial

peoples has proceeded everywhere on a similar pattern. This struggle can be observed more easily in British, French or American colonies or ex-colonies than in the non-Russian territories of the U.S.S.R. which are cut off from almost every contact with the non-communist world. Four lessons may be drawn from the general trend in the colonial territories outside the Soviet Union.

First, the more advanced dependent peoples will appreciate material achievements only if such go hand-in-hand with political progress, i.e. if the colonial power encourages the growth of self-government.

Secondly, the peoples of the colonial territories in order to fulfil their national aspirations create political movements and ideologies corresponding to their own national and tribal traditions and different from those of their European colonizers.

Thirdly, national aspirations can be properly defined only if the colonies enjoy at least a certain measure of democracy and freedom of discussion. This implies the coexistence within one colony of various political groups with diverging views about the way in which to advance their development towards self-government and national independence.

Fourthly, recognition of self-government as a desirable political aim on the part of a progressive colonial power does not mean unlimited recognition of all national aspirations of a colonial people. National aspirations cease to be 'legitimate' if they aim at the oppression of ethnic and religious minority groups and if the colonial power has the obligation to protect these.

If one admits that the essence of a modern colonial policy lies in the encouragement of self-government, then every colonial system, including the so-called 'Soviet nationalities policy', must be judged on the basis of this fourfold standard.

I have therefore concentrated in this book on the question of the extent to which the government of the U.S.S.R. has assisted or hampered the legitimate national aspirations of the peoples of the Soviet Empire. This does not mean that I seek to belittle or to deny any of the material achievements carried out by the Soviet Government in territories inhabited by non-Russian nationalities. I take them for granted as the basis of discussion. My contention is, however, that the essence of a colonial policy and of the political system of which it is a part cannot be estimated by reference solely to material achievements. The Dnieper Dam no more indicates that the Ukrainian problem has been solved than Hitler's motor highways indicated any virtue in German Nazism. The Main Turkmenian Canal will be no more proof of the success of Soviet colonial policy than the Trans-Siberian Railway line is proof of the success of the Czarist régime.

My original plan was to describe the working of Soviet colonial policy throughout the U.S.S.R. Practical difficulties have compelled

me to leave out of account the Soviet colonial territories on the Pacific coast and in Eastern Siberia. These Far Eastern territories, bordering on China, Japan and the United States of America, form a special geopolitical entity and I intend to write a separate book on them. I have made an exception in the case of the Autonomous Province of Birobidzhan which as an area of Jewish settlement is given its natural place in the chapter 'The Jews – a people of the Soviet Union'.

The problems connected with Soviet colonial policy are so vast that I have had to limit my subject in a further direction also. In dealing at greater or lesser length with some forty Soviet colonies one cannot hope to tell the full story. One can but give examples and mention the most typical features in the development of a given nationality while omitting or summarizing the secondary aspects of it. It may appear that I have done less than justice in this book to the Baltic peoples. Indeed, I have dealt with them only very briefly because events in the Baltic States have been a repetition of what happened earlier in other parts of the Soviet Empire. It seemed best to pay greater attention to those earlier events than to the repetition of them.

A word must be said about the sources used. I have employed as a rule only Soviet sources, primarily newspapers, journals, textbooks and broadcasts, and also novels, plays and poetry. With insignificant exceptions, I have refrained from using any other material which might have bearing on my subject. In particular, I have avoided the very large Russian émigré literature, statements by refugees from the Soviet Union, reports by non-communist foreigners of their experiences in Soviet Russia and news items published under a Moscow dateline in the press of Western countries.

Thus, as the book is based not on the testimonies of critics of the Soviet régime but on evidence emanating from the régime itself, several important factors pertaining to Soviet colonial policy have not been taken into consideration. Among these is the forced-labour system to which the reader will find only passing references. The use of Soviet sources, which to be more precise are mostly Soviet sources in the Russian language, has also affected the spelling of non-Russian names. Except for well-known personalities and places I have transcribed these names from the Russian. I have even used the official Russianized forms, for instance, Ibragimov instead of Ibrahim. This may be irritating for Orientalists but it is symbolic of the Russian preponderance in the U.S.S.R.

I am indebted to Mr. J. B. Birks, Miss Dorothy Davies and Miss Marjorie Nicholson for many valuable suggestions. Thanks are also due to Dr. W. A. Morison for translations of Russian poetry and to Mrs. Nancy Feeny for compiling the index.

WALTER KOLARZ

CONTENTS

MAPS

I

RUSSIAN COLONIZATION AND SOVIET NATIONALITIES POLICY

THE ESSENCE OF RUSSIAN EXPANSION

Political reality has transformed the word 'Europe' into an empty geographical notion. From a merely geographical point of view Europe is still the continent bounded by the Atlantic in the West and the Ural Mountains in the East. Politically, however, Europe is divided into 'Eur-Asia' and 'Eur-America'. Western and Southern Europe form a unit with America, whilst Eastern Europe belongs to another 'political continent' which includes the whole of Northern Asia and a large part of Central Asia. This division which has become unmistakably clear since the end of the Second World War is fundamentally an old division which arose when Europeans started to colonize America.

Russia is the only big European nation which has remained aloof from the colonization of America, if we leave out of account the episode, ending in 1867, of the Russian occupation of Alaska and the comparatively insignificant number of Russian immigrants going to the Western Hemisphere in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Many subjects of the Czar did certainly go to America during this last stage, but only a small percentage of them were Russians in the ethnical sense; most of them were Jews, Finns, Latvians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Poles, etc.

While practically all European nations were devoting their energies to the colonization of the Americas and other overseas territories, the Russians colonized the vast spaces adjoining their own original living-space.

The European peoples built a new great continent for what became the new nations of America. In addition to North and South America the Europeans colonized Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Africa; they dispersed their efforts all over the globe. The Russians built Eurasia for their own benefit.

Many European nations were constantly losing the best, most active and most enterprising members of their younger generation in the process of colonization; the Russians preserved their youth for themselves. They invested their manpower almost exclusively for the benefit of their own people and their own Empire.

Russia's continental expansion is unique in its scope, but other European nations, for example the Germans and the Poles, have tried continental expansion too. These two peoples, wedged in between the Russian colossus and the Western seafaring nations, played a dual role. They participated in a subordinate position in the colonization of the new world, and on the other hand, they also attempted to effect their own continental expansion and colonization in Eastern Europe. In the Middle Ages the Germans crossed the Elbe, Oder and Vistula and colonized Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Brandenburg, Silesia and East Prussia. The Poles spread their culture and political rule from the area of Poznan and Cracow, the territorial nucleus of their national existence, to Lithuania and to what to-day is Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia. Russia's strong position at the end of the Second World War brought about changes on the map of Central and Eastern Europe which deprived both Germans and Poles of the fruits of their colonizing efforts, efforts which had always been modest compared with Russia's forward march to the Urals and beyond.

It is a misconception of Russian history to consider it primarily as an urge towards the sea. Certainly, access to the sea was of vital importance to Russian trade and to the general development of Russia towards the status of a world power. It was a great moment in Russian history when Russia reached the shores of the Baltic under Peter the Great and the Black Sea coast under Catherine II. But it was a far greater moment when Ivan the Terrible captured Kazan on October 2nd, 1552, for that event not only brought about the transformation of the comparatively small national Russian State of Muscovy into a multinational Empire, but also determined the future direction of Russian expansion. Most of the subsequent territorial conquests can be traced back to the liquidation of the Tartar Khanate of Kazan. Thus the lines of Russian destiny were not St. Petersburg-Odessa nor St. Petersburg-Riga-Koenigsberg, but ran from Moscow via Kazan and Orenburg to Tashkent, via Kazan across Siberia to Vladivostok and again via Kazan to Astrakhan and Baku.

Russia's maritime expansion was, in some cases, only the crowning of her continental expansion, not a purpose in itself. Thus Russia did not aim at the conquest of the Pacific shore. Russia's interest in the Pacific and the emergence of a Russian Pacific policy were the more or less accidental outcome of the conquest of Siberia.

The idea of 'mobile frontiers,' not the urge to the seas, dominates Russian geographical and political thinking. Russia is a state which has been expanding for centuries; her borders have never marked the real limits of Russian rule, the final dividing line between Russian subjects and foreigners, but only a temporary demarcation without foundation in international law or real political importance. This applies to Russia's

Eastern borders in particular, but it is also true to some extent of her Southern and even of her Western borders.

In the East and South the demarcation line was usually only the front line from which new thrusts into further unknown territories were launched as soon as the required manpower became available. The bounds of the Russian Empire in the East, South and North were not determined by the resistance which other states opposed to Russian expansion, but mainly by insuperable physical obstacles such as oceans, deserts, or mountains of great altitude. The idea of 'mobile frontiers' demonstrated by the entire course of Russian history, to-day still determines Russian foreign policy and the Russian people's approach towards this policy.

The conquest of the Russian Eastern territories, in so far as it was the outcome of deliberate political planning, was carried out with the memory of the Mongol yoke of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as the psychological and ideological background. There was not only the desire to avenge the disgrace of that past domination, but also an ever-present sense of the danger that the colonization work might suffer a setback by a new irruption of Asiatic peoples into Russian land. In order to ban the menace of a new Genghis Khan, the Czar of Moscow had to become Genghis Khan. There was a kind of logical compulsion for the Russians to penetrate deeper and deeper into the East, to build strongholds and fortified lines, conquer foreign peoples and explore Asia's most distant territories. At least the first stage of the Russian expansion to the East is comparable to the Christian 'reconquest' of Spain from the Moors, and later a belief in the fulfilment of a Christian mission accompanied Russian expansion beyond the Urals.

RUSSIA'S TWO HISTORIES

In the Soviet Union, it is true, the idea of a 'Christian mission' is no longer popular, but the attitude towards the historic Russian expansion as such remains positive. The formation of the Russian Empire, the most immense agglomeration of land in the world, is viewed in Communist Moscow primarily as the outcome of the gigantic collective efforts of the Russian people.

There is, indeed, much evidence for the thesis that the Russian Empire is chiefly an unconscious creation due to the sufferings but also to the enterprising spirit of a vanguard of the Russian people. The Russian peasants left their homes to shake off the fetters of autocracy and bondage, and to gain freedom they were ready to walk barefoot to the end of the world. This urge towards new land, born of despair, hunger and oppression, eventually gave rise to a kind of Russian people's imperialism.

Official Russian policy and Russian state imperialism often lagged behind the people's initiative. Frequently, official Russia did no more than endorse and legalize the facts which the people had created. Even the greatest figures of Russian history, like Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, on several occasions simply followed in the wake of lawless bands of fugitive peasants, the famous Cossacks, who had enlarged the boundaries of Russia without even knowing it.

In this way Russia lived a double life and had a double history. There was the official history of the Czars and the no less important unofficial history of the Cossacks. Cossack history is not only a social history in the sense of a history of the lower classes of the Russian people, but history in the strictest and widest sense of the word, a history of wars and conquests and territories. Despite the frequent wars which the official Russia of the Czars and the unofficial Russia of the Cossacks waged against each other, the latter became ultimately an essential source of Russian strength and greatness. The Cossack rebels, who from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards had been settling on the Don, had a decisive share in conquering the southern steppes for Russia and in enabling her to reach the shores of the Azov and Black Seas. From the Don the Cossacks went to the Volga, the Ural river and to Western Siberia and later to Lake Baikal, to the Amur and the Ussuri river in the Far East. In the later stages of their development the Cossacks became organically united with 'official' history, lost their rebel character and served in the famous Cossack units of the Russian army.

Associated with the Cossacks in the Russian people's colonization movement were the members of the persecuted religious sects emerging from schism in the Russian Orthodox Church. These 'religious colonists' were more important in quality than in quantity. Just as the English Puritans crossed the ocean in search of religious freedom, so the Russian dissenters or 'Old Believers' covered tremendous distances on land to reach territories where official persecution and intolerance could not reach them. To be free to observe their ancient religious customs, which had been brushed aside by an ecclesiastical reform in the official Church in 1666, they went to the most distant areas of the Russian Empire, to the Far North and to Siberia. The 'Old Believers' and the members of other sects who were ready to brave any danger and every conceivable hardship for the sake of freedom to worship God in their own way were easily Russia's most tenacious and most valuable colonists.

However, without the development of a vigorous Russian central state authority the spontaneous Russian people's colonization would have ended in an impasse. Thus Russia's official and unofficial history are inseparably linked with each other and it is hardly possible to take up a positive attitude towards the latter and to disown the former as

Soviet historians originally tried to do. These attempts to discriminate between two histories, characteristic of Soviet historiography in the twenties and early thirties have been abandoned, and there are no greater admirers of the centralistic order introduced by the great Russian Czars and of their territorial conquests than the historians of the Stalinist epoch.

RUSSIAN ANTI-RACIALISM

Neither official nor unofficial Russia knew any racial prejudice. It would, therefore, be an unjustified over-simplification of Russian history to describe the Russians as 'oppressors' and the non-Russians as the 'oppressed' in the conquered and colonized territories of the Russian Empire. There was, of course, a Russian upper class in the new Eastern territories, i.e. the Volga region, the Urals and Siberia, but there was no Russian master race since the serfs of the Russian squires were not only 'natives' but Russians as well. Some nationalities such as the Tartars also had an upper class whose prestige did not rank below that of the Russian squires. Russian and native oppressed classes joined hands in common action against economic oppression. Russian and Tartar nobility on the other hand established close social relations with each other which were not marred by any racial antipathies.

At no time in Russia's development was there any need for a book like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* since racial intermixture and assimilation were the basic principles on which Russian colonization was built. The classic work of Russian literature depicting the relationship of the Russians towards Tartars, Bashkirs, Kalmucks, etc. in the multi-national Volga region is the *Chronicles of a Russian Family* by S. T. Aksakov, a striking illustration of the Russian-oriental synthesis which came into existence during the centuries following the conquest of Kazan.

The author of this remarkable work was no revolutionary but a conservative country gentleman belonging to a family tracing its origin back to the ninth century. This family after transferring its seat to Bashkiria had no objection to establishing the closest possible ties with Tartars and Bashkirs, which Aksakov illustrates by numerous examples. He mentions one of his uncles, a wealthy nobleman who was so attracted by the Bashkirs that he used to spend the greater part of the summer with them. 'He spoke their language like one of themselves, and would remain whole days in the saddle never alighting even for a moment, so that his legs were as bowed as any Bashkir horseman's.' Another of Aksakov's relatives married a beautiful Tartar girl whose family had then (at the end of the eighteenth century) already adopted 'an external European culture and spoke good Russian but retained the strictest Mohammedan faith'. The young Russian-Tartar couple soon enjoyed

a 'firm and honourable position' in Russian provincial society and the Tartar lady turned out to be 'a most graceful and interesting woman of the highest fashion causing no little sensation and envy'. The most remarkable evidence of the gradual growing together of Russians and non-Russians in the Volga valley and the Transvolga region was the personality of Aksakov's own tutor at Kazan University, Nikolay Mikhailovich Ibragimov. His family name and his external appearance were completely Tartar or Bashkir; he had an enormous head, wide cheek bones and small piercing eyes. Culturally, however, he was so totally Russian and Slav that he wrote an *Introduction to the Slavonic Grammar* for the perusal of Russian secondary schools. It was he who encouraged Aksakov to take up a literary career.[1]

In Siberia, where the local nationalities were more primitive than in the Volga region, the lack of racial prejudice expressed itself in a far more robust way than in Aksakov's refined family circle. Rape and barbarian acts of violence towards native women marked the first stage of the 'physical *rapprochement*' between Russian Cossacks and the Siberian peoples. This intermixture between Russians and natives was later carried on on a voluntary basis with the blessing of the Orthodox Church. As a result of intermarriage with the natives the Russians in many parts of Siberia lost all similarity to the Russians of Kiev and Novgorod. Thus in the Lower Ob region, in the Northern part of the Tobolsk province, the 'Russians' assumed the characteristic features of the Ostyaks: round face and slanting eyes; in the Tomsk area, Russians mixed with Tartars, Kalmucks and Kirghiz and assumed their physical characteristics; in the area of Lake Baikal black-haired and black-eyed 'Russians' bear witness to Russian-Buryat mixed marriages.

Absence of racial pride and prejudice is thus for Russia not a revolutionary principle, but is both the natural prerequisite of the growth of the Russian Empire and the natural outcome of centuries of racial intermixture. A conservative Russian nobleman would have been as proud of being a descendant of Genghis Khan as of the most highly-born Slavonic ancestry. The Soviet régime may have transformed anti-racialism into a dogmatic principle, it may have formulated this principle legally and politically, but Russian anti-racialism is no Bolshevik creation, it is a component part of Russian history.

At the time of the establishment of the Soviet régime Russian colonization was still unfinished. The Russians had colonized the Eastern part of European Russia, the Volga region and the Urals from the sixteenth century onwards, they had colonized the Black Sea coast and the North Caucasus region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A great effort was made to colonize Siberia in the period between 1886 and 1916 when 4,500,000 persons went to that vast area, of whom, it is true, 1,000,000 returned to Europe. But all these and many other

colonizing activities amounted to little when related to the gigantic potentialities of the Russian Empire. The North, not only the Far North, was a huge empty space. Siberia had hardly any major towns. The Russian Far East was badly underpopulated.

THE RUSSIAN CHARACTER OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

The October Revolution of 1917 instead of ending Russian colonization gave it a new impetus. The Revolution was a Russian revolution. It was Russian not only in the sense that it took place in Russia, but also in that it was carried out by people who were Russians in the ethnical or cultural sense.

This does not mean that it was backed by the majority of the Russian people or that it was the triumph of Russian national aspirations. On the contrary, the Revolution was the work of one Russian party only, the Bolshevik or Communist Party, which tried to impose itself on all nationalities of the Russian Empire in the first place and then on all nations of the earth.

The ideals of the earlier democratic Revolution of February 1917 were understandable not only to Russians but to all nationalities of the Russian Empire. The political aspirations of the progressive nationalists in Central Asia, Transcaucasia, Ukraine and Byelorussia were not fundamentally different from those for which the supporters of the 'Provisional Government' fought in Moscow and Petrograd. The October Revolution, on the other hand, was based on a principle which from the outset was not acceptable to the non-Russian nationalities – the leadership of the proletariat over the peasantry. This meant in reality the leadership of the Russian working class over the peasants of all the peoples of Russia.

The triumph of Bolshevism could, therefore, be achieved only by the extermination of all movements which did not accept the leadership of the proletariat. These movements included not only the bulk of the big Russian party of Socialist-Revolutionaries but also a large number of local political forces like the Dashnaks in Armenia, the Mussavat Party in Azerbaidzhan, the Alash Orda in Kazakhstan, the Shuro Islamiya movement in Turkestan, etc.

The October Revolution proclaimed the equality of all nations of the Russian Empire, but this 'equality' was an empty formula in view of the leading part which the Russian proletariat was called upon to play. Mikhail Kalinin blurted out the truth when he said it was the aim of Soviet policy 'to teach the people of the Kirghiz steppe, the small Uzbek cotton-grower, and the Turkmenian gardener to accept the ideals of the Leningrad worker'.[2] Kalinin, who was the head of the Soviet State between 1920 and 1946 thus admitted that there was no

question of working out a compromise between Russian workers, Ukrainian peasants, Uzbek cotton-growers, and Mongol cattle-breeders. The worker of Leningrad – or of Moscow – would simply impose his ideals on the others.

The heroes of the October Revolution and of the Civil War in the non-Russian territories of what is now the Soviet Union were primarily Russians or people of non-Russian nationalities who had severed their links with their nation of origin and adopted Russian culture. In Central Asia the triumph of Bolshevism was secured by the two Russians Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze and Valerian Vladimirovich Kuybishev. No Soviet textbook has ever tried to deny the role of Frunze and Kuybishev in the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia or claimed that any Uzbek, Kirghiz, Kazakh, Turkmenian, or Tadzhik personality, took a leading part in it. To make the Russian leaders of the revolution more acceptable their names were slightly transformed and appear in the local Central Asian folklore as 'Prunze-aka' and 'Koibashi-aka'.[3] In the multi-national Northern Caucasus region the leaders of the revolution were the Russian Sergey Mironovich Kirov (Kostrikov) and the Georgian Ordzhonikidze, in Byelorussia the Russianized Jew Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich, in Azerbaidzhan the Armenian, Anastas Mikoyan.

THE RUSSIAN CHARACTER OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY

The strength of the Russian element inside the revolutionary vanguard, the Communist Party, can be gauged from official statistics on the ethnical composition of the party membership. In 1922, when the Civil War had almost ended, 71·96 per cent or 270·409 party members were Great Russians although their percentage of the total population was 52·91 per cent. Other nationalities which had a greater number of party members than they were entitled to on the basis of their numerical strength in the country were Jews (5·21 per cent), Latvians (2·53 per cent), and Poles (1·5 per cent). The Latvian and Polish communists were mainly political *émigrés*, while the prominence of Jewish communists arose from the high proportion of Jewish people in the town population of Western Russia. Russians, Jews, Latvians and Poles aggregated 81·2 per cent of the total party membership, although they represented at the utmost 55·5 per cent of the total population. The Ukrainians, the second largest nationality in the Soviet Union, accounted for only 5·88 per cent of all communists, although one out of every five Soviet citizens was a Ukrainian. The largest non-European groups among the party members were Tartars 3,940 (1·05 per cent), Azerbaidzhani Turks 2,451 (0·65 per cent), Uzbeks 2,043 (0·54 per cent). Kazakhs and Kirghiz together had 4,890 communists, or 1·3 per cent of the total.[4] None of these figures corresponded in the least to the

numerical importance of the peoples concerned. In themselves these figures were of little importance since they showed only the number of the rank and file communists belonging to a given nationality, without disclosing their real political weight.

In this respect statistics on the ethnical composition of party congresses are much more revealing since the congress delegates are, for the most part, leading officials of the party. At the Thirteenth Congress, held in May 1924, only 1 per cent of the delegates represented the Turko-Tartar peoples who were then almost 11 per cent of the entire population of the Soviet Union. The Russians had 60·8 per cent of all delegates; 11·3 per cent were Jews, 7 per cent Latvians and 4·7 per cent Ukrainians.

At the Fifteenth Party Congress, held in December 1927, when the important decisions on the collectivization of agriculture were taken, the non-European nationalities were again without adequate representation. The Turko-Tartar group had but 1·6 per cent of all delegates. The percentage of Russians had gone up to 62 per cent ; Jews and Latvians still sent fairly large delegations, although their percentages had gone down to 7 per cent and 4·7 per cent. The relative strength of the Ukrainians had increased to 9·8 per cent, i.e. almost double, and the number of Byelorussian delegates had gone up from 1·2 to 2·9 per cent. The delegations of a number of non-Slav nationalities, however, decreased slightly compared with 1924.[5]

Throughout its existence the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has remained a predominantly Russian and Slav body. The number of non-Russian party members, it is true, increased both absolutely and relatively, but this statistical increase was not accompanied by a corresponding increase of their influence in the party and state machinery. Attempts have been made to shake Russian predominance and to establish both a greater degree of national equality within the Communist Party and a genuine federation within the Soviet Union. But these were foiled by Stalin and his associates during the big purge of 1936/38.

There is no doubt that Stalin upheld the Russian character of the October Revolution while his opponents wanted to broaden the basis of the Soviet régime by giving greater weight to the non-Russian nationalities. Both the left-wing and the right-wing opposition to Stalin agreed on that point for opposite reasons. For the extreme left, Russian predominance was incompatible with the idea of the world revolution. The right-wing opposition around Bukharin and Rykov was guided in its hostility to centralism by its generally more liberal approach to Soviet internal politics. Both groups were able to quote in support of their standpoints the works of Lenin, who in various proclamations and appeals to non-Russian peoples had shown great understanding

for their national aspirations. In his 'Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine' Lenin recognized the right of the Ukraine to complete independence.[6] In another letter 'To the Communists of Azerbaidzhan, Georgia, Armenia, Daghestan and the Mountain Republic' Lenin advised the Communist Parties of the Caucasus and of Transcaucasia not to copy the Russian experience but to show more mildness and caution than the Russian Bolsheviks did. Lenin further suggested to the local communists that they should be ready to make concessions to the petty bourgeoisie, to the intelligentsia and, particularly, to the peasantry.[7]

How far Lenin was able to equate his practical policy with these theoretical precepts is another question. The forcible incorporation of the Caucasian and Central Asian territories into the Soviet Union, for instance, took place under Lenin and was not primarily Stalin's responsibility. The fact remains, however, that Lenin's approach to the national problem was not as crude and inelastic as Stalin's. Those communists who play the founder of the Soviet State against his successor when denouncing Russification and centralism are thus not entirely wrong even if they do overstate the case.

Left-wing opposition to Stalin's nationalities policy was predominantly theoretical but Bukharin and especially Rykov, who for several years had been at the head of the Soviet state administration, challenged Stalin in the practical field as well. As early as 1923, at the Twelfth Communist Party Congress, Rykov had declared 'It is impossible to administer from Moscow on the basis of bureaucratic centralism a country with more than 130,000,000 inhabitants covering one-sixth of the earth'. Rykov, the son of a Russian peasant, acted at least to some extent on the basis of this principle. Manifestations of local nationalism had already been suppressed under his rule, but more drastic centralization measures and the large-scale persecution of federalist-minded non-Russian communists started only after his dismissal from the post of Soviet Prime Minister and his replacement in 1930 by V. M. Molotov. Rykov's policy too had moved within the narrow framework of a one-party system, but in the days of inflexible centralism which Molotov introduced under Stalin's supreme guidance the Rykov period appeared like a golden age to the communist chiefs of the non-Russian peoples. The leading communists of the Caucasus and Central Asiatic republics thus co-operated with the right-wing opposition in the hope that the downfall of Stalin might lead to the fulfilment of some moderate national aspirations.

From the point of view of the régime it was thus not enough to have ousted Rykov from office; it was necessary to exterminate physically him and his group which represented a federalist alternative to Stalin's nationalities policy. The official charges put forward against Bukharin, Rykov and many other members of the opposition asserted that they

wanted to 'sell' the Ukraine, the Caucasus and Soviet Central Asia to 'imperialistic powers'. These allegations sound fantastic and cannot be accepted at their face value. Nevertheless, the charges against Rykov contained a grain of truth. Rykov did want to alter the status of the non-Russian nationalities, not to please imperialism but to do justice to the peoples of the Soviet Union.

Together with Rykov and his co-defendants in the Moscow trial of the so-called 'Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites' the Stalin administration exterminated communist federalists all over the Soviet Union. By wholesale police measures and mass trials it deprived almost all the important non-Russian peoples of an entire generation of their political leaders, economic experts and cultural workers. These purge victims were described as 'enemies of the people', 'bourgeois nationalists', 'agents of German fascism' if their homes were West of the Urals and 'agents of Japanese militarism' if they belonged to an Asiatic nationality. The purge of the national deviationists from 1936 to 1938 was exclusively directed against persons who had grown up in the Bolshevik Party and who themselves had taken an active share in the liquidation of genuine local nationalists. Thus the non-Russian peoples lost two sets of their national *élite* during the period stretching from the October Revolution until roughly the outbreak of the Second World War. The first included intellectuals who had championed the cause of their peoples under the Czarist régime and the second group was made up of those Bolsheviks who had taken their place and had tried to defend the interests of the nationalities and territories of which they had been put in charge. It is true that Stalin's purges affected both Russians and non-Russians alike, but the non-Russians, having only a limited reserve of educated persons at their disposal, suffered proportionally much heavier losses than the Great Russians who numbered 100,000,000.

The Eighteenth Party Congress of March 1939 formally concluded the purge and elected a Central Committee the composition of which was highly characteristic of the Russian predominance in the Soviet Union. The Committee of seventy which is the highest policy-making body in the U.S.S.R. included no more than two persons of Moslem and Turkic origin. These were the Party Secretary of Azerbaidzhan, M. D. Bagirov and the Party Secretary of Uzbekistan, Usman Yusupov. The latter was the only representative of the 11,000,000 Moslems of Central Asia on the Central Committee since the other 'Central Asian', the then Party Secretary of Kazakhstan, Nikolay Skvortsov, was a Russian.

There were three famous Caucasians on the Central Committee; but they have never claimed to be the spokesmen of their respective peoples since their main ambition has always been to strengthen the central state machinery of the Soviet Union; the Georgians, I. V. Stalin

and Lavrenty Beriya, and the Armenian, Anastas Mikoyan. Another less-known Armenian on the Committee was I. T. Tevosyan, then Minister for Shipbuilding. The rest of the Central Committee were Slavs, most of them Russians, about half a dozen representatives of the Ukraine and one or two Byelorussians. The Slavs also included eight communists of Jewish origin who were, however, completely assimilated and could not be regarded as anything but Russians. Several of them were ousted from the Committee during the period of Nazi-Soviet co-operation.

Among the sixty-eight alternate members of the Central Committee elected at the Eighteenth Party Congress, the non-Slavs formed again but a tiny group, including one Tartar, one Bashkir (who was expelled in 1941), one Armenian, three representatives from Georgia and two local NKVD chiefs bearing Georgian names. Of the latter, one was stationed in Leningrad, the other in Vladivostok.

Among the rank and file of the Communist Party the non-Russians are, of course, more strongly represented than on the Central Committee, but there is still a great disproportion between Russians and non-Russians. This can be illustrated by a comparison between Moscow and the Ukraine. In 1949 Moscow (including the whole of Moscow Province) with 9,000,000 inhabitants had 600,000 organized communists. The Ukraine with its 40,000,000 inhabitants had only slightly more, namely, 684,000 party members, but the number of Ukrainian communists is smaller than that, as the figure includes at least 25 per cent non-Ukrainians, mostly Russians.*

Since the October Revolution is a Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik Party a Russian Party, they are both bound to pursue Russian aims. The aims of a Russian policy, like any other national policy, can

* At the Fifteenth Congress of the Ukrainian Communist Party, which was held in May 1940, only 56 per cent of the delegates were Ukrainians, as many as 37·2 per cent were Great Russians, 4 per cent were Jews and 2·8 per cent belonged to other nationalities (*Pravda*, May 16th, 1940.)

In the other European border republics of the U.S.S.R. the position is roughly the same as in the Ukraine: the organized communists represent 1 to 2 per cent of the total population. The Party has 110,000 members in Byelorussia (1949), 31,000 in Latvia (1949), 30,000 in Moldavia (1951), 24,000 in Lithuania (1949), 19,000 in Estonia (1951). Many Communist Party members of these border republics do not belong to the local nationalities but are Great Russian party and state officials, skilled workers and technicians.

In the six Moslem Republics of the U.S.S.R. – Azerbaidzhan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirghizistan, Tadzhikistan and Turkmenistan – there are over 580,000 full party members and candidates for membership in a population of nearly 20,000,000, including both Moslems and non-Moslems. Most of the party members live in the industrial centres, where the Russian element is numerically strong, particularly in Kazakhstan (229,000 members in 1949) and Azerbaidzhan (108,000 members in 1951).

Apart from the Great Russians, the Party has recruited a fairly strong membership among Georgians and Armenians. There are 61,000 party members in Armenia (1951) and 166,000 in Georgia (1949). This means that about 5 per cent of the population of these two republics are organized in the Communist Party.

take a great variety of forms. It can be peaceful or aggressive abroad, liberal or despotic at home. The Soviet régime and the Bolshevik Party have interpreted the aims of a Russian policy in the most narrow-minded way; they have followed the bad rather than the good examples of Russian history, while acting in conformity with some of its fundamental lessons. Thus they have accepted the definition of the 'bourgeois' historian, Klyuchevsky, who said Russian history was that of a country which was being colonized.

RUSSIAN COLONIZATION UNDER THE SOVIET REGIME

The Soviet leaders realized that the power and size of the Russian Empire were due to successfully conducted colonization and that the Soviet Union too could not do without a colonization policy. The form and methods of Russian colonization, but not its essence, changed to a certain degree under the Soviet régime.

In the first years after the October Revolution the pace of colonization declined owing to the general confusion and the hostility of the non-Russian peoples towards new Russian colonists. Moreover, agricultural colonization had lost a great deal of its previous attraction because the best land had already been occupied by Russian settlers, and more land could be made available only at the price of investing considerable sums in irrigation and improvements. Land conditions in Asiatic Russia were such that Siberia and Central Asia combined could not absorb more than 200,000 to 250,000 agricultural settlers a year. Despite the existence of vast empty spaces in Russian Asia, the colonization movement at the beginning of the First World War was heading towards an impasse.[8]

Not only the Soviet régime but any other Russian régime taking over in 1917 would have had to alter the methods of colonization policy. The Soviet Government, particularly since 1928, the beginning of the planning period, continued to encourage agricultural colonization on a moderate scale, but the emphasis was clearly shifted to industrial colonization. To industrialize Russian Asia, to exploit its great national riches, in short, to carry out the Five-Year Plans, it was imperative to draw on the reserves of population of European Russia and to transfer them beyond the Urals. In the twelve years between the end of 1926 and the beginning of 1939 alone, 3,000,000 people migrated from Central and Western Russia into the new industrial centres of the Urals, Siberia and the Russian Far East. In addition, 1,700,000 new settlers came into the Central Asiatic Soviet Republics.

The migration towards the East constituted, however, only one aspect of a general industrialization and urbanization process which also led to a migration of 4,800,000 people into the provinces of Moscow and

Leningrad between 1926 and 1939, and to a minor migration of 350,000 people into the Gorky Province.[9]

An important feature of the industrial colonization was the foundation of new towns and workers' settlements. Between 1917 and 1947, the Soviet régime claims to have brought into existence 508 new towns and roughly 2,000 workers' settlements of an urban type. A detailed analysis of these figures shows that urbanization and Russification went hand in hand, since many of the new towns became Russian industrial strongholds in non-Russian territories. Out of the 508 new towns, 209 sprung up in non-Russian Soviet Republics, including fifty-one in Transcaucasia, forty-seven in Central Asia, and forty-three in the Ukrainian coal district – the Donets Basin. Almost half of the new workers' settlements were likewise built in the non-Russian Republics, including 230 in Central Asia alone. As to the 299 new towns of Russia proper, many were founded in ethnically non-Russian territories or in areas with mixed populations: sixteen in the Far North, fifty-five in the Urals and fifty East of the Urals.[10]

Despite all efforts made under the Soviet régime to shift populations from the densely populated districts of European Russia to the scarcely populated North and East, little had been achieved up to the outbreak of the Second World War. The census of 1939 revealed that the unequal distribution of Russia's population showed trifling changes compared with the Czarist period, notwithstanding all the new towns and new industrial centres: six per cent of the Soviet population lived scattered over two-thirds of the country's territory while forty-eight per cent of the people were concentrated in six per cent of the territory.[11]

Only a bold policy of agricultural resettlement could remedy this situation. Moreover, industrial colonization was bound to reach a saturation point if a sufficient food basis could not be provided for the new 'mushroom towns' in Asia. To keep up the tempo of industrial colonization agricultural colonization too needed a fresh impetus. Greater emphasis on agricultural colonization was, therefore, one of the important features of the Third Five Year Plan (1938–1942). To render agricultural colonization on a larger scale possible, the Soviet state had to make higher demands on agricultural science, whose main task it became to extend the cereal growing area towards the North and to make Russia's wheat belt as elastic as possible. On the other hand, the Soviet Government tried to create better opportunities for agricultural colonization by improving the organization in charge of it. Various Soviet institutions dealing with resettlement and colonization matters had been in existence since 1925, but in 1939 a new authority was created – the 'Central Resettlement Board', which had its agents in all Union Republics and Provinces. The outbreak of the war interrupted the work of the board, and in 1945, when it was able to resume its

activities, it was disbanded and a new resettlement organization was created and attached to the Council of Ministers of the Russian Federative Socialist Soviet Republic (R.S.F.S.R.). This was a logical measure since the R.S.F.S.R. is the most important purveyor of settlers for under-developed areas.*

During the first post-war Five Year Plan (1946–50) the Soviet Government encouraged both industrial and agricultural colonization, but both had a very obvious strategic tinge. Colonists were directed to certain militarily vital areas, such as the Murmansk Province and the Russian-Manchurian border regions, but above all to the new strategic outposts which Russia had annexed at the end of the Second World War. In this latter category belonged the Karelian Isthmus, the Soviet portion of the former East Prussia, Southern Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands. A widespread propaganda campaign was started to popularize the new territories as settlement areas: pamphlets describing their rich resources and potentialities were lavishly distributed and the advantages of settling in the new districts were eagerly discussed in collective farm meetings – on the initiative of the communist rural organizations.

Although one need not believe every word of Soviet propaganda about the spontaneous desire of the Russian people to migrate to remote areas in order to serve the motherland, it would be untrue to suggest that administrative coercion is the only motive behind the continuous large-scale population movements inside the Soviet Union. It cannot be denied that there exists the enthusiasm of a young generation which wants to build and to create, if possible in a new and unknown territory. There also exists the inborn 'wanderlust' of the Russian peasant and his natural ability to adapt himself to different geographical surroundings and climatic conditions. Another powerful incentive for a semi-voluntary peasant migration inside Russia is the hope, if not the definite promise, that the collective farm statute will be less strictly applied in the distant territories than in the over-crowded provinces of Central Russia. Less rigidity in the application of the statute may be worth a journey thousands of miles long, since it means for the peasant more time to be devoted to his individual allotment outside the collective farm and a larger number of cows, sheep and goats for his personal use.

Although the primary approach of the Soviet régime towards colonization is an economic and strategic, and not a national Russian one, Soviet colonization policy serves to promote the triumph of the Russian people no less than colonization under the Czarist régime. Only a people which is both numerically large and stubborn by character, a people which is used to hardships and privations and which has ex-

* A number of non-Russian Soviet Republics such as Georgia, Tadzhikistan, etc., also have resettlement organizations which are in charge of minor local resettlement schemes.

perience in colonizing activities can carry out successful colonization work on such a large scale as is needed in the vast Euro-Asiatic plain. This is why only Russians and Ukrainians can be relied upon as colonizers to any extent worth mentioning. Many other peoples may locally participate in the great colonization of the Russian East and North, but the Russians themselves must necessarily lead and dominate the colonization work everywhere. The role of the Russians in the work of colonization is that of a huge advancing army which is accomplishing the main job, but which is assisted by a number of small satellite detachments to whom certain local tasks are assigned. The use of non-Russians for Russian colonization is common to both the Czarist and Soviet régimes, but the latter is by far more thorough and systematic in the mobilization of the non-Russian population and no longer permits the alternative of emigration abroad.

Christians from the Baltic countries, Moslems from the Volga, Tartars and Mordvinians, Chuvash and Mari, cultured Jews and half-civilized Chukchi from beyond the Polar Circle – they are all thrown into action by the Russian colonizers for the ultimate benefit of the Russians. The more the peoples of Russia become intermingled and the more they are scattered through the Eurasian continent by a planned colonization policy the less there is danger of the rise of 'national problems' and the greater the likelihood of their absorption by Russian civilization. From economic necessity the Soviet régime is inflicting a double blow on the non-Slav peoples: it pumps Russian and Ukrainian skilled workers, specialists and officials into the territories of the small Soviet nationalities and recruits unskilled labour from among the latter to send them to Russian industrial centres, in an endeavour to solve the manpower problem there.

LOCAL NATIONALISM

The Soviet nationalities policy is thus largely identical with the promotion of colonization and industrialization in the non-Russian territories of the U.S.S.R. It can also be defined in other ways; it depends on the standpoint from which the definition is formulated. From the point of view of Soviet Russia's neighbours the Soviet nationalities policy is an instrument of Soviet diplomacy. The Bolshevik 'Old Guard' considered the nationalities policy as an abstract policy of encouraging the cultural and economic development of the peoples of Russia. For the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union itself the nationalities policy and the fight against local nationalism are identical notions. Each of these definitions contains a certain amount of truth, but there can be no doubt that the fight against local nationalism has been the dominant element in the Soviet nationalities policy since the thirties.

Until then the communist leadership had most energetically fought against 'Great Russian chauvinism' which had been described as the 'main danger on the national front'. Gradually the situation was reversed, the danger of 'Great Russian chauvinism' was more and more belittled and the campaign against 'local nationalism' became increasingly merciless. We have already referred to the political side of the purges, but the 'fight against local nationalism' implied more than a struggle for power between centralists and federalists. The expression 'local nationalism' was used in the widest possible sense. Every assertion of national individuality in the economic, cultural and political field was transformed in Soviet language into 'local nationalism'.

The main forms of local nationalist tendencies which the Soviet régime tried to stamp out were the following:

1. THE 'FEDERALIST NATIONALISM'. Many a nationality of the Soviet Union realized that it was too weak by itself to resist Russian colonization. It therefore tried to strengthen its position by entering into closer relationship with one or several other non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union to which it was ethnically related or linked together by geographical circumstances. Whenever such tendencies were expressed the Soviet central Government denounced them as 'counter revolutionary manœuvres' emanating from some sort of pan-ism. Sub-federations are considered undesirable within the U.S.S.R. however politically reliable those participating in them may be. Thus a regional federation of the three Baltic Soviet Republics is unthinkable under the working of Soviet nationalities policy; and in four cases the Soviet central Government actually suppressed regional sub-federations after having permitted them for longer or shorter transition periods (in the Volga region, Transcaucasia, Northern Caucasus region and Central Asia).

2. LOCAL NATIONALISM IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE. Measures applied to the whole Soviet Union were frequently transformed into measures against local nationalism, when put into practice in the territories of national minorities. People of many nationalities in the Soviet Union denied the Moscow Government the right to interfere with the internal economic structure of the territories which they inhabited. A case in point was the collectivization of agriculture in 1930–33, which, as a rule, met with greater resistance in the non-Russian areas than among the Great Russians. Other economic measures again, like the resettlement of the millions of nomads of the Soviet Union, affected exclusively non-Russian nationalities.

3. RELIGIOUSLY TAINTED NATIONALISM. The fight against 'local religion' has always been closely inter-twined with the fight against local nationalism. The Soviet leaders have disregarded the simple truth that a nation cannot be free if its religion is oppressed. In the inter-war

period the campaign against the religions of the national minorities was conducted by the state authorities, the Communist Party, the Communist Youth League and by the 'Nationalities Commission' of the Central Committee of the S.V.B. (Soyuz Voinstvuyushchikh Bezbozhnikov – League of Militant Godless). After the war the work of the S.V.B. was taken over by a 'Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge' which has a special anti-religious department ('Section for Propaganda Problems of Scientific-Atheistic Knowledge'). The Society which is closely connected with the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Communist Party has branch organizations in all non-Russian Soviet Republics. Although the principal target of the Bolshevik fight against religion was the Russian Orthodox Church, the non-Russians, particularly the Eastern nationalities of the U.S.S.R. were affected by it more than the Slavs. Since nationality and religion are almost identical in the Eastern provinces of the Russian Empire – as almost everywhere in the Orient – the fight against religion in these territories was implicitly a fight against national culture and national traditions as well.

4. LINGUISTIC NATIONALISM. The Soviet régime rightly feared that the languages of the non-Russian nationalities could too easily become an instrument in the struggle against Bolshevism if they were not carefully kept under control. The question of political terminology, for instance, was of paramount importance. 'Bourgeois nationalists' could obtain political advantages by what orthodox communists considered to be an incorrect translation of such terms as 'Soviet', 'dictatorship of the proletariat', and 'general line of the party'. The régime tried, therefore, to wrest from the 'nationalists' the weapon of the languages by changing their character and introducing into each of them a large number of Russian and Russianized so-called international terms. The dual aim of the Soviet language policy was to reduce on the one hand the differences between the local languages and the Russian, and on the other to widen the cleavage between languages belonging to one and the same language group so as to weaken all pan-isms but pan-Slavism.

Not only was the victory of the Stalin group over the opposition forces inside the Communist Party tantamount to the victory of centralism; it also implied the triumph of the Russian language and of Russian civilization. It is a striking coincidence that the decree on the obligatory teaching of Russian in all national minority schools was passed on the very day on which Rykov and Bukharin were sentenced to death – on March 13th, 1938. The new party leadership which Stalin installed in the various national republics started its activity by launching a campaign for the study of the Russian language. For the non-Russian communists a good command of Russian thus became a way to manifest their loyalty to the Kremlin.

During and particularly after the Second World War official Soviet ideology became less hypocritical by openly proclaiming that the Russians were the 'driving force' within the U.S.S.R. and not just one of the '180 peoples of the Soviet Union'.

On the very morrow of victory Stalin ordered that greater emphasis should be given to the leading role of the Russian people in the Soviet State. When addressing the Red Army commanders at a great victory celebration on May 24th, 1945, Stalin demonstratively toasted the Russian people whom he described as the 'most outstanding people of the U.S.S.R.' and he paid tribute to the 'clear mind, steadfast character and patience' of the Russians. This toast was not only a eulogy of the Russians, but also an oblique censure intended for the other peoples of the Soviet Union, whose mind, character and patience from Stalin's point of view had been less commendable during the Great Patriotic War.

It seems that Stalin's subtly formulated reproach to the non-Russians was justified. In the fatal years of 1941 and 1942 in particular, the Russians had borne the brunt of the battle. In October 1942 *Pravda* dropped all propagandistic pretence and stated flatly that the Russians formed the 'vast majority' of the army. This admission was very remarkable in view of the fact that the Russians constitute less than half of the population of the U.S.S.R.*

Stalin's toast to the Russian people was no toast in the ordinary sense of the word. It was the ultimate logical conclusion to be drawn from the Russian character of the October Revolution. It also supplied the key for the understanding of the purges carried out after 1945 among the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union. The aim of these purges was to eliminate from the cultural life and the national traditions of the non-Russians everything that might possibly encourage among them any kind of anti-Russian sentiments.

CONSTITUTIONAL FEDERALISM

In examining the essentials of Soviet nationalities policy we cannot overlook the laws, decrees and constitutions of the U.S.S.R. and its constituent republics, but we must use them with care. Considered in isolation they give no more than a clue to the propagandist aspect of Soviet

* The same *Pravda* article which was quoted by *Soviet War News* on October 16th, 1942, also complained about the insufficient military training of the non-Russian soldiers. The newspaper said: 'Not all the reserves arriving at the front from the national republics and provinces are equally well trained. Some young soldiers are insufficiently familiar with military technique, particularly with their weapons. It is the duty of military training organizations to attend to this, to give the young fighters a complete idea of modern war weapons and teach them how to use them. Political work has always been an important activity of our army organizations. It is of particular importance among Red Army men of non-Russian nationality. . . .'

nationalities policy, whilst the real position of the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union can be judged only on the basis of the application of the laws, i.e. in the light of facts. The constitutional framework of the U.S.S.R., though not a guide to the fundamentals of Soviet nationalities policy, acquaints us with the terminology with which the latter operates and introduces us to the various degrees of Soviet territorial autonomy.

1. SOVIET REPUBLICS. The highest form of Soviet autonomy is enjoyed by the sixteen constituent Soviet Republics. According to Soviet legal theory these sixteen Republics are fully fledged sovereign States, with all the prerogatives of a State including a constitutional right to leave the Union should their respective parliaments, the Supreme Soviets, so decide.

The sovereignty of the Soviet Republics is, however, a mere constitutional fiction, because in reality they have no say in questions of internal security, high-level economic planning, transport, or higher education, not to speak of foreign policy and defence. Since February 1st, 1944, the Soviet Republics have possessed a nominal right to have foreign ministers and defence ministers of their own, but the national foreign ministers and foreign offices have a purely formal existence, while the national defence ministries never came into being. It is difficult to see what functions such defence ministries could have had, in view of the centralized and predominantly Russian character of the Soviet armed forces. Non-Russians, it is true, may rise to the highest posts in the Red Army and Navy, but Russian is the official language of the Soviet military apparatus. During the Second World War all military orders were written in Russian.

Even from a merely legal point of view the constituent Soviet Republics do not own the natural riches on their soil. The coal of the Ukraine, the oil of Azerbaidzhan, the copper of Kazakhstan belong to the U.S.S.R. as a whole and not to the individual republics. The same applies to the agricultural land of the Republics.

The 'sovereignty' of the Union Republics is also rendered fictitious by the existence of the 'Prokuratura', the strongly centralized office of the all-Union Attorney-General ('Generalny Prokuror') which was founded in 1933. The all-Union Attorney-General himself appoints an Attorney-General for each of the Union Republics and even the personnel of the 'Prokuratura' in the provinces and districts of these republics is under his supreme command. Republican governments cannot interfere in the least with the work of the 'Prokuratura' nor can they influence the composition of its local staff. The Attorney-General has a dual function. He acts as Public Prosecutor and he checks on the legality of measures carried out by the republican and local authorities. The Attorney-General of a Union Republic, on instructions from the all-Union

Attorney-General, can rescind any local laws and decrees if they contradict the so-called 'revolutionary legality'.

The legal system on which the 'Prokuratura' bases its work is in itself rigorously centralized. There is no all-Union Penal Code, it is true, but the Penal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. is also in force in Kazakhstan, Kirghizistan, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and the Karelo-Finnish S.S.R. The fact that there are separate penal codes for the R.S.F.S.R., Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Transcaucasian and some of the Central Asian Soviet Republics is of little importance since their differences in content are insignificant. Moreover many articles in the individual penal codes have been superseded by all-Union laws and decrees (particularly the decrees on the 'protection of socialist property' and on various 'state crimes').

Often, the Soviet legal 'States' do not correspond to States in the sense of living organisms. In numerous instances these 'States' have not been created by historical development or by the will of their peoples, nor do they owe their existence to some particular geographical features. They owe their origin simply to a decision taken by the Soviet leaders or even by the supreme Soviet leader only. Examples of such 'States' which were created by Soviet political opportunism are the Karelo-Finnish S.S.R., the Moldavian S.S.R. and the Soviet Republics of Central Asia. Republics which were taken into the Soviet Union *en bloc* as an outcome of military operations, such as Georgia, Estonia and Latvia are of a different nature. Originating from political and economic units gravitating around a centre, they possess the characteristics of statehood in the sense of political and economic geography, even if the Soviet central Government has considerably curtailed the exercise of their actual state functions.

Soviet legal theory, as taught in Soviet law schools, asserts that a territory has to answer three requirements to become a Soviet Republic, namely: (*a*) the nationality giving its name to the Republic must have an absolute majority in the territory concerned: (*b*) a Soviet Republic must have a common border with at least one foreign State because otherwise it could not secede from the Union if it wished to do so, and (*c*) a Soviet Republic must have at least 1,000,000 inhabitants.[12]

These 'conditions' too are only theory and are not fulfilled by all the sixteen Soviet Republics. Thus the Kazakhs have no absolute majority in Kazakhstan, nor have the Karelians and Finns combined in the Karelo-Finnish Soviet Republic. Moreover, the last-mentioned republic did not fulfil condition (c), since it had less than a million inhabitants when promoted to the status of a fully-fledged Soviet Republic. As to condition (b) it has become an illusion, since several Soviet Republics adjoin only Soviet satellite States and Soviet-controlled territories (Byelorussia, Moldavia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizistan).

2. AUTONOMOUS SOVIET REPUBLICS. A considerably lower degree of autonomy was granted to the 'Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republics' (A.S.S.R.) but they are also officially described as 'States'. Out of the sixteen Autonomous Republics twelve are part of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (R.S.F.S.R.), one each belongs to Azerbaidzhan and Uzbekistan and two to Georgia. An A.S.S.R. is extremely limited in its scope of action and its autonomy is almost exclusively confined to the linguistic sphere. Formally and legally, however, things are different, since every Autonomous Republic possesses a constitution of its own (although almost identical in wording and content in all sixteen A.S.S.R.s), a 'Council of Ministers' and a 'Supreme Soviet'.

3. AUTONOMOUS PROVINCES. The next group of national territorial units, the Autonomous Provinces (*Avtonomnye Oblasti*) have lost much of their importance by the introduction of the 1936 Constitution promoting the more populous Autonomous Provinces to Autonomous Republics. Out of the nine still existing Autonomous Provinces six belong to the R.S.F.S.R. and one each to Georgia, Azerbaidzhan and Tadzhikistan.

The difference between an 'Autonomous Province' and an ordinary province is that the former has rules of its own with regard to its official languages. The 'Autonomous Province' has a special 'Statute' adopted by the provincial Soviet and confirmed by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic to which it belongs; it also has a special representation in the 'Soviet of Nationalities' which the ordinary province has not.

The 'Autonomous Provinces' of the R.S.F.S.R. are not placed directly under the government of the Russian Federation but under the Executive Committee (Ispolkom) of a kind of super-province, 'Kray', which can be translated as 'Territory'. Thus the Autonomous Province of the Circassians belongs to the Stavropol Territory, the Khakass Autonomous Province to the Krasnoyarsk Territory, etc.

4. LOWER FORMS OF NATIONAL AUTONOMY. Yet another form of national autonomy was designed primarily for the small nationalities of the Far North, the 'National Areas' (*Okrugi*). There are ten such 'National Areas' altogether, four of which extend along Russia's Arctic coast. The majority of the 'National Areas' cover huge but almost unpopulated spaces and even from the legal point of view they enjoy only a very limited autonomy.

'National Districts' (*Rayony*) were devised for small but compact minorities wedged into alien surroundings. These 'National Districts' consist very often of five to ten villages only. Before the Second World War there had been as many as 147 'National Districts' in the R.S.F.S.R. alone. Most of them were located in the Far North, Yakutia, Buryato-Mongolia, Eastern Siberia and the Amur region.

'National Village Soviets' (village councils) and 'National Collective

Farms', of which there are many hundreds, guarantee, in theory, the rights of the tiniest national minority group.

The Soviet central Government has shown a singular indifference to its own creations in the field of nationalities policy. 'National Areas' and 'National Districts' have often suddenly passed out of existence. Frontiers of both Soviet Republics and Autonomous Soviet Republics have never been regarded as more than experimental lines which can be changed by decree just as they were created by decree. Whole slices of territory have often been cut off from one republic and added to another when this appeared to be convenient from the economic point of view. Capitals of Autonomous Republics have been similarly shifted according to economic expediency. Moreover, even the internal administrative division of a constituent republic into provinces is not a matter to be decided by the republic concerned, but belongs to the competence of the central authorities in Moscow.

The Stalin Constitution of 1936 set itself the task of giving a final form to the administrative sub-division of the U.S.S.R. But ever since then there have been numerous alterations which were not due to territorial conquests alone. All this is only too natural: Russia is a young country whose economic potential is steadily growing and whose administrative set-up, therefore, has to be elastic without being hampered by the interests of the local peoples.

SOVIET BUDGETARY CENTRALISM

The real importance, or rather the factual insignificance, of the autonomous units created by the Soviet constitution can best be shown by examining the budgetary means at the disposal of both the central government and the regional governments and Soviets.

The expenditure side of the Soviet budget is usually sub-divided into five groups: (1) financing of national economy; (2) social and cultural measures; (3) administration; (4) defence, and (5) miscellaneous expenditure. Expenditure for national economy is covered by the central budget to the extent of 86·3 per cent. Only 6·3 per cent is derived from the budgets of the Union Republics. The remaining 7·4 per cent of the expenditure for national economy comes from the so-called 'local budgets' which include the budgets of the provinces, districts, the town councils and the rural councils. Half of all 'local' national economy expenditure is spent by the town councils and only an insignificant percentage – at any rate less than ten per cent – by all A.S.S.R.s, Autonomous Provinces and National Areas put together. Their combined share in the whole national economy budget is less than one per cent of the total. (All these and the following figures are based on the budget of 1941, the first full year in which the present sixteen

Soviet Republics were in existence. The figures would hardly be different in any other year.)

The central budget finances 93·8 per cent of all expenditure for industry, including the entire heavy and armament industry and also the larger plants of the building, food, textile, fishing and timber industries. Only the small plants of light industry and the production of local fuel resources are financed by the constituent republics.

In the field of agriculture the share of the local budgets is somewhat bigger, for the central budget absorbs 'only' 77·1 per cent of the whole expenditure for agriculture. The Union budget is responsible for Machine Tractor Stations (M.T.S.), large-scale irrigation schemes, those state farms which grow cereals, sub-tropical fruits, cotton and other technical cultures and also for all cattle farms. The appropriations out of the republican budgets go to small state farms growing vegetables or breeding poultry, rabbits and bees.

As far as transport is concerned the Union budget has a *de facto* monopoly since it covers the entire air, rail, water and road transport of all Soviet Republics with the exception of local road communications of 'republican importance' which account for less than two per cent of transport expenditure as a whole.

With regard to social and cultural expenditure the preponderance of the Union budget is less marked; it directly controls only 35·7 per cent of the appropriations in that field. However, even for social services and education the constituent republics have far less financial means at their disposal than the Union. Their share in the funds earmarked for social and cultural purposes is no more than 14·3 per cent which, although nominally a figure referring again to 1941 only, may be considered a fair average. Fifty per cent of the funds in this category are covered by the local budgets. Over 300 educational institutions all over the U.S.S.R., many research institutes, scientific libraries and all the Academies of Sciences are financed out of the Union budget. The republican budgets provide for secondary schools, libraries, museums, state theatres, etc. The republican and local budgets also cover ninety per cent of the expenditure on public health.

Administration costs are divided up as follows between the three groups of budgets: Union budget 32·4 per cent, republican budgets 24 per cent, local budgets 43·6 per cent. All that is vital to state security in all parts of the U.S.S.R. is covered out of the Union budget. The local budgets, apart from providing appropriations for general administrative purposes, finance registry offices, traffic police and fire brigades.

The 'miscellaneous expenditure' is almost entirely charged to the Union budget (95·3 per cent).

Since the expenditure side of the republican and local budgets is small, the latter have little need of major resources of income. The pur-

chase tax and the State's share in the profits of nationalized industry, the two main sources of income of the Soviet budget, thus go mainly into the central treasury and only comparatively small portions are diverted each year into the republican treasuries and local budgets.[13]

The centralistic direction of Soviet financial policy does not prevent, of course, the application of heavy state investments in the non-Russian territories. On the contrary, Soviet statistics could prove only too easily that a comparatively greater proportion of the budgetary appropriations goes to non-Russian territories than to many territories inhabited by Russian people. The fact remains that the republican governments have no financial autonomy, no real say in regard to the money spent on their territory. If the Soviet Republics enjoyed budgetary autonomy the budgets would undoubtedly look different and the interests of the individual peoples of the Soviet Union would not be sacrificed to the interests of the Union as a whole; instead a compromise would have to be worked out between all-Union requirements and local aspirations.

THE 'SOVIET OF NATIONALITIES'

The protagonists of Soviet nationalities policy might argue that the non-Russian nationalities have a considerable, if not decisive, influence on the preparation of the Soviet budget, through their predominant participation in the Soviet of Nationalities. At this point we again have to leave Soviet reality as expressed in the budgetary figures and to revert to the fiction of Soviet constitutional law.

The Soviet of Nationalities is the Second Chamber of the Soviet parliament, which until 1936 was known as 'Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.' (in Russian abbreviated as Ts.I.K.) and which since then has been officially called 'Supreme Soviet' or 'Supreme Council'. The Soviet of Nationalities has equal rights with the First Chamber, the Soviet of the Union, and serves in theory as the constitutional safeguard for the small nationalities, so as to check any preponderance of the Slavs.

Under the 1923 constitution there was a very wide measure of equality between large and small nations in the Soviet of Nationalities. Union Republics and Autonomous Republics were placed on the same level and had five representatives each, Autonomous Provinces one each. The new constitution greatly enlarged the Soviet of Nationalities but discriminated between Union Republics and Autonomous Republics. At present every Soviet Republic elects twenty-five members to the Soviet of Nationalities, every Autonomous Republic eleven, every Autonomous Province five, and every National Area one deputy. Although the non-Russian Soviet Republics and the Autonomous Republics and Provinces usually include Russians in their delegations to

the Soviet of Nationalities, the non-Russians and even the non-Slavs have a clear majority in that body. Had the deputies of the Supreme Soviet any real powers they could by a common effort easily prevent the passage of any law which they thought harmful to their national interests; they could even defeat the adoption of the Union budget.

Membership of the Soviet 'parliament', however, signifies not much more than a title of honour for a distinguished Stakhanovite, a 'Hero of the Soviet Union', a successful chairman of a collective farm or a writer of nation-wide reputation. Both the Soviet of Nationalities and the Soviet of the Union meet for no more than a fortnight every year for purely formal sessions, in which they have to give belated approval to all the measures taken by the government and to pass the budget. The speeches made during the 'Supreme Soviet' sessions serve predominantly for propagandist purposes, although they also contain, here and there, elements of criticisms regarding points of detail and some minor recommendations which, however, never affect the substance of the budget or the general policy of the régime.

Even if the Soviet of Nationalities had more power and held longer sessions it could not safeguard the individual national interests of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., in view of the fact that the overwhelming majority of the deputies are members of the Communist Party. The formidable totalitarian power of the Communist Party reduces even further the importance not only of the Soviet of Nationalities but also of the entire constitutional system created by Soviet nationalities policy.

The organization and machinery of the All-Union Communist Party is centralistic in the extreme. The party is the same in all Soviet Republics, Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Provinces, etc., and thus guarantees a complete uniformity of policy throughout the Soviet Union despite all constitutional federalism. The central machinery of the All-Union Communist Party is constantly checking on the governments of the constituent republics lest they should take too literally the federal character of the constitution. An entire staff of party officials at the service of the 'Central Committee' is constantly being switched round in the Soviet Union so as to ensure that the Party shall remain one monolithic whole, without regard to local frontiers drawn between Russia's nationalities. The Central Committee often endows its emissaries with extraordinary powers reducing to nothing all the prerogatives which the governments of the Soviet Republics, or Autonomous Soviet Republics possess on paper. After the completion of the emissaries' mission, Moscow's interference is then usually admitted by the formula 'with the assistance of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party it has been possible . . . to overcome the difficulties on the agrarian front', or '. . . to liquidate the nationalistic deviation', or '. . . to raise the level of cattle breeding.'

FALLACIES OF SOVIET STATISTICS

Soviet propaganda has tried to conceal the basic truth about its nationalities policy not only behind a fictitious legal construction but also behind a dense smokescreen of statistics.

This propaganda makes belief that Soviet nationalities policy is the sum total of all the figures referring to the cultural and economic advancement of the peoples of Russia in the last thirty years. It is quite immaterial whether the Soviet statistics are accurate or not; they cannot reflect the success or failure of Soviet Russia's handling of the nationalities problem, because they refer solely to quantity and not to quality.

1. CULTURAL STATISTICS. Soviet cultural statistics, for instance, reveal a fantastic growth of literacy among the non-Russian peoples, but they do not say what end the literacy serves. Does it smooth the path for the beginning of a national cultural life of the peoples concerned? Is it a preparation for final 'Russification'? Or is it designed to fabricate a uniform 'Soviet culture', national in form but Bolshevik in substance?

Moreover, Russian and Western concepts never fully tally. Words like literacy and illiteracy have a different meaning in the Soviet Union and in Western Europe. The slogan of '100 per cent liquidation of illiteracy' in a given area of the Soviet Union does not mean that any number of people approaching this percentage can participate in cultural life even in the most primitive way. After the formal liquidation of 'illiteracy' there still remains what Russians call *malogramotnost*, which means a low degree of literacy implying a technical knowledge of the alphabet without the ability to make practical use of it.

Or let us take the impressive number of books published since 1917 in the national languages. At the first glance these figures can tell us nothing about the cultural development of the peoples for whom they are printed. These statistics will reflect reality only as soon as we break them up and find out how many books in a given language are simply translations of the works of Lenin and Stalin, of the *Short History of the All-Union Communist Party*, or propaganda pamphlets, and how many books constitute genuine contributions towards the cultural enrichment of the nationality for which they are printed. There is no doubt that this last figure will be in every single case discouragingly small.

2. ECONOMIC STATISTICS. Even less relevant for any assessment of Soviet nationalities policy are economic statistics. These will tell us the percentual increase of industrial production in any national minority territory of the Soviet Union, but the figures themselves will not answer the question how far this increase guarantees or endangers the survival of the non-Russians of the U.S.S.R. This is a reproach not to Soviet reality but to Soviet propaganda, which is trying to conceal a most logical

and natural fact; that the theory of the Soviet nationalities policy has to be sacrificed to the Five-Year Plans, since the contrary would be Utopian. Practice has shown that every new factory, every new coal-mine, every new oil-well in a non-Russian territory of the U.S.S.R. is not primarily an asset for the people of that territory but rather for the Great Russians, who alone have a sufficient manpower reserve to staff the new enterprises.

3. THE NUMBER OF SOVIET NATIONALITIES. Finally, the most fundamental figure of the Soviet nationalities policy – the number of peoples in the Soviet Union – is also an arithmetical illusion if not further elucidated. The number of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is usually given as 180, although there are other estimates, slightly higher and slightly lower. A scientific analysis based on the 1926 census gave the number of nationalities in the U.S.S.R. as 169, sub-divided into twelve basic groups. According to this analysis Russia included 47 Turkic, 39 Japhetic (Caucasian), 27 Ugro-Finnish, 17 Iranian, 9 Palae-asiatic, 8 Indo-European, 5 Semite, and other nationalities.[14] Such figures, accurate as they may be from the point of view of the ethnographer, have no practical value and exaggerate the real scope of Soviet nationalities policy, which is big enough without any exaggeration.

At least half of the 180 peoples cannot be reckoned as nationalities in a cultural or political sense, even if the most generous criterion is applied. The Soviet cultural worker and communist propagandist must therefore operate with a figure considerably lower than 180. Alexander Fadeyev, the well-known Soviet writer and member of the Communist Central Committee, addressing the Peace Congress in Paris in 1949, said there were 'about seventy nationalities' in the Soviet Union. This is nearer the truth in so far as nationalities which have arrived at a minimum degree of cultural or even linguistic self-expression are concerned. There are indeed newspapers in eighty languages of the Soviet Union. Political and literary journals exist in fifty languages.[15]

The régime can reckon with thirty to forty-five nationalities in the actual sphere of Soviet 'home politics'. Thus forty-four nationalities were represented among the delegates of the first post-war congress of the Communist Youth League[16] and thirty-two nationalities among the delegates to the Tenth Congress of the Soviet Trade Unions in 1949.[17] Even the existence of thirty to forty nationalities which count politically is sufficient to make the tasks of the Soviet nationalities policy, with its narrow pattern and rigid principles, extremely complicated. How the Soviet régime has tried to solve the multitude of political, economic and cultural problems which are inherent in Russia's multi-national character, can be shown only by examining the application of Soviet nationalities policy in detail, nationality by nationality, republic by republic, province by province.

1. S. T. AKSAKOV, *Chronicles of a Russian Family*, translated by M. C. Beverley, with an introduction by Prince Mirsky. Routledge, London - New York 1924, pp. 158, 209, 353.
2. M. KALININ, *Za ety gody* - During these Years, Moscow-Leningrad 1929, vol. 3, pp. 385/6.
3. P. BEREZOV, *Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze*, Moscow 1947, pp. 78/79.
4. *Sotsialny i natsionalny sostav VKP (b), Itogi vsesoyuznoy partiinoy perepisi 1927 goda.* - The social and ethnic composition of the A.U.C.P. (Bolsheviks), Results of the all-Union party census of 1927, Moscow-Leningrad 1928 (published by the Department of Statistics of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party).
5. International Press Correspondence, January 5th, 1928.
6. *The Essentials of Lenin* (2 vols.), LAWRENCE and WISHART, London 1947, vol. 2, p. 548.
7. *The Essentials of Lenin*, vol. 2, p. 699.
8. OGANOVSKY, *Ocherki po ekonomicheskoy geografii S.S.S.R.* - Sketches on the economic geography of the U.S.S.R., Moscow 1924, p. 87.
9. Large Soviet Encyclopædia, Volume U.S.S.R., Moscow 1948, p. 56.
10. *Trud*, November 5th, 1947.
11. S. S. BALZAK, V. V. VASYUTIN, Y. G. FEIGIN, *Ekonomicheskaya Geografiya S.S.S.R.* - Economic Geography of the U.S.S.R., Moscow 1940, vol. 1, p. 141.
12. A. I. DENISOV, *Sovetskoye gosudarstvennoye pravo* - Soviet public law, Moscow 1947, pp. 234/5.
13. Prof. N. N. ROVINSKY, *Gosudarstvenny byudzhet S.S.S.R.* - The state budget of the U.S.S.R., Moscow 1944, pp. 30/48.
14. *Sovetskoye Stroitelstvo, Nr.* 37, August 1929, p. 110.
15. *Izvestiya*, May 5th, 1949.
16. *Pravda*, April 1st, 1949.
17. *Pravda*, April 23rd, 1949.

VII

THE NORTH CAUCASUS PEOPLES

RUSSIA AND THE CAUCASUS

The Caucasus means more to the Russians than either Russian Central Asia or the Russian Far East. The bonds between Russia and the Caucasus are strong and real and no official propaganda efforts are needed to prove their existence. The idea of the 'Russian Caucasus' will be alive among the Russian people as long as they continue to honour and read their great poets, because the Caucasus has become part and parcel of Russian national tradition through the works of Pushkin, Lermontov and Tolstoy.

Lermontov's works in particular show that the Russians have interpreted the word 'Caucasus' not as a purely geographical notion, but as a whole period of Russian history and a political programme strongly flavoured with romanticism. While deploring the end of the primitive freedom of the Caucasus peoples Lermontov, like Pushkin, considered the final triumph of Russian civilization over the Caucasus tribes to be an unavoidable historical necessity. Thus the two greatest Russian poets gave to the Caucasian peoples identical advice, namely to reconcile themselves to the victory of the Russians.

Pushkin has expressed this conviction in the phrase: 'Humble thyself, Caucasus, for Yermolov* is coming'. Lermontov, on the other hand, predicted to the Circassians that one day they would proudly say 'We may truly be slaves, but at least we are slaves of the ruler of the Universe!' Since Lermontov's time Russia's power has grown considerably and the service of a great master has indeed become the dubious consolation not only of the Caucasian peoples but of many others besides, throughout the Soviet Union.

The peoples of the Caucasus did not act in accordance with Pushkin's and Lermontov's admonitions; they stubbornly fought Russia and struggled desperately for their freedom, because they did not realize the tremendous odds they were facing. They were too remote from the world of political and diplomatic realities of the nineteenth century to understand either the hopelessness of their own situation or the power of the Russian Empire. They deceived themselves by the erroneous supposition

* General Yermolov (1772–1863) was the principal Russian hero of the Caucasus conquest

that Russia would not fight for the barren Caucasus mountains if she were really as great and mighty as was sometimes asserted by some mountaineers who had seen her immensity and later returned to their own people.[1]

THE FIRST EXODUS OF THE MOUNTAINEERS

The mountaineers of the Western Caucasus – the Circassians or the Adyge – who had lived close to the shores of the Black Sea, occupied particularly important strategic positions. In every war which Russia waged against Turkey the fearless Circassians had constituted a grave menace in the immediate rear of the Russian Caucasus front. The alternatives, from the Russian point of view, therefore, could only be either the total surrender or the total annihilation of the Circassians. As only a minority of the Circassians were ready to accept surrender, a mass migration of the Circassians to Turkey appeared the only possible 'solution', both to the Russian conquerors and the Circassians themselves, whose indomitable spirit of freedom could not be reconciled with Russian rule.

Thus between 1861 and 1864 about 500,000 Circassians left the Caucasus; but owing to starvation, disease and the hardships of the journey in overcrowded vessels, it is said that only half of them ever reached Turkey alive. Referring to this trek of the Circassians a semi-official Russian publication admitted that 'a calamity of such proportions has rarely befallen humanity'.[2] This great exodus of the Circassians disposed of the problem of nationalities in large areas of the western part of the North Caucasus region and opened them up to Russian, Ukrainian and Armenian colonization.

After the departure of the Circassians a great deal still remained to be done in the North Caucasus region from a Russian national point of view. Although thousands of Chechens, Nogai Tartars and Ossetins had likewise participated in the great exodus, these and other peoples of the Central and Eastern Caucasus continued to be a source of uneasiness to the Russian State. Complete Russian victory over the rebellious mountaineers was achieved only under the Soviet régime.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHAOS IN THE SOVIET CAUCASUS

The Russian communist leaders came to the Northern Caucasus with progressive ideas and plans for raising the material and cultural level of its peoples. The Soviet Government was originally even determined to give the small mountain peoples a chance to combine their forces and thus become a political factor of some importance. In accordance with the wishes of the more advanced mountaineers the Soviet Government decided that there should be one United Northern Caucasus

Republic aggregating approximately 1,500,000 inhabitants. This Republic – officially called 'Autonomous Mountain Socialist Soviet Republic' – (Gorskaya A.S.S.R.) – was formed by a decree of January 20th, 1920. Its capital was the city of Vladikavkaz. The Republic comprised no fewer than seven different Caucasian peoples: Kabardinians, Chechens, Circassians (Cherkess), Ingush, Ossetins, Balkars and Karachay.

In its original form the Mountain Republic remained in being for only about twenty months. The Russian communist rulers apparently felt that the promotion of unity among the North Caucasus peoples was not in the interest of Soviet centralism and that it was safer to have them split up again into several single units. The disintegration of the Mountain Republic started in September 1921 when the Kabardinians were given a special Autonomous Province. In January 1922 three more peoples seceded from the Republic. The Balkars were made to join the Kabardinian Autonomous Province and the Karachay and the Cherkess were given a joint Autonomous Province. In December 1922 the Chechens were induced to set up an Autonomous Province of their own, which left only the Ossetins and the Ingush, in the Mountain Republic. In July 1924 both these peoples were endowed with separate territorial units of their own. The experiment of a united North Caucasus Republic was thus finally terminated. Administrative changes in the Northern Caucasus continued even after the end of the Mountain Republic. In April 1926 the Karachay-Cherkess Autonomous Province was divided into two provinces; and in January 1934 the Ingush merged with the Chechens into a single Autonomous Province.

The autonomy which the Northern Caucasus peoples had enjoyed existed very largely on paper. In reality they were administered up to 1934 from Rostov, the capital of the huge North Caucasus Territory, which was almost as large as Great Britain and Eire combined. The Executive Committee of the North Caucasus Territory (Krayispolkom) was entitled to overrule any decisions taken by the various Autonomous Provinces. In 1934 the Soviet bureaucracy administering the multinational parts of the North Caucasus region moved from Rostov to Vladikavkaz. Only in December 1936 did the mountaineers gain a greater say in the management of their affairs through the transformation of three Autonomous Provinces into Republics (Kabardinian-Balkar A.S.S.R., Chechen-Ingush A.S.S.R. and Northern Ossetin A.S.S.R.).

The repeated shifting of the Northern Caucasus peoples from one territorial unit to another had left untouched the real problem: how to make the mountaineers into reliable Soviet citizens and how to associate them with the socialist transformation of society. The continual changes in the administrative boundaries had hindered rather than encouraged these tasks. They had rendered particularly difficult the recruiting of administrative personnel from among the local peoples and the intro-

duction of their languages for official use. In other words, the Soviet nationalities policy in the Northern Caucasus remained unsuccessful, and an endless stream of statements, ordinances and recommendations issued by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee (TsIK) in Moscow had been unable to remedy the situation to any major extent. On May 10th, 1931, for instance, TsIK circulated a decree to the effect that Soviet nationalities policy in the Northern Caucasus should operate at a quicker pace. The decree stipulated that by the end of 1932 at least 70 per cent of officials in the Autonomous Provinces should be recruited from among the local nationalities, and that local languages should be introduced into the administration. On July 5th, 1934, TsIK issued a statement recognizing that the decree put into force over three years earlier had remained a dead letter. A further decree which Kalinin signed on January 7th, 1936, again denounced the non-implementation of the Soviet nationalities policy in the Northern Caucasus and revealed that the Russian language dominated everywhere in local government bodies, from the provincial administration down to the village councils. Of 1,310 officials in the Northern Caucasus Territory only seventeen belonged to the mountain peoples. According to the new decree the local languages were supposed to come into official use in 1936 and 1937, but it is open to doubt whether that order had any greater practical results than its predecessors.

THE SECOND EXODUS OF THE MOUNTAINEERS

The Russo-German War fully revealed the discrepancy existing between propaganda and reality with regard to conditions in the Northern Caucasus. One could hardly find a better example of the former than the optimistic and distorted picture which Mikhail Kalinin gave in October 1942 when the German troops were approaching the Caucasus Mountains. Kalinin then said: 'The Caucasus is the most enlightening demonstration of the reforming, beneficial effect of the Soviet sytem on the psychology and character of people who, not without reason, saw danger to themselves everywhere. The Caucasians have now become a social people who see in the collective system their bulwark, the foundation of material prosperity and a higher intellectual life. . . . The whole Caucasus has become one mountain village for its peoples. The whole Soviet land, from border to border, has become their beloved home. National enmity has given way to mutual understanding, estrangement to co-operation. . . . Is not everything that has taken place in the Caucasus during the twenty-five years of Soviet power a miracle? Yes, it is a miracle. It is that for which Lenin fought all his life, that for which Stalin fought and is fighting, that to which our party has always aspired.' And Kalinin went on to say that the peoples of the Northern Caucasus were

displaying worthy resistance to the enemy, derailing trains, blowing up bridges, destroying ammunition and fuel depots.[3]

Only a few weeks after Kalinin had made his panegyric statement little was left of the Caucasian 'miracle', and of the idyllic situation which the Soviet President had depicted. When the German armies occupied the Northern Caucasus region many mountaineers manifested their hostility towards the Soviet régime. They attempted to use the retreat of the Red Army to free themselves from what they considered the 'Russian yoke'. Over twenty years of Soviet rule had not altered their ingrained conviction that Russia's foes were their friends. These peoples apparently thought that they owed as little loyalty to Russia as the Indonesians deemed themselves to owe to the Dutch and the Vietnamese to the French when their respective countries were occupied by Japan. In the official Soviet view, of the seven peoples who in 1920 had formed the Mountain Republic four had shown themselves particularly unreliable in the crucial winter of 1942–43. They were the Chechens (407,600 according to the 1939 census), the Ingush (92,074), the Balkars (42,660) and the Karachay (75,737). After the North Caucasus region had been cleared of the invaders, the Soviet Government found itself unable to forgive these nationalities for their disloyalty or even their indifference. It also abandoned all further attempts to transform them into good citizens of the U.S.S.R. and expelled them from the 'happy family of Soviet peoples'. All of them lost the special territorial administrative units which the Stalin Constitution of 1936 had bestowed on them. Early in 1944 they were rounded up and deported to far away places in Siberia. For all practical purposes they ceased to exist. Thus were abolished the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous S.S.R. and the Autonomous Province of the Karachay. The Kabardinian-Balkar A.S.S.R. was transformed into the Kabardinian A.S.S.R. after having been relieved of the 'burden' of the Balkar traitors.

Soviet policy in the Northern Caucasus differed to some extent from Czarist policy since it resulted in the building of schools, theatres, libraries and hospitals, but for the four deported nationalities all this had been of little use. From their point of view there is hardly any difference between the policy of General Yermolov and that of Generalissimo Stalin. Indeed, the Soviet régime deprived at least as many Caucasian mountaineers of their homes as did the Czarist régime.

CONTINUITY OF RUSSIAN CAUCASUS POLICY: THE CHECHENS

The Chechens, as the most numerous nationality left in the Northern Caucasus after the emigration of the Circassians, offer a particularly good example of the continuity of Russian policy. The Large Soviet Encyclopædia rightly summed up the historical role of the Chechens by

describing them as the 'most active and strongest opponents of the Czarist Government during the conquest of the Caucasus'. The Russians suffered extensive and costly disasters at the hands of this people, who were unequalled in forest warfare.

Ever since the time of Peter the Great, the Chechens have challenged the Russian Empire, but from 1818 onwards their resistance to Russian rule assumed major proportions. In that year General Yermolov built a fortress to subjugate more easily the land of the Chechens. He called the new fortress 'Grozny', meaning 'menacing' and 'formidable'. The name of Grozny had a deeper meaning than might appear at the first glance: it was the symbol of a political programme that Yermolov defined in the following words: 'I wish that the terror of my name should guard our frontiers more potently than chains of fortresses, that my word should be for the natives a law more inevitable than death'. Grozny became Yermolov's headquarters, and it was from Grozny that countless Russian expeditions set out 'to punish raiders, avenge defeats, establish new posts, relieve beleaguered garrisons, or rescue retreating bands and armies'.[4] The Russian campaign against Chechenia reached its climax in 1840, at the time of the great Chechen rising under the leadership of Imam Shamil. The breakdown of Shamil's fanatical Moslem movement led to the gradual submission of the Chechens in the years 1857-59.

The Russian authorities knew well that these new subjects of the Czar, after all the trouble they had caused, would not easily reconcile themselves to the loss of their freedom; so an attempt was made to settle the 'Chechen problem' by a double transfer of population. Immediately after the conquest the inhabitants of forty-four auls (mountain villages) were transplanted from the mountains to the plains, where they could more easily be controlled. The more rebellious ones were forced to emigrate to Turkey, where they were given hospitality on the express demand of the Russian Government. In the summer of 1865, 39,000 Chechens, one-fifth of the entire Chechen population at that date, left Russia. Those who stayed behind did not remain quiescent. In 1877 there was another wave of unrest following the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War, and more trouble in 1886. A Russian monograph on the Chechens, published in 1894, said that they could not yet be considered 'fully pacified'; they still looked across the border to Turkey whither many more dreamed of emigrating.[5] The emigration of the 39,000 had not eliminated the 'Chechen problem', for the birthrate of these Chechens was particularly high, far above the average in the Russian Empire.

CHECHEN-INGUSH MOSLEM OPPOSITION

The immediate consequence of the October Revolution in Chechenia was a revival of violent nationalism and religious fanaticism among the

Chechens. They at first accepted the leadership of the Sheikh Uzun Hadji who proclaimed himself Imam and Emir of the Northern Caucasus. The Emir was the ally of the communists in the struggle against the White Guards of General Denikin. Having vanquished the White armies, the Bolsheviks dropped the Imam, but they were unable to cope with Chechen nationalism. The Chechens demanded the expulsion of all Russians who in the course of the last century had settled in their 'living space'. Pending a positive answer to this request Chechen nationalist bands terrorized the Russian population of the area beyond endurance. In the early twenties the Russian settlers in Chechenia sent a complaint to Moscow on account of the endless raids and murders perpetrated by Chechen bands, and petitioned that they be disarmed. Mikhail Kalinin went personally to the Caucasus and attempted to calm down both Russians and Chechens. With carefully chosen words he tried to persuade them to live together in peace, to intermarry and to respect each other's customs.[6]

Whilst in consequence of Kalinin's personal intervention banditry stopped in Chechenia, it would seem that Moslem opposition to the Soviet régime was never quite suppressed. In 1931 the little country still had 2,675 mosques and Arab schools, as well as 1,250 mullahs, 34 sheikhs and 250 religious elders. The mullahs who were powerful opponents of the Soviet régime even managed to keep alive the illegal Shariah courts which were camouflaged as 'reconciliation commissions'.

The hostile attitude of the Chechens towards the Soviet Russian régime was often manifested in the readiness to credit the most fantastic anti-Russian rumours. Thus, in the early thirties, there existed a widespread belief that Kunta Hadji – the head of a popular Moslem sect who had died at the end of the nineteenth century – was still alive and was soon to return to Chechenia, where he would found a State based on Moslem religious law. Apparently the Chechens did not differentiate between Czarist and Bolshevik Russia in their hopes that Kunta Hadji would appear as Messiah, for it was he who had led them in the risings against Czarism in 1864 and 1877, for which he was exiled to Novgorod.

The Ingush, whose fate Soviet policy had coupled with that of the Chechens, showed themselves no less loyal to Islam. A delegate who represented Ingushetia at the 'Second All-Union Conference of Godless Pedagogists' in 1931, stated that the influence of the Moslem clergy was still so strong among the Ingush that children refused to learn from books which they believed to be anti-religious. Whenever a teacher tried to introduce anti-religious propaganda he encountered a hostile attitude among school children and there were cases in which teachers had even to leave the school for having criticized Islam. The work of the secular Soviet schools, where the children were taught in the winter, was counteracted by the Moslem schools where the young Ingush would learn

during the summer holidays all that the Soviet authorities wished them to disregard. A number of Ingush party and Communist Youth League members, instead of working against the influence of religion, used themselves to go to the mosques to pray.[7]

The difficulties existing between the Soviet authorities and the Chechens and Ingush were not exclusively due to the Bolshevik failure to understand the importance of the religious factor in the life of the mountaineers. There were also extraordinary difficulties of a technical nature, due to the fact that the directives of the central administration were issued in the Russian language and therefore did not reach the Chechen-Ingush masses. Being unable fully to understand the orders received, the local Soviet organs either could not carry them out, or falsified the decisions of the party and of the administration.[8]

GROZNY – THE OIL CITY

It was the tremendous dead weight of the predominantly Russian capital of Chechenia that prevented the implementation of any genuine Chechen autonomy and finally spelled the doom of the Chechen people. The actual liquidation of the Chechens would probably not have occurred had not the largest town in their homeland become an oil city, and indeed, one of the most important oil centres of the U.S.S.R.

This oil city had developed out of the little fortress of Grozny. Although Grozny oilfields had been discovered as early as 1833, they were hardly exploited at all in the nineteenth century. In 1912, however, they already supplied 11·5 per cent of the entire Russian oil. Between 1913 and 1917 this figure had risen to 16·7 per cent, and in the following four years to nearly 25 per cent. By 1937 the proportion of Grozny oil to total Russian oil production had fallen to 9·25 per cent, but in terms of absolute figures this output represented an increase of 234 per cent, compared to that before the First World War. The development of Grozny as an oil centre made for an increase of the population on an 'American scale'. In 1890 the place had no more than 6,000 inhabitants, against 34,067 in 1913, 97,095 in 1926 and 172,468 in 1939. It need hardly be added that the Chechens and Ingush, peoples consisting of shepherds and peasants, could not contribute anything worth mentioning to the rise of the town which was styled, almost ironically, 'Capital of the Chechen-Ingush A.S.S.R.'. Among the oilworkers of Grozny there were probably at no time more than one-tenth of 'natives', and until 1936 there were but 9·7 per cent.

Unlike so many cities in the Soviet Union, Grozny never changed its name under the Soviet régime, despite the imperialistic history connected with it. As a matter of fact, it was the Soviet oil city of Grozny which spelled the doom of the Chechens and not the little fortress which

Yermolov had founded to spread terror among the mountaineers. The struggle which Czarist Russian officers had begun was terminated by Soviet Russian police officials, who finally ensured Russian domination over the northern slopes of the Northern Caucasus by expelling the Chechens bag and baggage. It is questionable whether the crimes officially attributed to the Chechens – particularly the help which they had given to the Germans – would have been a sufficiently weighty reason for exterminating them as an organized community, had not the Grozny oil been involved. To protect the Grozny oil-wells against all future risks the Soviet authorities removed the Chechens from Grozny's hinterland and transformed the Chechen-Ingush A.S.S.R. into the Grozny Province. Grozny is another instance of the danger which the existence of oil-wells can bring to a small people. Whether in Latin-America, the Middle East or in the Soviet Union, national self-determination, independence, autonomy and national rights count little as soon as oil interests are at stake.

Almost up to the very moment of their suppression as an ethnographic unit, Russian propaganda made considerable use of the Chechens in its attempt to impress the public abroad with the Soviet nationalities policy. Even a year after the outbreak of the Second World War the Chechens were still regarded as a 'good people'. In August 1942 they were said to have played a prominent part in a 'big anti-fascist meeting' in the town of Ordzhonikidze where 3,000 mountaineers pledged their 'boundless devotion to our beloved motherland – the Soviet Union – and the great Russian people'. Delegates of the Chechens, Ingush, Balkars – all peoples whom the Soviet Government later deprived of their national existence – addressed the meeting and spoke about their strong friendship towards the Russians.[9] Data made available on October 5th, 1942, showed that forty-four Chechens had been awarded decorations for valour in the field, not a bad record considering that far larger national units like the Turkmenians, Tadzhiks, Kirghiz and Estonians had not won many more by that date.

Paradoxically, the Chechens and Ingush continued to serve the purpose of Soviet propaganda even after their liquidation as political entities. Their removal from their homeland enabled the Soviet régime to rewrite the entire history of the Northern Caucasus. This rewriting consisted in blaming the Chechens and Ingush for all acts of anti-Soviet resistance perpetrated in the years following the October Revolution in the Caucasus region, and in whitewashing all other nationalities. This new interpretation of Caucasus history was even elaborated in a statement of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party. It dealt with the opera *The Great Friendship* the libretto of which had not taken into account the official reorientation with regard to the history of the Caucasus. The Central Committee statement of February 10th,

1948, said: 'The plot of the opera is historically false and artificial. It pretends to depict the struggle for the establishment of Soviet power and of friendship between the peoples in the Northern Caucasus in the years 1918-20. The opera conveys the erroneous impression that such Caucasian peoples as the Georgians and Ossetins had been hostile during this epoch towards the Russian people. This is historically false since the obstacle to the establishment of friendship between the peoples in the Northern Caucasus was during that period the Ingush and Chechens.'[10]*

This pronouncement was a most authoritive exposition of the new Soviet theory about 'good' and 'bad' peoples.

THE ABOLITION OF THE KARACHAY PROVINCE

Another Caucasian people who, together with the Chechens and Ingush, came to lose their territorial administrative unit were the Karachay, a people of the Western Caucasus who had suffered greatly in the nineteenth century under the pressure of Russian Cossack colonization. The Karachay had been driven out into the mountains by the advancing wave of the Cossacks who took possession of the Caucasus foothills. Confined to the rocky mountain area the Karachay lived in conditions of great misery and earned a scanty livelihood through nomadic cattle-breeding.

Before the war the Soviet Government considered that the resettlement of the Karachay into the plain was one of the great achievements of Bolshevik Caucasus policy. It was just that resettlement which in 1942 offered to the Karachay the opportunity of getting into touch with the German armies and rendering service to them.

From the point of view of its ethnical composition the abolition of the Autonomous Province of the Karachay was hardly justifiable, since Slav colonization in the province was insignificant. In 1926 the Russians represented only 1·7 per cent and the Ukrainians 4·4 per cent of the population, while the Karachay themselves formed over three-quarters of the inhabitants in the province. As neither Russian nor Slav national interests were affected the Soviet Government decided to accompany the abolition of the Karachay Province by a friendly gesture towards the Georgians. Only the northern part of the Karachay Province was added to the Russian province of Stavropol, while the southern part with the 'capital' Klikhori,† was included in Georgia. The annexation of this

* Before the Chechens and Ingush fell into disgrace the official Soviet history of the October Revolution and the Civil War attributed to these two peoples the most daring exploits in support of the Bolsheviks. This is what an official Soviet publication for foreign consumption said about the Ingush in 1937: 'In the Revolution this people covered itself with undying glory. During the Civil War, Sergo Ordzhonikidze, pursued by the enemy, was driven to seek refuge with the Ingush. The Ingush faithfully protected him'.[11]

† Klikhori was originally called 'Mikoyan Shakhar'. The town was built in the late twenties to give the Karachay people an administrative centre.

territory comprising 1,200 square miles was a national triumph for Georgia, for it enabled her, for the first time, to spread out to the north of the Caucasus.

A 'GOOD' PEOPLE – THE OSSETINS

After the expulsion of the Chechens from their homeland the Ossetins became the largest mountain people of the Northern Caucasus. In 1939 there were altogether 354,000 Ossetins in the U.S.S.R. of whom slightly less than two-thirds lived in the Autonomous Republic of Northern Ossetia, with which we are here primarily concerned, and about one-third in the Southern Ossetin Autonomous Province of Georgia. The two Ossetin territories adjoin each other and it would have been logical to amalgamate them into a single Autonomous Republic. Representatives of the two Ossetias went to Moscow in October 1925 to discuss the unification of their people with the Soviet central Government and personally with Stalin whose own mother is of Ossetin origin. This discussion which is briefly referred to in the seventh volume of Stalin's complete works, was inconclusive. The unification of the Ossetins would have been possible only at the expense of Georgia and the Kremlin was apparently not prepared to harm the interests of one of the constituent republics of the U.S.S.R. for the sake of a minor nationality.

Czarist and Bolshevik authorities agree in their appraisal of the comparatively peaceful and placid Ossetins, no less than in their judgment on the turbulent Chechens. Of course, both régimes had encountered difficulties among the Ossetins, too, but never on the same scale as in the case of other Caucasus mountain peoples.

Czarist Russia started the conquest of the Ossetins in the period of Catherine II and skilfully exploited the class differences among them as well as their hostility toward their western neighbours – the Kabardinians. Many Ossetins considered the establishment of Russian rule as a safeguard against the danger of attacks by more warlike mountain peoples. Ossetin folk-songs of the early epoch of Russian conquest reflect a pro-Russian spirit and state unequivocally that living under Russian rule was identical to living in peace.

The Ossetins appreciated that Russian occupation and protection enabled them to settle in the plain from which they had been driven by the Kabardinians. Part of that re-settlement had already started in the second half of the eighteenth century. The major part of the re-settlement action was, however, carried out much later, between the twenties and the forties of the nineteenth century.

The Ossetins were of use to Russia not only as settlers, but also as soldiers. As early as the last years of the eighteenth century a number of Ossetin officers distinguished themselves in Prince Potemkin's army in

actions against the Turks. An Ossetin Major-General, K. Zankisov, fought in Poland against the insurgents of 1863–4 and he was by no means the only Ossetin Major-General of that epoch. Furthermore, an 'Ossetin Division' became famous in the course of the Russo-Turkish War in 1877–8, when General Skobelev described its 'chivalrous gallantry' as being 'above any praise'.[12]

Russian cultural work among the Ossetins started much earlier than among other mountain peoples. The first book to appear in the Ossetin language was printed in Moscow in 1798; its object was to serve as a kind of introduction to the study of the Bible. A long period of fruitful association with the Russians and the general peaceful approach of the Ossetins towards Russian military and political rule made them more open to the acceptance of Russian preponderance. The Ossetins were, as a matter of fact, the only people of the Northern Caucasus to produce a great writer in the person of Kosta Khetagurov (1859-1906) who was half Russianized himself and wrote in both the Ossetin and Russian languages. The Soviet régime greatly popularized Khetagurov as a symbol of Russian-Ossetin synthesis, which he undoubtedly was. He had a complete Russian education, had studied at St. Petersburg and was strongly influenced by such progressive Russian writers as Herzen and Chernishevsky, which makes him particularly acceptable from the Soviet point of view.

Until the Ossetins gave proof of their loyalty to Russia during the war the Soviet régime had had to overcome Ossetin resistance to both the establishment of collective farms and the suppression of tribal customs. During the period of the collectivization Ossetin peasants waged a sort of guerilla warfare against 'socialist property' and while outwardly accepting collectivization, tried to transform the Kolkhoz into an instrument of their respective clans. Ossetin chairmen of collective farms and officials of local Soviets seem to have acted on the principle 'I decide who is a kulak and an enemy of the State and who is not'. Thus, at least during its initial stage, collectivization in Ossetia became a downright farce. Persons belonging to a rival clan were rendered innocuous by being denounced as kulaks; real kulaks, on the other hand, were promoted to the rank of respectable Soviet citizens if they happened to belong to the clan dominating the local village council or the collective farm concerned.[13]

All such 'incidents' were forgotten when the Ossetins redeemed their reputation by their brilliant war record. In the fighting which resulted in the dislodgement of the Germans from the approaches to the Caucasus, Ossetin partisans operating from behind the enemy lines greatly assisted the Red Army.[14] As a mark of appreciation for their loyalty, the Soviet Government allowed the Ossetins to increase substantially the territory of their national republic. A decree of April 8th, 1944, stipulated

that three districts were to be added to the Northern Ossetin A.S.S.R. in their entirety as well as parts of three other districts. The major portion of this new Ossetin territory was sliced off the Stavropol Territory, but a section of it came from Ingushetia, which had occupied the western border area of the Chechen-Ingush A.S.S.R. In this way the Northern Ossetin A.S.S.R. grew from 2,390 square miles before the war to 3,250 square miles. This territorial change altered the ethnographic character of the Republic, for together with its new territories Ossetia received a fairly large number of Russians who mostly lived in the two new 'Ossetin' towns, Mozdok and Malgobek. Russian communists thus obtained a greater say in the running of the Northern Ossetin A.S.S.R. at the expense of their Ossetin comrades. In the small Northern Ossetin Republic of the inter-war period (an Autonomous Province until 1936) the Ossetins had formed 84 per cent of the entire population against 13·4 per cent Russians and Ukrainians. In 'Greater Ossetia' however, the percentage of the Ossetins may have dropped to about 60 per cent while the Slav share may have increased accordingly.

In addition to the territorial expansion of Ossetia the Soviet Government made still another 'concession' to the Ossetins. The capital of the republic, Vladikavkaz, was allowed to assume the Ossetin name of Dzaudzhikau – a worthless gesture since Russian predominance in the town was not affected by the change of its name. Dzaudzhikau remained that which was implied in its former name of Vladikavkaz, meaning 'Ruler of the Caucasus'. It continues to be one of the centres from which Russian administration exercises its control over the mountaineers.

RE-EDUCATION OF THE KABARDINIANS

The Chechens and the Ossetins represent the two extremes in the attitude of the local Caucasus peoples towards the Russians – the most irreconcilable resistance in the case of the Chechens, and the most far-reaching appeasement in the case of the Ossetins. The Kabardinians, forming part of the once powerful Circassian group which had been broken up by Russian colonization and conquest, stand between these extremes. In the Second World War their attitude was not beyond reproach. The Kabardinians had their deserters and traitors, but the Soviet Government did not consider they were bad enough to justify the abolition of their Autonomous Republic.

During the important administrative reorganization which took place in the Caucasus towards the end of the Second World War, the Kabardinian A.S.S.R. was diminished by only 300 square miles, which were incorporated into Georgia. This, however, was not meant to be a punishment for the Kabardinians, but was directed against the Balkars who had inhabited the area in question. The small administrative reform

achieved a dual purpose. In addition to punishing the Balkars it served as a warning for the Kabardinians, who from then on hastened to express their loyalty towards Soviet Russia in a very demonstrative, even effusive, way.

After the war the Soviet authorities found it advisable to provide for the Kabardinians, as a means of strengthening their allegiance to the Soviet State, a clear conception of history which would unequivocally show that the Russians had always been the protectors of the Kabardinian people. The task of formulating the details of this conception was assigned to the 'Kabardinian Research Institute', whose headquarters are in Nalchik, the capital of the Kabardinian A.S.S.R. The new conception implied the 'official recognition' of Temryuk Idarovich as the national hero of Kabarda. Kabardinian children are expected to look up to Temryuk with the same awe as Russian boys and girls to Peter the Great or Suvorov. According to the new official thesis Temryuk, a Kabardinian prince who lived around 1550, 'endeavoured to build up a strong centralized State able to resist Turkish and Crimean Tartar oppressors'. Temryuk had realized that the Kabardinians were incapable of withstanding their enemies if they were to rely on their own forces only; establishment of close contacts with Muscovy was therefore the only wise Kabardinian policy.[15]

It is the same story which is told with some variation to all the peoples of the Soviet Union in all their many languages. There is always a grain of truth in the story, but never the entire truth, since history is not so simple and so clear-cut that it would fit the purposes of a one-sided propaganda. It is a historical fact that Temryuk asked Ivan the Terrible for protection and even gave him his daughter for wife. Originally, in the days of greater internationalism, Soviet historians failed to stress this fact, and laid more emphasis on the slave trade in which the Kabardinian feudal lords had engaged with the Crimean Tartar Khanate. However, since events had proved the necessity of increasing the attachment and loyalty of the Kabardinians to the Russians and the Soviet State, Temryuk had to be brought to the forefront of Kabardinian history.

Kabardinian post-war literature also pursued the aim of re-educating the Kabardinian people. The central theme of the first Kabardinian literary almanac consisted in showing that it was 'the friendship with the Russian people that led the Kabardinians towards a better life.'[16]

While a great deal was done for 're-education' in the sense required by the Russians, education as such had been neglected during the first post-war years, at least as far as the Kabardinian language was concerned. The so-called 'national' schools in the Kabardinian A.S.S.R. were Kabardinian in the first four forms only; from the fifth form onwards teaching was in the Russian language exclusively. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party issued in 1948 a state-

ment on 'serious shortcomings and mistakes' committed in Kabarda in the field of national policy. It stressed that conditions in Kabardinian education were in conflict with the constitution of the A.S.S.R., which stipulated the right of the Kabardinian people to schools in their own language.

Although the Kabardinians are by far more numerous and advanced than the peoples of the Soviet Far North, they suffer from the same acute shortage of national teaching-personnel which has been fatal to the national culture of many a minor Soviet nationality. Thus in 1948, the Kabardinian teachers' training college at Nalchik had but fifty-six Kabardinians out of a total of 559 students.[17]

It is to be expected that the survival of a truly Kabardinian culture and Kabardinian language will become even more remote with the increasing pressure of Slav colonization. Between 1926 and 1935 alone the number of Russians and Ukrainians in the Kabardinian A.S.S.R. more than doubled; it increased from about 37,000 to 93,000. This increase was partly due to immigration, partly to the inclusion in Kabarda of a number of Cossack villages in 1932. After the war the numerical relation between 'natives' and colonists changed to the detriment of the former, owing to the forcible departure of the Balkars. Moreover more Russian colonists came into the country to staff new factories springing up around Nalchik.

THE CIRCASSIANS – A RESERVE OF SOVIET MIDDLE EAST POLICY

For the benefit of the remnants of the Circassian people the Soviet Government set up two Autonomous Provinces in the western part of the North Caucasus area; the Cherkess Province in the Caucasus foothills and the Adyge Province in the Kuban plain.

Surrounded as they are on all sides by Russian territories these two national units have little chance of long-term survival. This applies in particular to the Adyge Province, whose capital – Maikop – used to be the third largest Russian oil centre after Baku and Grozny, before the development of the 'second Baku' between the Volga and the Urals.

Originally, Maikop was not included in the Adyge Province, which had a small Adyge majority in its initial stage (55·7 per cent various branches of Adyge, 42·7 per cent Russians and Ukrainians, and the rest made up of other Europeans and Armenians). The size of the Province was increased, however, before the war and the Adyge thus found themselves in the position of a minority. In 1930 the Adyge Province won doubtful 'fame' owing to its extraordinarily high percentage of disfranchized people. This was due to the arbitrary action of the local Soviet authorities, who had indiscriminately interpreted the terms of 'kulak', 'capitalist' and 'reactionary' with the result that 12 per cent of the

entire adult population of the Province were deprived of their civic rights.

The Circassian (Cherkess) Autonomous Province is inhabited by three small Northern Caucasus peoples – the Cherkess, the Nogai Tartars and the Abazintsy, apart from Slav colonists. In 1933 the three indigenous peoples had a narrow aggregate majority over the Russians and Ukrainians.

Although the Circassians, as a people, have no political future in Soviet Russia itself, they may still be of service to the Soviet diplomacy. There are Circassians living in Turkey, Palestine, Syria and Transjordan. They are all descendants of the very Circassians whom the Czarist authorities forced to leave Russia in the sixties of the nineteenth century. In Turkey the Circassians have largely become one with the Turkish people, but in the Arab countries they still form distinct communities. In Palestine they have kept to their own customs and language, and do not inter-marry with the Arabs. The Syrian Arabs dislike the Circassians, of whom both Turks and French had made use against the indigenous population of the country. In Transjordan, too, the Circassian minority has preserved its individuality.[18]

The survival of Circassian national sentiments in Syria, Palestine and Transjordan may tempt the Soviet Union to create a 'Circassian problem'. Soviet propaganda may try at a given moment to arouse interest for the 'old country' among the Circassians in the Arab world. It should not be too difficult for Russia to spread among the Middle Eastern Circassians the story of the rebirth of the Circassian people in the U.S.S.R., and of the existence of 'Circassian States' therein. Having done this preparatory work Russia may either encourage Circassian re-immigration into the Caucasus or she may use the Circassian on the spot as one of several trump cards Russian imperialism holds in reserve in the Middle East.

RUSSIA'S MOST POLYGLOT COLONY: DAGHESTAN

Daghestan represents the most difficult problem which the Soviet nationalities policy has to face, not only in the Caucasus, but in the Soviet Union as a whole. The very name of the Daghestan A.S.S.R. indicates that the country occupies a special position in the U.S.S.R. It is the only Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic which does not bear the name of a people but of a territory.

Daghestan is one of the most polyglot countries of the world. Ethnologists record that its roughly 1,000,000 inhabitants are split up into thirty-two nationalities, in a territory of only 14,600 square miles.* The

* In its original form Daghestan covered 19,800 square miles. In 1938 the Soviet Government separated from Daghestan parts of its lowlands with their predominant Ukrainian-Russian population, and its territory was thus reduced to about 13,000 square miles. After the war, Daghestan 'inherited' from Chechenia 1,600 square miles.

language and nationality issue in Daghestan is a new and superficial one. The fundamental problem is that of religion; and religion unites the Daghestani mountaineers under the green banner of Mohammed.

Under the Czarist régime Russian penetration into Daghestan was incomplete. The country had been a Russian possession since the Treaty of Gulistan which Russia and Persia concluded in 1813, but there was no real pacification of Daghestan until 1859, the year which ended the 'Gazavat', the Holy War which the mountain peoples waged against Czarist Russia under their national and religious leader Shamil. Even during the pacification process these peoples were largely left to themselves. The Russians were concentrated in the small Daghestani towns of Temir-Khan-Shura, Derbent and Petrovsk, and did not interfere with the internal autonomy of the mountain villages. Only half-hearted efforts were made to impose Russian civilization upon the mountaineers. By 1914 only fifty-four Russian schools existed in the whole of Daghestan. In the same year the country had more than 800 religious schools where children learnt the Arabic language, the Koran and the Shariah. In 1917 the sketchy attempts at Russification broke down completely; the Russian schools were closed and mountain localities which had introduced Russian as the official language reverted to Arabic.

Thus Bolshevism had to start in Daghestan right from the beginning with the imposition of Russian rule and Russian civilization. The Bolshevik Party found it extremely difficult to gain a foothold in the isolated, deeply religious, mountain country. As an ideology Bolshevism has not conquered the mountaineers yet. The technical establishment of Bolshevik rule was, however, achieved in the greater part of Daghestan by the late autumn of 1920, when the Russian White Guards were routed and the Moslem nationalists withdrew to certain centres of resistance in the south of the country.

THE TWO FACES OF SOVIET POLICY IN DAGHESTAN

In November 1920 Stalin came personally to Temir-Khan-Shura, the temporary capital, and proclaimed the autonomy of Daghestan. Stalin addressed an 'extraordinary congress of the peoples of Daghestan' and solemnly promised on behalf of the Soviet Government that the Shariah would be respected.

'Daghestan', Stalin said, 'shall be free to administer itself according to its own conditions, its ways and its customs. We are informed that the Shariah has great importance for the peoples of Daghestan. We are also informed that the enemies of Soviet power are spreading rumours that the Soviet régime would ban the Shariah. I am entitled to declare here on behalf of the Government of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic that these rumours are lies. The Government of Russia

leaves to every people the full right to administer itself on the basis of its own laws and customs. The Soviet Government considers the Shariah as customary law of the same standing as that in force among other peoples living in Russia. If it is the desire of the people of Daghestan their laws and customs shall be preserved'.[19]

Stalin's statement on the respect which the Soviet régime intended to show towards the Shariah reassured many mountaineers as to the good intentions of the new régime. Considered retrospectively this credulity is not surprising. At a later stage similar pledges which the Soviet Government gave in various instances as to the preservation of foreign institutions and non-interference in national customs have blinded other more advanced nations and their statesmen.

The Daghestani, of course, did not know that a month before his visit to Temir-Khan-Shura Stalin had already defined his Daghestan policy to a Russian communist public in a different way. Writing in the newspaper *Pravda* on October 10th, 1920, Stalin recommended with regard to Daghestan that 'the direct method of combating religious prejudices must be replaced by indirect and more cautious methods'. Instead of 'Cavalry raids' with the object of immediately communizing the backward masses of the Daghestani peoples, Stalin added, 'there must be a cautious and well-conceived policy of gradually drawing these masses into the general stream of Soviet development'.[20]

Thus Stalin wanted to give Daghestan only a short respite, but there was no question of Soviet Russia observing genuine tolerance for any length of time. As Stalin's real motives were not known to Daghestan his proclamation of Daghestan autonomy in Temir-Khan-Shura bore fruit and weakened the Moslem resistance movement led by Imam Nazhmuddin Gotsinsky who had raised the old banner of Shamil. By January 1922, the anti-Soviet revolt had completely petered out and the 'rebels' had reconciled themselves to the Soviet régime, which at that early stage seemed to adhere to the promise to respect the religious customs of the local population. A 'People's Commissariat for the Shariah' ('Narkomshariat') was set up in 1921 under the old Sheikh, Ali-Hadji Akushinsky.

At the time of the establishment of Soviet power Daghestan had about 40,000 people who could be described as 'clergy' in the widest sense of the word – Mullahs, Kadis, Sheikhs, etc. It would have been unwise to antagonize such an important group of Daghestan's population. The Communist Party decided, therefore, to bring about a split in the religious front and encouraged the establishment of a 'progressive' pro-Soviet Moslem group advocating the revision of the Shariah. Quite a number of Moslem ecclesiastic dignitaries walked into the communist trap. In 1923 a congress of over seventy Sheikhs and Mullahs met in the locality of Kakhib and sent a message of allegiance to Lenin and

Stalin. The message, drafted in Arabic, ran as follows:

'To Lenin and Stalin, Moscow.

The congress of the clergy and the Sheikhs of mountain Daghestan comprising seventy-six people greets thee, leader of the great army of the toilers, liberating the whole world from the chains of slavery and disgrace. We believe in the victory of thy army. We believe that Islam will be freed from oppression with its help. Together with the poor people of our villages we are waiting for thy recovery.* We shall help thy army.

Sheikh of Kakhib, elected chairman of the congress'.

The Sheikhs and Mullahs who had tried to make a pact with the Soviet régime found out in due course that Bolshevism had deceived them. As soon as Soviet rule had been to some extent consolidated, the Communist Party branch of Daghestan came out with a strong anti-religious line and gradually did away with anything that recalled its momentary weakness and apparent readiness for concessions. The 'Narkomshariat' was soon abolished. In 1925–26, death, birth and marriage registrations were taken away from the Kadis and handed over to the Soviet state authorities. The 'medresse', the religious schools, were also liquidated.

Despite all external measures the deep-rooted religious feelings of the Daghestan people could not be wiped out so easily. Religion remained triumphant even in the communist ranks. As late as 1930 up to 80 per cent of the communists in certain Daghestan districts observed religious customs. Even responsible party officials thought it necessary to practise the outward forms of religion so as not to give offence to the believers.[21]

Samursky, who was both the secretary of the Daghestan Committee of the Communist Party and the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Daghestan A.S.S.R., admitted in 1935 that there was then still a large number of believers in the country, although, he added, the power of the priests had been broken and the new generation did not fill the posts of Mullahs and Kadis.[22]

Samursky himself, who had done his best to annihilate Islam in Daghestan, finally fell into disgrace with the Kremlin because his anti-religious policy had been so unsuccessful. In 1937 he was executed as a 'bourgeois nationalist' and 'enemy of the people'. He was charged with having wilfully kept alive the 'counter-revolutionary activities' of the ecclesiastics. Under Samursky's rule, so the official charge went on, the Mullahs had been able to appeal for the observance of the reactionary customs of the Shariah, spread anti-Soviet literature, and agitate against collective farms.[23] Fritjof Nansen, who during a trip to the Caucasus

* The message was sent at the time of Lenin's illness. It is reproduced from Samursky's book *Dagestan* (Moscow 1925, p. 136).

had met Samursky personally, said about the Daghestani politician that he was a clever man, a good speaker and evidently had great influence among the local people.[24]

THE FIGHT AGAINST THE SHAMIL CULT

After the death of Samursky the religious resistance continued. The small Daghestani town of Buinaksk remained, together with Baku, Tashkent and Ufa, one of the four most important centres of Islam in the whole Soviet Union. Not only did the Bolshevik fight against religion fail in Daghestan, but Soviet power was equally unsuccessful in eradicating the historic traditions of the mountaineers centred around the great Imam Shamil.

Shamil is the unchallenged national hero of the mountain peoples of Daghestan and Chechenia, whom he led in the fight against Czarist Russia between 1834 and 1859. In Daghestan his memory is so universally respected that even the Soviet régime had to accept the Shamil cult. During over thirty years Soviet historians tried hard to interpret Shamil in accordance with communist ideology. Some went so far as to depict him almost as a forerunner of communism, and practically all agreed that he was the leader of a progressive national liberation movement. In all history textbooks as used in Soviet schools Shamil figured as a brave and capable military leader, a skilful organizer, a promoter of trade and an opponent of local feudalism.[25]

After the Second World War the Soviet leaders became more and more convinced that the benevolent attitude towards Shamil had been a mistake, and that it was time to put an end to all concessions to Daghestani anti-Russian nationalism. In 1947 members of the Institute for History of the All-Union Academy of Sciences were summoned for a long discussion on the Shamil problem. Most of the historians participating in it could find no possibility of reversing their judgment on the progressive and democratic character of Shamil.[26] Although the party leadership might have been expected to disagree with the attitude of the Academy, it waited till 1950 for its formal denunciation of the Shamil cult. The campaign was then conducted by the party secretary of Azerbaidzhan, Bagirov, and by his opposite number in Daghestan, Daniyalov. In separate statements, each about 10,000 words long, the two officials declared that practically everything written during the Soviet régime concerning Shamil had been wrong from beginning to end. Bagirov's statement was published in the party organ *Bolshevik* and Daniyalov's in *Voprosy Istorii* (Problems of History), an organ of the Academy. Both sought to show that Shamil was no national hero but an agent of British and Turkish imperialism. He was no progressive personality, they said, but had opposed the only progressive solution

for the peoples of Daghestan, namely, union with Russia. Both Bagirov and Daniyalov produced a large number of historical documents referring to Shamil's alleged treacherous and reactionary role. All these documents, most of which were over 100 years old, must long since have been known to Soviet historians, but probably did not seem to them relevant. The Daghestani party secretary went as far as to say that the annexation of Daghestan by Russia was the only way out of stagnation, since it had led to the development of Daghestani economy and brought the country into connection with progressive Russian culture.[27] The communist offensive against the Shamil cult reduced to zero many cultural efforts which had been made in Daghestan under the Soviet régime. Many works which Daghestani and Russian authors had written on Daghestani history became obsolete.

In view of the liquidation of the Chechens, the dethronement of Shamil could not affect Chechenia, which had likewise fought against Czarism under his leadership, but it had repercussions in Azerbaidzhan. Shamil's struggle had been very popular with the Azerbaidzhani people. Many Azerbaidzhani historians and writers had paid tribute to him. The sympathy which Shamil enjoyed in Azerbaidzhan was even the primary reason for the launching of the anti-Shamil campaign. This happened in the following way. An Azerbaidzhani scholar, Geidar Guseinov, had written a learned thesis *History of nineteenth-century social and philosophical thought in Azerbaidzhan.* The thesis was generally believed to have considerable merit as a book of scholarship and was awarded the Stalin Prize in March 1950. Two months later the award of the Stalin Prize was withdrawn by special decision of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. The official explanation of this gesture, extraordinary even for Soviet conditions, was Guseinov's estimate of Shamil's personality. His book had, indeed, contained a few friendly words about Shamil and his movement.[28] Not only was Guseinov himself sharply rebuked but also the reviewers of his book, and in particular the Azerbaidzhani Academy of Sciences, which had recommended it for the Stalin Prize.

DAGHESTAN'S LANGUAGE PROBLEM

According to the Bible, mankind became divided into nationalities and started to speak different tongues because Man had challenged God and had built the Tower of Babel. The language problem of Soviet Daghestan originated in a similar way from the Bolshevik challenge to Allah and to Arabic, the sacred language of the Koran. Arabic had acquired a monopoly as a means of education in the mountain country. It was the inter-tribal language which made the mountaineers forget that they belonged to different nationalities.

The difficulty of Daghestan's language problem lies in the fact that there is no local language in the country which can in any way claim priority over others. Even the most widespread of the local languages – the Avar – is spoken by only 158,000 people, just 22 per cent of the total population. The other more important nationalities of Daghestan are Kumyks (95,000), Darghinians (107,000), Lezghians (100,000) and Lakians (40,000).

The local Communist Party leadership was at first highly sceptical about encouraging literacy in the languages of the Daghestani mountaineers. The party felt that a more highly developed language should be introduced instead, to take the place of Arabic. The question arose whether Daghestan's new lingua franca and official language was to be Russian, which the Czarist régime had tried to impose, unsuccessfully, or Turkic. The Soviet authorities considered that Turkic was for many reasons a more suitable choice. First, Turkic, unlike Russian, was not a language of 'Unbelievers', but one spoken by Moslem peoples, and had thus a better chance to oust Arabic. The selection of Turkic was furthermore a tribute to the culturally most advanced nationality of Daghestan, the Kumyks, a Turkic people, the only ethnical group of Daghestan who had produced a national literature, in Czarist times. Finally, the communist leaders indulged in considerable illusions about the role which Daghestan might be able to play in revolutionizing the East, provided that it adopted the Turkic language.

This is what the party secretary, Samursky, wrote about this aspect of the Daghestani language problem, at a time when he fully reflected the official point of view: 'If one takes the interests of the World Revolution as the departing point one must recognize that education in the Turkic language can render in Daghestan a much greater service than education in Russian. Daghestan, on the one hand, is a land of the Orient which has so far kept up contact with all (Oriental) countries in the vicinity. On the other hand, Daghestan has come within the orbit of the Proletarian Revolution. Daghestan can and must serve as a link between the U.S.S.R. and the Orient better than all other parts of the Soviet Union and it must become a channel of communist ideas in the Near East. The Near East either speaks the Turkic language or understands it. The Turkic language gives the Daghestani the possibility of contact with all nationalities in the Near East and this contact will introduce a revolutionary current into the oppressed colonial and semi-colonial countries'.[29]

The Communist Party leadership soon found out that the hopes which it had pinned on the introduction of Turkic as Daghestan's lingua franca could not materialize. Daghestan was a bulwark of Oriental ideas in the Soviet Union and could never become a bulwark of Soviet ideas in the East with or without the Turkic language. The Daghestani Com-

munist Party was a tiny and weak body. In 1927 it had only 651 members from the local nationalities and they were unable to convert their own peoples to Bolshevism, let alone to become missionaries of communism in other Oriental countries.

In 1927–28 a special language commission of the Daghestan Committee of the Communist Party reconsidered the language problem and recommended that more attention should be devoted to the local languages. On the basis of this recommendation a language reform was decreed providing for elementary education in eight languages. A basic political terminology was worked out for all of them. The recognized languages were originally those of the Avars, Darghinians, Lezghians, Lakians, Kumyks, Tabasarans, Nogai Tartars and the Taty.* Later on recognition was withdrawn from the language of the Nogai Tartars,[30] most of whom lived in the territory separated from Daghestan in 1938.

Even after the language reform higher education was based on Turkic and Russian. Finally, however, Russian dominated the field at the expense of both Turkic and Arabic. It was authoritatively stated as early as 1930 that Turkic had already fulfilled its mission of 'diverting the attention of the masses from the Arab language'.[32]

The triumph of the Russian language in Daghestan was not only due to the need of a lingua franca in a multi-national territory; it was also a tribute to the outstanding role which the Russians played in the central administration of the Daghestan A.S.S.R. In the inter-war period the recruitment of Daghestani mountaineers into administrative jobs had hardly made any progress at all. In 1927 the percentage of the Daghestani employed at the headquarters of the Daghestan Government was 21·6 per cent; in 1929 it was 25·3 per cent and in 1936, 20 per cent only.[33] It is not altogether the fault of the régime if it failed to recruit civil servants from among the mountain people. The mountaineers were more interested in exercising self-government over their villages than in going to the towns of the plain to administer their villages from there. The two most important towns of Daghestan, Makhach Kala (previously

* The Taty speak an Iranian language. In Daghestan they are largely identical with the so-called 'Mountain Jews'. According to the 1926 census there were 11,484 of such 'Mountain Jews' in Daghestan and 10,270 in Azerbaidzhan. The returns are hardly correct as far as Daghestan is concerned, where the census took place at a time when the 'Mountain Jews' were exposed to active persecution. In the year of the census the Jews sent a delegation to Moscow to complain about their plight. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee dispatched an 'instructor' to investigate the situation. He reported to Moscow: (1) anti-semite excesses, even murders, were not punished by the administration; (2) the cultural and medical services of the Taty were neglected and the central Government deceived by wrong information; (3) national minority rights of the Taty were not observed in the local Soviets; (4) Taty were not accepted as workers in state enterprises; and (5) lower administrative organs were rude in their behaviour towards the Taty. The situation did not improve after the instructor had left Daghestan and the conditions in which the Taty found themselves remained for a while what a Jewish communist author described as a 'political scandal'.[31]

Petrovsk) and Buinaksk (previously Temir-Khan-Shura) are now called after Daghestani communists, but for that reason they have not become closer to the hearts of the Daghestani, nor are they likely to have changed their racial composition in which the Russian-Ukrainian elements used to prevail. The last available figure referring to 1924 showed that 55 per cent of the inhabitants of Makhach Kala are Slavs while Russians alone form three-fifths of the population of Buinaksk.

DAGHESTANI LITERATURE

The language problem which is also the problem of Daghestan's culture is still unsettled. Even if Russian civilization triumphs there will still remain the cultural heritage of the past, which is an Arabic heritage. Soviet cultural workers are fully conscious of this complication and are trying to solve it in a 'dialectical' way. They cannot ignore the literary documents which the peoples of Daghestan produced in Arabic during the past centuries, but they have tried to deny the existence of a cultural interdependence between the mountaineers and the Arabic Moslem world. The Arabic literary documents of Daghestan are now simply classified as 'Daghestani literature', and the fact that they were written in Arabic is just an unimportant coincidence. The Arabic heritage is still an important foundation stone for cultural activities in Daghestan. The national poet of Soviet Daghestan, Gamzat Tsadasa (1874–1951), a former Mullah, would probably not have embarked on a literary career had he not been under the spell of Arab poetry from his earliest youth. Even an official Soviet publication had to admit that a small library of ancient Arabic texts was one of Tsadasa's most treasured possessions.[34] The Soviet authorities were compelled to overlook Tsadasa's 'Arabomania' as long as he wrote poems in praise of Stalin and the Bolshevik régime.

Tsadasa was the second national poet of Daghestan. The first was Suleiman Stalsky (1869–1937). He, like Samursky, was a Lezghian, and it is not unlikely that this 'enemy of the people' was the first to discover him. Stalsky was built up into one of the most outstanding poets of the non-Russian peoples of the U.S.S.R. His poems were translated into many languages of the Soviet Union. To a remarkable degree they were always well-informed as to the official propaganda needs of the moment. At one stage Stalsky's poems attacked the 'kulaks' and hailed collectivization; then they boosted the Stakhanov movement; finally, they exposed the deviationists and bourgeois nationalists – always at the right time. This was the more amazing as Stalsky lived, according to an official biography, in considerable retirement in a mountain village and was unable to get any first-hand information on political matters. Stalsky was illiterate and no 'original version' of his

works existed. His poems were taken down by people among the audience while he recited them. Maxim Gorky took Stalsky under his wing and described him a 'Homer of the twentieth century'.[35] This well-meaning but somewhat exaggerated tribute was often quoted in the Soviet Union, particularly by the Daghestani themselves, among whom it provoked a certain nationalist conceit. If we have produced a Homer, the young Daghestani Soviet intellectuals argued, we have made an outstanding contribution towards Soviet literature and are entitled to the respect of the Russians themselves. Finally, the Daghestani had to be told that their pride was based on a misunderstanding, since Gorky did not mean to put Homer and Stalsky on the same level, but his comparison only referred to the way in which Stalsky's works were produced.[36] Stalsky's works are still reprinted in Russia, although some of his poems in which he denounced the Russian conquest of the Caucasus are no longer in harmony with the new Soviet patriotic ideology.

Both Stalsky and Tsadasa are poets of the past even if the subjects of their poetry are Stalin and the Five Year Plans. The poet of the future is Effendi Kapiyev. He belongs to the young generation of Daghestan, is a product of the Soviet school, and no longer believes in the romanticism of the *aul.* His homeland is no longer Daghestan but the whole Soviet Union and his language no longer a Daghestani idiom but Russian. The effects of Soviet education on Kapiyev can be gathered from his own words in praise of the Russian language which are included in his novel *The Poet:*

'Oh thou, great Russian tongue, I kneel before thee. Adopt me and give me thy blessing . . . I belong to a very small people lost in the mountains but I find thee and I am no more an orphan. Without thee there was and is no future, with thee we are truly omnipotent'.[37]

These words represent an extreme example of the spirit which the Soviet régime is trying to implant into all non-Russian territories of the U.S.S.R.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. *Kavkazsky Sbornik*, vol. 21, Tiflis 1900, p. 102.
2. *Kavkazsky Sbornik*, vol. 2, Tiflis 1877, p. 457.
3. Soviet War News, October 6th, 1942.
4. BADDELEY, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, London 1908, p. 108.
5. E. MAKSIMOV and G. VERTEPOV, *Chechentsy* – Chechens, Vladikavkaz 1894.
6. *Revolyutsiya i Natsionalnosti, Nr.* 50, April 1934, p. 10.

7. *Antireligioznik*, *Nr.* 11, November 1931, p. 72.

8. *Revolyutsiya i Natsionalnosti*, *Nr.* 72, February 1936, p. 41.

9. *Soviet War News*, September 3rd, 1942.

10. *Sovetskoye Iskusstvo*, February 14th, 1948.

11. *U.S.S.R. in Construction*, *Nr.* 3, March 1937.

12. *Izvestiya Severo-Osetinskogo Nauchno-Issledovatelskogo Instituta.* Reports of the North Ossetin Scientific Research Institute, vol. 9, Dzaudzhikau 1947, p. 182.

13. *Revolyutsiya i Natsionalnosti*, *Nr.* 35, February 1933, pp. 59/60.

14. *Izvestiya*, July 8th, 1944.

15. *Voprosy Istorii*, *Nr.* 12, 1947, p. 148.

16. *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, March 31st, 1948.

17. *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, July 8th, 1948.

18. A. HOURANI, *Minorities in the Arab World*, Oxford University Press 1947, pp. 58, 85.

19. I. V. STALIN, *Sochineniya* – (Complete) Works, vol. 4, Moscow 1947, pp. 395/396.

20. I. V. STALIN, *Sochineniya* – (Complete) Works, vol. 4, Moscow 1947, p. 362.

21. *Revolyutsiya i Natsionalnosti*, *Nr.* 2, June 1930, p. 38.

22. N. SAMURSKY, *Krasny Dagestan* – The Red Daghestan in *Revolyutsiyai Natsionalnosti*, *Nr.* 65, July 1935, pp. 41/42.

23. BORIS KANDIDOV, *Tserkov i Shpionazh* – Church and Espionage, Moscow 1938, p. 95.

24. FRIDTJOF NANSEN, *Through the Caucasus to the Volga*, London 1931, p. 111.

25. PANKRATOVA, *Istoriya S.S.S.R.* – History of the U.S.S.R., vol. 2, Moscow 1944, pp. 155/158.

26. *Voprosy Istorii*, *Nr.* 11, November 1947, pp. 134/140.

27. *Voprosy Istorii*, *Nr.* 9, September 1950, pp. 12/13.

28. *Pravda*, May 14th and 16th, 1950.

29. *Samursky, Dagestan*, Moscow 1925, p. 118.

30. *Narodnoye Obrazovanie*, *Nr.* 3, March 1950, p. 60.

31. LARIN, *Yevrei i antisemitism v S.S.S.R.* – Jews and antisemitism in the U.S.S.R., Moscow-Leningrad 1929, p. 131.

32. *Revolyutsiya i Natsionalnosti*, *Nr.* 2, June 1930, p. 75.

33. *Sovetskoye Stroitelstvo*, *Nr.* 123, October 1936, p. 65.

34. *Oktyabr*, *Nr.* 7, July 1947, pp. 164/166.

35. SULEIMAN STALSKY, *Stikhi i Pesni* – Verses and Songs, Moscow 1938, p. 10.

36. *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, July 10th, 1948.

37. *Ogonyok*, *Nr.* 7, February 1947, p. 27.

X

SOVIET NATIONALITIES POLICY AS A WORLD PROBLEM

An investigation of the Soviet record territory by territory and nationality by nationality does not bear out the claim of the Kremlin that the U.S.S.R. has solved the problem of nationalities. Soviet nationalities policy, instead of destroying Russian imperialism, has in reality tried to preserve and to consolidate it. This has led to a crisis in the relations between the central authorities of the Soviet Russian State and the dependent peoples fighting for national liberation. The Second World War laid bare the extent of the crisis in a number of areas (North Caucasus, Crimea, Ukraine, etc.). Since the war the Soviet régime has tried to solve it by tightening up security measures and by increasing the might of the centre at the expense of the non-Russian peoples.

The blame for the failures of Soviet nationalities policy cannot be put on the Soviet Government and the Communist Party alone. A number of factors obstruct a genuine solution of the problem on lines suggested in the Bolshevik programme. They have nothing to do with the shortcomings of the Soviet régime, but are inherent in conditions within the Russian Empire, independent of any political régime. These factors are:

1. The numerical disproportion between the Russian people and the non-Russians, particularly the non-Slavs of the Soviet Union, which naturally ensures Russian domination.
2. The geographical distribution of Russians and Ukrainians almost throughout the territory of the U.S.S.R.
3. The numerical weakness of many Soviet nationalities which prevents their independent cultural and political development.

Other more weighty reasons for the failure of Soviet nationalities policy are connected with the political philosophy and strategy of what is called 'Stalinism' with its totalitarian atmosphere of compulsion rendering impossible the cultural and political unfolding of all the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. From the point of view of the communist ideology itself the Soviet nationalities policy was a failure because it did not and could not succeed in establishing a federation of equals in the territory of the U.S.S.R., thus setting an example to the world. The Soviet nationalities policy did not fail in an absolute sense, however,

since it greatly increased the efficiency of the Russian 'melting-pot', under the neutral term of 'Union of Socialist Soviet Republics'.

The U.S.S.R. as a melting-pot of races is in many ways similar to that other big melting-pot, the United States of America. The melting-pot process, while disposing in the long run of the problems of nationalities in a given territory, provides no model for a global solution. Neither the American nor the Russian pattern can be schematically applied to Africa, Eastern Europe or South-East Asia.

There are, of course, notable differences between the American and Russian melting-pots. The Europeans who are being Americanized as citizens of the United States enter the melting-pot of their own free will; from the outset they want to become English-speaking Americans and they want their children to absorb English-American culture. The Soviet melting-pot is of a strongly compulsory character and produces some modified specimens of Russians linked together by the doctrine of Leninism-Stalinism. On the other hand, the colour problem which prevents the full integration of an American nation is absent in the Soviet Union. Because there are no Negroes in the territory of the U.S.S.R. it is impossible to assess with certainty whether colour prejudice is non-existent or whether it is non-existent in the higher sense of complete racial equality. It is a fair assumption, however, that were a large coloured population included in the framework of the Soviet Union it would not suffer from any special racial discrimination but only from the same repressive measures which the Soviet Government imposes on all peoples, their national cultures and traditions, within the boundaries of the Russian Empire. The Soviet Government would undoubtedly try to break the Negroes spiritually just as it has tried to break other nationalities and races. As long as the communist dictatorship lasts, racial equality in Russia will mean nothing but equality of subjection.

As far as absence of colour prejudice in Russia is a fact, it goes to the credit of the Russian people and not of the Soviet régime. The Russian attitude to racial problems is by no means unique but is characteristic of all peoples who, in the course of their history, have been exposed to a process of drastic racial intermixture. In view of this intermixture which educates towards racial tolerance and broadmindedness, the Russians, irrespective of the régime under which they live, would never insist on a policy of segregation, even to one slightly approaching that prevailing in the Southern States of the U.S.A., or in the Union of South Africa.

SOVIET NATIONALITIES POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE

The value of Soviet nationalities policy for the outside world has been greatly reduced, not only by its failure at home, but also by its inability

to bring about a just solution of the national and minority problems of Eastern Europe. In its early years Soviet Russia had a blueprint for solving the Eastern European nationality problems: the programme adopted by the Fifth World Congress of the Communist International in 1924. This programme, if put into effect, might not have altered anything in the present communist totalitarian structure of Eastern Europe, but within the general framework of a communist order it might have brought about a more just solution than the Pax Sovietica which emerged from the Second World War. For instance, the programme of the Comintern provided for the independence of the Slovaks and for a special régime of autonomy for nationally mixed territories such as Transylvania. For Hungary, the Communist International had demanded a frontier revision by which Hungarian-speaking areas of Slovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia were to be added to the Hungarian State. When Russia had a chance to carry out the principles embodied in that programme she ignored them completely and worsened rather than improved the conditions created by the 'imperialist peace treaties' of 1919-20. In solving the nationality and minority problems of Eastern Europe, Russia was not concerned with the establishment of some sort of abstract 'proletarian' justice as was the Comintern in 1924, but only with her own national interests. Russia divided the peoples of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe into those which for the time being were able, in one way or another, to serve her imperialist aims, and those which were less useful. The former, in most but not all cases, Slav peoples, were privileged at the expense of the latter. Thus Russia favoured Czechs and Rumanians against Hungarians, backed Bulgarian claims against Greece and supported the most far-reaching Yugoslav ambitions against Italy and Austria.

Fundamentally these temporarily favoured nations were not much better off than those nations whose interests had been consciously ignored. Since all Moscow-sponsored settlements of minority and border problems were based on expediency and changing Soviet moods, not on firm principles, the favoured nations had always to fear that Russia might drop them at any time and reverse her attitude towards claims on a disputed territory.

Russia's primary concern was to increase her own national territory at the expense of her satellites and to push their western frontiers as far to the West as possible. As regards the internal frontiers between her satellites, Russia assumed an unimaginative attitude and left them practically untouched. The Soviet Government did not even see to it that there was real fair play towards the minorities within the satellite States. Of all the small Eastern European countries only one, Yugoslavia, with its home-grown communist régime, tried to solve the nationalities problem on the basis of federalist principles. The Slovaks, instead of inde-

pendence, did not even get a proper provincial government, but only a 'Board of Commissioners', All other minorities of Eastern Europe had to content themselves with the creation of totalitarian communist organizations which pretended to defend their interests. These new organizations, such as the Democratic Federation of the South Slavs in Hungary, the Hungarian People's Union in Rumania, the Turkish People's Council Union in Bulgaria, etc., etc., were modelled on the pattern of similar totalitarian organizations which had existed in the Soviet Union, in the inter-war period, for small scattered minorities like Latvians, Assyrians and Gipsies. These Eastern European minority organizations are equally indistinguishable in character from the minority organizations which the Nazis built up from 1933 onwards for the German minorities in Eastern Europe. The members of these minority organizations have not the slightest influence on their policy, nor a say in the selection of the responsible officials, who are appointed by the central Government. No cultural or social activity outside the totalitarian bodies is possible; they hold a monopoly in the same way as does the Communist Party in relation to the people of the majority nationality. It is not even sufficient that the minority organizations are communist; they have to adhere to the officially approved communism of Moscow. The Tito-Cominform conflict showed that active persecution of national minorities in Eastern Europe is only suspended as long as complete ideological and political uniformity prevails. The slightest breach of discipline within the ranks of international communism results in a revival of nationalist antagonism and oppression of national minorities. Nothing is altered in the violent character of this oppression by the fact that it is nominally carried out for the sake of the purity of a political creed and not admittedly on behalf of a national ideology. The Tito-Cominform dispute led to purges of the associations of Slav minorities in both Hungary and Rumania, to the resumption of the Serbian-Bulgarian rivalries around Macedonia and to acute hostilities between Albanians and Yugoslavs.

* * *

The example of Eastern Europe is important because it indicates the kind of 'solution' which Russia may envisage for the many nationality problems in Asiatic countries which are either near her frontiers, like Persia, Afghanistan and Kashmir, or are the scene of particularly intense communist efforts, like Malaya or Burma. The peoples of these countries cannot expect from the Soviet Union any genuine consideration of their national claims. The Soviet Government and the international communist movement, for their own purposes, will encourage and exploit these claims only as long as they can be fitted into the general pattern of Soviet and communist policy.

Soviet diplomacy has given abundant evidence, particularly by its conduct in the United Nations organs, that it ignores principles, both those related to nationalities policy and all others, and that it is guided exclusively by opportunistic considerations. In the case of the Sudan, for instance, Russia supported Sudanese-Egyptian unity instead of Sudanese independence, as would have been in line with the basic principles to which Russia pays lip-service in her own territory.[1] In the case of Libya, Eritrea and Somalia, Russia, during a certain period, supported Italian overlordship, not because the Soviet experts considered this solution a just one and in agreement with the wishes of the local peoples, but because Italy is the weakest 'imperialist power'. In the case of Palestine Russia sided with the Jewish minority against the Arab majority, not out of sympathy with the aims of Zionism, but to embarrass 'imperialism'. In India, Russia's agents, the local communists, pursued a policy opposite to that adopted towards Palestine. So long as India was without independence they opposed Pakistan's urge towards nationhood because they feared that the emergence of a large Islamic State might harm the cause of an Indian communist revolution and the interests of Soviet Russia.[2]

SOVIET NATIONALITIES POLICY AND BRITISH COLONIAL POLICY

In their tendency to over-simplify and to press all political facts into a narrow ideological pattern, the Russian communist leaders conceive all developments in colonial territories in terms only of class struggle or 'imperialist manœuvres'. This makes the undogmatic, empirical British colonial policy particularly incomprehensible to them. Soviet experts on nationalities problems are interested in British colonial policy, not in order to understand its functioning, but to engage in arbitrary, naïve comparisons between conditions in backward colonies of tropical Africa, for instance, and conditions in Central Asian and Transcaucasian lands famous for their ancient civilizations. Unscrupulous Soviet propagandists and their sympathizers in other countries compare the number of hospital beds in cities like Tashkent and Samarkand with the sanitary installations in the forest regions of the Gold Coast, and measure the standard of education in Baku with conditions in the interior of New Guinea.[3]

A comparison between British and Soviet colonial policy can be of considerable interest provided that it does not confine itself to statistics and points of detail, but is concerned with the basic methods applied in dealings with dependent peoples, in the British and Russian Empires. Such a comparison, made after the Second World War, is more favourable to Britain than it might have been in the thirties, owing to the transformation of the Empire in the post-war period and the greatly

accelerated tempo in the implementation of constitutional reforms. Even the boldest changes carried out in this new era of British colonial rule seem often to become outdated in a matter of months after their coming into force, not because of more far-reaching demands made by colonial peoples but as a result of the deliberate policy of the colonial Power to improve conditions in dependent territories.

1. DEMOCRACY AND TOTALITARIANISM. The first and basic difference between Soviet nationalities policy and British colonial policy springs from the difference between a totalitarian one-party State and a democratic régime. The British Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, A. H. Poynton, described the British colonial system as a 'practical illustration of democracy under tuition'.[4] The political system as established in the non-Russian Soviet Republics can be described as totalitarianism under tuition. In the British Colonial Empire to-day there is almost unlimited possibility for the development of national movements. The outlawing of a political movement may occur as the result of armed struggle or threat of armed struggle, but very rarely because of the nature of its cultural and political activities. In the Soviet Union the only opportunity for political expression by non-Russian peoples is offered by the All-Union Communist Party and the All-Union Communist Youth League, while all cultural activity has to be carried on through such totalitarian organizations as the 'Union of Soviet Writers'. Not even the foundation of an orthodox Communist Party, on a national basis, is possible as was shown by the ban on an attempted Moslem Communist Party in the early years of the Soviet régime.

2. RIGIDITY AND ELASTICITY. Apart from the great differences in the substance of the two policies there are also profound differences in the forms. The Russian system makes little allowance for the various stages in the development of the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. All are pressed into the framework of four constitutional patterns: one of these four simply has to fit. The chief criterion for the selection of the constitutional pattern for a given nationality is not its political and cultural maturity but its numerical size and its geographical position. Peoples of such unequal developments as Armenians and Turkmenians, Estonians and Kirghiz, Volga Tartars and Yakuts, are put constitutionally on the same level. In practice, it is true, there are considerable differences, since the central authorities intervene more directly in the affairs of the less developed nationalities than in those of the more advanced.

The British system, 'with its haphazard complexity and lack of co-ordination on any structural basis' (Amery) does more justice to the great variety in the degree of development among peoples of such vast empires as the British or Russian. The wide range of British constitutional patterns includes at one end cases in which the nationality or group of nationalities is advanced enough to be given complete independence,

e.g. Burma or India, and at the other end such territories as Northern Rhodesia or Nyasaland, where the indigenous peoples have acquired no more than a token representation on the Legislative Council. Between these two extremes there is a wide range of intermediary stages. This system is so flexible that there are hardly two colonies in the British Empire with a fully identical administrative and constitutional set-up. It means little to say that a Dominion like Ceylon or a self-governing colony like Malta have incomparably greater political powers than any constituent republic of the Soviet Union. The so-called sovereign rights of the Soviet Republics lag far behind even those which the Queen and Legislative Council of Tonga, a British island Protectorate in the Pacific, are exercising. African chiefs, like the Emir of Kano, the Oni of Ife, or the Kabaka of Buganda, with their traditional African councils, are, in their spheres, less dependent on the British administration than the governments of the non-Russian Soviet Republics are on the Kremlin.

3. DISINTEGRATION AND FEDERALISM. The territories of the British Colonial Empire are either geographical entities like the British island-possessions throughout the world, or were created as a result of British conquest, like Nigeria, the Gold Coast, British Honduras, etc., and have subsequently developed into economic and even political units. The national-territorial sub-divisions of the U.S.S.R. are in most cases of an artificial nature. Soviet nationalities policy has been dominated by the idea of creating a maximum number of small self-contained units regardless of economic, geographical and historical factors, and with the only purpose of giving formal satisfaction to a 'national autonomy' idea without granting real home rule. With two or three exceptions, the national-territorial units of the Soviet State were each formed for the benefit of one specific nationality. Although in practice most of these units are bi-national if not multi-national, Soviet nationalities policy always distinguishes between the nationality after which a given autonomous territory is named and the national minorities.

British colonial policy, on the other hand, opposes the idea of national isolation and tries to find a satisfactory federalist solution for the problem of 'plural' societies. British colonial policy, as it emerges from the Second World War, dislikes the idea of splitting up the plural societies by 'partition'. Britain accepted the partition of India only reluctantly and never accepted it in Palestine as long as that country was a British responsibility. British policy is to induce peoples to stay together within a given natural, historic or even geographic or only economic unit; to find a common political platform and to arrive at a common patriotic conception. This may often be difficult, sometimes even an illusion, but it is the only truly humanitarian approach to the problem, for it expresses belief in human progress, in sound reasoning,

and it presupposes the triumph of common sense over passion and fanaticism.

Soviet nationalities policy, if consistently applied to the British Empire, would mean the disintegration of most of the African colonies into a number of national republics and autonomous provinces. The Soviet 'solution' for Nigeria, for instance, would have consisted in creating national States for the Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo, Fulani, etc., and other states of a lower order for the smaller Nigerian nationalities. These 'States' would have no links with each other, but would be directly subordinate to a central imperial government. Every important step in the economic life of these 'national States' would be decided by this far-away central administration. This is exactly the pattern which Russia followed in Central Asia.

Britain went the opposite way. Instead of splitting up Nigeria, whose main peoples differ from each other as much as Germans, English, Russians and Turks, the British Government did its utmost to make it a united country. The 1946 Constitution created a Legislative Council with an African majority which, for the first time, legislated for the whole of Nigeria, whose population is far bigger than that of all five Central Asiatic Republics put together.

4. NATIONAL CUSTOMS: BRITISH RESPECT AND SOVIET INTERFERENCE. The Soviet Russian colonizer considers that he is entitled to abolish all institutions of a given nationality; to impose every possible reform if this is in line with the communist programme. Thus Russian Bolsheviks never hesistated to introduce the principles of class struggle into the most backward atmosphere. They discovered an equivalent to the Russian 'kulaks' everywhere, from the oasis of the Kara Kum desert in Turkmenistan to the Lapp settlements of the Arctic coast. The most violent measures of coercion against the guardians and symbols of primitive national traditions, the chiefs and tribal elders, were always justified in the eyes of Soviet colonizers.

The British colonial administrator, whether he be a conservative or a socialist, feels he has no right to interfere with the customs of the peoples under his administration beyond what is necessary to maintain order. British colonial policy does not attempt to sweep away tribal customs and institutions simply because they are 'reactionary'. Customs are not abolished unless they are of a criminal nature. The British idea is that backward peoples, as they grow into a higher degree of civilization, will themselves throw off the ballast of their more primitive past. Gradual transformation of the institution of Chiefs and Elders and its adaptation to modern conditions is the aim, not abolition.

It may be held against British colonial policy that it interferes too little, where Soviet nationalities policy interferes too much. This applies in particular to British Protectorates which enjoy full internal autonomy,

and which may engage in extreme forms of religious intolerance without the local British officials preventing them.

5. THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM. Both Soviet nationalities policy and British colonial policy aim at the creation of a lingua franca in their respective domains. The Soviet Government conducts cultural propaganda for the Russian language, particularly amongst the less developed nationalities, while the cultural efforts promoted in British territories lead almost automatically to a further extension of the influence of English.

However, there is a considerable difference. The English language is a genuinely international one and not the language of one country and one nation. The peoples in British colonies who acquire a knowledge of English have a key to European and not specifically English civilization. It does not necessarily follow that a people increases its political dependence on the British Empire simply because it adopts the English language as its principal cultural medium and link with the outside world. The Russian language, on the other hand, cannot claim to be international. Every cultural success it achieves among the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union benefits, in the long run, only the Russians, and it increases the power of Russia as the only state where Russian is the language spoken. The Soviet Empire has always discouraged attempts to introduce an alternative lingua franca (Arabic, Azerbaidzhani Turkic, Chagatai) instead of Russian. The British authorities have not tried to place English in the same monopolistic position. Indeed, British colonial authorities have been instrumental in giving an honourable status to Hausa and to Swahili as inter-tribal languages, the first in Northern Nigeria, the second in East Africa.

Elementary education in both Empires is given in local languages. With regard to secondary education the British and Soviet educational policies adhere to different patterns. In view of the low degree of the development of the African languages secondary education is given in English in all schools of British Africa. English is the language of teaching even in schools run entirely or predominantly by Africans. In the Soviet Union many native schools switch over to teaching in Russian from the fifth form upwards and in many others from the eighth form. Thus in the Russian Soviet Federation forty-six languages are used in primary schools but only twenty-two languages in the last three forms of secondary schools (the so-called 'ten-year-schools').[5]

6. DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATION. British and Soviet educational policies in the colonies differ not only in regard to the language question. The Soviet Government, with the help of a totalitarian state apparatus, has been able to make literacy much more general than British colonial administration could do with its much slower-working democratic mass-education projects. The Soviet Government has also given greater

impetus to university education in the colonies than the British. Four of the five Central Asian Republics have not only got universities but even 'Academies of Sciences'. In the U.S.S.R. the terms 'university' and 'academy' are used in a rather loose way. A Soviet 'university' may be what the British would call a 'University College' or even a 'College' (the Fourah Bay College in Freetown, for instance).

'Academies' and 'universities' in the non-Russian republics and particularly in the Asiatic republics of the Soviet Union are not supposed to serve the national interests of the peoples for whom they are allegedly founded. Unlike the University Colleges of Ibadan and Achimota which have only African students the universities of Stalinabad, Ashkhabad, Baku, Samarkand, Alma Ata and Tashkent are half European institutions. As to the so-called 'Academies of Sciences' they have two assignments. First, they are to help in the implementation of economic schemes which are carried out in the territory of a given Republic in the all-Union interest, and secondly they must watch over the ideological orthodoxy of the local intelligentsia, their writings on history, their poetry, music and theatrical art. The existence of the 'academies' makes it easy for the régime to put into effect new directives governing the intellectual and artistic life of a non-Russian nationality and to purge 'nationalist' artists, writers and historians. If 'academies' with similar functions existed in the British colonies the local intellectuals would rightly consider them as redoubtable imperialistic instruments directed towards spiritual oppression.

7. THE COLONIZATION PROBLEM. The most important common problem which both the Russian and the British Empires have to face is that of European colonization in non-European territories. Lenin explained imperialism as the 'export of capital'.[6] Manpower investments, however, are a much safer basis for imperialist activities than capital investments. It has happened that colonists have been expelled from former colonial countries, but as a rule European manpower in the colonies is less endangered by political changes than European capital, mines and factories are. Russian imperial policy was almost everywhere built on the solid basis of colonization by Russian workers and peasants. Thus one essential basis of Russian imperialism remained untouched by the October Revolution.

The manpower export which is the rule as far as the Russian colonies are concerned is an exception in the British colonies. The territories which were originally colonized by the British, like the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are no longer part of the British Colonial Empire. No British mass colonization has ever been carried out in Burma, India, British West Africa and the West Indies. Something like a mass immigration of Europeans took place only in East Africa, in the two Rhodesias, in Kenya and Tanganyika. In these

territories the European colonization has created a worse problem than Russian colonization in Central Asia. This is due to the fact that the cultural, racial and economic cleavage between the indigenous population of East Africa and the European colonists is much greater than the cleavage between Russian and Ukrainian colonists, on the one hand, and the Kirghiz, Kazakhs and Uigurs on the other.

8. 'KORENISATSIYA' AND AFRICANIZATION. Many things which are accomplished in the Soviet Union as part of a great revolutionary achievement and widely publicized inside the country and outside, are also done in the British Empire, but as part of the day's work and unnoticed. Thus the Soviet 'korenisatsiya' (the gradual replacement of Russian party and state officials in the national territories by 'natives') has an exact equivalent in the 'Africanization' gradually carried out in the African British colonies, also called 'Nigerianization' in Nigeria. 'Korenisatsiya' and Africanization do not mean quite the same thing. Soviet nationalities policy is satisfied if a 'native' can be appointed to a job with a high-sounding title, such as 'Chairman of the Council of Ministers', or 'Chairman of the Supreme Soviet' of this or that republic. It does not worry the Soviet leadership if the person in question is a mere figurehead surrounded and guided by Russians. The British, prefer to give an African the subordinate job of 'assistant' or 'deputy' so that he can acquire the necessary skill and knowledge for a higher job, pending further promotion. But once chosen for a top position he will be fully responsible for his office and not a puppet in the hands of English mentors.

Full Africanization will ultimately be possible at least in some African colonies, while the large number of Russian colonists in the Soviet dependent territories will prevent any genuine 'korenisatsiya' from being implemented.

9. STRATEGIC COLONIES. Some of the general rules guiding British colonial policy do not fully apply to what one may describe as 'strategic colonies'. One can hardly deny that British policy towards Cyprus, Gibraltar or Malta has been less liberal than the British attitude towards the West Indian or West African colonies. However much one may criticize Britain's handling of the Cyprus question, on the other hand, it is a fact that Britain has not prejudiced the future of that island by altering the composition of its population. This is precisely what the Soviet Union has done with its strategic colonies. It has deported the Japanese from Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands; it has expelled all Germans from the Koenigsberg Province.

* * *

The peaceful transformation of the British Colonial Empire, if carried on boldly and determinedly, will more and more become the democratic

Western alternative to Soviet nationalities policy. In re-shaping relations between the former master-race and former dependent peoples, British colonial policy is perhaps taking the longest way, but other nations have made similar efforts in the same direction. The French Colonial Empire has become the French Union. Although the French Union, compared with the British Empire, is a centralistic body, its principles are democratic. Tolerance and respect for human dignity are its basis and it represents a much higher form of political organization than the Soviet Empire. Nationalist organizations in the French Union have been subject to a number of vexations and in the case of Madagascar even to bloody suppression. Nevertheless, national liberation movements which would never be allowed in Soviet Russia, are now conducting a legal or at least semi-legal existence in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. The United States have given a new deal to their dependent territories; independence to the Philippines, far-reaching autonomy to the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and the Hawaii Islands, while Alaska is heading for statehood. Denmark has shown for years a humanitarian non-imperialist attitude towards the people of its only remaining colony, Greenland. The Dutch had to liquidate their Empire under the pressure of events. Only the Belgians, Portuguese and Spaniards have refused to change the status of their colonial territories.

Whatever progress may have been made, the non-communist world is still very imperfect and a great deal of courage will be needed to correct mistakes and redress the wrongs of the past in the field of colonial policy. However, if the Western world lives up to its own ideals it can establish an order in Africa, in the West Indies and in South-East Asia, which not only will not be overwhelmed by communist Russian expansion and infiltration, but which will put to shame the Soviet nationalities policy. Of course, colonial reforms must primarily be concerned with the welfare of the colonial peoples, but they can simultaneously be part of a great plan to take the initiative of action and propaganda out of Russian hands. The Western nations can and must prevent Russia from posing as that force in the world whose task it is to solve the problems which the rest of mankind has left unsolved, including the nationalities problem and the problem of dependent peoples. Western justice in the field of colonial policy will ultimately acquire an explosive character in relation to those parts of the world suffering under political oppression and totalitarian rule. The conviction that Western civilization implies for everybody a greater degree of liberty than Soviet power and Bolshevism, will become general not only among the peoples outside the Russian grip but will spread to the nationalities within the Soviet sphere of influence and even within the Soviet Union itself.

The complete news blockade by which the Kremlin has surrounded

the peoples of Russia and the peoples living under indirect Soviet rule will not be sufficient, in the long run, to conceal the truth about what is good and progressive in the West and about such epoch-making changes as the granting of freedom to India. In the long run it will be impossible to hide from the peoples of Soviet Russia and her satellite countries, that 'something has changed' in the 'imperialist world'. The first doubts as to whether Bolshevism has discovered the universal medicine against the evils of our time and whether Russia holds a monopoly of progress, have already emerged among the satellites and have even crept into Russia itself.

To speak of changes for the better, outside the Soviet sphere of influence, is in itself a heresy for every Russian communist and few can be expected to admit their existence. The aged Hungarian-born Soviet economist, Professor E. S. Varga, is the only Soviet personality, so far, to come out with a timidly formulated statement challenging the official thesis that only communist countries are on the way to progress while the rest of the world is declining. He said: 'The fact that a process of political liberation is going on in the colonies, the fact that India has an ambassador in our country and we have one in India, is after all something new. One cannot simply say that this does not mean anything'.[7] In making this statement, for which he incurred the displeasure of the Kremlin, Varga showed that the facts which are giving the lie to Soviet theory and propaganda are becoming so strong that even Soviet communists can no longer ignore them.

The Kremlin is haunted by the fear that the Lenin prophecy will come true, according to which Russia will cease to be the model and will again become the backward country.[8] Russia is backward already in many ways – its lack of freedom is in itself extreme backwardness – but the backwardness is still hidden under the veneer of technical progress and propaganda slogans about the fraternity and equality of the peoples. It is up to the free nations to make the Russians more conscious of their backwardness by showing them through deeds that there are better, juster ways of solving many problems than those adopted in Soviet territories. The British Commonwealth, as the largest federal organization in the world, has a special mission in this respect; it can serve as a living example that Russia too can become a Commonwealth, that something like the 'United States of Russia' is not a Utopia but a practical, political possibility.

THE FUTURE OF THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA

To speak of such a possiblity, however, means to envisage a change of régime in Russia. This change alone could guarantee to the nationalities of the U.S.S.R. something which one could rightly describe as a 'future'.

If the Soviet régime continues in its present form there is no future for the peoples of Russia in the sense of a genuine political and cultural development. The first thirty years of the Bolshevik régime have shown clearly what the nationalities of the Soviet Empire have to expect from its continued existence: in the economic field further industrialization and urbanization connected with Russification; in the political and cultural field complete elimination of any genuine national initiative of the peoples concerned, through the communist inquisition and continuous purges.

In discussing a non-Bolshevik future for Eurasia one can never divorce the problem of the non-Russian nationalities from that of the Russian people. The Russians, a people of 100,000,000, will always have an important part to play in the destinies of Europe and Asia. A politically balanced world order cannot refuse to allocate to them a place which corresponds to their numerical importance, their abilities, their cultural and economic efforts and the vastness of the space they occupy. To incite the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union against the Russian people and to aim at the disintegration of the Russian Empire would be a short-sighted policy. Disintegration propaganda addressed to the non-Russian nationalities is perhaps the easiest way to embarrass the Bolshevik régime, but it will never lead to its downfall for such propaganda would irritate the Great Russians and make them sceptical regarding the intentions of the Western world. If Bolshevism is to be overcome at its very birthplaces, Leningrad and Moscow, the Russian people must not be under the impression that they will have to pay for liberation from communism with the dismemberment of their State through the loss of all territories which at various times have been attracted by centrifugal forces. In other words, the Western nations should not become the splitters of Russia by attaching more importance to the local nationalities than to the Russian people. Those peoples of the U.S.S.R. who for geographical, historical, cultural and economic reasons will not fit into a new Russian Federal State will leave Russia anyway, in the process of tremendous political upheavals which are likely to accompany a change of régime. Responsibility for this action, however, should rest with these peoples alone. The Western nations should take no initiative in it and should not push the non-Russians towards political separation. This non-interference should not be dictated simply by opportunistic, tactical considerations. The emergence of a multitude of small national States in Eastern Europe, in the Caucasus and Central Asia, in the territory of what to-day is the U.S.S.R. would increase the anarchy in the world and would not even benefit the nationalities concerned. The creation of small and medium-sized national States, encircling as it were the Great Russian people and cutting them off from the rest of the world would guarantee the interests

of the peoples of Russia as little as the collapse of Austria-Hungary safeguarded the interests of the peoples of the Danubian monarchy. What both the interests of the peoples of Russia and the maintenance of world peace really require is the transformation of the mock federation, which is the U.S.S.R., into a genuine federal union. This does not mean that a new Russia will necessarily remain in possession of all territories over which the Soviet Government to-day extends its domination, nor does it mean that the internal divisions of the U.S.S.R. into Republics and Autonomous Republics, etc., will remain as they are now. Numerous adjustments will undoubtedly be necessary. Thus there is no justification for the maintenance of such creations of Soviet propaganda as the Karelo-Finnish Republic, or the Moldavian Republic; nor would it be proper for a democratic Russian Federation to keep 'strategic colonies' like the Kurile Islands or the Petsamo region, the islands of the Gulf of Finland and other territories which the Soviet Government has wrested from the Finns.

It would be in Russia's own interest to give the members of the federation the maximum of freedom so as to increase the attraction of joining it. Such a genuine federation might comprise, as a minimum rather than as a maximum, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Armenia and Georgia together with Russia proper including all nationalities living within the habitat of the Great Russian people. We have shown how Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians are intertwined with each other and no further lengthy explanation is, therefore, necessary here to prove that a federal union of the three Slav peoples is reasonable and feasible if there is full respect for each other's peculiarities. The inclusion of Armenians and Georgians in the federation could be warranted by the positive character, in the past, of relations between the two Christian Caucasian peoples and the Russians. Moreover, the fact that a large number of Armenians live intermingled with Russians in the Northern Caucasus region and elsewhere in the Russian Empire, would have to be considered in any future settlement, as well as the interdependence of Russian-Georgian economic relations.

The Baltic nations, on the other hand, cannot be expected to join a federal union with the Russians. A new democratic Russia will only gradually gain the confidence of Latvians, Estonians and Lithuanians and these three small peoples might prefer to enter a regional federation centred in the Baltic Sea.

The problem of Russia's Moslem border republics will be the most difficult to solve, but political reason demands that they should not be separated altogether from the Russian body. The case for the present Soviet Central Asia remaining within the framework of a Russian federation is at least as strong as the French case for the retention of Algeria within the French Union.

Any political planning dealing with the future of Russia's Moslem Republics must take into account the substantial changes brought about in these countries since the Russian conquest, both in the economic and ethnographic fields. The Russian mass colonization, in particular, is a factor which must be considered. Not one of the six Moslem Republics of the U.S.S.R. can really be regarded as a 'Moslem State' in the same sense as Iraq, Afghanistan or Iran. They are even far less Moslem in character than Morocco and Tunisia where European colonization has left a fairly strong imprint.

There is a tremendous scope for changes in the conditions of the Moslem and other non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union without disintegrating the Russian Empire. The establishment of freedom of religion alone would have far-reaching consequences. It would not only bring about the freedom of religious cults, as such, but in the case of the Russian Moslems it would mean freedom to keep up contacts with the Moslems of the world. It would also imply freedom to publish books in Arabic and permission to teach and learn Arabic in government schools. Thus the Moslems in Russia, while citizens of a Russian federation, would have every possible chance to be simultaneously members of the great world community of Islam.

A future Russia would also have to accept the principle that whatever obligations a political and economic federation might impose on its members, every nationality must be the supreme master of its language and literature. All pressure from the central Government regarding the vocabulary and grammar of the local languages and the contents of their literature must obviously be discontinued if the peoples are to develop freely. If the local nationalities want to 'purify' their language from Russian expressions they have been forced to absorb in large numbers under the Soviet régime, they should likewise be free to do so. If two or more peoples belonging to the same language group should express the desire for a single literary language no obstacle should be put in their way to achieve this aim. The Turkic peoples of Russia, in particular, should be given the choice to decide whether they want to retain the languages created in the Bolshevik period or whether they want to pursue those tendencies towards linguistic and cultural unification which Bolshevism repressed. Any cultural unification would also have political consequences which would be reflected in the regional subdivisions of a future Russian federation. While the Soviet régime has tried to keep non-Russian peoples apart as much as possible, a new Russia would have to recognize all trends not only towards cultural but also towards political union, in so far as these union ideas are geographically and ethnically sound.

A democratic Russian federation will be able to establish a new relationship between Russians and non-Russians. Cultural contacts

between Russians and the peoples historically linked with them can have no real value so long as they result from political pressure and so long as admiration of Russian culture is officially demanded in the same way as admiration of Stalin.

Under the Bolshevik régime the Russian classics have been desecrated and reach the non-Russian peoples only as a by-product of the vast flood of Soviet propaganda literature. After the stamp of official Bolshevik approval has been removed the Russian classics will acquire again their educational and enlightening role among the non-Russian peoples. Pushkin will again be read as Pushkin, Tolstoy as Tolstoy and Belinsky's critical works will be studied because of their merits and not within the framework of a propaganda campaign against 'cosmopolitanism' or for the 'Greatness of the Motherland'.

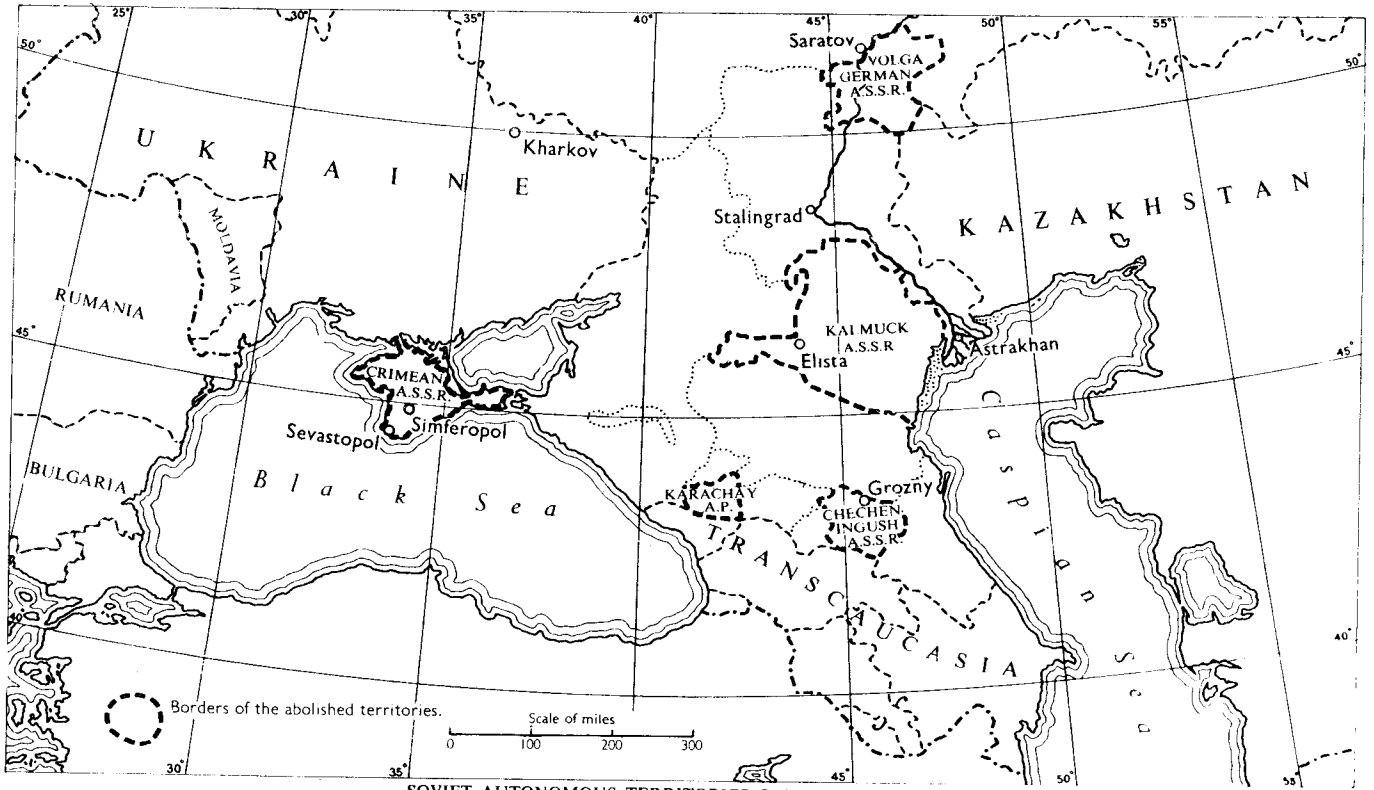
Not only to the nationalities of Russia but to the whole world will the true face of Russian culture become visible again. Russian poets and writers will again be able to enrich literature, music and art to the benefit of all mankind, instead of being doomed to servile propaganda production. The Russian people, at present represented to the world by a thin strata of diplomats and bureaucrats, will become visible through the expression of their true political ideals, not those of world revolution and world communism which are advocated on this people's behalf. The people of Russia will resume contact with the outside world by making genuine contributions at international conferences into which Soviet representatives invariably carry an element of discord. The Russian Christians will enter into a relationship with other Churches of the world, not to serve Russian state interests, but to promote Christian co-operation on a world-wide scale. A Russian labour movement will emerge, no longer issuing orders to the 'workers of the world' but keen on a free exchange of views with organized labour in the advanced industrial countries. Thus in all fields the Russians would be equal partners instead of stubborn, suspicious opponents. Not to believe in such a future for the Russian people would mean not to believe in the future of human civilization, in its strength to survive and shake off totalitarianism.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES TO CHAPTER TEN

1. *Mirovoye Khozyaistvo i Mirovaya Politika* – World Economics and Politics, Nr. 6, June 1946, p. 72.
2. G. M. ADIKHARI, *Pakistan and Indian National Unity*, London 1943, p.24.

3. Statistical comparisons between British and Soviet colonial policy can be found in the following books: PALME DUTT, *Britain's Crisis of Empire*, London 1949, p. 137; LEONARD BARNES, *Soviet Light on the Colonies*, A Penguin Special, London 1944, pp. 197/211; GEORGE PADMORE, *How Russia Transformed Her Empire*, London 1946, pp. 100/103. (Mr. Padmore's book contains interesting material about the Negro policy of the Communist International.)
4. Information on Non-Selfgoverning Territories, Memorandum by the Colonial Office on Proceedings in the General Assembly of the United Nations 1947, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948, p. 38.
5. *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, April 4th, 1951.
6. V. I. LENIN, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Selected Works, London 1936, vol. 5, p. 81.
7. *Prilozhenie k zhurnalu Mirovoye Khozyaistvo i Mirovaya Politika* – Supplement to the Journal, *World Economics and Politics*, *Nr.* 11, November 1947, p. 4.
8. V. I. LENIN, *Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, Selected Works, London 1938, vol. 10, p. 57.

INDEX



SOVIET AUTONOMOUS TERRITORIES *LIQUIDATED* 1941-46