

A RAND NOTE

TRANSFORMING CLIENTS INTO SURROGATES:
THE SOVIET EXPERIENCE

Rose E. Gottemoeller

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Prepared for

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for Policy



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PREFACE

Because the United States plays an important role in protecting Western interests outside Europe, many Americans expect the cooperation of U.S. allies, especially the industrialized nations, in this endeavor. The willingness of U.S. allies to help, however, depends on the nature of the cooperation requested and the situation in which it is required.

The Soviet Union faces similar problems in protecting its own perceived interests as head of the socialist alliance. In recent years, Soviet efforts to expand cooperation among its allies have received wide attention in the West, especially since these efforts have increasingly involved the Soviet Union in third world crises and conflicts.

This Note examines Soviet cooperation with five third area client states--Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Syria, and Grenada--in an attempt to explain how the Soviets manage these relationships. The lessons of the Soviet experience, it is hoped, will aid U.S. policymakers seeking greater and more effective cooperation with U.S. allies in the developing world.

The Note contributes to a Rand project on enhancing the support of friends and allies for U.S. maneuver forces. The project was funded by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy under Contract No. MDA903-85-C-0030.

SUMMARY

The Soviet Union cultivates a wide variety of client states, all of which depend to some degree on the Soviets, share with them certain objectives, and assist them in the international arena. Some support the USSR on the political front, in the United Nations and in the nonaligned movement. Others assist with aid projects abroad, providing doctors, technicians, and teachers. Still others contribute military support, including training, weapons and equipment, and even combat missions.

These clients are acting as surrogates for the USSR. As such, they serve Soviet purposes while sparing the Soviets direct involvement in third world affairs.

This study examines (1) the incentives for Soviet-client cooperation and the limits to their effectiveness and (2) how the Soviets manage their relationships with their third world allies. It focuses particularly on the Soviet ability to induce cooperation in activities beyond a client's borders.

The research is based on primary sources, including Soviet theoretical writings and documents from the Grenadan revolution. It also uses western analyses of overall Soviet performance in the third world, detailed case studies of individual countries, and the current press.

Four conditions define a cooperative relationship between the USSR and its client state:

- Proximity of the client to a major opponent of the USSR
- Reliance of the client on the USSR for strategic goods
- Government of the client country by a Marxist-Leninist regime
- Existence in the client country of a well-developed economy and professional military establishment.

These four conditions, however, do not fully explain the process by which a client state becomes a surrogate. Two additional factors contribute to the conversion process:

- First, a client state may have its own regional or international leadership aspirations, in which case it may align itself with the USSR so as to augment its own national military and political power.
- Second, Moscow will likely increase military and economic aid to a client whose national aspirations dovetail with its own interests. The client's status as a privileged ally then increases the chances that it will become a surrogate.

This study applies the four conditions and two additional factors noted above to five cases: Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Syria, and Grenada. The case studies illustrate how the original basis for cooperation between the USSR and its clients evolved out of the four conditions. Theoretically, once the basis is firmly established, incentives for a client to perform as a Soviet surrogate should begin to operate. The cases indicate that incentives sometimes work imperfectly in inducing surrogate performance.

Cuba has the broadest basis for cooperation of the five third world countries examined. The four conditions for Soviet-client cooperation describe the Cuban case. Cuba lies only 90 miles from the United States; it receives the bulk of its strategic goods from the USSR; it has a strong central government rooted in Marxist ideals; and it controls a well-developed military establishment.

Inducements to cooperate exist on both the Cuban and Soviet sides. In Cuba, the Soviets have acquired a base from which to influence events in Latin America. To preserve that base, they willingly bankroll a Cuban economy that otherwise would not survive. Moreover, a well-trained Cuban military establishment maintains its skills in Soviet service abroad.

Cuba's strongest incentive to cooperate, however, probably derives from the extent to which its interests coincide with Moscow's. Almost from its inception, the Castro regime has sought international leadership. Its ambitions were at least partly realized in the 1970s, when it entered the conflicts in Angola and Ethiopia as a Soviet surrogate. Its performance in these conflicts further enhanced its position with regard to Moscow, resulting in increased material support for the Cuban economy. This privileged status as a Soviet ally in turn increases the likelihood that Cuba will perform as a Soviet surrogate.

Vietnam also has the four basic conditions for cooperating with the Soviet Union. However, Vietnam defines its national interests as advancing control over Indochina in the face of Chinese efforts to secure a zone of influence in the region. At the same time, the Soviet Union seeks rapprochement with China. The two policies conflict when Chinese demands, as conditions for agreement with the Soviets, impinge on Vietnamese interests.

The clash between Soviet strategic policy and Vietnamese national interests will probably prevent Cuban-style cooperation between the two, at least in the foreseeable future. To the Soviets, rapprochement with China takes precedence over serving its client's interests. Vietnam will probably continue to support the Soviets, however, as long as that support does not give China an advantage over Vietnam.

Nicaragua, Syria, and Grenada have (or had) less reason than Cuba and Vietnam to cooperate with the Soviets. Only one condition for cooperation applies to all three: The Soviet Union supplies strategic goods to each. Otherwise, they have neither strong Marxist governments nor reliable military establishments. Syria, moreover, is not located near a major opponent of the USSR. Nevertheless, the three clearly have had cooperative relationships with the Soviets, especially in international political forums. However, they probably neither could nor would regularly assume more taxing surrogate roles.

These five cases indicate that the Soviets have yet to find a surefire means of turning a client relationship into reliable surrogate performance. Even when the factors underlying cohesion and the necessary incentives seem to be operating on both sides, the Soviets

cannot be certain that a client will remain committed to performing surrogate roles.

In sum, the Soviets cannot guarantee surrogate performance. They can only improve the likelihood that a client will perform by (1) giving it incentives and (2) ensuring that it meets certain basic requirements for reliability and availability of resources, especially skilled cadres of military and aid personnel.

The Soviet experience has important implications for the United States: U.S. policymakers can successfully use surrogates in the third world; indeed they may be required to in future world conflicts. However, they should not underestimate the taxing requirements for transforming a client into an effective surrogate.

A potential surrogate must qualify on a basic level with a strong central government, viable economy, and trained military establishment. The United States must possess the means to influence him, whether as a strategic supplier, bulwark against the Soviet bloc, or partner willing to consider his national interests. Finally, and most important, the client's national interests cannot conflict with or prevent the United States from achieving its own strategic goals.

In attempting to use a client in a surrogate role, the United States will probably not be able to meet these stringent requirements. As a result, U.S. policymakers must be willing to accept the risk that a client will perform inadequately or not at all. Indeed, uncertainties remain even if all requirements are met, because a client's perceptions of its interests shift over time. The United States must therefore accept the need to adjust policies that require foreign surrogates, or to quickly abandon them when they fail. Surrogates are an important element of great power strategies in the developing world, but the Soviet experience shows that they are a risky one.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Soviet Union cultivates a wide variety of client states, all of which depend to some degree on the Soviets and share with them certain international objectives. As a result, the Soviets obtain many kinds of assistance from their clients. Some support the USSR on the political front, for example, in the United Nations and the nonaligned movement. Others assist with aid projects abroad, providing doctors, technicians, teachers, etc. Still others contribute wide-ranging military support on Soviet behalf, including training, weapons and equipment, and even combat missions. These clients are acting as surrogates for the USSR.¹

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SURROGATE RELATIONSHIP

A client state becomes a surrogate when it moves beyond passive political and diplomatic support for the Soviet Union to actively implementing Soviet policies in neighboring countries or around the world. Although often most influential at the regional level, such countries also promote Soviet interests globally.²

The Soviets recognize the advantages of having surrogates perform certain political, economic, and military tasks on the international front. The involvement of a client may, for example, prevent direct confrontations between the USSR and its major opponents, the United States and China. In many cases, clients are better suited than the Soviets to handle third world issues and personalities. Finally,

¹USSR has had cooperative relationships with Eastern European countries since World War II. Nowadays, the Czechoslovaks tend to supply arms to aid candidates, for example, while the East Germans provide training. Other East European states have served in other surrogate roles over the years. See Brian Crozier, *The Surrogate Forces of the Soviet Union*, Conflict Studies No. 92, Institute for the Study of Conflict, London, February 1978; Melvin Croan, "A New Afrika Korps?" *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 1980; and William F. Robinson, *Eastern Europe's Presence in Black Africa*, RAD Background Report/142, Radio Free Europe Research (Eastern Europe), June 21, 1979.

²See the definitions of *surrogate* in Stephen T. Hosmer and Thomas W. Wolfe, *Soviet Policy and Practice Toward Third World Conflicts*, Lexington Books, Lexington, Mass., 1983, p. 101.

surrogates can insulate the Soviet Union from accusations of great power meddling in third world affairs. In short, they serve Soviet purposes while sparing the Soviets direct involvement.

This definition of the surrogate relationship embraces many degrees of support and cooperation, highlighting the range of surrogate roles that a country might fill. Under this definition, for example, a country unable to render the Soviets combat support might nevertheless serve as a mouthpiece for the USSR in the nonaligned movement, where the latter lacks a direct voice. Since a country often cannot or will not perform certain tasks for the Soviets, the broad definition includes countries that are Soviet surrogates in some circumstances but not in others.

Four conditions contribute to a cooperative relationship between the USSR and its client state:

- Proximity of the client to a major opponent of the USSR³
- Reliance of the client on the USSR for strategic goods
- Government of the client country by a Marxist-Leninist regime
- Existence in the client country of a well-developed economy and professional military establishment.

One or more of these conditions provide the basis on which the client and surrogate relationships develop and mature. The conditions illustrate where incentives lie, sometimes for one participant, sometimes for the other, and sometimes for both.

With regard to the first condition, a country such as Cuba, close to the United States, or Vietnam, close to China, aligns itself with the Soviet Union to face down its superpower neighbor. The Soviet Union, in turn, acquires a means to influence events in an opponent's traditional sphere of interest. This might be called the "outpost-of-empire" condition.

³Ambassador William H. Luers, U.S. Department of State, pointed out this principle in remarks at a luncheon meeting of the Washington, D.C., Chapter of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, November 30, 1983.

The second condition involves the USSR's being a client's major or only supplier of such strategic goods as oil, weapons, industrial equipment, raw materials, and food. Some countries pay for Soviet weapons with their own petrodollars; others are in debt to the Soviets for everything from wheat to oil to MiGs. The degree of dependence indicates (although imperfectly) the strength of the strings that the Soviets might pull to ensure that a client serves Soviet objectives.

The Soviets for obvious reasons prefer that a country have a genuine Marxist-Leninist party firmly in control of its central government--the third condition. The party and government usually have close ideological and institutional ties with Moscow. Soviet recognition that a regime must firmly control political power before it can be considered a reliable "revolutionary power" came about after repeated and sometimes spectacular disappointments in Egypt, Somalia, and Ghana.⁴

The fourth condition--a developed economy and professional military establishment--is important for foreign aid and military cooperation. A client should be able to offer the Soviets one or more of the following advantages: trained armed forces highly motivated by revolutionary ideals; industries producing exportable goods, including weapons; and technicians and experts capable of overseeing many types of foreign-aid and military-training programs.

⁴Soviet recognition that a regime must firmly control political power before it can be considered a reliable "revolutionary power" came about after many disappointments. Hosmer and Wolfe (1983, pp. 27-34) discuss a few of these. A Soviet commentator addressed such failures as follows: "The issue comes down, after all, not to tempos of reforms, as some revolutionaries think at times, but to the effectiveness of the measures adopted, not to the broadness of the economic reforms but to the reliable securing of all (or the maximum possible) fullness of power. It is precisely this, in the last analysis, that is the key to the realization of reforms not on paper, but in fact, the guarantee of the reliability and irreversibility of revolutionary gains." See Sergo Mikoyan, "On the Peculiarities of the Revolution in Nicaragua," *Latinskaya Amerika*, July 1982, p. 41. Another thoughtful discussion of Soviet concerns about backsliding appears in Thomas J. Zamostny, "Moscow and the Third World: Recent Trends in Soviet Thinking," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2, April 1984, pp. 223-235.

These conditions, while basic to extensive cooperation between the Soviet Union and its clients, do not fully explain the process by which a client state becomes a surrogate. Two additional factors seem especially important to the conversion process:

- First, a client state may have its own regional or international leadership aspirations, in which case it may align itself with the USSR so as to augment its own national military and political power. Thus, Cuba and Vietnam became surrogates in attempting to realize their own national ambitions.
- Second, Moscow will likely increase military and economic aid to a client whose national aspirations dovetail with its own interests. The client's status as a privileged ally then increases the chances that it will become a surrogate.

What determines the degree of cooperation that the Soviets can expect? How far will a client go in serving Soviet interests? The answers obviously involve incentives for both sides to cooperate. They also depend on the limits to the effectiveness of those incentives, limits that stem from the national interests and priorities of each participant.

STUDY PLAN AND SOURCES

This study examines (1) the incentives for Soviet-client cooperation and the limits to their effectiveness and (2) how the Soviets manage their relationships with their third world allies. It focuses particularly on the Soviet ability to induce cooperation in activities beyond a client's borders.

The study applies the four conditions and two additional factors noted above to five cases: Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua, Syria, and Grenada. The case studies illustrate how the original basis for cooperation between the USSR and its clients evolved out of the four conditions. Theoretically, once the basis is firmly established, incentives for a client to perform as a Soviet surrogate should begin to

operate. The cases indicate that incentives sometimes work imperfectly in inducing surrogate performance; at times, seemingly nothing will persuade a client to reconsider its national interests or cooperate in Soviet policy goals despite them.

Cuba is examined first, in Sec. II, because over time it has exemplified a Soviet client that has both cooperated with the Soviets in many roles and failed to cooperate at important junctures in its relationship. Section III reviews the case of Vietnam, also an interesting example of cooperative and noncooperative behavior. Section IV briefly discusses the surrogate roles of Nicaragua, Syria, and Grenada.

Section V attempts to portray the Soviet mechanism for managing client relations, including the incentives for surrogate activities, the limitations of such incentives, and the negative and positive aspects of Soviet efforts. The research stresses the means by which the Soviets attempt to transform their clients into surrogates, rather than overall Soviet policy goals for a country, except when such goals affect the surrogate question. Finally, it discusses the implications of the study's findings for the United States.

The research is based on primary sources, including Soviet theoretical writings and documents from the Grenadan revolution. Western analyses of overall Soviet performance in the third world, as well as detailed case studies of individual countries, were also used. Newspapers and journals provided further information. Finally, the research benefited greatly from the insights of several scholars of Soviet and third world affairs: Edward Gonzalez, Stephen Hosmer, and Thomas Wolfe of The Rand Corporation and Ambassador William H. Luers of the U.S. Department of State.

In addition to the five cases presented here, other countries might have been examined in the research. North Korea, for example, offers interesting possibilities for analysis because of its dual relationship with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The five cases chosen, however, represent a wide range of cooperative interaction. Their variety thus serves to illustrate the Soviets' overall ability to induce surrogate performance. This study examines the reasons why some clients are less disposed than others to cooperate.

II. CUBA

ALMOST AN IDEAL SURROGATE

Cuba is probably the Soviet Union's best example of an outpost of empire. In the Soviet view, Cuba is "the advance post of socialism in the western hemisphere, 90 miles from the citadel of imperialism."¹ Although Castro leaned toward the United States after coming to power in 1959, by 1960 he had perceived a grave threat from the United States and turned to the Soviet Union for survival.² By 1961, Cuba had signed its first bilateral trade agreement with the USSR, received its first shipment of Soviet crude oil, and broken diplomatic and consular relations with the United States.³

Judging by their decision to station nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962, one may conclude that the Soviets saw almost immediately that they could use Castro's Cuba to challenge American power and influence in the western hemisphere--indeed, in the world at large. The Cubans, for their part, realized that they could use the USSR and other socialist countries as "the guarantee of their security."⁴

Cuba depends heavily on the USSR for strategic goods. In 1982, a Soviet journal described Cuba's oil dependence in these blunt terms: "Practically the entire functioning of Cuba's national economy is based on energy supplies from the Soviet Union."⁵ Cuba produces basically sugar and nickel for export, and like other third world raw material producers, it is subject to severe boom-and-bust cycles in the

¹*Krasnaya zvezda* (Red Star), Moscow, December 29, 1982.

²Jorge I. Dominguez, "Cuban Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1978, p. 84.

³Jorge F. Perez-Lopez, "Sugar and Petroleum in Cuban-Soviet Terms of Trade," in *Cuba in the World*, Cole Blasier and Carmelo Mesa-Lago (eds.), University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1979, pp. 276-277.

⁴*Krasnaya zvezda*, December 29, 1982.

⁵V. Burmistrov, "The First Soviet-Cuban Long-Term Trade Agreement (1976-1980): Its Results," *Foreign Trade* (Moscow), January 1982, p. 9.

international marketplace.⁶ Economic cooperation with the Soviet Union has insulated Cuba from the worst of the fluctuations. Castro characterized the cooperation as "a truly ideal, exemplary type of economic relations between an industrialized nation and a poor, underdeveloped country such as ours."⁷

In addition to aiding the civilian economy, the Soviets have steadily modernized the Cuban armed forces over the past eight years. Shipments of military supplies reached 66,000 tons in 1981--as President Reagan stated, "more than any year since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis."⁸ Shipments have included Soviet MiG-23 (Flogger) fighter aircraft, some of the most modern in the Soviet arsenal. Thus, the USSR supplies most of Cuba's strategic goods, economic and military.

A third factor also influences the Cuban-Soviet relationship: a strong Marxist-Leninist government over a united polity. Castro's nationalism and social idealism contributed to the popularity of his revolution in its early stages. When Castro embraced the revolutionary ideals of a Marxism-Leninism, Cuba's citizens evidently followed close behind. Today, Cuba remains free of popular rebel insurgencies. Although some discontent probably exists,⁹ it has not led to the development of serious opposition to Castro.

The acquiescence of the Cuban population in the national cause makes it possible for Castro to require extraordinary sacrifice, and get it. Thus, although the Cubans forgo many goods and services considered necessities elsewhere, they evidently support the flow of goods and services abroad. Cuban "revolutionary doctors" serving in Nicaragua, for example, have been a considerable source of national pride. Likewise, Cuban economic aid programs are apparently not begrudged

⁶The cycles are influenced by factors beyond the control of even the best economic planners. Bad weather and low prices, for example, ruined Cuba's sugar crop in the late 1960s. Indeed, "the two variables worked against the Cubans; whenever they had a good crop, prices were low and, conversely, when prices were high, they had a poor crop." See Carmelo Mesa-Lago, "The Economy and International Economic Relations," in Blasier and Mesa-Lago (1979), p. 173.

⁷*Granma* (Havana), Year 8, No. 2, January 14, 1973.

⁸*New York Times*, February 25, 1982.

⁹Hosmer and Wolfe (1983, p. 167), for example, noted the domestic political costs that significant casualties in foreign wars might engender for Castro.

because they carry the message of Cuban success to other third world countries. This national enthusiasm provides an important basis for cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Cuba's strong military establishment further contributes to the relationship. Fidel Castro has announced that the Cuban army is available to aid "sister peoples" in their struggles against imperialism, and indeed the Cuban military has shown its willingness to participate in both combat and military training programs.¹⁰ It played both roles in Angola and Ethiopia. The Cubans were instrumental in achieving short-term victories for pro-Moscow forces in both countries before 1980. In trying to consolidate those victories since 1980, they have been actively involved in training local forces.

Although the Cubans may serve as a conduit for Soviet arms, however, they are not themselves major arms suppliers, as are the Czechoslovaks and East Germans.¹¹ The Cubans, however, offer the Soviets manpower in the form of combat troops and military technicians.

The first four conditions of Soviet-client relationships apply strongly to the Cuban case. Cuba is a Soviet outpost of empire; it receives the bulk of its strategic goods from the USSR; it has a strong central government rooted in Marxist ideals, and it controls a well-developed military establishment. Hence, the basis for Cuban cooperation with the Soviets is seemingly quite firm. Because the two sides share interests ranging from the advancement of world revolution to the continued viability of the Cuban economy, incentives to cooperate apply fairly consistently, and the Cubans and the Soviets have cooperated with evident ease in a number of areas.

Other motivations for the relationship, however, spring not from mutual interests but from interests limited to one side or the other. Where the interests of the two sides clash, the potential for sponsor-

¹⁰For a discussion of this issue, see Edward Gonzalez, "Complexities of Cuban Foreign Policy," *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1977, p. 9.

¹¹For a sample of Soviet bloc weapon supply activities in the third world, see the Central Intelligence Agency series, *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1975* (ER76-10372U, July 1976); *1976* (ER77-10296U, August 1977); *1977* (ER78-10478U, November 1978); *1979* (ER80-10318U, October 1980).

client conflict emerges. This potential has in fact been present through the history of the Soviet-Cuban relationship.

For example, Castro enthusiastically declared Cuba to be a Marxist-Leninist state in 1961, well over a year before the Soviets could bring themselves to acknowledge its status as such. Castro's enthusiasm concerned the Soviets because they understood the ideological implications of the Cuban declaration. By the rules of communist construction, once a country has advanced to the stage of socialism, it cannot retrace its steps through any of the preliminary stages of development, such as feudalism or capitalism. The collapse of a declared socialist state challenges the validity of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. For that reason, Castro's declaration forced Moscow to up its aid commitment simply to keep the Cuban economy above water and forestall backsliding.¹²

Castro's interests in this case were probably rooted in a mixture of Marxist zeal and political pragmatism, for without a firm sponsor he could not long defy the position of the United States in the western hemisphere. His interests apparently spurred the Soviets to act, in their view probably prematurely, to accept Cuba into the socialist bloc.

Although Cuba was firmly in the Soviet-led socialist camp by 1962, a disappointment at the hands of its newfound mentor forced another twist in its ideological development. In 1962, the Soviets installed offensive nuclear weapons in Cuba, then quickly removed them under threat of nuclear attack from the United States. The strain of this missile crisis profoundly disillusioned Castro, who thought of the missiles primarily in terms of Cuban defense. The Soviets, dismissing his concerns, withdrew the weapons without even consulting him.¹³

¹²As Wayne Smith put it, "Even after Cuba had read itself into the socialist camp, the Soviets persisted in describing its major importance as being the advancement of the noncapitalist, rather than socialist, path in Latin America." See "Soviet Policy and Ideological Formulations for Latin America," *Orbis*, Winter 1972, pp. 1127-1128, 1134. See also Morton Schwartz, "The USSR and Leftist Regimes in Less-Developed Countries," *Survey*, Spring 1973.

¹³William J. Durch, "The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East: From Algeria to Angola," Center for Naval Analyses, Professional Paper No. 201, September 1977, p. 6.

The missile crisis, a bitter lesson for Castro on the nature of great power rivalries, led him to look elsewhere for political support: According to a 1970 account:

Castro, depending on the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance, but resentful over Khrushchev's settlement with Kennedy, vented his ire by adopting a Maoist line on the feasibility of exporting revolution by violent means. This set him in direct opposition to . . . Khrushchev, who advocated a policy of peaceful coexistence.¹⁴

In the mid-1960s, Cuba actively supported revolutionary movements in Latin America and Africa, thus exploiting the growing rift between China and the USSR. Cuba's revolutionary fervor culminated at the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America--the so-called TriContinent Congress--held in Havana in January 1966. Although the Soviets intended to use the conference as a political forum to grapple with the Chinese,¹⁵ Castro immediately dominated the floor with wild rhetoric calling for guerrilla warfare throughout the third world:

The peoples have the right to sweep away, and sooner or later they will sweep away, all those governments, traitors at the service of foreign interests in their own countries, and they will sweep them away through the most violent revolutionary action, because imperialist exploitation and oppression is imposed on them with an ever increasing use of force, violence, arms, and there remains no other choice open to them.¹⁶

The Soviets, whose support for armed uprisings was at a low point, probably found such inflammatory statements difficult to take. However, since Castro's guerrilla war indisputably had succeeded and since the Chinese stood even further to the left, the Soviets felt obliged to

¹⁴Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1970, p. 301.

¹⁵Smith (1972), p. 1142.

¹⁶*Granma* (Havana), Vol. 1, No. 2, February 20, 1966.

uphold at least some aspects of "revolutionary action." Castro, however, was not satisfied, and accused the orthodox leadership of being a "Mafia of pseudo-revolutionaries."¹⁷

This complicated tangle of ideological conflict continued until 1968, when Che Guevara's death in Bolivia signaled the failure of Cuban efforts to export revolution to Latin America.¹⁸ The Cuban economy also began to collapse under pressure from the USSR and elsewhere. In addition, Cuba's formerly cordial relations with China began to deteriorate, thus depriving Castro of outside support in his clashes with the Soviet Union.¹⁹

The Soviets were able to bring Cuba back to their sphere of influence by applying economic pressure as events unfavorable to the Cubans unfolded elsewhere. During this period, however, Cuban national interests would almost certainly have dominated Castro's motives for cooperating with Moscow. As a result, the Soviets probably did not count on surrogate cooperation from Havana during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Soviet-Cuban relationship changed radically in the mid-1970s, when newfound mutual international interests led to joint military ventures in the third world. Of these, the intervention in Angola was the most notable.

SOVIET-CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA

The major Soviet-Cuban activity in Angola took place in 1974 and 1975, when Portugal was disengaging from its African empire. The independence of Angola had been set for November 11, 1975, and three indigenous political groups were slated to participate in a coalition transition government. These arrangements, which the three groups had agreed to in January 1975, had begun to break down by March.

¹⁷Smith (1972), pp. 1140-1142.

¹⁸Guevara's failure in Bolivia is discussed in *ibid.*, p. 1142, and in Dominguez (1978), pp. 87, 89.

¹⁹Dominguez (1978), p. 89.

In March 1975, the Soviet Union increased arms shipments to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the faction it had chosen to support. During the same period, Cuban military advisers began to arrive to train MPLA fighters. Castro was a close friend of the group's leader, Agostinho Neto, and had backed him for some years.²⁰ According to Jiri Valenta, this Soviet and Cuban military assistance "unquestionably emboldened the MPLA and contributed to the breakdown of the transitional government."²¹

The other two factions, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA), also were emboldened by aid from foreign powers and also contributed to the breakdown. UNITA was first supported by China and later by South Africa. The FNLA received aid from Zaire, China, and the United States.²² This array of foreign assistance supported a continued struggle among the triumvirate to establish dominance prior to the November 1975 independence day. Deep-seated racial and ethnic animosities, along with deep mistrust among the leaders of the three groups, fueled the struggle. According to one FNLA spokesman at the time, "Ideology is secondary. . . . It's really just a power struggle. We have all been fighting [the Portuguese] so long, we have too much invested in blood to allow the others to win."²³

The fighting in the spring was followed by a full-scale civil war in summer 1975. South African forces invaded in August to secure the Cunene River dam that provides water for its territory of Namibia. Although the South Africans professed limited goals in this intervention, they apparently were responding to a request to provide

²⁰Jiri Valenta, "Soviet Decisionmaking on Angola," in David E. Albright (ed.), *Communism in Africa*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana, 1980, p. 110.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 101. This section focuses on Soviet-Cuban cooperation in Angola in 1975 and 1976. For a review of Soviet-Cuban activities in the region since 1980, see Peter Clement, "Moscow and Southern Africa," *Problems of Communism*, March-April 1985, pp. 29-50.

²²Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 81.

²³Quoted in Valenta (1980), p. 101.

military advisers and equipment to UNITA and the FNLA. In Soviet eyes, the South African threat was probably compounded by increased aid from China and the United States. The Soviets apparently feared that the Chinese leadership would actually "enter into a conspiracy with the United States" to cooperate in supporting UNITA and the FNLA.²⁴

Increased aid to its rivals led to MPLA reverses on the battlefield. Although the FNLA and UNITA had been driven from the capital, Luanda, and from 12 of the 15 provinces by midsummer, early fall brought a counteroffensive that carried FNLA forces to within 20 miles of Luanda. They were joined in this operation by Zairian elite commandos whose military skill changed the course of the battle.²⁵ The Soviets apparently decided at this stage to increase support of the MPLA.

Cuban military personnel had been advising the MPLA since the spring, and a contingent of at least 1500 combat troops began to arrive in Angola in late September. According to some accounts, the MPLA had requested these troops directly from the Cubans after the Soviets had refused to provide their own combat forces, but had advised the MPLA to ask the Cubans.²⁶ Although evidence on this point varies, it seems likely that Castro himself decided to commit combat units, perhaps with Soviet assurances of support, rather than responding to Soviet orders to make the commitment. By late fall, the Cubans had apparently decided to swell the initial contingent to about 20,000 troops, the deployment of which was achieved by spring 1976.²⁷

Between November 1975 and February 1976, Cuban manpower and Soviet military equipment ensured the survival and eventual victory of the MPLA. Although Cuban troops barely arrived in time to prevent the capital, Luanda, from falling to the FNLA in November, by December they

²⁴V. Solodovnikov, TASS, November 18, 1975, cited in Valenta (1980), pp. 103-104.

²⁵Valenta, pp. 101, 105.

²⁶Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 81; see also Robert Moss, *The Sunday Telegraph* (London), January 30, 1977, pp. 8 and 9, and Peter Vanneman and Martin James, "The Soviet Intervention in Angola: Intentions and Implications," *Strategic Review*, Summer 1976, p. 97.

²⁷Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 83.

had begun to turn the tide against the MPLA's opponents. The FNLA and UNITA forces, untrained in mobile mechanized warfare, were overwhelmed by a minimum of Cuban fighting efficiency.

The South Africans, however, proved even more skilled at mobile warfare than the Cubans. In mid-December, the Cubans lost a three-day pitched battle to the South Africans about 150 miles south of Luanda. According to some accounts, such defeats so unnerved the Cubans that they considered withdrawing from Angola.²⁸ Retreat proved unnecessary, however, for the South Africans themselves withdrew in January 1976.²⁹

Many factors external to the relationship of the USSR and Cuba contributed to the success of their cooperation in Angola. First, the political ferment inside Angola during the period of declining Portuguese influence, with three strong factions competing for control of the country upon independence, provided opportunities for outsiders to meddle.

Second, the lack of strong commitment from the Soviet Union's superpower rivals to aid the FNLA and UNITA also helped the Soviet-Cuban intervention. The U.S. Congress had limited further aid to foreign insurgencies, and China had backed away from its aid to the FNLA, probably because it did not want to associate with South Africa.

A third factor was the poor military discipline and ineffectiveness of Angolan indigenous forces. Moreover, several African nations, including Algeria, Mali, and the People's Republic of the Congo, gave the Soviets basing rights; the Soviets used the bases as staging areas for their airlift and arms supply operations.³⁰

²⁸Ibid., p. 224, fn. 24.

²⁹African political pressure, the cutoff of U.S. aid to the MPLA's opponents, and the continuing buildup of Cuban forces were three apparent reasons for the South African withdrawal. See Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), pp. 224-225, fn. 25. For a South African account, see "Nature and Extent of the SADF's Involvement in the Angolan Conflict," South African Defense Forces Headquarters, Pretoria, February 3, 1977.

³⁰Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 85.

The Soviet-Cuban success was attributable also to the fact that the relationship had matured to the point that effective cooperation was possible. Each participant had achieved capabilities to permit a successful intervention in a third world conflict. The Soviet Union had built up its airlift and sea-lift potential since the 1960s and had acquired experience in using both in the Middle East. In general, the Soviets seemed to have a better developed conception of the logistics and command and control requirements that would be exercised in Angola than they had exhibited previously.

The Cubans complemented the Soviet command and support structure with an armed force that had trained on Soviet equipment. Annual Cuban imports of arms from the Soviet Union had tripled between 1970 and 1975, and the Cubans made use of the new arms and materiel to modernize their army (see Table 1). At the same time, as the Cuban armed forces modernized, the need for them inside Cuba decreased.³¹ Castro was therefore in a position to offer his troops for combat in third world revolutions.

It would be wrong to assume that Cuba provided the muscle while the USSR provided the brain. Edward Gonzalez convincingly describes the Soviet-Cuban relationship as a dynamic one, not one of dominance and subordination.³² In Gonzalez's view, Cuba pursues its own objectives in the third world, but within the parameters of Soviet political and strategic interests. These objectives, according to Gonzalez, spring from Cuban ideological drives, the organizational interests of the Cuban armed forces, and Castro's quest for international status and for influence in the third world and the Soviet Union.³³

³¹Edward Gonzalez, "Cuba, the Soviet Union, and Africa," in Albright (1980), pp. 152-153.

³²Ibid., p. 145.

³³Ibid., p. 147. For other commentaries on Cuban national interests and objectives, see Mark W. Katz, "The Soviet-Cuban Connection," *International Security*, Summer 1983; Jorge I. Dominguez, "It Won't Go Away: Cuba on the U.S. Foreign Policy Agenda," *International Security*, Summer 1983; and Sergio Roca, "Cuba Confronts the 1980s," *Current History*, February 1983.

Table 1
CUBAN IMPORTS, INCLUDING ARMS, 1970-1982
(In \$ million current)

Year	Arms Imports ^a	Total Imports	Arms as % of Total Imports
1970	20	1310	1.5
1971	30	1390	2.2
1972	70	1300	5.4
1973	70	1780	3.9
1974	60	2690	2.2
1975	70	3767	1.9
1976	130	3879	3.4
1977	100	4362	2.3
1978	350	4751	7.4
1979	260	5089	5.1
1980	260	6409	4.1
1981	800	6602	12.1
1982	975	6916	14.1

SOURCE: Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1970-1979* (ACDA Publication 112, March 1982), *1971-1980* (ACDA Publication 115, March 1983), *1972-1982* (ACDA Publication 117, April 1984).

^aThe USSR supplied most of these arms; other Warsaw Pact nations also contributed.

The search for leverage with the Soviet Union is probably one of the most important determinants of Cuban cooperative behavior. Castro and the Cubans seemingly have decided that supporting Soviet interests in the third world will reap them the status of a privileged ally. Indeed, Table 1 graphically illustrates this reward. Arms shipments to Cuba from the USSR and other Warsaw Pact countries tripled between 1970 and 1975; by 1982, arms aid had skyrocketed to over 40 times the 1970 amount. The Kremlin had apparently concluded that the Cubans were well worth rewarding.

The leverage that the Cubans can gain from their relationship with the Soviet Union, however, is limited. The Angolan conflict provided the important example of Cuban failures against the South Africans. While Cuban successes speak well for the military prowess of the Warsaw Pact, defeats against troops carrying advanced Western weapons have the opposite effect.

Based on the Angola experience, the Soviets may perceive the Cubans to be of limited usefulness in any venture where advanced Western military technology and tactics are likely to play a role. Such Soviet perceptions may in turn lead to controls on Cuban attempts to pursue its own objectives in the third world.

SOVIET-CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia provides further examples of limitations on the Soviet-Cuban relationship. The Ethiopian revolution began in September 1974 with the dethronement of Emperor Haile Selassie and his replacement by the Dergue, a group of leftist military officers also known as the Provisional Military Council. At the time, the Soviets were providing arms to the Somalis, who were pressing irredentist claims to the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, an area heavily inhabited by Somali tribesmen.³⁴

Several trends in 1975 and 1976 made Ethiopia an increasingly tempting target for the Soviets. Domestic turmoil, the Somali invasion, and continued rebellion in the northern region of Eritrea made the Dergue desperate for increased military aid. At the same time, the United States, the traditional Ethiopian arms supplier, began to balk at continuing the arrangement because of human rights violations and the movement of the Dergue toward socialism.

The Soviet Union and Ethiopia first concluded an arms deal in July 1976. By spring 1977, the Dergue expelled the remaining U.S. military officers and the United States terminated its aid commitments to Ethiopia. At the same time, the initial contingent of Cubans arrived to train Ethiopians on Soviet equipment.³⁵

³⁴Without Soviet arms, the Somalis would not have been emboldened to invade the Ogaden, according to Paul Henze, "Communism and Ethiopia," *Problems of Communism*, May-June 1981, pp. 61, 69.

³⁵Henze (1981), p. 63. See also Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), pp.

Meanwhile, the Ethiopian armed forces were fighting poorly against the Somalis in the Ogaden. "Beleaguered and semimutinous," they were forced to retreat in October 1977.³⁶ The Soviets and Cubans had each been trying to negotiate a settlement of the conflict, but the Ethiopian defeats combined with Somali intransigence led them to abandon these efforts.

On October 19, 1977, the Soviets ended arms aid to Somalia.³⁷ As a result, Somalia renounced its treaty with the USSR in November and expelled Soviet and Cuban advisers. Many of these advisers went directly from Somalia to Addis Ababa, where they were desperately needed to help the Ethiopians to absorb the arriving Soviet military equipment and to cope with the Somalis.

The Cubans were again drawn into combat. Arriving by air and sea from Angola, Somalia, South Yemen, and Cuba, they numbered about 12,000 by spring 1978.³⁸ They fought effectively in the Ogaden and helped to train a much expanded Ethiopian army.

The Cubans provided only limited combat support, however. When the Ethiopian army sought to quash the long-standing rebellion in Eritrea, the Cubans participated only on a severely restricted basis. They reportedly provided air support in Eritrea, but limited ground forces almost totally to garrison roles.³⁹

As Paul Henze noted, the Cubans showed more "conscience" regarding Eritrea than they showed about any other international issue in which they were involved; i.e., they avoided engaging in combat against the Eritrean insurgency, which they had supported in the 1960s and early 1970s.⁴⁰ Whether the Soviets would have preferred otherwise is

91-92; Paul B. Henze, "Communist Ethiopia--Is It Succeeding?" The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif., P-7054, January 1985, p. 20; and Edmond J. Keller, "The Ethiopian Revolution at the Crossroads," *Current History*, March 1984, p. 119.

³⁶Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 91.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., p. 92. Other estimates placed the number of Cuban troops closer to 18,000. See, for example, Henze (1981), p. 64.

³⁹Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 228, note 73.

⁴⁰Henze (1981), p. 73. Henze further notes that this circumspection did not give the Cubans any special credibility with the Eritrean factions.

difficult to gauge, but it is notable that they went beyond field command activities to provide air and naval support in actions against the Eritrean separatists.⁴¹ They participated at a considerably lower level in Angola.

Soviet involvement did not solve the Eritrean problem, however. According to Henze, the Soviets attempted to play all sides in the conflict and, as a result, were discredited by both the Ethiopian central government and the Eritrean insurgents.⁴²

The situation in Eritrea, complicated by drought and famine and by turmoil in neighboring Sudan, has become less amenable to a political solution in the years since the Dergue took power. If the Soviets are to effect a reconciliation between the Eritreans and the government in Addis Ababa, it probably will not occur through force of arms. The Eritrean and Ethiopian lack of confidence in the Soviets, however, does not encourage hope for a political agreement under the Soviet aegis.

Nevertheless, Soviet and Cuban cooperation succeeded in Ethiopia, as it did in Angola, in establishing the Soviets' chosen faction in power. The combination of Cuban combat troops and Soviet logistics and command support--Stephen Hosmer and Thomas Wolfe call the technique *cooperative intervention*⁴³--has enabled the Soviet Union to achieve decisive results where other superpowers and regional actors have failed. Cooperative intervention has also given the Cubans significant leverage over their Soviet allies. This leverage resulted in material rewards for the Cubans; it also may have opened more outlets for the international ambitions that encouraged their common effort with the Soviets in the first place.

The Soviets, heartened by success in Angola and Ethiopia, may now have decided that cooperation with the Cubans in Central America could stimulate revolutionary activity in the area and weaken U.S. influence. The Cubans have long sought this outcome, but the Soviets have until now discouraged them. Cuban effectiveness in cooperative interventions may have changed Soviet perceptions of opportunity in the region.

⁴¹Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 228, note 73.

⁴²Henze (1981), p. 73.

⁴³Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 79.

LIMITS TO CUBAN INFLUENCE

The leverage that the Cubans can hope to exert, however, is probably limited. Cuban influence with the Soviets rests heavily on the performance of the Cuban armed forces in combat against third world insurgents. The Cubans have succeeded in establishing the preeminence of a favored faction in such conflicts. They have shown less skill in consolidating that outcome so that the faction can remain in power unchallenged and begin to mature as a ruling body.

In Angola, the MPLA continues to face armed opposition, despite the presence of Cuban combat troops and a large contingent of Soviet and Cuban military and government advisers. In Ethiopia, Mengistu Haile Meriam has not allowed the Cubans and the Soviets to participate in building up the Ethiopian government and security forces. Government posts are still limited to Ethiopians, many of whom received their education and formative experience during years when Ethiopia looked west.⁴⁴ In neither country can Cuban military force decisively guarantee the continued reign of the leadership that it brought to power.

The equivocal results in Angola and Ethiopia probably stem from the extreme divisions that exist among national groups in these countries rather than from the poor military skills of the Cubans. Nevertheless, the situation in the mid-1980s, ten years after the Angolan and Ethiopian revolutions, bespeaks the limits of military power in enforcing solutions, whether that power be provided by the Cubans or by another internal or external actor.

The limits to Cuban military effectiveness must be clearly visible to the Soviets, who continue to work side by side with Cubans as advisers to the local regimes. Although no evidence exists to show the Soviets eager to abandon their positions in the two cases, the lessons of the experience are probably not lost on them. Winning the capital city is not the same as consolidating power, a goal to which the Cuban armed forces might be able to contribute little. The lack of Cuban effectiveness during a protracted period of jockeying for local leadership may in fact have a net negative effect on Cuban efforts to influence the Soviets.

⁴⁴Henze (1985), pp. 31, 35-37, 43.

A further limit on Cuban leverage, alluded to earlier, stems from the poor Cuban performance against modern, well-equipped combat troops. With the example before them of Cuban failures against South African forces in Angola, the Soviets must be concerned that the repetition of such problems would damage their credibility as both a successful champion of third world causes and an international arms supplier. As Hosmer and Wolfe note,

[U]nless the Soviets were to feel more confident than they probably are concerning Cuban capability to handle . . . outside Western opposition in the future, the combat use of Cubans . . . against such oppositions would not appear to recommend itself to Moscow.⁴⁵

Such Soviet doubts will likely reduce Cuba's leverage over the Soviet Union.

⁴⁵Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 104.

III. VIETNAM

A REVOLUTIONARY ALLY

From the end of World War II until 1975, the Vietnamese Communist Party cooperated with both the Chinese and the Soviets to gain control of the former French colonies in Indochina. When victory came in 1975, however, this tripartite alliance ended almost as soon as the Americans left. At the same time that the Vietnamese sought to assume leadership of Indochina, the Chinese wanted to assert their great-power prerogatives in the region. In February 1979, after the Vietnamese installed a pro-Hanoi regime in Kampuchea, the Chinese invaded Vietnam in a punitive gesture that left no doubts as to the poor state of Chinese-Vietnamese relations.¹

Soviet support of Vietnam during the Chinese invasion remained limited to diplomacy, logistics, and a show of naval force in the South China Sea.² The Vietnamese were probably emboldened to move into Kampuchea, however, only after they had signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the USSR in November 1978.³ In supporting the Vietnamese, the Soviets were evidently bidding for influence in an area that the Chinese considered their own.

The Soviet Union's patronage of Vietnam has enabled it to maintain a foothold in a portion of the world long closed to it.⁴ The interests of both sides coincide: The Soviets want to weaken Chinese influence; the Vietnamese want to improve their regional position. Thus, the first condition of surrogate cooperation applies to the Soviet-Vietnamese client relationship. Vietnam has gained the status of a Soviet outpost of empire.

¹MacAlister Brown, "Laos: Bottoming Out," *Current History*, April 1983, p. 180.

²Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), p. 95.

³Ibid., p. 56.

⁴David P. Chandler, "Strategies for Survival in Kampuchea," *Current History*, April 1983, p. 153.

The second condition for a cooperative relationship--the degree to which Vietnam depends on the Soviet Union for strategic goods, such as weapons, petroleum, raw materials, and industrial products--further contributes to Moscow's ability to demand cooperation. Over the past few years, the Soviets have typically provided as much as 90 percent of Vietnam's total import volume. In 1982, imports from the USSR included 200,000 tons of grain, 550,000 tons of fertilizer, and about 1.5 million tons of oil and oil products, all Vietnam's oil needs. In 1983, these figures were expected to increase by more than 30 percent over 1982 amounts.⁵

In addition to the goods traded, the Soviets have been heavily involved in industrial and building projects in Vietnam. These have included the building of a 5-kilometer bridge near Hanoi, enlargement of the Haiphong port, coal mine operations, and new machinery plants. A Soviet-Vietnamese company is also drilling for oil and gas on the Vietnamese continental shelf.⁶ In return for the services of the Soviet technical advisers assigned to these projects, Vietnamese go to the USSR and Eastern Europe to work, thus receiving training and practical experience.⁷

The Soviet bloc has consistently aided the Vietnamese armed forces. In 1982, high-level Soviet, Czechoslovak, and East German military delegations arrived in Vietnam to assist in military modernization projects. The modernization effort seems to have extended even to remote units of the Vietnamese army: Vietnamese forces fighting in western Kampuchea, far from Vietnamese territory, used the latest Soviet tanks and infantry assault rifles.⁸

⁵Ton Long, "A Reassuring Hug," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 6, 1983, pp. 79-80.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Carlyle A. Thayer, "Vietnam's New Pragmatism," *Current History*, April 1983, p. 184.

⁸Ibid.

The value of Vietnamese arms imports from the Soviet bloc indicates these trends (see Table 2). Following the fall of South Vietnam and the reunification of the country in 1975, Soviet bloc aid to Vietnam dropped off, hitting a low of \$20 million in 1977. By 1979, arms imports had again risen to \$1.2 billion. A level of at least \$500 million was sustained between 1979 and 1982.

Table 2
VIETNAMESE IMPORTS, INCLUDING ARMS, 1970-1982
(In \$ million current)

Year	Arms Imports ^a	Total Imports	Arms as % of Total Imports
1970	200	373	53.6
1971	310	594	52.2
1972	1200	692 ^b	173.4
1973	270	616	43.8
1974	150	NA ^c	NA
1975	80	NA	NA
1976	40	NA	NA
1977	20	NA	NA
1978	70	900	7.8
1979	1200	NA	NA
1980	1000	NA	NA
1981	575	NA	NA
1982	800	NA	NA

SOURCE: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1970-1979* (ACDA Publication 112, March 1982), *1971-1980* (ACDA Publication 115, March 1983), *1972-1982* (ACDA Publication 117, April 1984).

^aThe USSR supplied most of these arms; other Warsaw Pact nations also contributed.

^bThe source documents report total trade figures published by individual countries but use multiple sources for arms transfer data. Obviously, the \$692 million does not include all arms imports for 1972.

^cData are not available.

Vietnam, in short, seems as good a candidate as Cuba to cooperate with the Soviets on the basis of the economic and military aid that it receives. Certainly at the present time, the two sides perceive their interests to coincide on this issue. Soviet aid assures the Vietnamese of their continued support.⁹ The Vietnamese, seeking little aid elsewhere, evidently accept the arrangement.

The leaders of the Communist Party in Vietnam had long adhered to the goals of revolution and military resistance before they gained control of the entire country in 1975. This small, cohesive elite today continues to control the Vietnam government.¹⁰ From the Soviet perspective, the ideological credentials of these leaders are well established. If anything, the Soviets apparently have tried to temper overzealous communist reformers in Vietnamese-controlled Indochina.¹¹

Thus, although the Vietnamese must battle rebel insurgencies in Laos and Kampuchea and dissent within their own communist party,¹² they represent a government firmly rooted in the Soviet tradition. A prominent Vietnamese propagandist in fact portrayed a Vietnamese party role strikingly similar to that played by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) during the Brezhnev regime, when the CPSU was said to have appropriated government functions. The propagandist criticized the Vietnamese Communist Party for abandoning a true leadership role and taking on the day-to-day running of the country. This process, he claims, has produced an overly bureaucratized system suffering "a chaotic overlap between government and party functions."¹³

⁹Ton Long (1983), p. 80.

¹⁰Thayer (1983), p. 159.

¹¹For example, Alexei Kosygin, then Soviet premier, evidently advised the Laotians in 1979 to stop collectivization before their entire peasant class fled to Thailand. See Brown (1983), p. 154.

¹²See, for example, Paul Quinn-Judge, "A Vietnamese Cassandra," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 26, 1982, pp. 14-16.

¹³Nguyen Khac Vien, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 15.

In any event, the third condition of Soviet-client cooperation also applies to the Vietnamese case. The Soviets accept the government in Hanoi and believe that it will remain in power.

The Vietnamese military establishment fulfills the fourth condition of cooperation, having proved itself in the long war against the French and Americans, in the resistance to the Chinese invasion, and in the occupations of Laos and Kampuchea. The large-scale military modernization discussed earlier is at least partly a tribute to the performance of the Vietnamese armed forces over the years. So are the deadly weapons, among them lethal chemicals, with which the Soviets have evidently entrusted the Vietnamese.¹⁴

The Vietnamese military establishment, while effective, has thus far played only a limited role outside Indochina. In perhaps the best-known instance of outside activity, the Vietnamese in 1980 offered the revolutionary forces in El Salvador some 60 tons of U.S. rifles, machine guns, mortars, rocket launchers, and ammunition captured in the Vietnam war.¹⁵

In active combat roles, however, the Vietnamese have limited themselves to Laos and Kampuchea, which Vietnamese forces have occupied since the late 1970s. A July 1977 treaty confirmed the "special relationship" under which 40,000 Vietnamese troops are today in Laos;¹⁶ the 180,000 Vietnamese currently serving in Kampuchea began their stay with the ouster of Pol Pot's regime in 1978.¹⁷ These numbers probably represent the limits of Vietnamese resources, at least resources available to form expeditionary forces for combat elsewhere in the third world.

¹⁴See U.S. Department of State, *Chemical Warfare in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan*, Special Report No. 98, March 22, 1982, and U.S. Department of State, *Chemical Warfare in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan: An Update*, Special Report No. 104, November 1982.

¹⁵See Hosmer and Wolfe (1983), pp. 102-103.

¹⁶Brown (1983), p. 156.

¹⁷Robert S. Dudley, "Now the Kremlin Feels the Heat," *U.S. News and World Report*, August 8, 1983, p. 24.

As long as Vietnam is tied down in Laos and Kampuchea, it would be hard pressed to take on a mission such as Cuba's in Angola. Moreover, the Vietnamese leadership does not appear committed to achieving control beyond Southeast Asia. The old communists in Hanoi, in short, do not seem to possess the same global ambitions that drive Castro.

BUT A LIMITED SURROGATE

Despite the strong basis underlying Vietnam's cooperation with the Soviet Union, its large-scale commitment in Southeast Asia would appear to limit its ability to play surrogate roles according to Kremlin priorities. In fact, Vietnam's commitment to pursuing its own national objectives in Laos and Kampuchea creates the potential for a divergence of Soviet and Vietnamese interests. China may provide the impetus for such a split.

The Vietnamese quickly moved into the vacuum created by the U.S. departure from Indochina. The governing classes in Laos and Cambodia had also fled, leaving a dearth of civil servants skilled in government administration. The local communists, distrusting those who remained, killed some and sent others to camps to be reeducated. To fill the gap, they sent many young people to Vietnam and the USSR for training. It will be many years, however, before the younger generation matures sufficiently to govern.¹⁸

Meanwhile, Vietnamese govern Laos and Kampuchea.¹⁹ This process has apparently alarmed the Chinese, who perhaps see the emergence of a Vietnamese-dominated Indochinese federation before the end of the century. To the extent that the Vietnamese seek to consolidate such a federation, they will directly interfere with China's interests in the region.²⁰

¹⁸Brown (1983), p. 156.

¹⁹For interesting discussions of this phenomenon, see John McBeth, "Bureaucrats from B68," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, October 15, 1982, p. 16; and Nayan Chanda, "A Defector's Designs," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 26, 1982, p. 44.

²⁰Douglas Pike, "Southeast Asia and the Superpowers: The Dust Settles," *Current History*, April 1983, p. 179. Pike also notes that the Chinese are trying to bleed Hanoi in Indochina, especially Kampuchea (see p. 147).

At the same time, the Soviets most likely seek to counterbalance Chinese influence as a great power. The Soviets also are aiding Laos and Kampuchea, but to a far lesser extent than the Vietnamese. After all, Vietnamese forces occupy these countries and Vietnamese bureaucrats govern them. The Soviets see their 25-year dispute with the Chinese as a strategic matter. They probably consider their current alignment with the Vietnamese a tactical ploy in that dispute. The Vietnamese, in contrast, seem vitally committed to extending their control over Indochina. They need the Soviets to provide them the resources to achieve that goal.

The present Soviet-Vietnamese relationship probably represents a marriage of convenience for the Soviets and of necessity for the Vietnamese.²¹ The Vietnamese, therefore, are doubtless seeking to pry as many resources out of the Soviet Union as possible and, at the same time, to maintain Soviet political support in international bodies and on bilateral and regional fronts. Soviet policy seems at present to accord with those interests.

When Soviet and Vietnamese interests threaten to diverge, the Vietnamese try to influence the Soviet Union in the direction that they prefer. A prime example of such efforts involves Vietnamese fears of a Soviet-Chinese rapprochement.

As the Soviets and Chinese reopened negotiations to improve relations in spring 1983, the Vietnamese launched a strong offensive on the Thai-Cambodian border, striking guerrillas supported by, among others, the Chinese. Hanoi was apparently demonstrating its control in Indochina, no matter what the behavior of its superpower ally, the USSR. The Vietnamese foreign minister in fact warned the Soviets, "Our foreign policy is based on our own forces, not on any relationship with another country. . . . Once the relationships change, you have to change yourself."²²

²¹Ibid., p. 148. For additional commentary on the current Soviet-Vietnamese relationship, see the testimony of Bernard K. Gordon, Evelyn Colbert, and Douglas Pike in "The Soviet Role in Asia," *Hearings before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East and on Asian and Pacific Affairs*, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, 98th Congress, 1st Session, July 26, 1983, pp. 160-234.

²²Quoted in John Stirling, "Why Vietnam Fears Closer Soviet-Chinese Ties," *Business Week*, May 2, 1983, p. 51.

Vietnamese bravura in this case seems farfetched, especially because Vietnam depends so heavily on the USSR for economic and military aid. Nevertheless, Hanoi did meddle in great-power politics in an attempt to influence the Soviets to adjust their policy of seeking accommodation with the Chinese. The Vietnamese apparently hoped to do this by spoiling Soviet-Chinese negotiations, forcing the Soviets to choose between supporting the Vietnamese offensive and mollifying the Chinese. The commitment of the two great powers to negotiate prevailed: Hanoi failed to prevent continued high-level contacts between the Soviets and Chinese.²³

The Soviets certainly recognized where Vietnamese interests lay, but improving the Soviet Union's strategic relationship with the Chinese apparently mattered more to them than placating their Vietnamese allies. In single-mindedly pursuing their own interests, the Vietnamese in turn diverged from their basis for cooperation with the Soviets. In sum, they acted less like a surrogate than an unruly ally.

But allies they remain. The Soviets probably think that, overall, the Vietnamese are working to Soviet advantage in Southeast Asia. Certainly the volume of Soviet aid to Vietnam attests to that conclusion. Although the Vietnamese do not always serve Soviet purposes in Indochina, they have given the Soviets a foothold in Southeast Asia.²⁴ The most important symbol of this foothold is the access that the Soviet navy enjoys to the important bases at Danang and Cam Ranh Bay. The Vietnamese, one might say, are Soviet allies with a mixed record of surrogate performance. Their own interest in controlling Indochinese events limits their usefulness to the USSR.

²³For example, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Peter Kapitsa visited Peking in September 1983.

²⁴Chandler (1983), p. 153.

IV. NICARAGUA, SYRIA, GRENADA

Nicaragua, Syria, and Grenada have each, in some sense, played the role of a surrogate for the Soviet Union in the third world. However, as we try to determine what basis for cooperation exists in each case, we find that these countries can be called Soviet surrogates only under very particular circumstances.

NICARAGUA: LIMITED MEANS FOR COOPERATION

Nicaragua superficially resembles Cuba. The Sandinistas brought to Nicaragua a Marxist government that has gained a considerable degree of popular support. The country, virtually in the U.S. backyard, is well situated geopolitically to become a Soviet outpost of empire. The Soviets, it would seem, have only to throw their support fully behind the Sandinistas and they will acquire another Cuba in Central America.

But aside from Nicaragua's outpost-of-empire potential, the other factors of cooperation are missing. The Soviets have not begun to underwrite the Nicaraguan economy; if anything, they have warned the Nicaraguans that they are unable to shoulder heavy new economic burdens in the third world.¹ Even their military aid did not compare in strategic importance with that extended to Cuba.

The Soviets evidently established a threshold in shipping arms to the Nicaraguans. According to one analyst, the shipments so far have been specifically geared to counterinsurgency warfare--small arms, helicopters, and anti-aircraft weapons to protect against small planes. Although MiG-21 fighters have reportedly been slated for Nicaragua, this analyst asserts that they are "temporarily" deployed in Cuba while Nicaraguan pilots train in Bulgaria, and it is unclear whether the Soviets will ever risk a U.S. response by redeploying them to Nicaragua.² In short, neither in the economic nor military sphere have

¹Speech of Yury Andropov to the CPSU Central Committee Plenum, June 15, 1983, reported in *Pravda*, June 16, 1983; translated in the FBIS Soviet Union *Daily Report*, June 16, 1983, p. R11.

²Peter Clements, Central Intelligence Agency, at a luncheon meeting of the Washington, D.C., Chapter of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, November 30, 1983.

the Soviets been willing to become major suppliers of strategic goods to Nicaragua.

Soviet hesitation to underwrite the Nicaraguan revolution may have much to do with the status of the Marxist government in Managua. Although it has gained popular support, it continues to battle three separate insurgent groups in the countryside. These *contra* forces are well supplied with foreign weapons and evidently have the use of a good communications system.³ Moreover, they need not fight the Sandinistas continuously, but can regroup, train, and get supplies in Honduras and Costa Rica. The Sandinistas, therefore, face a much more stubborn insurgent threat than would be encountered on an island such as Cuba. Their chances of establishing a strong central government in control of remote areas are correspondingly slim, at least in the short run.

The Soviets have evidently recognized the risks of the situation, for they have indicated that the Nicaraguan revolution may not be irreversible.⁴ They thus have acknowledged that Nicaragua may revert to the capitalist path of development and are not tying their prestige to the survival of the Sandinistas. They recognize at the same time that the Sandinistas do not have the domestic political capital to cooperate with the socialist bloc on a wide front.

On the military side, Nicaragua is unquestionably a net consumer of goods and services. The capabilities of the Nicaraguan military establishment are limited to battling the insurgents, and they sometimes appear inadequate for even that purpose. In short, the Soviets cannot count on the Nicaraguans to cooperate in military actions elsewhere in the third world, even in Central America.

Because Nicaragua has outpost-of-empire potential, the Soviets are probably attracted by the opportunities that it represents. The Sandinistas for their part are probably eager to prove their Marxist credentials; they are certainly eager to attract Soviet aid in order to consolidate their power. With this limited basis for cooperation, the Soviets might expect the Sandinistas to support them in international political bodies, such as the United Nations. Beyond that, they likely

³Dudney (1983), pp. 21-22.

⁴Richard Gott and Jonathan Steele, "Russia Turns Down the Cuba Card," *The Guardian* (London), April 28, 1983, p. 15.

do not expect Nicaraguan cooperation in Soviet economic aid or military initiatives. Hard pressed at home, the Nicaraguans have few resources or personnel to spare for activities abroad.

SYRIA: LIMITED BASIS FOR COOPERATION

The Soviets and the Syrians cooperate, but on a specific and limited basis. Syria evidently seeks to control events in the Middle East, a volatile region where the United States and USSR have themselves vied to control events for nearly two decades.⁵ A short-lived effort of the two to cooperate in solving the Arab-Israeli conflict ended with the separate peace between Egypt and Israel that President Carter engineered in 1978. Since then, Moscow has apparently looked for a means to regain influence in Middle Eastern affairs. Syria appears to be serving as that means.

The basis for Soviet-Syrian cooperation is scant, however, since few of the factors underlying a close Soviet-client relationship apply. Syria is not located close to any Soviet superpower rival, hence it cannot serve as a Soviet outpost of empire. The government of Syrian President Assad is not controlled by a Marxist-Leninist party; indeed, Syria is among the Middle East states that have periodically harassed and arrested local communist party members.⁶ Thus, the Soviets lack ideological reasons to support Syria, since Moscow can have little hope that Syria will adopt a Marxist line and begin the march toward socialism.

⁵For a discussion of Syrian interests in the region, see Milton Viorst, "We Forget That Syria, Too, Has Vital Interests," *Washington Post*, Outlook Section, December 11, 1983.

⁶The Soviets have occasionally called on the Syrians to extend more power to their indigenous communist party, but without much apparent success. See R. A. Ulyanovskiy, "On the Unity of the Anti-Imperialist Front of Progressive Forces in the Newly Independent States," *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya*, No. 9, September 1972, pp. 76-86. Syrian politics seem to be affected more by internecine strife than by ideological considerations. See Martin Talbot, "Aliiev in Syria," *Soviet Analyst* (Richmond, Surrey, England), Vol. 13, No. 6, March 1984, pp. 1-2.

Furthermore, the Soviets evidently have little faith in the Syrian military establishment. Following the poor showing of Soviet air defense weapons against Israeli fighter aircraft in the Bekaa valley of Lebanon in summer 1982, Soviet commentators openly criticized the poor training of Syrian forces.

According to one Soviet article, the same weapons that the Syrians had failed to use properly had been effective in Vietnamese hands.⁷ The official Soviet military newspaper stated bluntly that Syrian soldiers "must be taught to read and write before they can begin to master weapons and hardware."⁸ From this evidence, one may assume that the Soviets probably have little faith in the Syrians as a military force in third world conflicts, whether in the Middle East or elsewhere.⁹

The Soviet supply of strategic goods--in this case weapons--to Syria offers the one condition that could lead to cohesion. As with the Egyptians ten years earlier, the Soviets have evidently decided that they must provide their Syrian clients with sophisticated SA-5 air defense weapons to combat Israeli air operations in the region.¹⁰

The Soviet-operated SA-5s serve several purposes: As part of an integrated air defense system, they offer the Soviets the opportunity to restore their image as a supplier of reliable weapons--an image tarnished when the Syrians lost 99 planes to the two lost by the Israelis in the Bekaa valley campaign.¹¹ They also form an important deterrent force. Because they are operated by Soviets, the Kremlin

⁷Quoted in Cynthia A. Roberts, "Soviet Arms Transfer Policy and the Decision to Upgrade Syrian Air Defences," *Survival*, July-August 1983, p. 157.

⁸Col. F. Kozanchuk, "Meetings on Syrian Soil," *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 29, 1983, p. 5.

⁹The struggle for power in Damascus also might fuel Soviet concerns that different elements of the Syrian armed forces will open fire on one another, catching Soviet advisers in the crossfire. In short, the Soviets have more than one reason to doubt the reliability of the Syrian armed forces. See Talbot (1984), p. 2.

¹⁰For a comparison of the Egyptian and Syrian cases, see Craig S. Karpel, "Mideast Melody: Play It Again, SAM," *Wall Street Journal*, June 15, 1983, p. 34.

¹¹Vincent J. Schodolski, "Soviet Arms Replacing Syrian War Losses," *Chicago Tribune*, March 23, 1983, p. 8.

leadership probably calculates that (1) the United States would press the Israelis not to strike the missile batteries and (2) Damascus would not initiate a major air battle in the region without certain SA-5 protection of Syrian forces.

The missiles thus enable the Soviets to influence the escalation potential of the conflict. Although never invited in as peacekeepers, the Soviets have all the same found a way to deploy a peacekeeping force in the Middle East.

The Syrians as Soviet clients benefit from the replacements for their war losses.¹² The Soviets, in turn, gain the influence that they have sought in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Given their earlier experiences with Nasser and Sadat,¹³ however, they probably have little confidence in their long-term ability to compel Syrian cooperation in juggling the forces at work in the region to Soviet advantage. Where Sadat drove Soviet advisers--including those manning SAM batteries--from Egypt in order to launch the 1973 Yom Kippur war, Assad might do the same once his troops learned to operate the SA-5s.

The Soviets' ability to keep the peace or incite conflict at will therefore depends solely on Syria's perceived military aid requirements. Since Syrian perceptions might change, one hesitates to predict continued Soviet-Syrian cooperation on the basis of the strategic supply factor. The Soviets now probably count on the Syrians to act for them in certain third world matters. Because of the scant basis for cooperation, however, they cannot rely on the Syrians to oblige over a long period.

¹²Schodolski, *ibid.*, catalogues the other military items that the Soviets have recently given to Syria, including 1000 new trucks, 350-400 T62 and T72 tanks, and 100 new fighters, mostly MiG-23s.

¹³Hosmer and Wolfe (1983) discuss the Egyptian case in detail and provide extensive references; see Ch. 6, 11, and 12 and corresponding footnotes.

GRENADA: MORE A CLIENT THAN A SURROGATE

Grenada was no more than a fledgling Soviet client state when the United States invaded the island in October 1983. The Grenadan case showed promise as an example of Soviet-client cooperation, but Grenada itself was at such an early point of revolutionary development that the Soviets would hardly have expected much help from the Grenadans in third world initiatives.

Nevertheless, Grenada is perfectly situated in a geopolitical sense to serve as a Soviet outpost of empire. The Soviets readily noted that fact and seemed prepared to support Grenada as one more means of irritating the United States in its traditional sphere of influence.

Marshal Nikolay Ogarkov, then Chief of the Soviet General Staff, said in a 1983 meeting with Grenadan Chief of Staff Major Einstein Louison: "Over two decades ago, there was only one Cuba in Latin America; today there are Nicaragua, Grenada, and a serious battle is going on in El Salvador." The United States, the marshal then said, would try to prevent progress, but "there were no prospects for imperialism to turn back history." Evidently to bar an imperialist resurgence, Ogarkov pledged that "the Soviet Union would contribute to raising the combat readiness and preparedness of the Armed Forces of Grenada."¹⁴

Well before the Ogarkov-Louison meeting, in fact, the Soviet Union and Grenada had in July 1982 signed an agreement under which the former would supply military equipment to the latter. The Soviets were to provide rocket launchers, rifles, machine guns, vehicles, and other military items by 1985.¹⁵ The arrangement, made in great secrecy, apparently did not proceed smoothly, for Louison complained to Ogarkov during their meeting that items, especially vehicle spare parts, were not arriving on time.¹⁶

¹⁴Report of the meeting between the chiefs of the general staffs of the Soviet armed forces and people's revolutionary armed forces of Grenada, March 10, 1983; documents captured by the U.S. Armed Forces and released by the U.S. Department of State, DOS document 000008, p. 2.

¹⁵See *Agreement between the Government of Grenada and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Deliveries from the Union of SSR to Grenada of Special and Other Equipment*; documents captured by the U.S. Armed Forces and released by the U.S. Department of State, DOS document 000191.

¹⁶U.S. Department of State, DOS document 000008, p. 3. Ogarkov,

The Soviet Union thus was supplying strategic goods, but not with nearly the evident enthusiasm that the Cubans were providing aid programs. The Cubans were doing in Grenada what they generally do best in aiding newly declared revolutionaries--providing doctors and establishing a literacy campaign.¹⁷ They also launched a showy building project--the international airport at Point Salines--the likes of which are the hallmark of Soviet aid programs but are usually too expensive for the Cubans to undertake. The Cubans, therefore, may have been serving as Soviet surrogates in this case.

Whatever the Soviet-Cuban cooperative arrangements in Grenada, they were supplying Grenada with strategic goods in a way that tended to tie that country to the Soviet bloc. The Point Salines airport, for example, was evidently a source of great pride to the Grenadans, who would be unlikely to abandon the project even if slighted by the Soviets and threatened by the Americans. The aid incentive for Soviet-client cooperation seems thus to apply in the Grenadan case.

The third condition of Soviet-client cooperation--a strong, Moscow-oriented central government--however, did not apply in the case of Grenada. A Soviet theoretical journal, *Latinskaya Amerika*, devoted to revolutionary developments in that part of the world, revealed the Soviets' lack of confidence in the ultimate success of the Grenadan revolution.

In a 1983 article in *Latinskaya Amerika*, Richard Jacobs, Grenadan ambassador to the USSR, quoted Prime Minister Maurice Bishop as declaring in a July 1982 speech in Moscow that the Grenadan revolution was "firmly established on a path of socialist orientation."¹⁸ According to Jacobs, "an organization with a socialist orientation, the New JEWEL Movement, headed the revolutionary process." He further described the movement as a vanguard party, the members of which sought

the record states, "jokingly" told Louison to keep to his studies, Louison being a student at a Soviet military academy in Moscow.

¹⁷Ecumenical Program for Interamerican Communication and Action, Task Force Report, *Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution*, Washington, D.C., 1982, pp. 81-86.

¹⁸W. Richard Jacobs, "The Revolutionary Process in Grenada," *Latinskaya Amerika*, No. 6, 1983; translated in the FBIS *USSR Report: Political and Sociological Affairs*, JPRS 84530, October 13, 1983, p. 8.

to increase the worker's revolutionary consciousness and turn "spontaneous protest into an organized struggle."¹⁹

These designations have real meaning in Soviet ideological parlance. "Socialist orientation" and "vanguard party" describe Marxist revolutionary regimes holding power in countries considered not yet ripe for full-scale socialist revolution. The Soviets use the terms when they fear that a country will lose the momentum of socialist development, or that nearby capitalists will meddle. The fact that Bishop and Jacobs were evidently constrained to describe their revolution in those terms means that the Soviets did not have full confidence that the revolution would succeed in Grenada.²⁰

The fourth condition--a strong military establishment--also did not apply, a fact readily evident from Marshal Ogarkov's assessment of the Grenadan armed forces. In his meeting with Major Louison, Ogarkov stated bluntly that "since Grenada was located close to U.S. imperialism and *was not developed militarily* the Grenada revolution would have to be specifically vigilant at all times."²¹ Ogarkov clearly would not have expected the Grenadan armed forces to cooperate in military activities elsewhere in the third world.

The Grenadans were nevertheless willing to act in international political forums in the Soviet interest. Bishop, for example, clearly reflected the Soviet position toward nonalignment when he spoke at the Sixth Conference of the Heads of State from the Participating Countries of the Nonaligned Movement:

Nonalignment, as we understand it, in no way means that we must take a position of neutrality in the emasculated and negative sense of this concept; and in exactly the same way it does not mean that our country must play the role of a political eunuch. . . . On the contrary, we view nonalignment

¹⁹Ibid., p. 10.

²⁰The Soviets had good reason to fear backsliding. According to Jiri and Virginia Valenta, they probably knew of the power struggle going on within the New JEWEL Movement in September-October 1983. See their "Leninism in Grenada," *Problems of Communism*, July-August 1984, pp. 1-23, esp. pp. 20-23.

²¹U.S. Department of State, DOS document 000008, p. 2.

as a positive ideological current, which arouses us to take a principled and decisive position on international problems.²²

Grenada, Bishop made clear, would associate nonalignment with revolution--the Soviet definition of the nonaligned movement, not that of its founders.²³

The Grenadan revolutionary government was thus able to serve the Soviets in one surrogate role. The poor state of its economy and armed forces, however, precluded its cooperating with the Soviets in economic aid projects and military actions abroad. In fact, the weakness of Grenada's central government as a revolutionary force probably would have precluded its sending its resources abroad, even if the armed forces or economy had been stronger. The basis for Soviet-Grenadan cooperation depended heavily on Grenada's attraction as an outpost from which the Soviets could project power in the Caribbean region.

²²Quoted in Jacobs (1983), p. 8.

²³For the origins of the nonaligned movement, see Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World*, Princeton U. Press, Princeton, N.J., 1970.

V. CONCLUSIONS

LESSONS OF THE SOVIET EXPERIENCE

The cohesion of cooperative links between the USSR and its clients in the third world depends on four conditions: (1) the client state serves as a Soviet outpost of empire; (2) the client state receives the bulk of its strategic goods from the USSR; (3) the client state's government inspires Soviet confidence; and (4) the client state has a well-developed economy and/or professional military establishment. In addition, congruence in the interests of the two sides provides firm incentives for cooperation. These incentives, in turn, help to explain the process by which a client state becomes a Soviet surrogate.

Cuba has the broadest basis for cooperation of the five third world countries examined. The four conditions for Soviet-client cooperation describe the Cuban case. Cuba is a Soviet outpost of empire; it receives the bulk of its strategic goods from the USSR; it has a strong central government rooted in Marxist ideals; and it controls a well-developed military establishment.

Inducements to cooperate exist on both the Cuban and Soviet sides. Where Castro stands firm 90 miles from Florida, the Soviets acquire a means to influence events in Latin America. To preserve that means, they willingly bankroll a Cuban economy that otherwise would not survive. The investment is a good bet for the Soviets because Castro firmly controls and surely wants to continue to control the central government in Havana. Moreover, a well-trained Cuban military establishment maintains its skills in Soviet service abroad.

Cuba's strongest incentive to cooperate, however, probably derives from the extent to which its interests coincide with Moscow's. Almost from its inception, the Castro regime has sought international leadership. Its ambitions were at least partly realized in the 1970s, when it entered the conflicts in Africa as a Soviet surrogate. Its performance in these conflicts further enhanced its position with regard to Moscow, resulting in increased material support for the Cuban economy. This privileged status as a Soviet ally in turn increases the likelihood that Cuba will perform as a Soviet surrogate.

Vietnam also has a broad basis for cooperating with the Soviet Union, for the four basic conditions are present in the Soviet-Vietnamese client relationship. However, Vietnam defines its national interests as advancing control over Indochina in the face of Chinese efforts to secure a zone of influence in the region. At the same time, the Soviet Union seeks rapprochement with China. The two policies conflict when Chinese demands, as conditions for agreement with the Soviets, impinge on Vietnamese interests.

The clash between Soviet strategic policy and Vietnamese national interests will probably prevent Cuban-style cooperation between the two, at least in the foreseeable future. Even if the basic conflict of interests were resolved, Vietnam's commitment to securing Laos and Kampuchea absorbs all of the capabilities that it can muster from its own stores and Soviet aid. Vietnam's national objectives, and the rebuilding of its war-ravaged economy, leave no resources for the role of Soviet surrogate beyond Indochina.

To the Soviets, rapprochement with China takes precedence over serving its client's interests. Vietnam will probably continue to support the Soviets, however, as long as that support does not give China an advantage over Vietnam.

Nicaragua, Syria, and Grenada have (or had) less reason than Cuba and Vietnam for cooperation with the Soviets. Only one condition for cooperating with the Soviets applies to all three: The Soviet Union supplies strategic goods to each. Otherwise, they had neither strong Marxist governments nor reliable military establishments. Syria, moreover, cannot be considered a Soviet outpost of empire. The three clearly have had cooperative relationships with the Soviets, especially in international political forums. However, they probably neither could nor would regularly assume more taxing surrogate roles.

The narrow basis for cooperation in these cases probably precludes the operation of other incentives. Soviet superpower interests would have little chance of coinciding with Nicaraguan, Syrian, and (formerly) Grenadan national ambitions. The exceptions seem to depend largely on geopolitics. Nicaragua is and Grenada was a Soviet outpost in the western hemisphere. In a region dominated by the United States, the two

have no one to turn to but Cuba should the Soviet Union fail to support their interests. Castro's resources are limited, however, and his relationship with the Soviets is currently close. He would thus be unlikely to overshoot a Soviet commitment in any radical way. Perhaps this is one reason why Cuban resistance to the U.S. invasion of Grenada did not continue, despite contrary predictions.

The Syrians, in contrast, can take their interests elsewhere if they and the Soviets fail to agree. They might, as Sadat did in the 1970s, turn to the United States or another Western power. Or, they might turn elsewhere in the Middle East. Syria is neither a Soviet outpost nor a Marxist state, so it need not limit itself in choosing an alternative to the Soviet Union. If it is concerned about obtaining spare parts for Soviet weaponry, the Egyptian case illustrates that the problem can be overcome.

These cases leave a definite impression that the Soviets have yet to find a surefire means of turning a client relationship into reliable surrogate performance. Even when the factors underlying cohesion and the necessary incentives seem to be operating on both sides, the Soviets cannot be certain that a client will remain committed to performing a number of surrogate roles.

The uncertainty of the surrogate relationship seems to stem from shifting perceptions of national interests. A client's idea of what is important for his national survival and advancement changes over time. Hence, even if the Soviets are fairly certain today that Castro identifies Cuban national aspirations with the goals of the Soviet bloc, tomorrow they may find that he has found an opening from the West to be attractive.

Although Castro would certainly find it risky to defy his major strategic supplier in a big way, he may, as he has in the past, attempt to diversify his sources as well as his international contacts. As a result, he may become less willing to take on major operations as a Soviet surrogate in the third world.¹ Furthermore, Castro may find his goals shifting as the result of Cuban experiences in these countries.

¹Edward Gonzalez points out, however, that the Cubans actually have few alternatives to the USSR as a strategic ally, because the Soviets both supply high levels of economic support and allow Havana the freedom

If Cuba's long-term experience as a Soviet surrogate in Angola becomes a national burden, for example, the value of such adventures in Cuban eyes may rapidly decline.

Likewise, the Soviets may discover Cuba's value as a surrogate to be limited in certain circumstances. If, for example, the Cuban armed forces faced defeat, Western perceptions of the Warsaw Pact's military power might erode. The Soviets thus might seek to discourage the Cubans from further combat, while the Cubans remained determined to proceed. In this case, the greatest Soviet strategic worry, the status of the Warsaw Pact, would interfere with Cuban national goals and objectives. With the means to achieve their objectives curtailed, the Cubans might refuse to cooperate fully with the Soviets in the third world.

Thus, the Soviets cannot guarantee surrogate performance. They can improve the likelihood that a client will perform by (1) giving him incentives and (2) ensuring that he meets certain basic requirements for reliability and availability of resources, especially skilled cadres of military and aid personnel. Satisfaction of these requirements in essence provides a basis for the Soviet decision to attempt to use a client in a surrogate role. Neither incentives nor requirements, however, ensure that the client will perform.

The nature of the various surrogate roles may give some notion of what the Soviets can expect from a surrogate. Each country considered here has performed the least stressing surrogate role, i.e., supporting the Soviet Union in the international political arena. To perform this role consistently, a country need only speak up for the Soviets in international forums. For Soviet clients, this option clearly costs little in terms of their national interests.

Only Cuba and Vietnam have cooperated with the Soviet Union in the more stressing economic and military aid projects. These well-established, strong Marxist states can send resources abroad without triggering internal dissent or threatening their ability to handle local rebellions. Economic burdens do constrain the aid that they can offer, however. Cuba limits its assistance mostly to trained personnel;

to pursue its preferred foreign policy. See Edward Gonzalez, *A Strategy for Dealing with Cuba in the 1980s*, The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif., R-2954-DOS, September 1982, pp. 49-52.

Vietnam operates almost exclusively in Indochina. Therefore, their willingness to cooperate with the Soviets on aid projects is tempered by national concerns for the health of their economies.

Cooperation in the most stressing role, military combat abroad, has likewise applied only to Cuba and Vietnam. Vietnam's surrogate performance has been muddied, however, by its leaders' stubborn pursuit of their national interests in the face of Soviet efforts to improve relations with China. It is often unclear whose interests the Vietnamese are pursuing in Laos and Kampuchea.

In recent years, only the Cubans have consistently seemed to be serving a wide spectrum of Soviet interests in the third world. They have spared the Soviets direct involvement in international politics, foreign aid, and military campaigns abroad. They have often performed in situations where Soviet action would have been imprudent or impossible. This cooperation seems to be based today on Cuban indebtedness combined with an extraordinary congruence of Soviet and Cuban interests. Havana has advanced its own international policies through cooperative ventures with the USSR.

The Soviet experience suggests four overall conclusions:

1. A great power soliciting surrogate performance from a client must attempt to determine how the client perceives his national interests. If they relate to the client's willingness to cooperate, the great power should consider how best to further them or, at least, how best to prevent them from clashing with his own goals.
2. A client's geographic location strongly influences his urge to cooperate. If he lies near a great power, then he will frequently be ready to cooperate with a strategic opponent of that power so as to protect himself from his powerful neighbor.
3. A client's indebtedness for strategic goods can strongly influence his willingness to cooperate, especially under pressure. To determine the degree of influence, the price and availability of a commodity on the world market must be considered. Hence, the Soviet Union as the supplier of oil has greater leverage on its clients than does the United States as

a supplier of grain. The incentives in this situation strongly depend on a client's price and supply alternatives.

4. For more taxing surrogate roles than, say, support in international forums, the surrogate must offer the great power certain incentives. Thus, a great power should attempt to use a client in aid or combat operations only if it meets the following conditions:

- First, the client regime must control a strong central government, the ideology of which is compatible with the ideological commitments of the great power. A strong government without internal strife to drain his resources ensures that the client will be able to maintain his commitment to a surrogate task.
- Second, the client must possess an industrial base and/or military establishment well enough organized to provide resources for activities beyond the country's borders.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES

The Soviet experience clearly shows the sponsor-client relationship to be one of enormous complexity. The complexity increases when the sponsor attempts to translate the relationship into some form of surrogate cooperation. Although a client may be willing to play a surrogate role, the sponsor must decide whether the result is worth the price. A great power can provide incentives, but beyond those incentives a client's participation is motivated by his own interests--interests that the sponsor can never fully control. He can channel them or even attempt to change the client's perceptions of them, but ultimately the client's own calculation of advantage prevails.

These conclusions have certain important implications for the United States: U.S. policymakers can successfully use surrogates in the third world; indeed they may be required to in future world conflicts.² However, they should not underestimate the taxing requirements for transforming a client into an effective surrogate.

²Stephen T. Hosmer's study *Constraints on U.S. Strategy in Third World Conflict* (The Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif., R-3208-AF,

A potential surrogate must qualify on a basic level with a strong central government, viable economy, and trained military establishment. The United States must possess the means to influence him, whether as a strategic supplier, bulwark against the Soviet bloc, or partner willing to consider his national interests. Finally, and most important, the client's national interests cannot conflict with or prevent the United States from achieving the goals of U.S. strategy. If, for example, the client intends to control events in a region, the policies that he undertakes to achieve that objective should not prevent the United States from dealing effectively with the Soviet Union or China.

In attempting to use a client in a surrogate role, the United States will probably not be able to meet these stringent requirements consistently. As a result, U.S. policymakers must be willing to accept the risk that a client will perform inadequately or not at all. Indeed, uncertainties remain even if all requirements are met, because a client's perceptions of his interests shift over time. The United States must therefore accept the need to adjust policies that require foreign surrogates, or to quickly abandon them when they fail. Surrogates are an important element of great power strategies in the developing world, but the Soviet experience shows that they are a risky one.

forthcoming, pp. 54-75) suggests this necessity. See also Charles Wolf, Jr., "Beyond Containment: Reshaping U.S. Policies Toward the Third World," Discussion Paper No. 98, California Seminar on International Security and Foreign Policy, Santa Monica, Calif., September 1982.

