

SOVIET UNION SET TO BREAK STALEMATE IN THE MIDEAST

Jan. 1 (IPS)--In a dramatic shift of their Mideast policy, the Soviet government announced Monday that the scheduled visit of Soviet party chief Leonid Brezhnev to Egypt has been "postponed indefinitely." This refusal by the Soviets to continue to lend public support for the U.S.-backed Egyptian government makes the future of the regime of President Anwar el-Sadat extremely uncertain. European wire services reported yesterday that rioting had broken out in Cairo, with police using tear gas to quell violent demonstrations of workers protesting high food prices.

The cancellation of the Brezhnev trip, announced at the conclusion of a three-day visit by Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmi to Moscow, was coupled with a sharp attack on the "private ownership tendency" in Rockefeller-controlled Egypt's economic policies in the pages of the Soviet party newspaper Pravda Dec. 28.

Situation Until Now

With the cancellation of the trip, the Soviets have opened the possibility for an immediate reversal of the current slide toward overwhelming Rockefeller dominance in the Mideast. Up until this point, Mideast strategists of the Rockefeller faction have relied on the assumption that the Soviets would generally give undifferentiated support to any Arab or Palestinian nationalist who maintained a credible "anti-imperialist" cover. In the most notorious case, the Soviets have in the past ignored the abundant evidence that Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat is working in collaboration with the CIA in the hope that Arafat's anti-American posturings were somehow legitimate.

Up until this point, Rockefeller strategists had planned to use the Soviet's tacit or explicit support for CIA-controlled "nationalists" to cover for another engineered Arab-Israeli war. Such a war, and the inevitable oil price rise hoax that would follow, are necessary for Rockefeller financial interests to continue to restructure the world economy.

The New Mideast Battleground

By challenging the Rockefeller strategy on the Egyptian issue, the Soviets have stopped the Mideast from remaining a controlled environment of undifferentiated Arab nationalism for Rockefeller and have transformed the area into a real battleground for socialist politics. On one side, the Rockefeller forces must quickly consolidate a regional machine--a new Persian Empire under the CIA figurehead Shah of Iran, stretching from Teheran to Cairo--capable of administering the slave-labor projects designated for the area and capable of keeping potent Soviet influence out.

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On the other side, by beginning to isolate the phony progressives of Egypt, the Soviets have struck a heavy blow at the weaker end of the proposed Teheran-Cairo axis. It is clear from the news of large-scale arms deals from Iran to Egypt published last week, that the CIA's Shah had hoped to quickly consolidate the military aspect of his "progressive," anti-communist axis before the Soviets thought the better of it. With the withdrawal of Soviet support for the CIA-ordered maneuvers of Egypt, not only is this consolidation jeopardized, but the Soviets can immediately begin to reassert their influence in the area.

This allows the Soviets to stop their simply defensive reflex actions and to move firmly for a full strategic victory in the Mideast.

The pivotal Shah is already in a weakened position due to his overextension, and because the development projects upon which his police state rule depends are stalled, Soviet moves have greatly enhanced this weakness. With the question of progress for the Mideast now in doubt in the minds of Arab and Israeli workers and independent politicians, the Soviets have the ability to immediately sweep the area up into a socialist program for growth. By mobilizing Iraq, their only remaining ally in the area, along with other pro-socialist Mideast forces, the Soviets could begin the drive to integrate most Mideast nations into Comecon, the East bloc's economic community. If Comecon offered these nations a full anti-austerity, growth program--for which the community would have to appropriate at least key features of the International Caucus of Labor Committees' program for food production and fusion power development--the slave-labor resettlement projects of the Shah, Sadat, and Arafat would be put in their proper, genocidal perspective.

Forcing the battle to that level, the Soviets would only have to aim the sharp polemics they are currently using against Rockefeller's "progressives" within the European left at Rocky's Mideast agents. Such a propaganda drive under these circumstances would make all of these figures--particularly the high-profile Shah--dangerous liabilities to the Rockefeller forces.

These probabilities have not been lost on the Rockefeller strategists. But, with the development projects in a holding pattern and control of what was to be a "controlled depression" questionable, Rockefeller spokesmen have only been able to muster outrage devoid of content. As unsure as Rockefeller is about what should be said or done in the situation, many spokesmen have reverted to "diplomatic" nonsense talk and blustering anti-communism.

Usually a staid mouthpiece for Rockefeller international doctrine, the U.S. State Department has been hysterical. Typical was the State Department briefing on Dec. 30 by spokesman Paul Hare. To reporters' questions on the postponement of Brezhnev's visit to Egypt, Hare dispensed a continuous string of "No comment's."

Suddenly--in mid-sentence--Hare was called to the telephone to speak with Undersecretary of State and former CIA official Joseph Sisco--who reminded Hare that State "would have nothing to say about the Brezhnev cancellation." Hare compounded this obvious paranoia by returning with the lame cover that "It was my girlfriend" on the phone!

As rumors mounted during the week that Brezhnev would cancel his trip, the Western press corps--fed by Beirut rumors--began spreading the lie that the Soviet-Egyptian rift was only a minor disagreement and that the Soviets had offered Egypt MIG-25 jet fighters, an entirely phony report. An official Soviet news agency Tass communique issued Dec. 30 soundly denounced the Western press for "speculation about the state and prospects of Soviet-Arab relations."

Although unwilling to make public their full fears, the traditionally right-wing press in Europe is emphatically pointing to the Soviet moves as a danger signal. The British Daily Telegraph warned after Brezhnev's cancellation that "if America does not succeed in persuading Israel to make...concessions, Sadat will be in trouble. So long as America produces movement, Sadat can survive."

The Telegraph, echoing more well-known Rockefeller conduits at the New York Times and the Washington Post, has attempted to mobilize some renewed Geneva peace talks. Although it is clear that the Rockefeller forces have no immediate response to the Soviets, it is believed that if the Soviets can be sucked into a "tradeoff" in Geneva, then they can be limited to simple attacks on the expendable Sadat "for the sake of peace in the Mideast."

The same Rockefeller spokesmen are not leaking, however, that under the current drive the Soviets could use the Geneva talks as a platform--with representatives of the Palestinians and Israelis present--for Mideast socialist redevelopment and Comecon integrations.

Possibly aware of this option, Rockefeller forces are arming the area heavily, hoping to intimidate the Soviets with hardware and are covering for this with "red scare" propaganda. The lead editorial of the Washington Post Dec. 30 claimed, "Is it really in the United States' interests to be supporting what can only be described as Iranian imperialism? Perhaps so. The U.S. has cultivated Iran as a regional power to counter radical and Soviet influence." A column in the same issue of the Post indicates the horror with which the Rockefeller forces view a possible socialist Mideast, claiming that the Soviets are merely attempting to fulfill the imperialist designs of the Czar!

Despite such tough talk, however, the United States is hardly in total control. Rule based on naked military might and despotic tyrants such as the Shah is naturally unstable and apt to crumble in the face of a concerted Soviet programmatic offensive. The

West German Communist Party, singling out the prime target in Rocky's Mideast rogue's gallery, has already strongly attacked the Shah, calling him the "despot on the peacock throne" in a searing article in its paper *Unsere Zeit*.

PCF LEFT TURN NETS GAINS IN PLANT VOTES

PARIS, Jan. 1 (IPS)--French workers have shown their support for the left turn of the French Communist Party (PCF) and its organizing drive by giving their votes to candidates of the PCF-affiliated trade union federation, the CGT, in recent factory elections.

These vote totals give the lie to recent statements by CGT head and PCF Politburo member, George Seguy, that the PCF polemic against the Socialist Party and its austerity policies had gotten workers "worried."

The CGT made significant gains at the expense of the CIA-controlled CFDT and right-wing unions at several plants. At the major truck works in Berliet, the CGT gained nearly 4 per cent while the CFDT lost nearly 2 per cent compared to 1972 figures. At the Petrole D'Aquitaine (oil company) in Paris, increased votes gave the CGT a plurality of delegates.

In Marseilles, the CGT picked up an additional 10 per cent in voting among transit workers. In the steel plant of Meurth and Moselie, the CGT registered 14 per cent gains; at the Peugeot Vesoul auto plant the CGT gained 5 per cent.

Reports in the PCF's weekly journal, *France Nouvelle*, indicate that PCF-CGT cadre are responding to the left turn by acting like mass organizers. CP journalist Henri Malberg wrote that workers cells are taking "new and diverse" initiatives--like organizing rallies at plant gates.

PCF cadre are briefing workers about the political situation and PCF program over bullhorns, while others leaflet wearing signs. According to Malberg, PCF literature tables have attracted clusters of militants who are debating working-class politics.

The PCF "is considering all workers of the plant as the organic base of the Party." "Politics," Malberg writes, "is not the business of a minority but the concern of all workers."

This motion being generated by the PCF is currently determining political life in France, challenging even the peasant base of the Gaullist party. However, in the absence of clear programmatic direction, this motion will quickly dissipate.

The European Labor Committees, the only other force moving and whose program has already been a significant factor in determining the course of the left turn, is capable of providing the necessary direction.