

## Editorial Comment

by Nora Hamerman

### A case of dangerous stupidity

It is common knowledge among intelligence circles that the Soviet government not only had nothing to do with bringing Khomeini to power in Iran, but also fully understands the British sponsorship of this prophet of feudalism.

This Soviet understanding did not prevent certain directors of Persian-language Radio Moscow from opportunistically broadcasting support for the 'anti-American' actions of the Ayatollah. Some official Soviet spokesmen, such as Central Committee member Vadim Zagladin, support the ayatollah's religious movement as a legitimate revolt against repression.

NATO's Alexander Haig has announced that he expects the USSR to collapse "without a shot" due to nationalist, religious, and economic protest movements. If the Soviets are guided by the thinking of Zagladin, Haig could prove absolutely right.

Zagladin has said that "in general, the events in the Muslim world are events which are quite justified. ... In this region there is economic, social and political backwardness, and all this is beginning to budge...."

Zagladin is pushing a factional position within the Soviet government. As a man responsible for relations with overseas parties not in power, Zagladin is one of the most prominent Soviet apologists for the Club of Rome, the thinktank of the New Dark Ages. He works with British intelligence agent Kim Philby who, as an Arabist, would have a role in formulating Zagladin's line.

Unfortunately, given the official Marxist-Leninist line on religion, there is no way to be sure whether Zagladin is a conscious agent or an oaf peddling the line's.

The problem is encapsulated in a Nov. 16 *Pravda* article, "Religion and the World Today." The article's author M. Mchedlov uses the "objective-subjective" dichotomy typical of Marxism-Leninism. Religion, he says, provides a subjective "conservative social function" in the face of "objective" material reasons for revolt.

Mchedlov finds that in Afghanistan, Islam is centered in feudal landholders. But in Iran, the landless peasants and urban unemployed are the Islamic shocktroops. Thus the Muslim Brotherhood's Afghan branch he excoriates as reactionary, but in Iran it is "progressive" because of the objective material deprivation of its adherents!

Contrary to Adam Smith and his deluded Marxist-Leninist followers, man is not motivated by "objective, material conditions," but by an overriding sense of identity located in a social movement or system. If the sense of identity is bestial—as in Iran's backward peasantry—the masses are easily manipulated into a movement dedicated to destroying the symbols of civilization. This principle of manipulation, wielded by British intelligence, lies behind the fundamentalist movements sweeping the Christian, Jewish and Islamic religions.

What Soviet materialists and their Western counterparts don't understand is that the mainstream of Christianity, Islam and Judaism has been used to reinforce a *human* sense of identity, appealing to man's impulse to perfect himself through mastering nature and building a better future for mankind. This 'city-builder' tendency was shared by non-religious leaders as well—such as the Russian revolutionary, Lenin.

The Khomeini mob is anti-American only because America provided most of the industry, science and cities in Iran. Can it become anti-Soviet, as Haig and his various fellow geopoliticians predict? By Mchedlov's criteria, a revolt against "objective" economic deprivation in the U.S.S.R.'s Muslim-dominated Central Asian Republics could only be considered progressive.

Such scripts are by no means out of the question, if Moscow does not help to defuse the satanic cults, parading as religions, through which the oligarchy has pledged to bring industrial society down into rubble. But to do that, the Soviets' blunders must be corrected *epistemologically*.