

Mother Russia by Luba George

An empire of 'bantustans'

Gorbachov's outrageous call for "homelands" for American blacks is nothing new in the Russian ideology.

During the recent Moscow visit of the U.S. congressional delegation led by Jim Wright (D-Tex.), an extensive meeting was held with General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov on April 17. At one point in the discussion, Gorbachov recommended that the ideal solution for the "black question"—and other minorities—in the United States would be the creation of an autonomous black state.

"Our Soviet system of autonomous republics is based on ethnic background and culture," he said. "We have regions named for minorities such as Tartars, Jews, and Chukchi Indians. We have respect for our nationalities in this country. Why don't you have such autonomous states for blacks, Puerto Ricans, and the Polish?"

This brutally racist statement, which shocked the congressmen present, was no aberration on the part of Gorbachov, but expressed the essence of "Great Russian" attitudes concerning ethnic and racial questions, both before and after the Bolshevik Revolution.

Soon after the Revolution, Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky authored a Comintern pamphlet calling for the establishment of an "autonomous" homeland for American blacks, in Alabama and Mississippi.

On this point, Trotsky was thoroughly in line with Lenin, and later Stalin. It has been the official Soviet policy ever since, as evidenced in the writings of today's top Soviet ethnographer, Julian Bromley. Bromley is the Director of the Miklukho-Maklai

Institute of Ethnography at the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. The Ethnography Institute has for years maintained the most meticulous records of ethnic groups, tribes, and minorities, and their corresponding pre-Christian primitive belief structure, around the world. The records include detailed studies on inter-ethnic animosities and conflicts, which can be manipulated to dismember nation-states, particularly in the developing sector.

In a document titled "Soviet Ethnography Today" (published in *Social Sciences*, Vol. VII, No. 1, 1976), Academician Bromley writes: "Soon after Soviet power was established, Lenin noted the need, in connection with the preparations for the demarcation of Central Asia, for, among other things, a *special ethnographic map* of 'Turkestan with a subdivision into Uzbekia, Kirghizia, and Turkmenia.' In the 1920s, Soviet ethnographers completed a number of ethnographic maps of multinational regions of the U.S.S.R. and later *they began preparing ethnic maps of all parts of the globe*. . . . Soviet ethnographers and ethnodemographers are now jointly compiling an 'Atlas of the Population of the World,' the numerous maps of which will spatially record the basic ethnic and demographic indicators of all peoples of our planet."

Under Gorbachov, Bromley continues to play a leading role as the Soviet nomenklatura's "in-house" racist ethnographer. More recently, he has authored policy papers emphasizing

the need to drastically lower the "high Muslim birth rates" in the Soviet Union, and the need for "mass resettlement" of laborers from the Muslim "labor surplus regions" to Siberia and other "labor deficit" regions.

Every Soviet citizen has an internal passport, which records, distinct from his "citizenship" in the U.S.S.R., his "nationality"—Uzbek, Jew, Russian, etc.

Further, Soviet denunciations of South African "apartheid" are a patent fraud. The Soviet concept of "ethnic maps" is directly parallel to the South African "bantustan," or "black homeland." In the Muslim Republics (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tadjikistan, Kirghizia, Azerbaidjan), the direct parallels with the apartheid system go even further. The Russian ethnic population residing in those Muslim Republics is urban-centered, living in "Russian districts" (the equivalent of South Africa's "white townships.") The Russian population in these areas is composed primarily of party functionaries, managerial elites, and skilled workers. Nearly all manual and rural labor is done by the "natives."

How far the Soviet mania for creating a "bantustan" for every ethnic group has gone, can be illustrated in Stalin's policy regarding the "Jewish question." Unlike other ethnic minorities in the Russian empire, the Jews were dispersed and had no territory that could be turned into a "homeland." In the 1920s, Stalin created a "promised land" for the Jews far out in the Siberian East, where no Jews lived. Several tens of thousands of Jews were forceably resettled there, and overnight the "Jewish Republic of Birobidjan" was added to the long list of Soviet "bantustans."

The same racist attitude is vividly expressed in recent Soviet articles attacking the "Westernizing" influence of the Catholic Church in Africa.