

Brezhnev's 'Hardline' Speech Fits Trilateral Commission Profile

Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev appeared in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses this week to tell a trade union audience that "we will not tolerate" continued U.S. administration support for Soviet dissidents. Brezhnev's fist-banging performance fell right into a trap laid for him by President Carter and the other members of the Trilateral Commission in charge in Washington.

Brezhnev's warning against "interference in our internal affairs from any quarter under any pretext" and threat that "a normal development of relations on such a basis is, of course, inconceivable" fit precisely the Trilateral Commission's psychological profile of the Soviet leadership. Carter's foreign policy has been predicated on the expectation that the Kremlin would eventually explode in anger at U.S. affronts, especially Carter's ham-handed support for the dissident networks run by the man acting as Minister of Provocations, Zbigniew Brzezinski.

The Soviet General Secretary's outburst can easily be and has already been used as evidence of Soviet "intransigence" by Carter and Brzezinski. It may be expected that the text of Brezhnev's speech will be a major tool of Carter operatives trying to organize a wary U.S. Congress to consent to the administration planned new Vietnam war against "Soviet-Cuban subversion" in Africa.

The creation of this environment will likely be aided by next week's trip to Moscow by U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. If the Soviets refuse Vance's terms for a new strategic arms (SALT) agreement, expected to include demands to curtail research and development programs vital to Soviet military and economic security as well as linkage to agreement on Africa and other areas, Vance can add his voice to the clamor about "intransigence."

A Mix of Kremlin Lines

Notwithstanding propaganda to the effect that Brezhnev's warnings on the dissidents question mark his transformation into a "hardliner," the speech actually confirms that Brezhnev has a slippery grip on Soviet decision-making. The speech itself is made up of components, some contradictory, showing three different political inputs.

The "we will not tolerate" line was clearly forced upon Brezhnev by hardliners in the military and the party. This faction has characteristically asserted itself every

time the Soviet motherland appears to be decisively threatened. Its crude "stop it or we'll blow you up" response was grist for Trilateral mills.

The hard line was contradicted throughout the speech by input from the soft faction, which includes Brezhnev himself and the suspiciously pro-Brookings Institution head of the USSR's American Studies Institute, Georgii Arbatov. Brezhnev added his personal touch with a remark, after all the tough warnings, that Soviet-American relations will assuredly turn out satisfactorily in the long run. More dangerous than this remark, was the nature of Brezhnev's Middle East proposal, which was formulated to counter Carter's explosive idea of "double-borders" for Israel. Brezhnev reportedly confused some Arab leaders by failing to mention the Palestinian Liberation Organization as he called for reconvening the Geneva Peace Conference. This suggested that the Soviets might drop what the Arabs consider a crucial element of any peace negotiations and thereby strengthen the hand of the warhawks in the U.S. and Israel.

The final voice in Brezhnev's presentation was that closest to sanity. At points in the speech there were statements made from neither a paranoid sabre-rattling nor a capitulationist perspective: this was the voice of that faction of the Warsaw Pact leadership which fairly well understands the Trilateral Commission's scheme to box them in. This faction is committed to breaking out of the Trilateral box by offering the socialist sector's transfer ruble as a means of replacing the dollar monetary system whose bankruptcy is driving the world to war. It was from this standpoint of reality that the speech included analysis which correctly linked the current machinations in Zaire "by NATO countries," the assassination of Congo President Nguouabi and Lebanese leftist leader Jumblatt, and the "operations being conducted against the socialist world" as part of a unified imperialist plan.

The continuing activity of this faction was indicated as well by the emphatic support expressed by Soviet ally Fidel Castro as he toured the African continent for speedy establishment of a new world economic order and implementation of the Colombo resolutions of the non-aligned movement. In Europe, journalists with and without Communist Party connections raised the prospect of transfer ruble financing of international trade as an issue still very much alive.