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COLD WAR OPERATIONS: THE POLITICS OF COMMUNIST CONFRONTATION



Part X: Communism in the Near East and South Asia

by

Professor Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, Jr.

(A series of lectures by Professor Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, Jr. of the Political Science Department, Brown University, given at the United States Naval War College as a part of the Electives Program. These lectures are selected from those in a course entitled *Cold War Operations* which Professor Kirkpatrick presents at Brown. The original series, which consisted of eight lectures, was given during the 1966-67 term. For the present term, Professor Kirkpatrick presents four additional lectures. Thus, the series is expanded to twelve lectures. This is the tenth lecture, and the others will appear in the next two issues.)

Any attempt to describe the role of communism in an area that extends from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Bengal, more than 4,000 miles, and from the southern borders of the Soviet Union to Africa is bound to be difficult. This geography includes the second most populous nation in the world, India; eight republics: Ceylon, Cyprus, India, Israel, Lebanon, Pakistan, Turkey, and Yemen; eight monarchies;

Afghanistan, Greece, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, the Maldive Islands, Nepal, and Saudi Arabia; and two nations in which there is military rule or a one-party state, Iraq and Syria. It is a region fraught with strife: national rivalries; India and Pakistan over the Kashmir; Israel and the Arab States; religious rivalries, in India and Ceylon; minority problems, in India, Iraq, Iran and Turkey; civil war in Cyprus and Yemen.

The Near East and South Asia are composed almost exclusively of nations in the process of development and, except for the oil-rich states of the Arabian Peninsula, of countries with serious economic problems. Until World War II it was an area in which British influence was extremely strong and acted as a restraint to constant Russian efforts to extend their interests.

In recent years, with British influence diminishing, the Soviet Union has aggressively attempted to expand its influence both politically and economically with considerable success.

Russia has aspired to be a Mediterranean power and the Soviet Union now maintains a fleet on that sea, thanks to port facilities provided by the United Arab Republic. By making itself an Arab arsenal and providing arms for the United Arab Republic, Iraq, and Syria, the Soviet Union has become a major factor in the Arab-Israeli dispute (not too unusual in view of the fact that the Communists regard Zionism as one of their dangerous enemies). United Arab Republic President Nasser's prolonged visit to the Soviet Union in July 1968 can be viewed as not only the requirement to pay the piper but perhaps even more important to determine the tune. The Soviet Union was obviously less than enchanted with their protégé's defeat by Israel in the 5-day war of June 1967 and the loss of about a billion dollars worth of military equipment.

The Soviet Union and Romania have been actively acquiring oil rights in the Middle East, undoubtedly with the farsighted view of avoiding depletion of their own reserves. (Between 1966 and 1970 the Soviet Union will deliver a billion barrels of oil to Eastern Europe.) The Soviets have an agreement to assist Iran in oil exploration in the Caspian Sea area in return for a portion of any crude oil produced. They also have an exploration contract with Iraq and a service contract with Syria. Romania has a contract for 9 million tons of oil

from Saudi Arabia.

Oil is not the only Soviet economic interest in the Middle East. It has a \$550 million agreement with Iran to construct a steel mill in return for 20,000 cubic meters of natural gas per year for 15 years. The Russians have offered to build a million-ton steel mill in West Pakistan and a nuclear power station in East Pakistan. They are the principal supplier of arms to India, and there have been reports that they have offered the Indians submarines in exchange for use of the naval base at Visakhapatnam. The Russians may also supply arms to Pakistan, using the accrued goodwill of having brought a cease-fire in the Kashmir in 1965 to deal equally with both countries.

The Russians have irritated the Chinese by their activities on the Indian subcontinent which Peking would prefer to have exclusively within their sphere of influence. But despite intensive activity on the part of both of the major Communist powers, the relative influence of the Communist Parties in the area has been an inconstant factor. Russian policy has been to allow the indigenous Communist Parties to try to gain political power through electoral means with support from the Embassies of the Soviet Union carefully concealed. Chinese policy, at least up until the time it was interrupted in 1966 by the power struggle inside China, was much more blatant and provocative, counseling violence and action. In India, especially, the result has been split and fragmentation of the Communist effort.

There follows a summary of Communist activity in the countries in the area:

Afghanistan. An hereditary constitutional monarchy in which the king retains effective political control. There is no organized Communist Party and no evidence of activity despite considerable aid and assistance from the Soviet Union, the eastern European countries, and China, including exten-

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sive cultural exchanges. The Soviet Union for many years has made large contributions of economic aid and has been predominant in the military assistance program. It has built a pipeline from Afghanistan to the new industrial centers in Soviet Central Asia which will be paid for by large-order deliveries of natural gas.

Ceylon. In the election of 1965 the Communist Party of Ceylon, which is pro-Moscow, polled 109,684 votes out of more than four million cast and elected four representatives of a total of 151. This contrasts to a total of 1,647,330 votes and 54 seats for the parties of the non-Communist left, and 1,722,710 and 70 seats for the center. One of the parties of the non-Communist left, the Lanka Sama Samaja, is Trotskyite, but has never been affiliated with an international Communist movement. The Communists have attempted to exploit anti-Western feelings as well as economic, language, and communal issues, but the latter has cost them support among the Tamil elements of the population. The Communist effort is weakened by factionalism. While the pro-Moscow element is most numerous, the pro-Peking faction controls the Ceylon Trade Union Federation. Principal Communist support is among the laborers, profession, and the youth.

Cyprus. Ever since becoming an independent republic in 1960, Cyprus has been torn by communal strife between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Communist activity is concentrated in the Greek Cypriot element, there being no organized Communist Party among the Turks. The "Reform Party of the Working People" is Communist and as a result of a deal with the Conservative "Patriotic Front" was given five of the 35 Greek seats (the Turks have 15 seats) in the House of Representatives, and three of 29 seats in the Greek Communal Chamber (the Turks have a separate communal chamber). The Reform

Party of the Working People is the most effective political unit on Cyprus, controlling the principal labor organization, a large youth group including secondary school students and a farm union.

Greece. At the present time a military junta tightly controls all political activity in Greece, and all Communists and suspected Communists are in prison. During the civil war in Greece in 1947 the Communist Party (KKE) and its labor, youth, and other front organizations were outlawed. Following the end of the war in 1949 the United Democratic Left, a legal political party, became the Communist front organization and polled an average of 14 percent of the vote in the national elections reaching a high of nearly 25 percent in 1958. In the last election of February 1964 the United Democratic Front polled 542,865 of 4,588,892 votes cast and won 22 seats in the unicameral parliament of 300 seats.

India. The second most populous nation in the world with close to a half a billion people, increasing at an annual rate of 2 percent, is faced with serious economic and political problems which could have contributed to major Communist successes, but of which the Communists have been unable to take advantage due to their feuding and factionalism.

India achieved its independence in 1947 probably better prepared for nationhood than any of the other new nations in the modern era. It had well-developed political institutions, a high level of literacy, an articulate middle class, a high rate of urbanization, and an expanding pool of qualified manpower. On this base there appeared to exist a good probability for the development of an effective and stable society.

The country was not without problems, however. In dividing the subcontinent with Pakistan to create one primarily Moslem nation and one pri-

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marily Hindu, it was necessary to divide Pakistan geographically, and obviously both countries still had sizable religious minorities. Communal disturbances of considerable magnitude rocked both countries after independence and still persist, including the bleeding issue of Kashmir, claimed by both. Within India regionalism and States rights became a serious issue with language becoming the focus for controversy. Oddly enough, another problem was created by the 46 universities and 1,946 colleges of the country as more graduates were produced than could be gainfully employed, creating added discontent in the middle class.

The governmental system provides for a President elected for a 5-year term by an electoral college consisting of the members of the Council of States, the senior body in the federal legislature, the members of the House of the People, the lower house in the federal legislature, and the elected members of the lower houses of the 16 federated states. The Council of States is a permanent body not subject to dissolution, with one-third of the members replaced every 2 years. The House of the People is elected on a national basis for 5-year terms, but may be dissolved by the President and new elections called.

The Communist Party of India was founded in 1924 by Marxist intellectuals and for approximately the next 23 years was a protege of the British Communist Party with only limited relations with Moscow. It was dominated by the intellectuals, but was very active with labor. In 1927 it gained control of unions at the Indian All Union Trade Union Congress but lost most of this influence within 2 years. After Indian independence the Party adopted an antigovernment line but in 1952 switched to a policy of attempting to win power through electoral means. In that election the Communists won 23 seats, the Socialists 12, and the Congress Party 362 out of a total of 489. Its

success in some state elections was more pronounced with 62 of 375 seats in the Madras legislature and 42 of 175 in Hyderabad.

While the Congress Party continued to dominate Indian politics at both the national and state levels, the Communists won control of the state government of Kerala in 1957, their first success in gaining control by parliamentary means. Their control was to last only 2 years, until 1959, when acting under federal authority Nehru took over the government of Kerala because of the inability of the Communists to govern. However, in the 1967 elections in Kerala the Communists with six other parties in a United Front returned to power winning 113 of 133 seats while the Congress Party won only nine.

The 1967 elections constituted the most severe setback for the Congress Party in the history of India. It won control of only seven of 15 state legislatures at stake. In several states the Communists formed coalitions with the Jana Singh (Hindu Party) and Swatantra (Conservative Party). In West Bengal the Indian Communist Party-left (pro-Peking) polled the second largest vote, but there were enough defections to the Congress Party to cost the opposition a majority. There was a tremendous amount of party switching after the 1967 elections, nearly one of every 10 legislators changing allegiance at least once.

The political situation in India bears constant watching. While the Communists are handicapped at present by extreme factionalism, they could expand their present strength in the regions to the federal arena and increasingly challenge the Congress Party.

Iran. The Communists were organized into the Tudeh (Masses) Party in 1942 and attempted to organize two puppet republics in the northwest in 1945, both of which collapsed after

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withdrawal of Russian forces in 1945. In 1949 the Party was banned but continued to be active until the fall of Mossadeq in August 1953. Today the Tudeh Party's influence is negligible, and it operates primarily through a group of exiles in East Germany, but even this group has been split by a pro-Chinese faction.

Iraq. Since 1958 there has been a succession of military governments which permit only one political party, the Arab Socialist Union. The Communist Party, known as the People's Union (Ittihad Al-Sha'b), operates clandestinely and may have as many as 20,000 supporters. Iraq has been used as a base for the illegal Communist Parties of Iran, Syria and Turkey.

Israel. There are two Communist Parties, the Israel Communist Party (Maki) and the New Communist List (Rakach). The principal difference is that the Israel Communist Party favors cooperation with other socialist groups and generally supports the government while the New Communist List is pro-Arab. In the election of 1965 the Israel Communist Party polled 13,617 votes and won one seat, while the New Communist List polled 27,413 votes and won three seats. There were a total of 1,185,749 seats cast for the 120 seats in the Parliament.

Jordan. All political parties were banned after an abortive coup in 1957. The Communists have only limited influence among the young intellectuals.

Kuwait. The Lebanese Communist Party banned in 1939 by French authorities, participated unsuccessfully in the 1943 elections, was declared illegal again in 1948, but operates today with relative freedom. At the end of World War II it controlled all important trade unions but has lost most of that influence although it is still active in some unions. It is split into two factions. Beirut is a frequent meeting place of

Communist leaders from the Arab countries.

Nepal. All political parties were made illegal by royal decree in 1960, but the Communist Party of Nepal has func-

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, Jr., was born in Rochester, N.Y., educated in public schools there and at Deerfield Academy, Deerfield, Mass., and graduated from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and

International Affairs of Princeton University in 1938.

After graduation he worked for the U.S. News Publishing Corporation in Washington, D.C., as an editor and personnel director. In 1942 he joined the Office of Strategic Services and served in Europe with that organization and as a military intelligence officer on the staff of Gen. Omar Bradley's 12th U.S. Army Group where he was the G-2 briefing officer. He left the military service with the rank of major, and for his service received the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, French and Belgian Croix de Guerre, and the European Theater Ribbon with five battle stars.

After the war he returned to the U.S. News as an editor of *World Report Magazine*. In 1947 he went to work for the Central Intelligence Agency where he served in a variety of positions, including Division Chief, Assistant to the Director, Assistant Director, Inspector General, and from 1962 to 1965 was Executive Director-Comptroller. In September 1965 he resigned from CIA to accept an appointment on the faculty of Brown University in Providence, R.I., as Professor of Political Science and University Professor. His courses at Brown University include one on *Communist Cold War Operations* and one on *American Security Policy*.

In 1960 he received the National Civil Service League annual award as one of the 10 outstanding career employees of the Federal Government. In 1964 he received the President's Award for Distinguished Service, the highest award that can be given a civilian in the Federal Service.

He is the author of *The Real CIA*, published by Macmillan in January 1968, of numerous articles, and has contributed to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica Yearbook*.

tioned more or less openly. It is badly split. One faction supports the king; another advocates violent opposition. It has been successful in some organizations in the countryside.

Pakistan. The Communist Party was banned in 1954 but since then has operated clandestinely among students, labor, intellectuals, and peasants. It receives support from a frustrated left and in return supports the Combined Opposition Parties which won 11 of the 156 seats in the National Assembly in the election of March 1965. The party is split with the greatest pro-Chinese support in East Pakistan and the greatest pro-Moscow in West Pakistan.

Saudi Arabia. The government has firmly suppressed all communism and consequently the organized strength is practically nil.

Syria. This is a one-party state with control in the extremist wing of the Ba'ath Party. While only the Ba'ath is permitted to function as a legal party, there is a Communist in the Cabinet and tacit toleration of some party activities.

Turkey. The historic rivalry with Russia has tended to inhibit the influence of communism in Turkey. While there is no organized Communist Party, the Turkish Labor Party is Marxist in orientation and polled 276,101 votes (of 9,307,563) winning 15 seats of 450.

Yemen. The government accepts aid from the Soviet Union and sends students to Communist countries, but suppresses local communism. There may be a small Communist Party but it has no important influence.

COMMUNISM IN THE NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

	Legal	Active			Factions		Est. Party Strength
		Students	Labor	Rural	Chinese	Russian	
Afghanistan							None
Ceylon	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	1,900
Cyprus	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			10,000
Greece	No	Yes	Yes	Yes			27,000
India	Yes				Yes	Yes	125,000
Iran	No						1,000
Iraq	No	Yes					2,000
Israel	Yes		Yes				2,000
Jordan	No	Yes	No	No			400
Kuwait	No	No	No	No			Negligible
Lebanon	No		Yes		Yes	Yes	6,000
Nepal	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7,500
Pakistan	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3,250
Saudi Arabia	No	No	No	No			Negligible
Syria	No						3,000
Turkey	No						2,000
Yemen	No						Negligible

