

1958

## Current Soviet-Satellite Relations

Andrew Gyorgy

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

---

### Recommended Citation

Gyorgy, Andrew (1958) "Current Soviet-Satellite Relations," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 11 : No. 5 , Article 3.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol11/iss5/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu](mailto:repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu).

## **CURRENT SOVIET-SATELLITE RELATIONS**

A lecture delivered  
at the Naval War College  
on 6 November 1957 by  
*Professor Andrew Gyorgy*

Faced with this overwhelming subject, enormous both in its scope and ideological significance, the academic mind is apt to shrink away and beg for the declaration of a state of personal emergency. A year ago almost to this day, we solemnly and enthusiastically celebrated the ephemeral, but shining, victory of Hungary's freedom fighters. Today, there is little ground indeed for optimistic appraisals and exuberant expectations. For the past few months, we have been face to face with a brutal military strangulation process in satellites like Hungary, curiously matched by a political tight-rope-walking act of dubious effectiveness in countries like Poland and Yugoslavia. Instead of lightly — and even irresponsibly — projecting our own hopes into a more promising future, today must be the day for sober soul-searching and realistic stocktaking.

Before analyzing briefly the principal forces which have favored the Eastern European position and entrenchment of our Communist enemy, as well as surveying the major factors which have militated against the continued impact of Soviet rule, three sets of introductory remarks are in order as an essential preface to the main narrative.

The tragically complicated and frustrating *historic* role of the Eastern European region ought to be emphasized first of all. Truly, this area has been the classic example of a geopolitical "shatter zone," combining geographic unevenness and lack of balance with political pressures of transition, interpenetration and permanent instability. As in contemporary French politics, nothing has been continuous here except for the continuity of change. Always in the path of aggressive invaders or deep-seated demographic

fluctuations, Danubian Europe and the Balkans have appeared as exceptionally attractive areas for eventual conquest and as politico-military magnets, irresistably drawing external waves of imperialism toward them. Consider the successive rounds of a Prussian and Nazi-German *Drang Nach Osten* so promptly and disastrously matched by a Soviet-Communist *Drang Nach Westen*. Indeed, we must agree with Professor Halecki's remark, who, in his recent *Borderlands of Western Civilization*, ably summarized this steady overexposure to foreign imperialism as follows: "The pressure from two sides was unfortunately the normal condition of Eastern and Central Europe throughout the whole course of history."

Upon this substructure of history, to use a peculiar and ominous Marxist phrase, let us now place the truly shattering superstructure of the most recent revolutionary phase. Further developing the sensitive analysis of Milovan Djilas in his incendiary *The New Class*, we must stress here the simultaneous impact of a three-pronged, Communist-guided, controlled and maintained wave of revolutions. Lenin's original *revolutionary* Communism was fully replaced by Stalin's *dogmatic Communism*, which, in turn, had to yield to a *nondogmatic, pragmatic* Communist revolution appearing either in a form of a Krushchev-inspired collective leadership or of a Titoist *New Class* type of oligarchy. In Yugoslavia, as well as in the Soviet satellites of Eastern Europe, we are witnessing either the single impact of one of these revolutionary variants or the multiple combinations of its individual strands and strains.

In terms of Soviet leadership, the skillful guidance and remote-control supervision of these revolutionary waves has had a two-fold impact on the satellite world: it fashioned a military bastion for the U.S.S.R., and it helped to create a ruthless new "power élite," which has been given the obviously top-priority assignment of safeguarding the political power of Soviet Communism. This is the only goal and purpose of the most recent, *pragmatic* phase of the originally post-world War II revolution.

This new élite, which now presides over the Eastern European social system is dedicated to a single frightening *Leitmotiv*: the ruthless perpetuation of an atmosphere of social inequality. Contemporary Communism, particularly in its complex Soviet-satellite relationships, seems to thrive in this aura of total inequality of the multiclass society, so arbitrarily managed and guided by a new ownership class of great power and even greater privileges. To quote again the telling phrase of the ideologically most prominent jailbird of Eastern European Communism: "The new class is as exclusive as the aristocracy, but without aristocracy's refinement and proud chivalry." (Milovan Djilas, *The New Class*, p. 60).

As the peculiar product of the three-pronged revolution, this new class is the complete antithesis of the workers', soldiers' and peasants' society, once so enthusiastically advocated by the original Bolsheviks. Indeed, the new élite represents the total prostitution of the Leninist notion of a "classless" society, around which the modern nation-state was expected to "wither away." The new leaders of Eastern Europe do not show the slightest willingness to wither away. On the contrary, this well-entrenched Communist élite is at present firmly crystallized around four major categories: the party leadership; the economic bureaucracy; the secret police; and the professional military — these four constituting the pillars or foundations of satellite society.

The recent and ominous Zhukov-Krushchev controversy clearly pinpointed the absolute primacy of the monolithic Communist Party (or, in Eastern Europe, Workers' or United Workers' Parties). The one-class society has thus unavoidably merged into the one-party state in which the character of the all-controlling and all-pervasive *Party Omnipotent* can be conveniently portrayed under the following major headings:

1. According to Communist doctrine, the Party is supposed to represent the real will of the people,

and, in turn, the workers are supposed to place absolute reliance on the Party.

2. The Party must discipline its members and exert tight and effective self-criticism.
3. The Party must reach into the most remote villages, and, through its operations, guide domestic affairs on every level of government.
4. The Party is the final authority in the management of national foreign policy.
5. To the rank and file of its membership, the Party stands above criticism. There can be no mercy for deviationist views, and even one per cent of heresy must be considered a hundred per cent of treason. Thus, the Communist Party — at least, in the frequently reasserted expressions of its leaders — is called upon to mold the fate of all the people.

### **Principal Factors Favoring the Eastern European Position of the U.S. S. R.**

Moving from the perspective of certain academic abstractions to the practical realities of a brief "power factor" analysis, we now ought to examine four fairly closely related forces which have emerged as the principal assets of the occupying nation, the U.S.S.R., in its manifold satellite relationships.

The most elementary item, and in many ways the most obvious and direct reminder of our basic weakness and positional disadvantage in the West, is simply the time factor. From their first appearance on Rumanian and Bulgarian soil (in August and September, 1944), the Red Army forces, and subsequently Soviet occupation officials, have enjoyed an uninterrupted span of thirteen years in which to consolidate both the military and political

aspects of their rule, as well as an unceasing exploitation of the slave labor of approximately 95 million people.\* Although a mere moment in the sweep of world history, this time span is distressingly long as a prison sentence! The abundant literature of this Communist "take-over" period clearly proves that a dozen or so years are sufficient to complete a thorough *Gleichschaltung* process. This phrase refers to the truly Machiavellian combination of establishing the initial military control and domination, and then following it up by a fundamental reshaping or remolding of the psychological, social, cultural and political atmosphere of the victimized target area.

Consideration of the time factor leads us to a survey of the economic-strategic resource picture of the captive satellite region. Even the most superficial stock-taking must attach unusual importance to the massive and long-term Soviet exploitation of four principal Danubian-Balkan assets of a tremendous military significance. These are the uranium deposits of Eastern Germany, Czechoslovakia and southern Hungary, the oil resources of the Ploesti region in Rumania, the high-grade bauxite of Hungary, and last, but certainly not least, the well-developed commercial navigation network of the Danube River — Europe's second largest inland waterway, serving as an ideal outlet into the Soviet-dominated Black Sea. Placed against the perspective of our nuclear, aluminum and oil age, it seems rather unlikely that Russian power would automatically — or, under our gentle prodding, even semi-automatically — withdraw from a hegemony position of colonial possession, extraction and utilization of these prime strategic resources.

Closely related to the resource factor has been the massive exploitation of the many and varied technical skills and manpower potential of Satellite Eastern Europe. While these skills are ever-present there in an across-the-board manner, the military-industrial

---

\*It is important to note here that this figure does not include the 16.5 million people of Yugoslavia, who are Tito's captives, and not those of the Soviet Union.

needs of the occupying power define the extent or priority listing by which their development and/or exploitation is being determined. Available evidence points to the utmost use of Czech munitions (witness the original Czech-Egyptian arms agreement of 1955, concluded under Soviet auspices), the Polish textile industry, East German chemicals and optical instruments — to mention only a few of the more specialized industrial possibilities — in addition to the artificially-developed coal, iron and steel complexes or *combinats* which liberally dot the Stalinist landscape from southern Albania to northeastern Poland.

Having thus trespassed on the well-marked preserve of the economic geographer, let us now turn to a political appraisal of the viability of satellite forms of Communism. Without wanting to engage in long-term predictions, one has to recognize soberly that the seeds of a Communist infection have been thoroughly planted into Iron Curtain Europe, and have even benefited by a lengthy incubation period. The ideological assault of contemporary Communism (here we abruptly switched metaphors) has not been necessarily or inevitably of the frontal variety. Since we have already referred to the all-pervasive character of the *Party Omnipotent*, at this point the techniques of Communist encirclement — or of a quadruple pincer movement — should be stressed.

The four principal strategies of encirclement or “social outflanking” are aimed at the perpetuation of Stalinism in the basically alien and even hostile atmosphere of a satellite society. Indeed, they are designed to extend the expectations of the ideological and power system of Marxism well beyond the life span of a Stalin, a Khrushchev, a Tito, or particularly, of a Kadar. The quadruple pincers of this assault strategy comprise skillful combinations or countercombinations of the following forces:

1. The total control and *Gleichschaltung* of education, from the prenursery stage to a post-Sputnik Ph.D. in physics;

2. A fantastically-developed "agit-prop" (agitation-propaganda) apparatus, systematically mobilizing both professional (regular) propagandists and semiprofessional "oral agitators" recruited from the ranks of so-called "Party volunteers," as well as true amateurs from the housewife fringes of the social spectrum, who, instead of participation in Red Cross or cerebral palsy drives (more familiar in our civilization), are called upon to perform Stalinist-directed grass roots functions of distributing, for example, incendiary Cominform literature;
3. Infiltration of the bureaucracy, implying mass firings of professional civil servants, the cleaning out of entire Ministries and of the agencies of provincial and local government, as well as the mass replacement of these administrative "deviationists" by trusted lieutenants or sublieutenants of the regime;
4. And, finally, we must emphasize the shrewdly-nurtured, carefully-cultivated myriads of allegedly "free and unfettered" mass organizations. Whether political or nonpolitical in orientation, these are labeled "transmission belts" of the Party, and are given extraneous (non-Party) indoctrination and political mobilization assignments. In Western terminology, they would serve as clearing houses or liaison agencies between such non-Party groups as women, children, "peace" devotees, the military, and the top-level Party leadership. Professional workers' unions, trade unions, and the multiple components of youth movements are among the most notorious mass organizations. According to a recent report from Bulgaria, where



the various groups had been merged into a non-party Fatherland Front, this front organization now boasts of a total membership of 2,830,000 — or, about 60 per cent of the electorate — of whom over two million are non-Communists. described at a recent Bulgarian Party Congress as a “monolithic mass political public organization,” the Front centers around 35,000 primary or local organizations, and is supposed to embody the “union of the working class” with the leadership of the Communist Party. On the whole, this mass organization strategy may be the most effective technique in the well-coordinated assault on the crumbling bastions of a once non-Communist Eastern European society.

### **Principal Forces Militating Against the Eastern European Position of the U. S. S. R.**

In the concluding section of this lecture, three important and closely related factors must be analyzed within the general perspective of liabilities and handicaps either actually impairing or potentially threatening the colonial power position of the U.S.S.R. in the satellite world.

The foremost of the phenomena can be accurately termed as the violent *political nationalism* of peoples in the Eastern-Central European area. How can we describe such a fantastically complex intangible? The most logical rejoinder would assume and openly assert that this political force has been ever present there, either stealthily lurking right under the surface or spectacularly exploding in a chain reaction of national revolts, civil conflict or partisan strife — first in one province or country, but inevitably enveloping the entire region with its flames, blood and wholesale violence. Long antedating anti-Communist uprisings, we have witnessed here an almost traditionally hysterical sequence

of events from the Sarajevo murders of June, 1914 to the Polish-Danzig crises of 1939, to the East Berlin revolt of June, 1953, to the Poznan riots of June, 1956, the Hungarian rebellion of just a year ago, and on to further explosions of this perennial and semidormant force.

Paraphrasing Mao Tse-tung, who talked of 100 flowers in the garden of Communism, we must assert that there are at least that many variants in the backyard of Balkan-Danubian nationalism; some are perennials, while others are of the annual variety. As a common denominator for all satellite countries, this nationalism emerges as a violently anti-Communist, truly popular, always anti-imperialist, but basically pro-Western political force, which, if fully unleashed, is certainly of a cataclysmic nature and of tyrannicidal intent.

This leads to the further observation that if explosions are to be expected, they will forcefully reveal the pro-Western sentiment and affection of these peoples — and particularly of the Hungarians, Poles and Czechs. In terms of the historic determinants of culture, language and history, there is such a fundamental and permanent yearning for Western values, political systems and intellectual pursuits that not even passing tragedies or political unpleasantness (yes, not even the peculiar broadcast record of "Radio Free Europe") have been capable of draining the bountiful reservoir of human good will which we in the West have enjoyed in Central and Eastern Europe! Let us distinguish sharply between the artificially-imposed superstructure of the cold war and the ever-present popular substructure of an affinity toward the West and a genuine admiration of our civilization and technological status.

Probably the most effective anti-Soviet force in the long run is the increasingly evident corruption and self-centered ruthlessness of Eastern European leaders, whether of the native or the Moscow-imported weed variety. Tito's *national* Communism in this context appears primarily as another prison cell, with

“separate but equal” facilities for the many dissenters and deviationists so thoroughly sick and tired of the Communists’ “promised land.” The fare in this utopia consists of the milk of deception and the honey of barbed propaganda phrases. The patent amorality of the *New Class*, the new *Power Élite*, is bound to generate waves of popular resistance, genuine discontent, and sickening nausea among the myriads of restless victims who have been so characteristically described in a recent speech by that outstanding *national* Communist, Wladyslaw Gomulka of Poland, as the “revisionists,” the “passive and disinterested,” and other “corrupt elements” in his Party.

If, in conclusion, we voice our firm belief that throughout history every process of massive human degeneration has eventually set in motion forces producing a great moral regeneration, how can we then draw up a temporarily accurate and realistic balance sheet of the complex “people’s democracy” versus Soviet Union relationship?

Like most balance sheets, this, too, has a credit and debit side. The former has been succinctly summarized by Barbara Ward, who in one of her recent articles suggested that “from its central position, the Soviet Union can thrust now in this direction, now in that.” In many places, she added, a satellite can be used as an effective spearhead of great *military pressure*. The debit side, however, is more comprehensive and complicated. Projecting our thoughts across the enlarged screen of the entire captive Communist World, it is crystal clear today that the Communist parties have failed to carry out agricultural collectivization; that they have destroyed the influence of the churches; that they have not raised the standard of living of the urban population; and most conspicuously of all, that they have been totally incapable of providing even a modicum or a modest semblance of democracy.

If you agree with Djilas’ emotional clarion call from the Yugoslav jail that the greed of the Communist leaders for maintaining their power positions is “tougher, more incomprehensible,

more savage, and more merciless than any animal struggle," then you will also hopefully go along with the inescapable final conclusion of the many other Djilases in other totalitarian police states of Eastern Europe that the ideological appeal of these satellite regimes, already anemic in character, is showing signs of steady and rapid disintegration.

## BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

*Professor Andrew Gyorgy*

Professor Gyorgy received his A.B. and J.D. degrees from the Law School of the University of Budapest, and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California.

He studied Law and Politics at the Sorbonne University in Paris during 1936-1937, and the following two years studied at the University of California on a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship. From 1941 to 1942, he was a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of California at Los Angeles.

After serving as Assistant Professor of Government at the University of New Hampshire during 1945-1946, he was Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yale University until 1950. During 1950, he was a visiting associate professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University. Professor Gyorgy returned to Yale University to serve as a research associate for one year, and the following two years he was a research associate at the Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since 1952, he has been Professor of Government at Boston University.

During World War II, Professor Gyorgy was an instructor in the Army Specialized Training Program at the University of California. Later, he was an instructor in the Academic Department at The Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia.

He took leave from Boston University to act as Consultant for International Relations and Social Sciences at the Naval War College during the first term of Academic Year 1956-1957.

Professor Gyorgy is the author of *Geopolitics, The New German Science and Governments of Danubian Europe*. He is also the editor of *Soviet Satellites; Studies in the Politics of Eastern Europe*; and *Problems in International Relations*.