

# national security

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## Getting colder



Graphic by Max DeRungs

## Soviet visions of power and persecution

By Henry Crumme  
Of the Emerald

As the striking Polish miners wake up, a man's voice announces over the intercom system that troops are massed outside the mine. "We will never break down," the voice proclaims, "until the government meets our demands."

In another part of the world, a small group of ragged tribesmen in the rocky hills of Afghanistan aim their weapons at a group of Soviet trucks and begin firing.

Does the Soviet Union's crushing of democratic reform movements in Czechoslovakia and Hungary and its recent role in Poland and Afghanistan reveal a Russian paranoia about the security of its borders, or a concern for maintaining hard-line Marxist-Leninist doctrine?

That question is not easily answered.

After World War II, the Soviet Union gave both Finland and Austria their in-

dependence, under the condition that they remain neutral. The Soviet invasion of neighboring Afghanistan was also prompted by national security concerns, says Leslie Brown. Brown is the deputy director of the state department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs and a participant in the Northwest National Security Conference.

But self-preservation is not the only aim of Soviet foreign policy. The Soviets have also given assistance to Angola, Cuba and Libya — countries that have nothing to do with Soviet national security, according to Brown.

Other experts agree. "There is little doubt in my mind that since Lenin's time the Soviet Union has openly declared its sympathy with what it calls wars of national liberation," says Frank Trager, a director of studies for the private National Strategy Information Center and a conference speaker.

Another conference participant, British journalist

Peter Jones, says the Russian approach to foreign policy is like that of the United States — purely pragmatic. He says Russia will ally itself with nations of differing political philosophies in order to expand its power.

The Soviets support or have supported countries where the Communist Party is banned, Jones says, citing Egypt, Syria, Libya and Iraq as examples.

However, Brown says while the Soviets may accept these nations' ban on communism, they maintain clandestine operations to encourage communist organizations.

Jones says Ethiopia offers another example of the ruthless, Machiavellian nature of Soviet foreign policy. During the Ethiopian war against Eritrean rebels, Jones says "the Russians turned on the Eritreans. For nearly twenty years, the Cubans had trained the Eritreans, then the Soviet Union did an about face and supported the Ethiopians."

Trager supports Jones' remarks, saying that the Soviets have displayed a flexible approach to foreign policy. "The Soviet Union has always given a high place to ideological considerations, but not at the expense of Russian policy," he says.

For example, Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky differed with Joseph Stalin about whether to export Bolshevism. Trotsky favored a vigorous policy of exporting revolution to the rest of the world, while Stalin had been in favor of the Soviet Union taking care of itself.

The Soviet population is extremely sensitive to any threat to its homeland. The Soviet Union is bordered on the east by hostile Communist China, with the largest army in the world, and by Japan, an American ally. On the west, the Soviets face NATO alliance countries, and in the south America has military bases in the Indian Ocean.

Increased military expendi-

tures abroad may have very serious consequences in Russia. If the Soviets make a greater effort to defend existing Marxist regimes they would assure greater opposition to their foreign policy from both the West and the Third World, according to Mark Katz of the Brookings Institution.

Katz says Russia would also risk the possibility of domestic opposition against the economic and military burden such a policy would create. But there is no guarantee that such a policy would be any more successful than it has been in Afghanistan, he adds.

The Soviets have shown firmness and resolution in accomplishing their goals, says Edwin Firmage, University of Utah law professor and conference speaker. Firmage says the Russians "have demonstrated their willingness to sacrifice for foreign policy objectives in the past. If we think we can arms-race them to the negotiating table, we are terribly mistaken."

## Getting darker

## Clouds of chemical warfare loom on the horizon

By Katherine Merrill  
Of the Emerald

The U.S. government has stepped up plans to prepare itself for chemical warfare, responding to reports that the Soviet Union is using a new kind of biological weapon on insurgent troops in Laos, Cambodia and possibly Afghanistan.

Secretary of State Alexander Haig and other American officials have charged that the Soviet Union is using biological toxins — produced from live fungus — in combat. If the Soviets are using such a weapon, they are violating both a 1925 Geneva Convention prohibiting chemical warfare and a bilateral pact with the United States

banning production, storage and transfer of biological weapons.

But state department evidence hasn't remained intact under scrutiny.

U.S. laboratory studies on plant samples from Cambodia and Laos have found up to 20 times more toxin produced by live fungus as would occur naturally. But some scientists say the contamination could have been the work of political groups or have even occurred naturally.

The State Department also uses victim symptoms to support its accusations. Stories about bleeding from the mouth and other orifices suggest fungal (mycotoxin) poisoning. But only a small number of refugees had such symptoms. One State Department

official presented evidence of these symptoms in refugees from Afghanistan, but his evidence showed little that related specifically to mycotoxins.

Another claim the U.S. government makes is that the climate and high-technology needed to produce these biotoxins is found only in the Soviet Union.

Mycotoxin expert Alex Ciegler disputes this. "All you need is the fungus (fusarium), a few flasks, and some rice or corn grits. You could produce it in an ordinary kitchen," he says.

A United Nations team was unable to confirm the United States' charges, mainly because it couldn't conduct on-site inspections where the alleged attacks occurred.

"It's a big swamp of accusations and counter-accusations," says Dave Isenberg, director of the University Veterans Association. The Reagan administration used the threat of biological warfare by the Soviets to renew American production of chemical weapons, he says. An 11-year moratorium on production of chemical weapons was ended by a September 1980 appropriation.

The Army is not operating its nerve gas facilities in Hermiston, after protests by citizens and Oregon legislators, Isenberg says. There is nothing going on there now, and "if there is, they're certainly not letting it be known."

"If they're working on mycotoxins they're not admitting it," Isenberg says.