

A Soviet 'goodwill' tour of Asia

by Linda de Hoyos

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze took a pre-Christmas tour of Asia, visiting three different countries: Japan, the Philippines, and North Korea. In all three, the aim was to take concrete steps in the creation of Moscow's dream for the region: the "Asian Collective Security Pact."

However, this was not the public thrust of Shevardnadze's excursion. But for those who have followed Soviet interventions into the region, especially since 1986, when the Soviet Union decided to embark on a policy of "confidence-building measures" leading toward Soviet hegemony over Asia, and General Secretary Gorbachov's declaration of the U.S.S.R. as an "Asian power," there was no doubt of the objective.

Shevardnadze's first stop was Tokyo, where he said his aim was "to open a new chapter in Japan-Soviet relations. His mission was to attempt to break the impasse created by the Soviet Union's seizure of four islands off Japan's northern coast in 1946. The Japanese, who never signed a peace treaty with Moscow after World War II, demand that Moscow give the islands back, if it wants to gain Japanese participation in the development of the U.S.S.R.'s Siberian hinterland.

One Soviet embassy official in Tokyo told the *International Herald Tribune* that Moscow considers Japan as "backward" and likely to "lose" because it is not "developing relations in every possible field" with the U.S.S.R., as Western European countries and the United States have done. Still, the official was reportedly forced to admit, "Japan still holds most of the cards."

It would seem the Japanese definitely believe so. The talks between Shevardnadze and his Japanese counterpart, Sosuke Uno, ended in stalemate, and were described by one Japanese official as "frank, serious, and heated"—diplomatese for acrimonious. Although Shevardnadze met Prime Minister Takeshita, there was no inkling of when Mikhail Gorbachov might visit Japan.

The last session of the talks was devoted to the Kurile Islands. According to the Japanese press, during their six and a half hours of talks, Uno gave Shevardnadze a history lesson on why the "northern territories," which lie just off Hokkaido, belong to Japan. Shevardnadze in turn appealed to Japan, "Let us not allow other problems between us to become hostage of just one problem. Even if there is a painful area remaining between us, [the U.S.S.R.] is prepared to address it with medical measures in the form of a new political concept." But earlier, Mr. Uno said there would be no improve-

ment in Japanese-Soviet relations without progress on the islands issue.

Shevardnadze was also insistent in his requests for Japanese investment. Officials told the Russians, "The overall situation in bilateral relations is not necessarily suitable for investment." The environment in the U.S.S.R. for foreign investment "must be improved," the Japanese said, and "there is not much record of foreign investment in the U.S.S.R. so far." Japan called the Soviet proposal for an agreement on basic trade principles "not clear enough," and said, "Japan does not see the need for any more agreements." Trade with the Soviets is only 1.3% of overall Japanese trade. A Japanese foreign ministry official told the London *Financial Times* that Japan is unwilling to underwrite Russia's economic development. "Assistance is not a notion that our government is considering," said the official, noting that Japan does not take Soviet claims of *glasnost* at face value. "We are watching carefully to see if these reforms change Soviet objectives in any way."

The main official outcome of Shevardnadze's visit was ratification of a treaty to protect migratory birds.

Glasnost comes to Manila

But if Shevardnadze failed to win confidence in Tokyo, he appeared to make gains in Manila, where he took great pains to give the "aura" of concessions.

Shevardnadze hinted to Philippines Foreign Minister Raul Manglapus that the Soviet Union might unilaterally pull out of Cam Ranh Bay. Shevardnadze, who buzzed into Manila for 24 hours, further claimed that Moscow is no longer interested in negotiating the removal of U.S. military bases from the Philippines.

Manglapus, who visited Vietnam last month, explained to the press that Moscow is "aware of our history and our constitution. He [Shevardnadze] merely expressed the hope that the time will come when the question itself will no longer be an important item in anybody's agenda. He recognized that there are important economic and political factors involved in the U.S. presence there."

"We have absolutely no intention of driving a wedge between the Philippines and its traditional allies," Shevardnadze said.

The Soviet foreign minister also pledged that Moscow would not deliver logistical or other support to the communist insurgent New People's Army.

But the real Soviet aim came through during Shevardnadze's meeting with Philippines President Corazon Aquino. Shevardnadze delivered a letter of invitation to Aquino to visit Moscow, a request that has been accepted but without the setting of a date. "We have to take a first step toward building new relationships in the Asia-Pacific region, toward creating the necessary negotiation mechanism," Shevardnadze said, as if Soviet politeness were able to nullify the Russians' major military build-up in the Pacific over the last 10 years to become the dominant military power in the region. Shevardnadze called for a conference of Asian Foreign Ministers to "reduce tensions" in the region."

Aquino was at least publicly taken in by the new Russian face. "We view Mr. Shevardnadze's visit"—the first by a Russian foreign minister ever—"to this part of the world as a signal that Soviet Russia will now assume her place among us as an Asian country."

Will it fly in Pyongyang?

From Manila, Shevardnadze flew back to the north to meet with leaders in Pyongyang, the capital of the North Korean state of Kim Il-Sung. Undoubtedly, among Shevardnadze's purposes was an effort to affirm North Korea's agreement to the multi-party steps now being taken toward an entente on the Korean peninsula.

The negotiating agenda for extending the *Pax Sovietica* to the Koreans was outlined in the December issue of *Far Eastern Affairs*, the journal of the Institute of the Far East of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. The journal printed the "joint proposals" of the Institute of the Far East and the International Strategic Institute at Stanford University, prepared by Soviet and American "specialists" over the course of 1987.

Under the subheading, "Short-term actions and the process of rapprochement," the proposals called for both superpowers encouraging "a program of confidence-building" in Korea, although recognizing that this must be accomplished in large part by the two Koreas themselves. The proposals also called for "a conference of foreign ministers of the governments concerned [that] could approve, take cognizance of, or put into effect measures agreed to as a result of various types of negotiations." These negotiations should soon proceed to the issue of military force reduction on the peninsula.

"The proposals outlined . . . are aimed at peaceful change leading to the resumption of normal and natural human and state relationships among all parts of Northeast Asia," the paper concludes. "The security of each of the two major powers also can be served by a carefully calculated sequence of steps as described in this report."

Clearly, such multi-party negotiations were the purpose of Shevardnadze's Yuletide trip to Asia. However, aside from talk, there is no indication—as the Japanese have so plainly stated—that there has been any "change in Moscow's objectives in any way."

CFR orders sell-out of El Salvador

by Gretchen Small

If the liberal Establishment's Council on Foreign Relations has its way, George Bush's government will hand all of Central America over to Moscow's terrorist allies, giving the terrorists the victory they have been unable to win on the battlefield for 10 years. The CFR further specifies, that El Salvador be made the first test case of this policy for the Bush administration.

The proposed strategy toward Central America is outlined in two articles published in the Winter 1988/1989 edition of *Foreign Affairs*, the CFR's quarterly magazine. The first article is written by James Chace, director of Columbia University's Program on International Affairs and the Media; the second, by Sol Linowitz, founder and co-chair of the Inter-American Dialogue.

Both men argue that any plans for military victory against the narco-terrorists must be written off; instead, the Bush administration must force governments and militaries of the region to negotiate "agreements" with their terrorist opponents. Likewise, Sandinista Nicaragua is declared to be no longer a threat in the Americas, but now a party with which to negotiate, more trusted than the military establishments of Central and South America.

One thing is made usefully clear by this CFR policy package, however. *Foreign Affairs* confirms in spades *EIR*'s long-standing charge that the campaign of lies painting Panama's Gen. Manuel Noriega as a communist drug-dealer, was ordered by the liberal Establishment, because Noriega is an obstacle to the Establishment's sell-out of Central America.

James Chace begins his article, "Inescapable Entanglements," with the assertion that all foreign policy of the next administration must be subsumed by the need to appease the Soviet Union. "The American-Soviet relationship will dominate the foreign policy of the next administration," he writes. "The next President could well negotiate the terms of the post-cold war era."

What concerns Chace, is how to ensure that the "grave foreign political problems outside the East-West context," are settled before they blow apart that global deal. He singles out South Korea, the Philippines, Panama, Nicaragua, and El Salvador as "inescapable entanglements" which must be settled, because these countries "are seen by others and by themselves, for good or for ill, as falling within an American sphere of influence.

"If these involvements are properly handled, the White House will be free to pursue overarching foreign policy goals