

of progress and prosperity whether history will see the next decade as a decade of great development or as a time of growing dangers for mankind.

The peaceful and constructive engagement of these external areas should be contemporaneous to the consolidation of the inner layer of countries more tightly linked to the Atlantic Community.

As far as the USSR is concerned, it is difficult indeed to forecast her political, economic and organizational development in the next ten years.

The Soviet leaders have repeatedly declared that the Soviet Union must make an all-out industrial effort, and that this effort is essential to her future. However, the giant bureaucratic apparatus of the country has yet to prove that it can undertake it.

At the beginning of this century a Russian historian pointed out that his country's progress was barred by the enormous weight of the state administration. Presently there is no great change in this situation. Furthermore, the USSR must also overcome great internal difficulties before attaining such essential goals as self-sufficiency in the production of agricultural and consumer goods, increasing the quality and variety of industrial products, and diversifying exports.

A NEW SOVIET COURSE OF ACTION

The Soviet Government is making an agonizing reappraisal. They have come to accept that their industrial economy and their administrative apparatus are entirely inadequate. Hence the new course of action based on profit and automation.

The new Five Year Plan approved last spring embodies these directives, and its objectives seems much sounder and more coherent than those of the previous Plans during the last 30 years. Its nonvoluntaristic character, as they call it now in the USSR, means that it should be more reliable, less bent on propaganda. In this respect it goes somewhat back to the earlier Soviet tradition which is at the root of the technique of modern planning.

The five-year period covered by the present Plan may represent a crucial turning point for the second world power. After the galling and costly setbacks in agriculture, the system has a second chance to prove its validity by successfully modernizing industry and substantially increasing overall productivity.

On the basis of the present situation in Russia some observers have considered various possible developments in their forecast. In our analysis we shall consider two opposite and extreme alternatives whose seeds are apparently already present in Soviet society.

According to the first alternative, whose plausibility is to some extent borne out by some attitudes of the present Soviet leadership, the Party and the Government will go all the way with the new course, courageously devoting their energies and capacities to devising and trying new measures to bring about all the necessary structural and economic reforms. For the top echelons in the Soviet Union this will also represent a dramatic form of self-criticism.

Apart from the expected results in the economic field, important political consequences may ensue. The inevitable social and psychological crises which will be caused by such reforms may lead to a partial democratization of the political system and an alliance of the establishment of the top echelons with the intelligentsia permitting better use to be made of the country's intellectual capacities.

Accurate balance of these reforms will be necessary within the USSR to avoid a sharp downturn in the standard of living, thereby igniting social explosions. As to external conditions, peaceful coexistence alone will probably not suffice. Only extensive cooperation extended to the USSR by the Western countries can put at her disposal the vast resources of foreign exchange and the managerial techniques which only the West possess and which are indispensable for this historic transformation of the Soviet economic system.

If this perspective is not altogether unrealistic, new opportunities undreamed of during the '50s and early '60s open up before us. Can we let them pass us by? Is it possible for us to cautiously foster their appearance?

The other extreme alternative is that reactionary elements will block renovation so that the status quo will continue within the USSR; and the present international situation of bare co-existence will go on, interspersed with recurrent crises of the Vietnam type.

DISRUPTIVE FORCES IN THE USSR

If this occurs, the economic vicious circle of low standard of living-low productivity will in all likelihood be perpetuated. Under the spur of increasing demands from the population the situation may one day become untenable. The disruptive