

SOVIET FAR EASTERN POLICY 1931-1945

By Harriet L. Moore

Sponsored by the International Sec
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Soviet Far Eastern Policy

1931-1945

HERE is a short but remarkably inclusive narrative account of the development of Soviet Far Eastern policy in the past decade and a half, with emphasis on Russian relations with Japan and China. The material is drawn largely from Russian sources; little of it has appeared in English before.

Miss Moore's purpose has been to give the American reader a picture of how the war in the Pacific looked to the Soviet peoples. To that end she has included in an extensive appendix the full text of key diplomatic documents and Soviet statements at critical moments in recent Far East history—from an *Izvestia* comment on Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 to the Russian declaration of war on Japan and the Soviet-Chinese treaty of 1945.

Over the last ten years, Miss Moore has studied the Soviet press, periodicals and commentary with special reference to her subject. Knowledge of Russian, extended trips to the Soviet Union, and continuous correspondence with Russians have enabled her to observe and evaluate Russian attitudes. She is at present research director of the American-Russian Institute.

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FAR EASTERN POLICY
1931–1945**

By HARRIET L. MOORE

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FOREWORD

WITH THE DEFEAT of Germany, increasing public interest is naturally being devoted to the war against Japan. In bringing this to a speedy conclusion and in the events and policies which will thereafter largely determine the course of history in the Far East, it is now very apparent that the attitudes and policies of the Soviet Union will be of very great importance. It is also apparent that the avoidance of causes of friction and the establishment of a satisfactory basis of cooperation among the United Nations require that these attitudes and policies be understood more clearly in the future than in the past. Miss Moore's book is a timely and important contribution to such understanding. As the author's preface explains, the study is not intended to be comprehensive, but the field to which it is of necessity limited is one which has not so far been explored for the benefit of those who use the English language; for it uses primarily Soviet sources to throw light on the Soviet Union viewpoint on Far Eastern affairs between 1931 and 1945. It does not tell the whole story of Far Eastern affairs in relation to the U.S.S.R. during those years, but it tells an essential part of the story.

The International Secretariat of the Institute of Pacific Relations is glad to have the opportunity of issuing so valuable a study as Miss Moore's under its auspices. It does not, of course, assume responsibility for statements of fact and opinion expressed in the book. For all such statements the author alone is responsible.

New York, N. Y.
June 1945

H. Belshaw
Research Secretary
Institute of Pacific Relations

INTRODUCTION

TO MANY AMERICANS, perhaps to most Americans, the policy of the Soviet Union toward China and Japan has been an enigma. The particular aspect of Soviet Asiatic policy which is of most interest to Americans concerns Soviet entry into the war against Japan. So long as the Soviet policy as a whole is considered enigmatic, neither this nor any other aspect of it can be rationally analyzed.

We must, then, deal first with a definition: the difference between an enigma and a problem. An enigma is an unintelligible riddle, which can perhaps be guessed but cannot be solved. A problem, on the other hand, is a complex of known and unknown factors, which can be analyzed by determining the known and unknown factors, and eventually solved by working from the known to the unknown.

To a certain extent the foreign policy of every country is a problem. Rarely can the average American say that he knows all the factors even in America's own foreign policy. It is normal, when analyzing foreign policy, to run across factors which are like x's in an equation. Usually, even the expert is forced to admit that he does not understand all of these x-factors. The best that he can do is to work out the equation or problem in such a way that it becomes comprehensible as a whole, even if some of the details remain puzzling or only partially understood. A working hypothesis or working solution can then be stated, by assigning tentative or approximate values to the x-factors.

If we can reduce Soviet policy from the total incomprehensibility of an enigma to a level at which it becomes, like

the policies of other countries, comprehensible in general outline even though many details remain obscure, we shall have gone a long way. Miss Moore has accomplished just this. By careful compilation of the record, and by frequent cross-reference to the unfolding of Soviet policy in Europe, the ups and downs of Soviet-American relations, and the overall course of events, she first breaks down the enigmatic into the problematic. Then, by grouping the identifiable factors, she opens the way to a rational consideration of the x-factors.

Miss Moore's work is timely and important, because we are entering on a new phase of history. The Soviet Union, by virtue of its large share in the Victory in Europe and the commanding position it holds in Asia, has a great deal more power than the old Russia ever had. America has also attained a greater sum of power, and a wider outreach of strength, than ever before. By all the accepted standards, America is the only country which is even more powerful than the Soviet Union. American-Soviet relations must therefore rank as more important than relations between any other two countries in the world.

In these relations America, because of her greater power, has the greater initiative—if she will take it and use it. Where Soviet policy is all-important is in its capacity to react to the American initiative, or to take the initiative if America should let it go by default.

As an analysis of the record, and as a guide to the alternatives of the present and the potentialities of the future, Miss Moore's work is unique in English. She has done a notable service to the interest of the people of America.

*The Walter Hines Page School of
International Relations
The Johns Hopkins University*

OWEN LATTIMORE

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PREFACE

IN THE LAST decade preoccupation with the Soviet Union in Europe has obscured the fact that the U.S.S.R. is also a potent power in Asia. Russia alone of the great western powers came to the Far East overland and has a long land frontier in the East. Its federation includes five oriental republics in Central Asia and indeed more than half its lands lie in Asia, thus involving it in Far Eastern conflicts whenever and wherever they arise. The Russo-Japanese War, Japanese intervention in Siberia, cooperation with Sun Yat-Sen's revolution are but landmarks in a long and difficult history of Far Eastern relations, both Tsarist and Soviet. Though less familiar to Americans, this Far Eastern history has left as deep an impress on Russian thinking as has its European history. From 1931 to 1941 it was not in Europe but on Russia's eastern border—the longest highly fortified border in the world—that the Soviets expected war from day to day. Their neutrality in the East has been one not of indifference but one of dangerous tension, repeatedly threatened by skirmishes, both diplomatic and military.

Soviet attitudes toward the Far Eastern conflict have not been too easily accessible to Americans because much of the material has appeared only in Russian. In addition, the lack of effective international cooperation prior to Pearl Harbor meant that the Soviet Union for the most part was acting alone and often the details of its policies escaped our attention.

Today, turning from victory in Europe to the problem of victory in the Pacific, it is clear enough that for the future security of the Far East the Soviet Union will be a necessary

factor. Its exclusion from the Washington Conference and Nine-Power Agreements concerning the Pacific may well have been the fatal flaw in the security machinery developed after the last war, and it goes without saying that this will not be repeated.

Looking back over the years to 1931 when the Far Eastern war began, no contrast is greater than in the position of the Soviet Union then and now. Today it is an integral part of a great world alliance to destroy aggressive powers and keep the peace. It possesses one of the greatest armed forces in all history, along with the industrial base essential to its maintenance and supply. Its new economic, social and political order has withstood the severest test to which a nation can be put and has evidently emerged stronger and more stable than ever before. The economic and strategic development of Siberia, Central Asia and the Soviet Far East have been stepped up to meet the menace in the East. The Soviet Union today is undoubtedly one of the great powers of the Pacific.

Whether or not its power is brought to bear on the serious problems of the day in the Far East is a matter of grave concern to all countries of the Pacific basin. In retrospect, the record as the Soviets have written it would answer the question in the affirmative. Not only is it plain that for the U.S.S.R. peace and security in the East have always been a question of national defense; to this end, Moscow has through the years, since Litvinov first formulated the phrase "peace is indivisible," advocated international machinery in the East as well as the West, machinery backed by requisite force.

The reader of this short study will not find the full story of the Soviet Union as a Far Eastern power. That story will not be written until archives are opened, not only in Moscow, but in China, Japan and the western capitals. What is attempted in this book is to bring to the American reader an account of what the Soviet Union said and did in the Far

East from 1931 until 1945. It gives approximately the picture which the Soviet people themselves have of this part of the world scene, for the study is compiled almost exclusively from Soviet sources. In addition, the appendices include translations of Soviet editorial comments on the most important developments. As far as possible, the account of actual events has been checked against non-Soviet sources but the author has not been able to make use of materials in Chinese or Japanese. Although it has not been possible to give adequate space to European events whose impact on Soviet Far Eastern policies has been so great, it will be obvious to the reader that Soviet relations at one end of its vast domain cannot but be of vital importance to its relations at the other. It is also outside the scope of this study to give an account of Soviet internal developments, especially the building up of its economy in the East which may be important to the future of Asia as a source of trade, military strength, and political example to the other nations of the Far East.

The author is indebted to the International Secretariat of the Institute of Pacific Relations for its help in preparing the manuscript for publication. Special thanks are due Olga Field for editing and checking the manuscript. However, all statements of facts or expressions of opinion are the sole responsibility of the author.

H. L. M.

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