

ROUND THE WORLD

JAPAN

Gromyko's Futile Tokyo Trip

During his stay in Japan from January 9 to 13, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko held a series of talks with Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Miki and Foreign Minister Kiichi Miyazawa. Out of its ambition for hegemony, the Kremlin tried to force Japan to renounce its demand for the return of the northern territories in the Soviet-Japan talks and first conclude a Soviet-Japan "treaty of friendship and co-operation" aimed at bringing Japan into the "Asian collective security system." But this attempt was a failure.

Immediately after the talks began, a heated debate developed and a sharp difference appeared over the question of returning Japan's northern territories. Foreign Minister Miyazawa reiterated that the four islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashiri and Etorofu are inherent territories of Japan and demanded that the Soviet Union return them to Japan en bloc, holding that their return is a precondition for the conclusion of a Japan-Soviet peace treaty. Instead of getting to grips with this question, Gromyko refused to return the four northern islands and repeated over and over the shopworn tune that the boundary question should be "solved realistically" and that "the Soviet Union and Japan hold different positions" regarding the territorial question.

On January 12, Gromyko called on Prime Minister Takeo Miki who reaffirmed Japan's stand on the question. He said: "The Japan-Soviet peace treaty would be concluded only after the settlement of the problem of the northern territories," and "looking forward to future friendly relations between Japan and the Soviet Union, the problem of territories is the biggest one." But Gromyko refused to answer Prime Minister Miki's questioning on the problem of the northern territories, declaring: "There is

nothing more to be said on this question."

The joint communique shows that the Japanese side did not retreat under Soviet pressure. It reaffirms that as an unsettled problem after World War II, negotiations on this question will be continued in the future. The Japanese Prime Minister in a statement at the foreign correspondents' club on January 13 stressed once again that a Japan-Soviet peace treaty could not be concluded if the four northern islands were not returned.

Gromyko's effort to peddle the "Asian security system" in the talks also failed. In the first day of talks, he lost no time in trotting out the "Japan-Soviet treaty of friendship and co-operation" repeatedly rejected by Japan. He said that conclusion of the "treaty of friendship and co-operation should be prior to the conclusion of the Japan-Soviet peace treaty." But the Japanese side stressed the need to give priority to settlement of the problem of territories and conclusion of a peace treaty.

Yomiuri Shimbun pointed out earlier that this so-called "treaty of friendship and co-operation" is "a component part" of the "Asian security system." It said that the Soviet purpose is to tie Japan into the "Asian security system" through the bilateral treaty. However, Gromyko proposed anew the "Asian security system" and the "treaty of friendship and co-operation" when he met Prime Minister Miki. According to Kyodo News Service, the Prime Minister made it clear to Gromyko that Japan refuses to accept the "Japan-Soviet treaty of friendship and co-operation" and the "Asian security system." He said that "the conclusion of a Japan-Soviet peace treaty is a precondition," and that "the Asian version of the European security conference will not be feasible."

Kyodo News Service reported that during the talks, Gromyko invited

Prime Minister Miki to visit the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister said in reply that prior to his visit to the Soviet Union, "the problem of the northern territories must first be settled and Japan-Soviet peace treaty concluded."

It was also reported that when the joint communique was being drafted, the Soviet side tried hard to insert in it a reference to the "Asian security system" and the conclusion of the "Japan-Soviet treaty of friendship and co-operation" but failed.

In the talks, Gromyko openly meddled in Japan's internal affairs, revealing once again the true features of the Soviet social-imperialists. Kyodo News Service reported that the Soviet Foreign Minister said threateningly to the Japanese Prime Minister that the Soviet Union may "have to review its relations with Japan" if the Japanese Government agrees to inclusion of the anti-hegemony clause in the projected Japan-China peace and friendship treaty. Prime Minister Miki told Gromyko: "The conclusion of the Japan-China peace and friendship treaty is a matter between the two countries of Japan and China and the talks on the treaty have nothing to do with the Soviet Union."

WESTERN EUROPE

Unity Stressed

Belgian Prime Minister Leo Tindemans released his report on European union to the press in Brussels on January 7. It stressed that Europe should unite to become the "master of its destiny" again.

Tindemans said that unless they are united, the nine European Economic Community (E.E.C.) countries cannot meet the requirements to defend the legitimate interests of their countries and ensure real security.

Referring to the question of defence, he emphasized in the report that "the European union will remain incomplete so long as it does not have a common defence policy." Tindemans proposed that the member states should "exchange regularly views on their specific defence problems and on multilateral European negotiations concerning security," and

"co-operate in the production of armaments" with a view to "increasing the autonomy" of Europe. He also pointed out that "the creation of a European agency of armaments to this end should be considered."

Tindemans was given this work by the E.E.C. Summit Conference in Paris at the end of 1974. He had visited other E.E.C. member countries and had had consultations with them before he drafted the present report which has been submitted to the heads of state and government of the nine E.E.C. members. The question of European union will be discussed at the forthcoming summit conference of the nine countries to be held in Luxembourg this March for the first time.

After the release of the report, the Soviet news agency TASS immediately charged that it "does not conform to the Helsinki (European security conference's) spirit."

Groundless Soviet accusations against Tindemans' proposal were refuted by the Federal Republic of Germany's Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and State Minister of Foreign Affairs Hans-Juergen Wischnewski in their recent statements.

In an interview with a Deutschlandfunk's reporter on January 11, Genscher stressed: "We welcome Belgian Prime Minister Tindemans' report. It is constructive and realistic." "The Federal Government supports the basic aims proposed in this report," he added.

Refuting TASS charges against the West European union, Genscher said: "These statements from the Soviet Union are a futile attempt to hold up the process of European integration. This process is a reality, and any attempt to intervene is an intervention in the internal affairs of the European Community."

The Soviet charges are "incorrect" and Soviet criticism of a common E.E.C. policy on foreign and defence affairs is also erroneous, State Minister of Foreign Affairs Wischnewski said in a press statement in Koeln on January 9.

WESTERN PAPERS

There Is No "Detente"

The 1975 international situation was marked not by an "irreversible detente" but by the new tsars' "detente" tactics of actively carrying out war preparations and external expansion, some Western papers stressed in reviewing international affairs in 1975 and forecasting prospects for 1976. With Soviet social-imperialist expansion in an aggressive mood, this will be a year of greater disorder in the international field.

In an article "Cold War Two," *The New York Times* said on December 29: "As 1975 draws to an end, detente is dead. The second cold war is underway." It added: "It is dangerous to act as if our wishes were reality." "Detente was killed by the Soviet inability to refrain from exploiting our weakness."

A number of papers also pointed out that the Final Act signed at the summit of the European security conference at the end of July and in early August could by no means bind the hands of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, it had whetted the Soviet appetite for aggression and expansion. "Detente" does not exist today and the "Helsinki spirit" is nothing but tactics used by the Soviet social-imperialists.

The French paper *L'Aurore* said: "The West hoped to reinforce detente by a spectacular conclusion reached at the European security conference. On the contrary, it heard the knell of detente."

"End of a Certain Idea of Detente," an article in the French paper *La Croix* on December 23, said: "In Helsinki six months ago, the Western world applauded the detente they considered durable," but facts have proved that "the East-West dialogue is definitively shrewd tactics to assure the Soviet preeminence over the Western world."

Some Western papers also held that under the smokescreen of "detente" the gainer was the Soviet Union while the United States and Western Europe were the losers. Western economic and technical aid to the Soviet Union would enable it

to further strengthen its military forces and this would in turn be a source of trouble for the West. The *Washington Post* said: "To advance the spirit of detente, the United States has in recent years surrendered many advantages. We have permitted our military posture to sag dangerously—from superiority over the Soviets to parity, and now to overall inferiority." "We have accepted the short end of the stick in arms limitations. We have bailed out the Kremlin from repeated agricultural catastrophes at the cost of inflating our food prices." The paper also said that the United States had provided the Soviets with valuable credits and know-how but had got little from them. "A mighty Soviet arms buildup has been going on," it emphasized.

Britain's *Daily Telegraph* said: "To Moscow, 'detente' means that it is permitted to push its expansionist policies without restraint and continue arms expansion while the West must support the backward Russian economy."

In a recent article analyzing prospects for Soviet-U.S. relations, *The New York Times* posed this question: Should the United States "ignore the Soviet-sponsored aggression and subversion"? The answer: "No, appeasement rarely appeases."

A *Washington Post* article stressed that through "detente" in the last few years, "we (the United States) learn once again that all our smiles and favours won't melt the iceberg," and "the lessons of the past should have put our leaders on guard against stimulating euphoria."

FIVE ASEAN COUNTRIES

Economic Hegemonism Opposed

Winning new victories in defence of national rights and interests, the five members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) last year further strengthened their regional economic co-operation, and their joint struggle against hegemony and the superpowers shifting the economic crisis on to others.

A major problem in the current struggle by these five countries

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in the economic field is how to get equitable prices for their raw materials and primary products. All have suffered great losses and found their balance of trade becoming more unfavourable due to the deepening economic crisis in the capitalist world and manoeuvres by the imperialists, particularly the superpowers which have intensified their efforts to shift the economic crisis on to others by cutting imports of primary products, raising prices of manufactured goods and forcing down prices of raw materials. Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore had trade deficits in the first six months of 1975. Although Malaysia maintained a favourable trade balance, the balance dropped from 197 million to nine million U.S. dollars.

The behaviour of the superpowers and other imperialists reaping profits at the expense of others has aroused resentment among the ASEAN countries and peoples who strongly demand that an end be put to the unreasonable status quo and a new international economic order be established. The 8th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in May stressed that, in view of the unreasonable in-

ternational economic relations, it was imperative to work out an ASEAN strategy on the question of raw materials and change the existing international economic order. These countries have joined hands with other third world countries in their struggle to achieve this end.

The five ASEAN countries realize that only by strengthening their unity and co-operation can they free themselves from imperialist control. To protect their national resources and economic rights and interests effectively, they set up the Shippers Council of Southeast Asian Countries, the Southeast Asia Lumber Producers' Association, the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Council of Petroleum, the Federation of Shipowners Associations and other economic co-operative organizations. They have adopted a common tactic and steps. Their co-ordinated efforts in the struggle have helped them win new victories. To protect reasonable prices for raw material products, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, producers of natural rubber, put restrictions on their exports to maintain stable prices by balancing supply and demand in the market. The average price per-kilogramme of rubber in

November 1975 jumped from U.S. dollar 0.38, the lowest for the corresponding period in 1974, to 0.58. The Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries has worked out plans to stabilize the price of rubber by setting up an international rubber hoarding body. It will also introduce a regional co-ordination system for selling rubber.

To defend their national independence and sovereignty, the Southeast Asian countries have realized more profoundly that they must develop their economies independently and strengthen economic co-operation among themselves. Thus they quickened the pace of regional economic co-operation in 1975. At the 8th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and the Second Session of the ASEAN Chambers of Commerce and Industry in May and July last year, the ASEAN countries decided to strengthen their economic development and co-operation and put forward recommendations on setting up a free trade zone as a first step towards forming an ASEAN common market. This was a new development in steadily strengthening regional economic co-operation among the five ASEAN countries in the last few years.