P.S. to the NEWS
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TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS TO THE SOVIETS

Enormous reams of newsprint and TV time have been consumed with the supposedly bold actions the Carter Administration has taken against the Soviet Union in boycotting the Olympics and imposing the grain embargo. But the continuing receipt of U.S. high technology is worth a thousand times more to the Soviets than sports or food.

And they are continuing to get it, despite White House announcements every other week about barring technology shipments. Sometimes the Soviets buy it, sometimes they steal it, sometimes they are given it free for the asking; but one way or the other the Soviets are building up their military forces and industrial plant by their secret weapon: U.S. technology.

There are four principal methods by which the U.S.S.R. obtains both the hardware and the know-how for its military-industrial complex: exploiting political decisions by U.S. Commerce Department officials who are pursuing detente; student exchange programs under which Soviet scientists are given access to U.S. scientific and engineering data; illegal actions by U.S. corporations eager to make a fast buck even at the expense of national security; and clandestine espionage.

After the Nixon Administration adopted the policy to pursue detente and a SALT I treaty, Congress replaced the Export Control Act of 1949 with new legislation encouraging more liberal U.S. trade policy toward Eastern Europe. The Nixon policy was based on the Kissinger concept of "linkage" between our giving the benefits of U.S. manufactures to the Soviet-Warsaw Pact nations and expecting them to improve their behavior and become more democratic.

Unfortunately, the new legislation gave unrestrained power to the Commerce Department to make the decisions on allowing the export of dual-use goods and technologies, that is, commercial items which also have military significance. The Commerce Department saw its major mission as one to facilitate trade, even in strategic goods; and the policy became one of granting all export licenses except in extraordinary cases.

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Most U.S. exports to the East in 1969 were agricultural products plus a few manufactured goods like chemicals, pulp and waste paper. By 1980, however, U.S. exports to European Communist countries consisted of computers, machine tools, chemical processes, semi-conductors, array transform processors, and turnkey plants.

Dozens of devious bureaucratic directives were the devices by which the Commerce Department stretched and bent the law out of shape to accommodate the policy of promoting "trade" with the Communists at all costs. Commerce progressively removed items from the control lists and abused the criterion of "foreign availability," that is, if the item is available from any other country, the U.S. should sell it, too.

The most shocking example of what went wrong with our export controls was the Zil truck complex, for which exports have been consistently approved even though Commerce had information that this Soviet plant was producing not only military trucks but missile launchers. The whistle was blown on Zil by Lawrence J. Brady, Deputy Director of the Office of Export Administration, who was rewarded for his concern by being demoted and harassed by his Commerce Department superiors.

American companies sold more than $1.5 billion worth of equipment and engineering data to the Soviets for their Kama River truck plant, which the Russians promised would be merely a civilian facility. What trucks do you think carried the Soviet troops into Afghanistan? Trucks from the U.S.-built Kama plant, of course.

The licensing of computers for export is probably the most sensitive area of export controls because they are essential to modern weaponry as well as modern industry. The Soviets were generations behind the U.S. in building computers, but U.S. companies have been falling all over themselves to try to help the Soviets to catch up. Nobody knows how many computers have been exported to the Soviet Union or what they are being used for.

Other technology transferred to the U.S.S.R. includes highly sophisticated mirrors for use in super-weapon space lasers, advanced computer technology with a wide variety of military applications such as missile guidance, integrated semi-conductors and transistors which can be used in military communications, and infra-red detectors which can be used in spy satellites.

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