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"The USSR and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s."

Praeger Publishers/Center for Strategic and International Studies, Box 465, Hanover, Pa. 17331. 129 pp. \$6.95 paper.

Author: David E. Albright

During the late 1970s, the Soviet Union made substantial inroads in sub-Saharan Africa. The remainder of the 1980s, predicts Albright, who teaches at the U.S. Air War College, will bring solid but less spectacular Soviet advances.

Soviet activity in black Africa is not unprecedented. Guinea, Mali, and Ghana all had close ties to Moscow during the 1960s.

But during the 1970s, Moscow signed special "treaties of friendship and cooperation" with four nations—Somalia, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Angola—and prompted Cuba to dispatch some 30,000 troops to the latter two. The Soviets delivered weapons worth \$3.4 billion to 21 black African nations and guerrilla groups in 1975–79, as opposed to only \$182 million in 1961–71. By 1979, nearly 10,000 Soviet and Eastern European economic and military advisers were working in the region.

Yet the Soviet advance is not unlimited, Albright says. Moscow faces increasing economic difficulties at home and has more pressing preoccupations abroad than Africa—Eastern Europe, China, Afghanistan. The Soviets are also short of the kinds of forces (e.g., aircraft carriers, amphibious shipping) needed to conduct military expeditions far from home.

Soviet economic limitations are already apparent. During 1975–79, Moscow provided Ethiopia's Marxist regime with only \$125 million in economic aid, while Western and OPEC nations and multilateral institutions such as the World Bank gave \$725 million.

But even a stingy Moscow, Albright believes, will seize opportunities for intervention as they arise. And many probably will.

Black Africa includes some of the poorest nations on the globe, ripe for revolution. Twenty-six of the 48 political entities in the region (including Namibia, a disputed South African protectorate) suffered declines in their gross domestic product during the 1970s. In 26 states, population grew faster than per capita food output.

Political instability, aggravated by tribal rivalries, is ever-present. Chad, with a population of less than five million, is torn by discord among 11 political factions, with Libya joining in. Corruption among Africa's rulers has worsened enough to stir grassroots discontent, Albright says. It contributed to army coups in Liberia and Ghana during the early 1980s.

Albright sees several trouble spots developing. In mineral-rich Zaire, Africa's largest nation, Mobutu Sese Seko's pro-Western regime is imperiled by its own venality and the citizenry's continuing poverty. Somalia's President Mohammed Siad Barre, who tore up his treaty of "friendship and cooperation" with Moscow after the Soviets backed Ethiopia in the 1977–78 Somalia-Ethiopia war, faces food shortages at home and a variety of guerrilla groups on his borders. South Africa's military forays into neighboring Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Mozambique (see *WQ*, Winter 1983, p.40) are almost certain to lead to requests from these countries' leaders for more Soviet aid.

"America's Hidden Success: A Reassessment of Twenty Years of Public Policy."

W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 500 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10110. 256 pp. \$12.95.
Author: John E. Schwarz

"Government is not the solution to our problem . . . government is the problem," President Reagan declared in his 1981 inaugural address. It is a common view, and not only among conservatives.

Schwarz, a University of Arizona political scientist, contends that the federal government's bad image is unjustified. A look at the facts, he argues, shows that Washington's domestic policies during the 1960s and '70s—notably its frequently attacked antipoverty and environmental efforts—worked well and cost surprisingly little.

Between 1965 and 1972, for example, Americans' real per capita disposable income grew by three percent annually. But the new wealth did not "trickle down" to the poor, Schwarz says. Without federal welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, and other subsidies, 21.3 percent of the U.S. population would have lived below the poverty line in 1965, 19.2 percent in 1972. But when Washington's help is included, the decline in poverty is far steeper: from 19 percent of the population in 1965 to *nine* percent in 1972. By the late 1970s, poverty had dropped again, to between four and eight percent.

Washington made enormous strides in improving poor people's living standards. The rapid expansion of the food stamp program after 1969 virtually eliminated malnutrition in this country; Medicaid and other health programs drove down the infant mortality rate among blacks from 40.3 per 1,000 births in 1965 to 24.2 in 1975.

Federal environmental programs also achieved singular results. In 1970, for example, Congress mounted one of its biggest cleanup efforts when it greatly strengthened the 1963 Clean

Air Act. By 1979, the levels of sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide in the air had dropped by 40 percent. Ten major cities studied by the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) saw a 35 percent decline in the number of days per year with heavy pollution.

The cost of better air quality, according to the CEQ, was \$16.6 billion in 1978. But the estimated benefits, chiefly in terms of improved human health, amounted to \$21.4 billion.

Indeed, says Schwarz, government's critics have vastly exaggerated the burden federal programs place on taxpayers. Corporate income taxes, for example, actually dropped from an average of 47 percent of profits in 1960 to 39 percent by the late 1970s. While state and federal personal income taxes rose from an average of 10.8 percent of earnings in 1960 to 12.9 percent in 1979, they increased faster—from 7.2 to 10.8 percent—during the 1950s.

Government's growth is often blamed for the "stagnant" economy of the 1970s. But in fact, says Schwarz, the economy did quite well: Real per capita disposable income increased by 24.7 percent during that decade, twice as much as during the 1950s. Between 1965 and 1980, American businesses created 25 million new jobs. Chronically high unemployment was the result of the entry into the work force of record numbers of new workers from the maturing Baby-Boom generation and from the ranks of women.

If things really weren't so bad, then what went wrong? Vietnam and Watergate stirred up antigovernment feeling, Schwarz says, and conservatives were quick to capitalize on it. Setting the record straight, he contends, is the first step toward reversing that sentiment.