

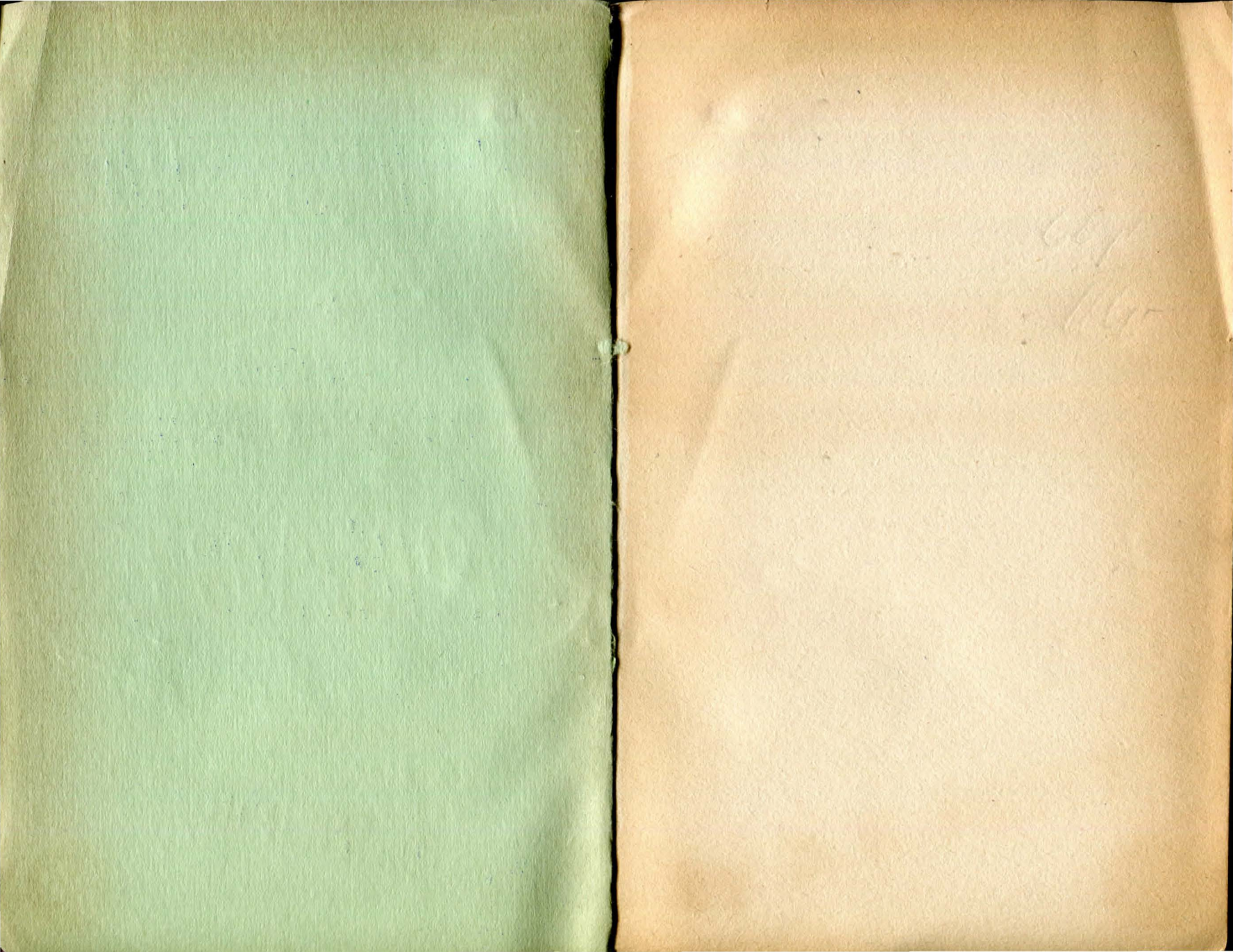
**RUSSIA**

*is for*

**PEACE**

by **D. N. PRITT**

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**D. N. PRITT, K.C.**

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## INTRODUCTION

THE SHADOW OF war hangs heavy over the world to-day. Millions are horrified at the prospect of a third World War. They resent the conscription of their sons, the loss of life in Korea and Malaya, and their own recall from the reserve. They deplore the cost of rearmament, which hampers every social improvement, lowers the standard of living, and is already causing acute difficulties in industry through raw material shortages. They know that, in a third World War, atomic bombs, hydrogen bombs, napalm bombs and biological warfare would bring a cumulative horror which neither our imagination nor our previous history helps us fully to understand. And they are conscious that armament races always result, not in greater safety, but in war.

Many of them nevertheless accept the burdens and dangers of rearmament because they have been half persuaded that the Soviet Union intends to launch an aggressive war against them to destroy 'freedom and democracy' and 'Christian values', and that it can only be restrained by armed strength.

I am sure that this view is wrong, and that the peoples and the government of Soviet Russia have no desire whatever for war, nor any motive for it—that on the contrary they have a profound need and wish for peace. If I am right, millions of people here, and in other countries too, will be free of a great anxiety; and we can all look forward to a new and richer era in which standards of living can rise, and houses, schools, and hospitals to meet our pressing needs can be built.

I write this book to show that to fear war from Soviet Russia is a mistake—that she will not launch a war. I will take the principal stories told against Russia and the Soviet leaders by our politicians, our Press, and our radio, and refute them by stern facts and by accounts of my own

experiences during my fourth long visit to the U.S.S.R. in 1950.

I cannot hope to answer *all* the stories. They are innumerable, and new ones are added almost every day. But if the more serious stories are refuted, I feel that many readers will see that their fears are unfounded, and that the present fantastic armaments drive, undertaken largely under American inspiration, is quite unnecessary for our protection.

What sort of things are we asked by the major political parties and their Press to believe, and do at the moment half believe? They are stories of the sort that Hitler told the German people about the Soviet Union in the 'thirties, when he was building his war machine. (The very phrase 'Iron Curtain' was invented by Goebbels.)

Russia, the story goes, wants to rule the world, and to spread Communism everywhere. Russia has the most powerful army and navy and air force in the world. Russia is preparing for armed attack upon every other country. Russia tried to starve a million Berliners. Russia breaks all her promises. Russia foments trouble and treason in every country. Russia engineers wars in Greece and Malaya and Vietnam and Korea.

Some of the stories contradict each other; we are told, for example, that Russia is at once so strong that we must bleed ourselves white in preparing for war, and so insecure internally that she has to keep 15,000,000 of her own people in 'slave camps', to muzzle her scientists and writers and artists, and to deprive her own people—whom she is to lead into world-wide aggression—of elementary freedom.

I am encouraged to think that these stories can be shown to be baseless, when I recall the stories that have been told—and disproved—in the past. Through the years since 1917, thousands of anti-Soviet stories have sprung up, poisoned

the air for a while, and then died, whilst that country has stood firm and grown stronger.

Let me give a few examples. In the early years after the 1917 Revolution, we were told that the new régime in Russia was collapsing and the old rulers would soon return. Later we had 'eye-witness' accounts of the failure of each successive Five-Year Plan. In 1939-40, we were told that the Red Army was so rotten that the Finns were destroying it single-handed. Then, when this Army, in spite of unprecedented winter weather freezing its oil supplies, had pierced the Kirke-Mannerheim line (almost the strongest defence line in Europe) in ten days, and brought the Finnish war to a close with a generous peace treaty, we were again told, in 1941, that it was so weak that the Nazis would go through it 'like a knife through butter' and crush all Russia in five weeks. A few years later, when the Red Army—after long retreats followed by mighty victories—was advancing to Germany, the story changed. This time, it was going to halt at the frontier, and leave us to face the Nazis unaided! Then, when the fascist enemies were defeated, the story was reversed once again; so far from not advancing, the wicked 'Reds' were never going to leave Norway, Iran, Björnholm, Korea. The list is endless.

All these stories, and countless more, have been refuted by events, and others have taken their places, to be refuted in their turn. Yet, alas!, each story succeeds, in its brief life, in deceiving some of the people some of the time.

As a corrective, we should remember the events of 1941 to 1945, and the changes they brought about in British public opinion. Until June, 1941, stories against Soviet Russia had been useful to discourage the spread of Socialism; but from June, 1941, to 1945, when the first need was to defeat Hitler, the tune changed. Open slander was dropped for the time;

and the overwhelming evidence provided by the military skill, the industrial strength, and the loyalty and courage and endurance of the Soviet people made the whole world their friends and admirers—and their debtors. And millions of ordinary people said: 'Our eyes are opened. We see now that we were fooled with lies about Russia before. We won't be fooled again.'

But the power of propaganda and the resources of those who hate Socialism are very great; and too many have been largely 're-fooled'. Let the reader bear this in mind, and consider carefully whether he has been fooled twice, as he studies this book, in which I hope to show that neither the people nor the government of Russia want war; that on the contrary, as one of them said to me, they 'need peace like they need air', to get on with the vast constructive work of building a new society; and that we have everything to gain and nothing to lose by living in friendship with them, and turning from an armaments drive to the work of improving the standards of life in our respective countries.

Let us consider once again the cost to ourselves of believing that Russia is bent on war. Already suffering severe restrictions of all kinds, we are asked to increase our expenditure on arms to nearly £1,600,000,000 a year (say £2 12s. per week for every family of four) whilst the United States of America is to spend £17,458,000,000 a year—rather more than twice our expenditure per head of population, with a possible increase to £21,564,000,000. As long ago as September, 1950, Mr. Attlee told the House of Commons how the extra expenditure then contemplated—substantially less than that since decided upon—would affect us all:

'There will have to be an increase in the prices of our imports. That, I am afraid, is bound to have an effect on the

cost of living. . . . There will be fewer commodities available to meet the home demand.'

And already, long before the increased expenditure has had time to produce its full results, everyone has learned from personal experience that acute shortages are appearing everywhere, production of useful goods is being drastically cut down, and—worst of all—prices of all necessities are rising week by week, savings are disappearing, and crises and uncontrolled inflation are threatening. The outlook is one of increased rearmament, rising prices, falling standards of living, and the sharpening threat of total war.

Nor is it only in material respects that the price is heavy. It is high in such things as freedom of speech and thought, and freedom even to get or to keep a job, if your views are not in line with the present policy. We imitate the American 'witch hunt' in our Civil Service and local government and education services; South Africa and Australia legislate against working-class political parties; elections are rigged in France and Italy; an 'iron curtain' falls around anyone who has any sympathy with or first-hand knowledge of Russia; political tests are imposed on the employment of teachers; petitions for peace are banned in schools; visas are refused to distinguished foreigners to attend peace conferences; and honest British citizens have their passports withdrawn. On the ground that we must fight 'Communism' to preserve our traditional freedoms, those freedoms are being taken away bit by bit.

The present policy, tragic if it were necessary and criminally wasteful if it is all a mistake, must be re-examined critically by ordinary citizens who carry the democratic responsibility for maintaining it and the heavy burden involved in carrying it out.

I write as an old supporter of friendship with Russia, who



has studied that country and believed in it in good times and bad; who has been correct in his judgement of it very often; and who is fortified by recent first-hand experience.

I feel justified in asking: Read this, please, with an open mind; see what I write, and what is actually happening in the world; and then make up your mind. If you see that Russia, far from planning war, is intent on maintaining peace, you may take hope for your future and the future of your children; and we may save our country from a Third World War.

## CHAPTER I

*WHO ARE THESE RUSSIANS?*

WITH WHAT SORT of people are we dealing? Who are these Russians?

The Soviet peoples—they are not all Russians though they are popularly so-called in Britain—are very like other people. They want a life that is not too hard or dull, reasonable periods of work and rest, a better standard of life than their parents had, and some assurance that their children will do better still.

There is much in their history to make them want these simple things even more intensely than most people. It is only thirty-four years since they started to rebuild their lives and their countries; and they began with meagre industrial development and backward agriculture, little education, and one of the lowest standards of living in the world. Inheriting the chaos and confusion of the First World War, they went through several more years of war, 'intervention' and civil war, waged against them by the Germans, the French, the British and others, as well as by 'White Russian' forces helped by their former Allies. They overcame all these; they overcame famine, too, at the price of terrible losses; they then survived years of almost complete trade boycott; and slowly, through many difficulties, they built up a great industrial and agricultural state. They relied on their own resources, for no country would help them; and their industrial development was the fastest in history. They suffered many postponements; even the most modest prosperity was for years 'just round the corner', mainly through the forced diversion of much of their energy to defence preparations. Long before any other state armed seriously against

the Nazis, Russia altered its Five Year Plans to meet the threat from Germany. They always felt the threat of war; they believed that capitalists everywhere were hostile to a state run by workers and peasants prospering without capitalists, and would seek to destroy the new state in the bud, for fear lest Socialism prove infectious.

They then lived through the last war. It is hard to understand fully what this meant to the people who suffered directly from it, and they still do not talk about it much themselves. Leningrad, for example, was besieged for nearly a thousand days, through the bitter Northern winters, with no light or heat or power; and twice as much high explosive fell on it as on the much larger area of London during the whole war.

In the long struggle to defeat the invader, one million people died, many of them from starvation. Some of its effects were described in a despatch from Leningrad, printed in *The Times* of the 5th January, 1944, some little time after the raising of the siege:

'A despatch from Leningrad describes the efforts made by the city authorities to save children from permanent mental injury as a result of the famine. An extensive chain of kindergartens was set up in Leningrad a year ago, and now almost all the children are back to normal. Last April the imprint of the difficult winter still lay on most of the children's faces and was evident in their games. Even in group games they played silently with a serious expression. When the children, most of whom were orphans, arrived at the kindergartens, the first move was invariably to press themselves close against the stoves.

'One teacher said: "They drew their little heads into their collars like young birds, pulled their sleeves down over their hands, and fought with cries for warm places. They would sit in silence for hours. Music irritated them. So did the grown-ups' smiling faces. One little girl was asked why she

was so moody. She replied sharply: "And why are you smiling?"

'We found that our whole system of music and toys only served to intensify the children's sufferings. The children's general depression caused them to break down at the slightest frustration. If one could not button up his dress he would wrinkle up his face, and another would burst into tears when asked to move his chair. The youngest expressed all their requests in the form of tears and caprices as though they had never learned to talk. Though the rooms were warm they would not take off their felt boots, hats, and coats, and crept stealthily into bed in them. It was difficult to wean them from the habit of sleeping huddled up. "It is warmer that way," they would say. It was in their feeding habits that the children were most affected by their experiences. They divided soup into two courses. First they drank off the liquid and then ate the rest. They crumbled bread into tiny bits which they hid in matchboxes. They saved the bread until last, like a delicacy, taking pleasure in eating a little piece for hours, turning it over and examining it as if it were some strange curio.

'No manner of persuasion had any effect till they became stronger. . . . Many of these children had seen their parents die from exhaustion, and one of the most difficult tasks facing teachers was to distract the children's passionate interest in small objects, such as locketts and rings, that reminded them of their lost mothers.'

I have seen some of those children growing up well and happy now. But I thought of them when in September, 1950, my wife and I visited a War Orphans' home in Kiev. Here live 120 children, looked after by two doctors, twelve teachers, and twenty-three other staff. Rs. 1,450,000 a year is spent to make their lives as normal as possible, so that they shall not suffer too much by comparison with children who have their own parents or have been adopted into families. Most of them have been in Nazi concentration camps; we saw the camp numbers tattooed on their arms, the marks of savage beatings on their bodies. They were happy, frank

and friendly, asking us eagerly to arrange for English school-children to exchange regular correspondence with them—which we have done: but many of them seemed years younger than their age.

The sight of them moved me deeply. I thought: 'Most of them have seen their parents murdered. Most of them are fortunate not to have been murdered themselves. And yet some people in the West think or pretend to think that the Soviet government is planning a new war in which such tragedies can be repeated and multiplied. And, still worse, some people advocate a new "preventive war" and seek to rearm the very Germans who ran these camps—and to release Nazi criminals from prison—in order to repeat such tragedies.'

There are many other places in Soviet Russia to teach the value of peace. Sevastopol is one of them. Here again I would like to quote *The Times*, in a despatch from its Special Correspondent on the 25th July, 1942:

'From reports of survivors it is now possible to relate some of the events of Sevastopol's last days when, after tenaciously fighting against overwhelming odds for eight months, the garrison was forced to abandon the ruined city. Yet even then a rearguard of marines, cavalrymen, pilots, pioneers, women and youths fought stubbornly to cover the embarkation of the main forces, the bulk of the remaining civil population, and the wounded. . . . When it was seen that the heaviest losses were not deterring the enemy from pressing forward . . . the defenders were told in plainest terms what lay ahead. Gathering round him his marines . . . the political commander spoke these words: "Now we have to die. We have to die for those who will one day return to Sevastopol; we have to die for those who will one day build another Dnieper Dam. We have to die for those who will go on fighting at sea." . . . The men removed their caps and stood silent for a short time and then swore an oath to conquer or die. They returned to their guns wearing under their Red Army blouses their striped sailor jerseys "for luck" and twisted round their forage caps hat-

bands bearing the names of their ships. . . . They fought till the last shell had been fired and then blew up themselves and their guns. No white flag ever flew at Sevastopol. . . . Amid the rubble of the city, among its fallen monuments and ruined quays, Russian resistance reached a climax, and time was saved and an example was created for the enemies of Germany fighting all over the world. Nothing was left.'

Then for a brief period of concentrated agony and glory—not much over a hundred days—Stalingrad held the world's imagination, while scores of thousands of Soviet youth were killed, and almost every building razed to the ground, to hold back the Nazis and win time to organize and carry through the largest and most superbly timed counter-offensive and encirclement in history, which inflicted a decisive defeat on the Nazi armies. Stalingrad saved the world; but the price it paid in human and material loss is vivid enough in the memories of the Soviet peoples to make them value peace more deeply than those whose countries were not invaded can fully understand. How could these people want war?

Mr. Churchill, who has shown himself to be an implacable and consistent enemy of the Soviet Union, was yet moved to speak out in unqualified praise of her. On the 2nd August, 1944, he referred in Parliament to

'the obvious essential fact . . . that it is the Russian armies who have done the main work in tearing the guts out of the German army',

and went on to say:

'I salute Marshal Stalin, the great champion, and I firmly believe that our twenty years' treaty with Russia will prove to be one of the most lasting and durable factors in preserving the peace and the good order and the progress of Europe.'

He followed this up on the 27th February, 1945:

'Marshal Stalin and the Soviet leaders wish to live in honourable friendship and equality with the Western democra-

cies. I feel also that their word is their bond. I know of no government which stands to its obligations even in its own despite more solidly than the Soviet Government.'

Perhaps the most striking incident came towards the end of 1944. Then, when it was thought that the Germans could launch no new major offensive, they suddenly attacked in the Belgian Ardennes, broke through the Anglo-American front, and placed many of our troops in a dangerous situation. They aimed to reach Antwerp. For a time it looked as if they would, and if they had done so, it would have prolonged the war and greatly increased the losses and hardship of the American and British armies, while the rain of rockets on our civilian population might have been longer and more horrible; and the peoples of Western Europe, so recently liberated from Nazi occupation, might have suffered it all over again.

In this anxious position, Mr. Winston Churchill turned to Marshal Stalin for help. On the 6th January, 1945, he cabled to him this rather urgent appeal:

'The battle in the West is very heavy and at any time large decisions may be called for from the Supreme Command. You know yourself from your own experience how very anxious the position is when a very broad front has to be defended after temporary loss of the initiative. It is General Eisenhower's great desire and need to know in outline what you plan to do, as this obviously affects all his and our major decisions. I shall be grateful if you can tell me whether we can count on a major Russian offensive on the Vistula front, or elsewhere, during January, with any other points you may care to mention.'

Despite the vast commitments of his forces, Stalin responded on the 7th January, within a few hours of the receipt of Mr. Churchill's cable:

'I received your message of 6th January, 1945, in the evening of 7th January. . . . It is very important to make use of our

superiority over the Germans in artillery and air force. For this we need clear weather for the air force and an absence of low mists which prevent the artillery from conducting aimed fire. We are preparing an offensive, but at present time weather does not favour our offensive. However, in view of the position of our Allies on the Western front, Headquarters of the Supreme Command has decided to complete the preparations at a forced pace, and, disregarding the weather, to launch wide-scale offensive operations against the Germans all along the central front not later than the second half of January. You need not doubt but that we shall do everything that can possibly be done to render help to the glorious troops of our Allies.'

On the 9th January, Mr. Churchill answered this great-hearted and unselfish response from the country which—as we shall see—he was even then scheming to weaken and to destroy, as follows:

'I am most grateful to you for your thrilling message. May all good fortune rest upon your noble venture.'

The offensive on the Soviet-Carpathian front, planned for the 20th January, was advanced to the 12th. On that day, the Soviet Army attacked on a wide front from the Baltic Sea to the Carpathians. One hundred and fifty divisions, supported by a large quantity of artillery and aircraft, broke through the front and threw the Germans back many miles. Five or six days later, German troops, among them two Panzer Armies, had to be withdrawn from the Western front to try to stem the Soviet attack. The German offensive in the west was thus frustrated, and the danger to Antwerp and the whole Western Front averted.

On the 17th January, Mr. Churchill cabled to Marshal Stalin:

'On behalf of His Majesty's Government and from the bottom of my heart I offer you our thanks and congratulations on the immense assault you have launched upon the Eastern front.'

This then was the quality of our war-time ally. The people of Russia to-day are the survivors of those who fought in that war, or the widows and orphans and parents of the more than seven million combatants and non-combatants who were killed. If there is a third World War, they have the bitter knowledge—as we should have too—that many more than seven millions of them, and countless millions of our people, will die fighting—on opposite sides. Is this not worth avoiding?

## CHAPTER II

## PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT

IT IS OFTEN asserted that, while the Soviet *people* no doubt want peace, their *government* wants war, and the people have no control over the government. Sometimes we are told that the people and the government are so far apart, and the people so hate their rulers, that they are only waiting for the opportunity of a war to overthrow their government. Mr. Churchill, for example, five years after his successful plea for rescue in the Ardennes, used language which would have provoked a storm of indignation in Britain and America if it had been used by any Soviet statesman 'the other way round', when he said to the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe at Strasbourg on the 11th August, 1950:

'The use of this weapon'—(the atom bomb)—'would shake the foundations of the Soviet régime throughout the vast areas of Russia, and the breakdown of communications and centralized control might well enable the brave Russian peoples to free themselves from a tyranny far worse than that of the Tsars.'

Some Americans, too, profess hopes of revolt in Russia. Mr. John Foster Dulles, the Republican adviser to the U.S. State Department, in an important speech on the 29th December, 1950, favouring the policy of U.S. military intervention in Europe, spoke of 'grave internal weaknesses' in the 'captive world', and suggested that the Russian people and 'satellites' would revolt if there were a third World War.

Now, it is not only wicked to hint that the Americans should start dropping atom bombs on Russia; it is also dangerous and baseless nonsense to suggest that war against the Soviet Union can be begun light-heartedly because it would produce a revolt. A revolt, if you please, when after a

tremendous military victory an era of real prosperity has dawned, and life is growing easier and happier for everyone! There is no evidence of 'disaffection' beyond the stories of a few dozen misfits who run away to foreign countries and find a market for their imagination.

If there had ever been a desire to revolt, it would have been in the hard times of 1941-45! People 'groaning under tyranny' might have revolted then! What they in fact did, as the whole world knows, was to fight for themselves, their country, their system, and their government, with a tenacity, courage and devotion, the equal of which has perhaps never been known anywhere else in history.

This suggests a very different picture of relations between the Soviet peoples and their government from that of the propaganda stories. How does the Soviet government in fact behave towards the people? Among other things, it gives them ever more lavish education, and teaches them the history of every revolution there ever was, including their own successful revolution of 1917—hardly the way to suppress ideas of revolt! To deal with revolt, moreover, one must have reliable courts to convict and sentence the disaffected; but by Soviet law the judges and their assessors (the equivalent of our jury) are *elected*—and can be *dismissed* at any time—by universal franchise, i.e., by the votes of the very people they are to convict! That would indeed be a dangerous weapon to give people thirsting for revolt. Those who hope for a 'Russian revolt' miscalculate dangerously.

This 'people versus government' story is sometimes put another way: 'We are sure that the Soviet people, like all other ordinary people, don't want war; but the people are one thing, and the government is another; and the government, a small handful of power-seeking men, wants war.'

Now, that 'the people are one thing and the government is

another' is true of most countries; but it is really untrue of the Soviet Union. In countries like Britain, the government is in general elected by the votes of round about half the electors actually voting, and very often by less than two-thirds of those entitled to vote. If the government does not directly represent industrial and financial forces, it is influenced and controlled by such forces; and it is natural enough in such circumstances to think in terms of 'we' and 'they'—*we* the people and *they* the government—and to look upon the government as an enemy to be opposed.

In the Soviet Union the position is different. Nearly everyone approves the government and believes that it serves the interests of the whole people. There are no industrial or financial forces, no handful of rich men, to thwart their plans for improvement; and there are no great divisions between sections or classes of the population. The people elect their 'M.P.s'—the Supreme Soviet—after an elaborate sifting of the candidates, by equal, direct, secret, universal ballot, and can recall and dismiss those members at any time by the same machinery. The candidates for any seat are checked over and discussed, not on party lines but on ability to represent the interests of the constituency and the country, until the general body of electors is pretty sure that one of them is the best choice. No one is an M.P. because his father was a lord, or a rich man; no M.P. is elected by a minority of the votes cast. Members elected and chosen in this way, usually straight from the factory or the collective farm, know what the electorate wants and thinks.

For a practical example of the M.P.s the people select, I recall a farm in the Ukraine which I visited in 1950. I was taken round by a sturdy good-looking woman in her early thirties. She talked to me of the losses and hardships of life on the farm under the Nazi occupation, of the heavy work of

its rebuilding from 1943 onwards, and of the successes now being won by hard work and the application of science. She was the chairman of the farm; hundreds of collective farmworkers, after searching among their own numbers to find the best head of a large modern farm, had voted in general meeting for this woman as the one best fitted for the task. She was also a Member of the Supreme Soviet. The 300,000 people in the region had picked her in the same way as the best person to represent them all at Moscow. Such a woman, living as a farmworker among farmworkers, selected by them as just the best of themselves, could not misrepresent them. They want peace and want it all the more intensely because they have had so much of war. It would be impossible for her to talk anything but peace at Moscow; and, if anyone in Moscow were mad enough to talk of war, she would not fail to assert that her constituents would have nothing to do with it.

The government, in its turn, consists of people of the same social composition as the M.P.s and their constituents. With such a political 'make-up', it would be easy, by adverse votes through the secret ballot, or by selecting candidates who would express disapproval of the government, to show that the government had lost or was losing the support of the people. And, plainly no government could last long if it did not command the confidence of the people and do their will.

All this may surprise those who have been told that the Soviet people have no choice of government or candidate, or any means of criticizing policy; but it is known to all who have studied and visited the U.S.S.R.

The strong position of the Soviet government rests on the people's experience of its conduct. The people have confidence in the government and leadership of Stalin; they regard it as *their* government, likely to lead them wisely in

the future as in the past. Subject only to minor changes, the leaders to-day are those who led the state before and throughout the war. Nothing has happened to change them from lovers of peace to aggressors or warmongers. When thoughtful people, not easily a prey to emotion, think that their government is close to them in feeling and regard for their welfare, there is no scope for great divergence on big issues, still less for revolt. If there ever were such divergences, policies could and would be altered. Let me quote from an article in *The Times* on the 19th March, 1946, by a special correspondent who has great knowledge of the Soviet people:

"The Russians remain insistent that, before they acquiesce in a policy, its intellectual foundations should be revealed and its superiority over alternative policies proved. The (Communist) party of to-day . . . claims to represent the whole of the Soviet Union and to draw its 6,000,000 active members—one for every fifteen adults in the land—from all the interests that make up society. Because the party is all the time watching popular reactions and can always ascertain which of its policies the masses accept and which they criticize, Soviet public opinion is a determining factor in Government policy.

"They have a new self-assurance, a feeling that the future is theirs, a decisiveness not easily found in the Russian character before, and above all a profound anti-militarism. . . .

"If there were disillusion or frustration in Russia one might justly interpret her foreign policy as adventurous, designed to divert public attention from home affairs. If there were militarism, or acute nationalism, some recent Soviet claims would have to be regarded with deep concern. But it is to their own affairs that the Government desires to direct the attention of war-weary people. It is granting them a widening freedom and responsibility. It is giving the rank-and-file members of society the feeling that they have not merely a nominal duty, but the actual power to mould their own future. . . . A reconversion programme has been launched that convinces the people that it is an age of plenty, not of adventure, to which the government aspires."

These words were written five years ago, but the whole development of Soviet policy since that time makes them even more true to-day. If there were a third World War, government and people alike would defend their country and their social system with the same determination and courage as before; and they would have with them the peoples of five or six Republics in Central and Eastern Europe, the 486,000,000 citizens of new China, and most probably millions more allies in Asia.

To judge whether aggression is in the air in Russia to-day, one should examine what is commanding the attention of the government, the Press, and the public. It is not, for example, intensive rearmament or even civil defence, although that would not be unnatural if they listened to such threats as those of General Orville Anderson, the officer in command of the Air War College of the U.S. Army Air Force. On the 11th September, 1950, he advocated the launching of an atom-bomb attack on the Soviet Union in these words:

'Give me the order to do it and I can break up Russia's five A-bomb<sup>1</sup> nests in a week. And when I went up to Christ, I think I could explain to him why I wanted to do it—now—before it's too late. I think I could explain to him that I had saved civilization.'

They might do the same if they listened to Mr. Francis Matthews, U.S. Secretary of the Navy, saying on the 25th August, 1950:

'The U.S. *must take the offensive against Russia*. It is a rôle which, in my opinion, we cannot escape. . . . We should first get ready to ward off any possible attack and we should boldly proclaim our undeniable objective to be a world at peace. *To have a policy we should be willing to pay*, and declare our intention to pay, any price—even the price of instituting a war to compel co-operation for peace.'

<sup>1</sup>He explained later that he 'picked the number of five out of the air'.

The U.S., he added, would have to assume a character new to a true democracy, and become 'an initiator of war of aggression'. 'It would win for us a popular title,' said he, '*We would become the first aggressors for peace.*'

A half-hearted denial that this statement was official U.S. policy at the time was issued, simultaneously with an announcement that Mr. Matthews would not be dismissed from his post!

But, despite such appalling threats, the Russian government is not making calls for sacrifices for rearmament, such as we receive day after day. What it is in fact doing was stated by Stalin himself to *Pravda* in February, 1951:

'The entire world knows that the Soviet Union demobilized its troops after the war. . . . Were Premier Attlee well versed in financial or economic science he would without difficulty understand that no state, the Soviet State included, can develop to the utmost civilian industry, launch great construction projects such as the hydro-electric stations on the Volga, the Dnieper and the Amu-Darya, requiring budget expenditures of tens of thousands of millions, continue a policy of systematic reduction of prices of consumer goods, likewise requiring budget expenditures of tens of thousands of millions, invest hundreds of thousands of millions in the restoration of the national economy destroyed by the German occupationists, and, together with this, simultaneously with this, increase its armed forces and expand war industry. . . . Premier Attlee should know from his own experience, as well as from the experience of the United States, that an increase of the armed forces of a country and an armaments drive lead to expansion of the war industry, to curtailment of civilian industry, to the suspension of big civilian construction projects, to an increase in taxes, to a rise in the prices of consumer goods. It is clear that if the Soviet Union does not reduce but on the contrary develops the construction of immense new hydro-electric stations and irrigation systems, does not discontinue but on the contrary continues the policy of reducing prices, it cannot



simultaneously with this expand war industry and increase its armed forces without taking the risk of going bankrupt.'

Nor are Soviet statesmen, or the Press, inculcating a war mentality. When I arrived in the Soviet Union in 1950, the campaign for signatures to the Stockholm Peace Petition (called in Britain the Peace Petition) had just started. This petition called simply for the United Nations to abolish the atom bomb and to declare that whatever government should thereafter first use an atom bomb should be branded as a war criminal. (It is not surprising that 500,000,000 adults, in a world of a little over 2,000,000,000 people, signed it in a few months!)

The progress of the campaign varied from country to country. Among ordinary British men and women there was no difficulty whatever in getting signatures, for we want peace just as much as the Russians do! But when the campaign here began to make headway, it was denounced by the Labour Party (which ordered its members not to co-operate, and indeed even not to sign, on pain of expulsion), and by the Press, which pilloried every person of distinction who had signed the appeal. Even schoolchildren who had taken the forms for signature to their schools, became the butts of Press attacks; and the London County Council gave instructions that no peace petitions were to be allowed to circulate in the schools!

In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the petition was encouraged by the government; within about five weeks, over 115,000,000 people—virtually the whole adult population—had signed it.

There is a clear lesson in this. It is quite impossible to encourage public support for such a Petition and at the same time win your population for an aggressive war policy, which must include the use of atomic weapons; and any government

with a war policy could not even permit the campaign, for it would foster the natural human love of peace and fear of war and so render any subsequent attempt to condition people's minds for war far more difficult. From a jingo point of view, it is almost sabotage!

If one recalls how Hitler built up the will to war in Germany by encouraging hatred of other countries and races, and glory in murder even among the smallest children, in order to reconcile people to 'Guns before Butter', and if, alas!, one then looks at what is being done in the United States and to a lesser degree in our own country, it provides a striking contrast to the way the Soviet Government encourages peace petitions and legislates against war propaganda. No one in the Soviet Union would talk of 'having a nice party, and killing a lot of people', as Field-Marshal Montgomery did not so long ago, or describe a mass of Korean corpses as 'a sight to gladden my old eyes', as General MacArthur did.

The opposition of our government and the United States to the Stockholm Petition and to the later petition for five-power negotiations, shows fear lest if people are allowed to sign such petitions they will not accept the present armaments race. When Mr. Attlee objected that the petitions 'weaken the will of the people to resist', he must have meant the will to embark on a war; for nothing, surely, would weaken our will to resist an attack on our own country. His argument applies both ways; if the petitions weaken the Russian will to fight, that is surely to the good; and if he in his turn encouraged the petitions we could all hope for peace. But as things stand, the American and British governments are in effect refusing to encourage a peaceful spirit among their peoples, whilst the Soviet government is actively doing so.

The inference is at any rate that we need not fear Soviet aggression.

It is sometimes suggested, in defence of American and British war propaganda, that 'the Russians started it'. I answer that *there is no corresponding propaganda in Russia*. There is plenty of strong criticism of the rulers of the U.S.A., of their warlike statements, and of their policy, but never even the most indirect call for war. If anything resembling the American calls for the destruction of Russia were said in the U.S.S.R. about Britain or the U.S.A., there would be ground for anxiety among Western Governments; but, as Mr. Vyshinsky told the General Assembly of the United Nations on the 18th September, 1947:

'If anyone in the Soviet Union permitted himself an utterance even remotely resembling those . . . permeated with criminal craving for further manslaughter, such an utterance would meet with a stern rebuff and public condemnation as an action gravely endangering society.'

For further contrast, read the speech of Ilya Ehrenburg, the well-known Soviet writer, at the Warsaw Peace Congress, in November, 1950:

'War is not the midwife of history; war destroys the flower of mankind. War is alien to our Soviet philosophy, to our ethics, our aspirations. For we have confidence in the future, and all the children of the world, not only the children of Moscow, but the children of New York, too—are our hope, our friends, our allies.'

'I believe that the way of life in the United States pains me no less than the Soviet way of life pains Mr. Acheson. Nevertheless, I stand for peace—for peace not only with the America of Howard Fast and Robeson but also for peace with the America of Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson. I know that there are many people in the world who do not like Socialism. I hope that Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson in turn know that there are not a few people in the world who prefer Socialism to capitalism. We live on one planet. However, it has plenty of room, and there is room on it for the adherents of different

social systems. They can come to an agreement that no one will break down the doors of someone else's house because of antipathy for the ideas of the master of that house, and that no one will throw stones at a neighbour's windows just because the neighbour thinks differently, talks differently, lives differently. . . .

'Two months ago the United States Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Matthews, suggested to his fellow citizens the following way to establish peace: "We must be prepared to declare war in order to compel co-operation for the benefit of peace. . . ." 'In the summer Assistant Secretary for War, Mr. Griffith, said that *back in 1947* he had already advised Mr. Truman to drop the atom bomb on the Soviet Union.

'*If the Minister of the Navy of the Soviet Union were to proclaim that it was necessary to declare war on the United States in order to compel it to co-operate he would beyond doubt be brought to trial. If the Assistant Defence Minister of the Soviet Union proposed dropping the bomb on America he would beyond doubt be taken to a clinic for mentally diseased persons. . . .*

'If I am told that I am prejudiced, that I accuse only one side, I will reply: It is possible to find shortcomings and mistakes in our Press. It is possible to point that one or another critic judges shallowly or unjustly one or another aspect of the cultural life in the West. *But never has a single political leader, a single Deputy, a single journalist or teacher in the Soviet Union called for war against the United States or any other power.*

'One can find in our newspapers sharp articles against the policy conducted by the United States, against the capitalist system, against an ideology which is alien to Soviet society. But no one will find in our newspapers urgings to drop the atom bomb on New York, to attack London, to capture Paris. In our schools hatred for other peoples, in particular for the American people, is not fostered. On the contrary, our teachers constantly remind pupils that, besides the America of Mr. Johnson or General MacArthur, there is another America, which has given the world Lincoln and Roosevelt, Longfellow and Whitman, the America of great scientists and honest, energetic working people.'

*WHOM ARE WE ASKED TO FIGHT?*

WHILE MUCH of the present world tension is built on fear of the Soviet Union—unnecessary fear, deliberately created by propaganda—it is growing clear that the ‘enemy’ that we are asked to fear, and hate, and build up arms to destroy, is no longer only the Soviet Union, but includes other countries, with total populations something like 800,000,000 in all—two-fifths of the world. We must be very sure that we have real grounds to fear aggression before we contemplate war on such a scale, ‘to contain Communism’ or for any other reason.

The reality is even worse than that. American and British leaders are preaching a ‘holy war’, not just against Soviet Russia and other Socialist and near-Socialist countries because they are ‘Communist’ countries, but against Communism (or Socialism) itself, i.e., against a political philosophy and a whole economic development. But we cannot fight ideas with bombs. Indeed, to fight ideas with bombs makes the ideas grow. The two world wars of this century have both been followed by an increase in the areas accepting the Communist philosophy. As Marshal Stalin said, as far back as the 10th March, 1939, when analysing the reasons why Britain, France and other states were appeasing Hitler and Mussolini instead of forming a Peace Pact with Russia:

‘The bourgeois politicians know, of course, that the First Imperialist War led to the victory of the revolution in one of the largest countries. They are afraid that the second imperialist world war may also lead to the victory of the revolution in one or several countries.’

Whilst no Communist leader wants a third world war in order to spread Communism, it remains true that war against Communism would not defeat Communism, but would lead

to the physical destruction of much of what men have built through centuries in the world. And, unfortunately, that destruction would be greater in Great Britain than in other countries, because of our vulnerable geographical position and of the United States bomber bases in our country.

There is now a volume of evidence to show that the real theme of propaganda to-day is war against Communism. One sample, of particular historical importance, is the declaration by Mr. Truman, President of the United States of America, on the 27th June, 1950. It will be remembered that on the 25th June hostilities began in Korea, and that on the same day the Security Council of the United Nations—acting without legal validity—pretended to pass a resolution condemning ‘the invasion of the Republic of Korea’ (i.e., South Korea) ‘by armed forces from North Korea’, demanding the immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of the armed forces of North Korea to the 38th Parallel, and calling on all members of the United Nations Organization to assist the United Nations in the execution of the resolution. (This was not a request to the members of U.N.O. for military aid to South Korea in the fighting; that request came two days later, on the 27th June.) But on the 27th, before U.N.O. had asked for military aid, and without even waiting an hour or two for it to do so, President Truman made this remarkable statement. After announcing that he had ordered U.S. air and sea forces to give cover and support to the South Korean troops, he continued:

‘The attack upon Korea makes it plain beyond all doubt that Communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations, and will now use armed invasion and war. It has defied the orders of the Security Council of the United Nations, issued to preserve international peace and security. In these circumstances the occupation of *Formosa*’—(my italics throughout)—‘by Communist forces would be a

direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and to United States forces performing their lawful and necessary functions in that area. Accordingly I have ordered the Seventh Fleet to prevent any attack on Formosa. As a corollary of this action I am calling upon the Chinese Government on Formosa' (i.e., Chiang Kai-shek)—to cease all air and sea operations against the mainland. The Seventh Fleet will see that this is done. The determination of the future status of Formosa must await the restoration of security in the Pacific, a peace settlement with Japan, or consideration by the United Nations.'

'I have also directed that United States forces in the Philippines be strengthened and that military assistance to the Philippine Government be accelerated. I have similarly directed acceleration in the furnishing of military assistance to the forces of *France* and the associated states of *Indo-China* and the dispatch of a military mission to provide close working relations with those forces.'

The only matter to which Truman should have been addressing himself was that of Korea. Yet he at once proposed military 'aid' to Formosa, a Chinese island, nothing to do with Korea. Formosa is part of China, as the United States and its allies agreed at Cairo and Potsdam; and as recently as January, 1950, Mr. Truman and his Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Acheson, expressly recognized this and said they had no intention of interfering in Formosa. Indeed, pre-Korean views on the strategic importance of Formosa were very different. In June, 1951, Mr. Acheson was obliged to make public a document—'Special Guidance No. 28'—issued by the State Department on 23rd December, 1949, to assist U.S. information officers when Formosa looked like falling to the victorious Chinese People's Army. Formosa, it was explained, was not critical to American Pacific defence and in no circumstances would the U.S. use military force to keep it from the Communists; for to do so would be to prove the charge of 'American Imperialism'.

In June, 1950, the only forces fighting in Korea were

Korean and American; and the Chinese People's Republic had every right to enter Formosa to deal with Chiang Kai-shek, who had been rejected by the Chinese people. No other country had any right to interfere in what was a purely internal affair on Chinese territory. Yet here was Truman directing his Navy to prevent the Chinese Government exercising its sovereign power on its own territory.

Since then the position in relation to China has grown steadily clearer—and worse. In May, 1951, Mr. Dean Rusk, U.S. Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs, emphasized that the Government would persist in 'recognizing' the Chiang Kai-shek régime as the authentic representative of the Chinese people and would give it help. As *The Times* put it, he

'made clear . . . that the United States intends to encourage and actively support attempts to overthrow the present régime in China'.

Mr. Truman's declaration, in its sweep beyond Korea, did not stop with the Chinese fifth of the world. He announced policies of military help to the Philippines and Indo-China—still further from any link with Korea. It was simply the policy of 'Fight Communism Everywhere', and made quite clear the real motives of the United States. One of the most dangerous developments of United States policy is this flouting of the United Nations Charter, which forbids interference in the internal affairs of other countries, on the pretext that the war against Communism must be carried on everywhere.

I leave the rights and wrongs of the war in Korea for discussion later. But I emphasize the grave extension of our burdens and dangers involved in these unilateral American decisions, primarily aimed at securing bases for military action against Russia in an ideological war, and having

nothing to do with the defence of Britain or Europe against suggested aggression.

To fight 'Communism' by military force is a hopeless enterprise. Whilst it is seldom clear what people mean by 'Communism', it is plain that 'Communism' or 'Socialism' can only be fought by showing that 'non-Communism' can give the masses at least as secure and hopeful a life as the Socialist countries are giving.

How far are we to be carried by this policy? If, for example, France or Italy elect a parliament with a Communist majority, would America call on us to intervene by force of arms? Some people would wish it; but the vast majority of British people would have nothing to do with it and would not risk our cities and countryside being laid waste in a futile attempt to 'contain Communism'.

The present campaign against the Soviet Union, if it is not checked soon, may lead us to the point Mr. Truman and other American politicians have already reached, that anything said to be 'Communist' must be fought, anyhow, anywhere, at any cost. And we must therefore be more careful than ever to see that we are not being misinformed or deceived on the facts.

I now turn to consider the principal anti-Soviet allegations, and hope to convince readers that war is not inevitable if we work actively against it.

#### CHAPTER IV

#### ACCUSATIONS

IN THIS CHAPTER I list some of the main charges against the Soviet Union, and will examine in the remaining chapters the answers to those charges.

It is not easy to decide which to answer and which to ignore, for people are differently impressed by different stories. I have chosen as best I can, disregarding questions of age or plausibility, and the importance of their subject matter, and selecting those which seem to trouble ordinary people most.

I give two warnings. The first is that some controversialists adopt different standards of common honesty in questions involving the Soviet Union. Of the many instances of this, I will give only one. It is that of a scholar of world-wide reputation who, in a letter to *The Times*, based an argument for increased armaments on what he called '*the Kremlin's claim that it is the historical mission of Russia to rule Europe*'. No Soviet statesman had ever made any such claim; but the words were given in inverted commas, suggesting that they were the actual words of someone speaking for 'the Kremlin', i.e., the highest Government authority in the Soviet Union. I challenged this scholar for evidence of such use of words; and he produced—without any apology—the unsupported recollection of a Polish emigré that a police official interrogating him in Moscow on a criminal charge five years earlier had used them!

My second warning is that it is difficult to persuade even the best newspapers to print articles or letters answering their mistaken statements about the Soviet Union. *The Observer*, for example, in the latter part of 1950, printed an article by

Mr. Edward Crankshaw, describing a very remarkable agricultural advance in the Soviet Union—the development of ‘*agroroda*’—as a scheme imposed upon the peasants by the Party leaders and ‘bitterly resented’ by the peasants; the aim of the scheme, he said, was to prevent the peasants from ‘escaping from the eye of party bosses’ and to ‘turn them into State serfs working on piece rates under central party direction as cogs in a food-producing factory . . . in short, as a move to put them into barracks’. It happened that I had just visited the very areas he was describing from an office in England, so I wrote to the paper to contradict him, stating that I had seen and talked to the peasants who were undertaking this new scheme, and building larger and better cottages, with electric light, baths, indoor sanitation, piped water, and all the amenities of a small town in the way of crèches, hospitals, hotels, cinemas, and clubs. I explained that the peasants had initiated the scheme themselves; had set up their own brickfields and carpenters’ shops, selected the sites, and set to work full of enthusiasm. I thought that with this first-hand knowledge I was well qualified to say that I had seen no ‘bitter resistance’ nor any sign that independent human beings were being reduced to serfdom or ‘cogs’ by living in better conditions, or that the democratic running of a farm had somehow become ‘central party direction’. My letter was not printed, the Editor giving as his reason the assertion that my facts were ‘propaganda’. It may be that Mr. Crankshaw, sitting at home putting his own gloss on the Soviet Press, knows more about the *agrorod* movement than I do after investigating it on the spot; but the public cannot form judgements if a reputable newspaper systematically prints the armchair detractor and suppresses the eyewitness. And yet this is done regularly, as a matter of policy. Newspapers like *The Observer* would never behave in this

way if they were dealing with, say, the U.S.A. or Western Germany.

More important, the many British delegations of ordinary citizens who visit the Soviet Union, see ordinary people doing work similar to what they do in Britain, and return with favourable impressions, find nowadays that the British Press and the B.B.C. are firmly closed against them, so that they cannot tell the people of their experiences and first-hand impressions, except at selected meetings (again unreported) and in pamphlets of relatively limited circulation, whilst the Press and B.B.C. are full of stories of Soviet life from hostile people, generally ignorant of the facts.

As a result, it grows more and more difficult for the ordinary public to pierce the ‘paper curtain’ of silence and get a correct picture, or even to keep their minds clear to form objective judgements on any new reports—or inventions—about the Soviet Union and its peoples.

I have not space to deal with the more fantastic stories dramatized by the less reputable newspapers; but, before passing to the more serious accusations, I will mention one of them—the story of the ‘Soviet Brides’. These ‘brides’ were a small number of Soviet women, married after the end of the Second World War to British employees of the British Embassy in Moscow. The Embassy had warned the bridegrooms that, if they married Soviet citizens, it would probably send them back to Britain at once, without their wives. It did in fact send them back, and when the Soviet authorities declined to let their wives follow them, a propaganda campaign was started in this country and carried on with such vigour as to make it virtually impossible for the Soviet authorities to reconsider the applications for exit visas; the tone was so malicious that one suspected the Foreign Office of consciously working to embitter relations.

It has always been Soviet law that citizens cannot emigrate at their own wish, just as it has long been the law of the United States that a non-American woman cannot immigrate just because she is married to an American (and in some parts of the United States all marriages between persons of different colour are forbidden as crimes). Both Russia and the U.S.A. waived their rules for war-time marriages, both making it clear that they would not regularly do so for marriages after the war. In Australia, too, wives have been kept apart from their husbands since the war because of the colour of their skins. But the hue and cry was raised only in relation to 'Soviet Brides'.

The main accusations with which I will deal can be listed as follows:

- (1) That Russia 'betrayed' Britain and France in August, 1939, by making an agreement with Hitler, and thereby caused the Second World War; and that she treacherously invaded Poland.
- (2) That after the war everyone wanted to be on friendly terms with Russia, but that she has dissipated their friendship and good will by her bad behaviour and hostile attitude;
- (3) That she has been systematically unco-operative in the United Nations Organization, that she has misused her power of veto, and in particular has refused to agree to the 'Baruch proposals' for the abolition of the atom bomb;
- (4) That she is 'imperialist', and has swallowed up, and intends to go on swallowing up, Eastern European and Asian countries, and exploiting them to her own advantage;
- (5) That she is arming to the teeth; that she intends to launch a war of aggression in Europe or elsewhere, and

that in particular her conduct in Berlin in 1948 and 1949 and in relation to Korea in 1950 is evidence of those intentions.

Finally, whilst it is absurd to have to consider accusations against the Russians as to how they choose to live their own lives, so much abuse is poured on them in that field too that I must deal with another head of accusation:

- (6) That there is no freedom in the Soviet Union; that the outside world is not permitted to go there and see for itself; and that millions of 'slaves' are kept in terrible conditions in concentration camps.

CHAPTER V  
RUSSIA IN 1939

THE STORY OF the Soviet agreement of August, 1939, with Nazi Germany is, in essence, that in 1939, when war between Britain and France on the one hand and Nazi Germany on the other seemed likely, the Soviet Union made an agreement with Hitler, which helped him to fight us; and that when Hitler invaded Poland from the west Russia invaded it from the east and robbed it of territory.

This story was a great anti-Soviet 'success' in the period between August, 1939, and the entry of the Soviet Union into the war in June, 1941. It has been dealt with fully in various books, including one which I wrote in October, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

To understand the Pact, we have to go back to the Munich Agreement of September, 1938, made between Britain, France, Germany and Italy, which resulted in the temporary destruction of the Czechoslovak State. Russia—which had a pact, with military clauses, with both Czechoslovakia and France at that time—was excluded from the discussions. The purpose and effect of Munich was to hand over to Hitler strategically vital areas of Czechoslovakia, in the hope of buying him off from war on Britain and France by diverting his attention to the Ukraine and the Caucasus. Its inevitable result was that within six months Hitler occupied the whole of Czechoslovakia without firing a shot, and thus strengthened himself for the war he had planned.

In April, 1939, when the situation was worsening and Hitler seemed ready to attack Poland, which Britain had lightheartedly promised to defend, Russia proposed negotia-

<sup>1</sup> *Light on Moscow*, Penguin Special, 1939.

tions between Britain, France, Poland and herself, for a pact to resist aggression. Such a pact would either have prevented Hitler from starting a war in Europe or led to his early defeat if he did; and the proposal was warmly welcomed by British public opinion and particularly by the Labour Movement.

After long delays, negotiations began in Moscow. The British and French representatives, at a time when every moment was precious, travelled by a slow boat to Leningrad, taking ten days in all to reach Moscow—a few hours by air from London. They arrived with no written credentials and indeed no clear authority at all. They were persons of little military or political importance, on an occasion which surely demanded 'the highest level'.

By mid-August, 1939, the course of the discussions had convinced the Russians that the other three countries had no intention of making a pact, but still hoped to divert Hitler's aggressive intentions to Soviet Russia. Mr. Molotov said to the Supreme Soviet on 31st August, 1939:

'The Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations lasted for four months, but they encountered insuperable obstacles. . . . The position of Great Britain and France was characterized throughout by crying contradictions. . . . On the one hand, Great Britain and France demanded that the U.S.S.R. should give military assistance to Poland in case of aggression. The U.S.S.R. was willing to meet this demand, provided the U.S.S.R. itself received like assistance from Great Britain and France. On the other hand . . . *Poland . . . resolutely declined any military assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R.* Just try in such circumstances to reach an agreement regarding mutual assistance—when assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R. is declared beforehand to be unnecessary and an intrusion!'

The U.S.S.R. thus had no choice but either to stand alone in the coming war, with no allies to help her to resist an



attack by Hitler, or to make an agreement with Hitler which would probably secure her a breathing-space of a year or two. She chose the latter course, and entered into the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact of August, 1939. The Soviet people had such confidence in their leaders that they fully accepted this unexpected step, which had of necessity to be taken quickly, with no time to prepare them for it and only the barest explanation of the reasons for it. It is clear now that that policy was correct, and that it led to the defeat of the Fascist powers; and the way the Soviet peoples fought in the war, when it did hit their country, showed that they had never wavered in their hatred of Fascism.

But the Soviet Union was violently abused in this country for 'making friends with Hitler'. And when war started soon after in the West, it was even said that the Soviet Union by concluding this agreement had 'caused the war'. As is now known, Hitler had definitely fixed the date for his attack on Poland before ever the agreement was made; and if anyone caused the war by their behaviour *in the summer of 1939*, it was the British and French who refused to make a pact with Russia against Hitler, or even to persuade the Poles to allow the Red Army to help them.

Stalin himself said to the Soviet people on the 3rd July, 1941, when it was possible for him to speak plainly about this agreement:

'It may be asked, how could the Soviet Government have consented to conclude a non-aggression pact with such perfidious people, such monsters, as Hitler and Ribbentrop? Was this not an error on the part of the Soviet Government? Of course not! Non-aggression pacts are pacts of peace between two states. It was such a pact that Germany proposed to us in 1939. Could the Soviet Government have declined such a proposal? I think that not a single peace-loving State could decline a peace agreement with a neighbouring State, even

though the latter were headed by such monsters and cannibals as Hitler and Ribbentrop. But that, of course, only on the one indispensable condition—that this peace agreement did not jeopardize, either directly or indirectly, the territorial integrity, independence, and honour of the peace-loving State. As is well known, the non-aggression pact between Germany and the U.S.S.R. was precisely such a pact.

'What did we gain by concluding the non-aggression pact with Germany? We secured our country peace for a year and a half and the possibility of preparing our forces to repulse Fascist Germany, should she risk an attack on our country despite the pact. This was a definite advantage for us and a disadvantage for Fascist Germany.'

As for the charge that Russia invaded Poland, 'stabbed her in the back', the truth was that the Polish State, with its inefficient and reactionary government, collapsed in a few days in face of the terrible attacks of the Nazi armies and air force, leaving its territories as a 'no man's land', open to occupation by the first comer. The Soviet Union thereupon entered those Eastern areas of Poland which, although part of the Polish State since 1918, were in fact populated by White-Russians and Ukrainians and should in justice have remained part of Soviet White-Russia and Ukraine instead of being taken by Poland after the First World War.

The Red Army did not, in any real sense, take these territories from the Polish State, which could not have held them against Hitler for a day. The Red Army rescued them from Hitler, who would have gained much if the Russians had not moved as quickly as they did. Yet many in Britain attacked the Russians for depriving Hitler of the territories in question! Mr. Churchill was a wise exception. In a broadcast on the 1st October, 1939, he said:

'We could have wished that the Russian armies should be standing on their present line as the friends and allies of Poland, instead of as invaders. But that the Russian armies should stand on this line was clearly necessary for the safety

of Russia against the Nazi menace. At any rate the line is there, and an Eastern Front has been created which Nazi Germany does not dare assail. When Herr von Ribbentrop was summoned to Moscow last week it was to learn the fact, and to accept the fact, that the Nazi designs upon the Baltic States and upon the Ukraine must come to a dead stop.'

*DID THEY THROW AWAY OUR FRIENDSHIP?*

RELATIONS between Great Britain, France and the United States, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on the other, which in 1945 were at any rate superficially good, are now extremely bad; and the general feeling of the British public towards the Russians is much less friendly than it was. If the Russians were really to blame for this, they could not complain, although we should still have to do all in our power to improve relations. But where does the fault really lie?

To my mind, the facts show that the fear and hostility entertained by the ruling forces in the United States and Great Britain towards the great Socialist state is not a post-war product, but has persisted through the years, being merely concealed during the war. If that is so, it cannot be due to Russian conduct since the war.

At first sight, one might think that the old hostility would not survive, even among the ruling class, in face of the popular affection evoked by the Russians' fight against our common enemy; and I remember being shocked myself once or twice during the war when it came to the surface; just to give one example, when Colonel Moore-Brabazon, then British Minister of War Transport, was reported to have said at a meeting of some trade union officials that 'the more the Russians and the Germans went on killing each other the better for us'.

But it is not really surprising that the ruling classes in the west should remain hostile to Soviet Russia. They feared both the spread of Socialism after the war and the difficulties of the readjustment of their war-expanded industries to

peace-time conditions, which might cause financial loss to themselves and mass unemployment to the workers. They naturally hoped that some of the 'backward' countries would not move into the Socialist sphere, but would remain available to them as fields of investment and exploitation. And still more, they wanted the Soviet Union to be weakened by the war, so as to be neither a rival to their system nor a formidable trade competitor; and they also wanted if possible to control countries around it—the Balkans, Turkey, Arabia, Persia, China, Korea, and others—as bases from which to 'contain Socialism'.

Once one sees the basis of this attitude, the ample evidence of its existence is not only more acceptable but more significant. The delay in opening the Second Front in France, right through 1942 and 1943 and up to June of 1944, for example, is seen to be more than just caution, more even than the understandable if dangerous selfishness of trying to let your ally do most of the fighting and dying. Clearly, the delay was largely due to the wish to weaken the Soviet Union as far as could be done without losing the war.

Such calculations are very cold-blooded; but the normal temperature of such calculations, when powerful interests are seeing to their own defence, is extremely cold. We know now that during most of the three years between the entry of the Soviet Union into the war and the opening of the Second Front in France, whilst the Red Army was fighting practically all the Nazi Armies, and none of its allies was engaged in any land fighting except in North Africa (which whilst important, well fought, and successful, engaged very few German divisions), Mr. Churchill was resisting the demands of President Roosevelt (who was far less willing than were the British to imperil the major strategy of the war in order to injure the Soviet Union) for the speedy

opening of the Second Front in France. As early as 1942, Roosevelt was pressing for this, and Churchill was successfully resisting; he continued to resist, again successfully, in 1943, and as late as December of that year, at the Teheran Conference, he sought to have the 1944 Second Front switched to the Balkans. That, fortunately, he failed to do.<sup>1</sup> This helps one to understand how, in October, 1942, at the very time he was expressing all our sentiments by praising the Red Army for its unmatched heroism at Stalingrad, Mr. Churchill wrote a famous Cabinet Minute, which Mr. Harold MacMillan, M.P., revealed seven years later. In this Minute, Mr. Churchill wrote of the need, as he saw it, to form a 'United States of Europe', including expressly such countries as Spain and Turkey, to prevent the 'measureless disaster' of the spread of 'Russian barbarism' in Europe after the war. Mr. Attlee and other Labour leaders were then members of the Cabinet, and we have not heard that any of them dissented from the view of Mr. Churchill, either

<sup>1</sup> It is sad that whilst Mr. Churchill was seeking in this way to delay the Second Front, he was saying, in the House of Commons, on the 11th February, 1943:

'When I look at all that Russia is doing and the vast achievements of the Soviet Armies, I should feel myself below the level of events if I were not sure in my heart and conscience that everything in human power is being done and will be done, to bring British and American forces into action against the enemy with the utmost speed and energy and on the largest scale.'

and that, in the same speech, after expressing regret that Premier Stalin had not been present at the meeting with Roosevelt at Casablanca in December, 1942, he added:

'Premier Stalin is, however, the supreme director of the whole vast Russian offensive, which was already then in full swing and which is still rolling remorselessly and triumphantly forward. He could not leave his post, he told us, even for a single day. But I can assure the House that, although he was absent, our duty to aid to the utmost of our power the magnificent, tremendous effort of Russia and to try to draw the enemy and the enemy's air force from the Russian front was accepted as the first of our objectives.'

when the Minute was circulated in 1942 or when it was disclosed in 1949.

Another illustration of the persistent hostile attitude of the allies to the Soviet Union was the conduct of the United States in relation to the atom bomb. This tremendous development was carried out in the U.S.A., kept safe largely by the military efforts of the Soviet Union; and when scientists drawn from various parts of the world had solved the problems and produced the atom bomb, it was decided—and announced without even any wrapping up of the facts—that the secrets would be shared between the U.S., Canadian, and British Governments (and of course the big monopolies in the U.S.A. engaged on the production work) but withheld from the U.S.S.R. The American government thus put itself in a position, at a time when the war was only just over, to secure that until Soviet scientists did the work all over again the Soviet Union should be weakened, both economically by the slower development of atomic energy, and militarily by American monopoly of the atom bomb; and American conduct since then makes it plain that that was the object of the retention of the secret.

Another field of evidence lies in the manifestations of Americo-British hostility, occurring after the war but too early for any pretence that they were the results of alleged unfriendly conduct of the Russians. In March, 1946, for example, when no one could have said that the Soviet Union had alienated the war-time goodwill, Mr. Winston Churchill made his famous speech at Fulton, Missouri, in the presence of President Truman. This speech, carefully read, justifies the generally held view that it was the opening of the campaign of hostility to Soviet Russia which now darkens our whole existence. Mr. Ernest Bevin, who always refused

to denounce the Fulton speech, said of it in Parliament in February, 1950:

'Well, there are such things as preventive wars. . . . As I understood the position of the Fulton speech, it was a preventive war which Mr. Churchill had in his mind.'

Mr. Churchill did not dissent.

Mr. Churchill said, in this speech:

'A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organization intends to do in the immediate future, or what are the limits, if any, to their expansive and proselytizing tendencies. I have a strong admiration and regard for the valiant Russian people and for my war-time comrade, Marshal Stalin. There is sympathy and good will in Britain—and, I doubt not, here also—towards the peoples of all the Russias'—note the use of the Tsarist phrase—and a resolve to persevere through many differences and rebuffs in establishing lasting friendships. We understand the Russian need to be secure on her western frontiers from all renewal of German aggression. We welcome her to her rightful place among the leading nations of the world. Above all, we welcome constant, frequent and growing contacts between the Russian people and our own people on both sides of the Atlantic. *It is my duty, however, to place before you certain facts about the present position in Europe.*

'From Stettin, in the Baltic, to Trieste, in the Adriatic, an iron curtain'—he borrowed this phrase from Dr. Goebbels—'has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe—Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest, and Sofia. All these famous cities and the populations around them lie in the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another not only to Soviet influence, but to a very high and increasing measure of control from Moscow.' Mr. Churchill went on, after clichés about 'police states':

'Except in the British Commonwealth and in the United States, where Communism is in its infancy; the Communist Parties or fifth columns constitute a growing challenge and

peril to Christian civilization. These are sombre facts for anyone to have to recite on the morrow of a victory gained by so much splendid comradeship in arms and in the cause of freedom and democracy, and we should be most unwise not to face them squarely while time remains.'

Having thus hinted that—in effect—capitalism should be defended because it is Christian, and that Communism should be actively resisted because it is Communist, he continued:

'I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines. But what we have to consider to-day while time remains is the permanent prevention of war and the establishment of conditions of freedom and democracy as rapidly as possible in all countries. . . .

'What is needed is a settlement, and the longer this is delayed the more difficult it will be, and the greater our dangers will become. From what I have seen of our Russian friends and allies during the war I am convinced that there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for military weakness.'

This comes very near to advocating war 'before it is too late'. The more the speech is studied, the clearer it becomes that Mr. Bevin's interpretation of it was correct, and that Mr. Churchill was preaching in 1946 'preventive war' against the bravest of our recent allies. This destroys any explanation or excuse of the present hostility by the suggestion that Russia has been awkward ever since 1945 or 1946.

The Russians saw the significance of the Fulton speech at once. Disregarding its politer passages, their statesmen denounced it as the speech of a warmonger, and gave it full attention in their Press and public statements, warning their own people and the world that it was a new and dangerous development.

Those who find it difficult to believe that the heads of the old economic system remained hostile to the Soviet

Union and determined to weaken it at all costs, right through the war, should read the following quotation from a leading article printed in the *News Chronicle* as long ago as the 9th February, 1942:

'There are not wanting those, even in high places, who would still like, if they could, to-day or to-morrow, to sabotage the hopes of permanent understanding with Russia. Such men would prefer to work for a settlement after the war which would build up what they would doubtless call a "strong Europe", as a barrier against Russian "encroachment". Some of them would even be found ready, if the opportunity came, to champion the establishment of a strong de-nazified Germany for this traitorous purpose. Traitorous, because that way lies the certainty of another and still crueller and bitterer war, one that in truth might bring civilization finally crashing down. Any man, therefore, who secretly harbours this intent in his heart is a dealer in the black market of human calamity.'

This showed remarkable foresight; and we cannot doubt that plans were going forward all the time to 'sabotage the hopes of permanent understanding with Russia', and to build up a 'strong Europe' against Russian 'encroachment'. It is sad that the *News Chronicle* itself, the author of this warning against 'dealers in the black market of human calamity', is now one of the leading dealers in that black market.

## THE VETO

I TURN to the charge that in the work of the United Nations Organization the Russians do not co-operate and will not meet other points of view or make agreements for peace; that in particular they misuse the so-called 'Veto', and that they rejected the 'Baruch plan' for the control and prohibition of the atom bomb, and are therefore to blame for the continued existence of atom bombs.

It is easy to maintain among ordinary British citizens the feeling that these accusations have substance. The complexity of the problem, and the forbidding amount of printed matter that must be read to understand it, contribute to confusion. The Security Council of U.N.O. meets frequently; the Assembly meets every year, often for many weeks; many long speeches are made, and cannot be very fully reported in our small newspapers; and pretty systematic study is required to understand the facts. In the circumstances, little cunning is needed to present the public with a picture of 'those awkward Russians'. (It is even easy to say 'Molotov says NO' so often that people accept the implication without even considering whether No is the proper answer! It sometimes is!)

One cannot, in a single chapter, or even a book, analyse the history of U.N.O. discussions sufficiently to present a full picture of everything the Russians are said to have done, for better or worse; but if one takes as examples 'the Veto', the Baruch plan for Atomic Control, and the proposals for reduction of armaments—all vital to peace—one gets a fair illustration of their behaviour.

Firstly, the 'Veto'. Few people know quite what it is, or why it exists. Many feel merely that it prevents the majority on the Security Council of U.N.O. doing something it wants to do, that the Soviet Union, the 'minority', often uses it, and that the other Great Powers entitled to exercise it seldom or never do so. That is, of course, not enough.

How did the 'Veto' come into being? In the summer of 1944, in talks at Dumbarton Oaks between the Americans, the British and the Russians, joined later by the Chinese, it was agreed that the basic unit of what was to be U.N.O. must be a Council (later called the Security Council) of which the five Great Powers (the four mentioned above with the addition of France) should be 'permanent members'. The question of voting on the Council was a little difficult; on *procedural* matters it was easy to agree that a simple majority of seven in a Council of eleven was to suffice, but a little difficulty arose over voting on substantive questions, on which war and peace may depend. On such points, plainly, special consideration had to be given to the five Great Powers, who, if they are in agreement can overcome the danger of war anywhere, and who cannot be expected, at the present stage of history, to accept majority decisions which they regard as injurious to their vital interests. The then U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Stettinius, put one important consideration thus:

'A straight majority vote on substantive . . . matters would mean that the armed forces of any major nation could be used without its consent, quite likely as a result of a vote cast largely by nations which had few armed forces to contribute.'

None of the five Powers was willing to accept the 'simple majority vote', and after some discussion, it was agreed that for a substantive decision to be valid, there must not merely be seven votes out of eleven, but that all the five

Great Powers must concur in the decision. Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Stalin, General Smuts and Mr. Churchill were all of this view, the latter remarking that he would certainly not accept a rule which might compel Britain to cede Hong Kong to China against her will. It may be added that, without such a safeguard, the Great Powers could scarcely have accepted a system which gave equal voting power to all countries, whatever their size.

In January, 1945, the fifty-four nations present at the foundation meeting of U.N.O. at San Francisco, unanimously accepted this arrangement, and embodied it in Article 27 (3) of the Charter in these words:

'Decisions of the Security Council . . . shall be made by the affirmative vote of seven members, *including the concurring votes of the permanent members.*'

Mr. John Foster Dulles, the Republican adviser to the State Department and an enemy of the Soviet Union, later stated the importance of the veto from the U.S. angle:

'Whenever there is discussion in the United States about amending the United Nations Charter, it centres on the "veto". . . . Up to 1st January, 1950, the Soviet Union had used the veto forty-three times. The United States had used it not at all. Therefore, the problem seems to us very simple. The veto has prevented the Security Council from doing what we wanted and what the Soviet Union did not want; therefore, the veto should be abolished. However, it is not really quite so simple as that. The Security Council is not a body that merely enforces agreed law. It is a law unto itself. . . . It could be a tool enabling certain Powers to advance their selfish interests at the expense of another power. It has happened so far that a majority in the Security Council has been friendly to the United States, so that our veto has not been needed to protect our interests. But it may not always be so; and if it should not be so, certainly the United States would want to have a veto power.'

Nothing could be plainer. And it is not surprising that it

was recently announced in Washington that if there should be a vote on the Security Council to admit the representative of the Chinese People's Republic to sit in place of Chiang Kai-shek's nominee, the United States will exercise its veto!

The unanimity principle is necessary, too, because a world organization which includes both Socialist and capitalist countries can only work effectively on two conditions: the first, that the major Powers settle any differences among themselves by negotiation and not by war; and the second, that great questions of policy be determined by discussion and compromise of divergent views, and not by one group of powers outvoting another at arm's length. The veto is the technical safeguard against any attempt to 'vote down' one of the five permanent members.

The veto, however, presents an obstacle to the desire of the U.S.A., materially the most powerful country and able to control a majority of votes<sup>1</sup> in both the Security Council and the General Assembly, to have her own way in all U.N. matters. She has made several efforts to sidetrack the veto by getting the powers of the Security Council, the supreme and executive body, transferred to the General Assembly, a deliberative body in which the veto does not apply. She tried, for example, to have the Assembly authorized to decide on 'special questions' of maintaining and restoring peace. This failed; and she then succeeded in setting up the 'Little Assembly' to exercise the functions and powers of the Security Council. Little came of this; and in June, 1950,

<sup>1</sup>How far the organization of votes in U.N.O. to carry through United States policy has already been carried was shown in June, 1951, by General Marshall:

'I often felt that General MacArthur did not fully realize the state of mind of these associates of ours . . . and the extraordinary difficulties we had in . . . having them all *line up with us where we had to have them*, before the U.N. Security Council.'

when war broke out in Korea, it was still necessary for any U.N. action to be passed by the Security Council, where the veto could operate, and operated.

There followed a striking degeneration of U.N.O. Either by chance or because, as many believed,<sup>2</sup> the hostilities were begun by South Korea at a time selected by her with American encouragement, the war came at a time when the Soviet delegates were not attending the Security Council, because they would not recognize Chiang Kai-shek's appointee as representing China there. The U.S., in the absence of Russia, summoned the Security Council at a few hours' notice, and rushed through resolutions condemning the North Koreans as aggressors, not merely without any evidence but without hearing them in their defence—and thus started the whole terrible war in Korea. The resolutions were of course invalid, because there was no concurring vote of the five permanent members.

Had the Soviet delegate been present to impose his 'veto' expressly, the invalidity of the resolutions would have been no more complete, but it would have given occasion for consideration, for the insistence that both sides to the dispute should be heard, and for full discussion.

The U.S.A. seemed to succeed for the moment, but she was not of course content, for the veto power remained. She continued her search for machinery to side-track it, and secured a resolution of the General Assembly of the 2nd November, 1950, entitled 'Uniting for Peace', which established a 'Peace Observation Commission' and a 'Collective Measures Committee'. This resolution was designed to empower the Assembly to make recommendations—to which of

<sup>2</sup> The evidence is set out in the author's pamphlet *New Light on Korea* (*Labour Monthly*, June 1951).

course no veto could be applied—for 'collective measures', including the use of force, 'in cases of a breach of the peace or act of aggression'. This was one more step towards the abandonment of Roosevelt's principle of agreement and compromise and its replacement by the domination of the American group.

Not only is the veto essential to the U.S.S.R., just as it would be to the U.S.A. if she could not rely on two of the other four permanent members to support her, but it is also natural that the U.S.S.R. has had to use it quite often. As she is accused of using it both wrongly and too frequently, I must examine the more important occasions of its use.

She first applied it on the 16th February, 1946, in opposition to the maintenance of British and French troops in Syria and Lebanon, which she regarded—surely quite rightly—as a threat to peace. She was of course consistent in this, for she has always objected on principle to the military occupation of one country by another, save by international agreements. She objected to Dutch troops fighting the Indonesians in Indonesia, to British troops fighting the Malayans in Malaya, to British and others fighting the Greeks in Greece, and to Americans and others fighting the Koreans in Korea; and in all these fields (except that of Malaya, which has not yet come before U.N.O.) she has vetoed resolutions supporting these various interventions, and voted for resolutions condemning them.

The U.S.S.R. used the veto, also, in the effort to secure the general rupture of diplomatic relations with Franco Spain, four times in all, in 1946. And a score of times between 1946 and 1949 she used it against the admission of certain new member states, while pressing for the admission of others. This particular matter gives a good example of the possibilities of agreement and compromise. The United



States wanted Portugal, Jordan, Italy, Finland, Ireland, Austria and Ceylon admitted to membership; the Soviet Union proposed Albania, Mongolia, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary, and was willing to see both groups admitted, but not one only. In June, 1949, she proposed as a compromise that all the twelve states should be admitted *en bloc*; but America and other states refused to agree. The dispute thus remained unsolved, and was presented to the world as 'another obstructive Soviet use of the veto'.

She used the veto, too, on several occasions between 1946 and 1948 over the Greek question. From 1944 onwards, at various stages, this country and the United States have given military and other help to the reactionary government of Greece, both to suppress the popular Left-wing forces and to establish naval and military bases against the U.S.S.R.; and the latter country naturally used the veto on this policy where she could, for it threatened the peace of the world. (This did not, unfortunately, prevent the U.S.A. from suppressing the popular forces by armed power and setting up a virtual American dictatorship, which by June, 1951, had gone as far as building twelve airfields in Greece, with one runway nearly two miles long, and 'at least four island locations from which long-range bomber flights could be launched against Russia'.)<sup>3</sup>

The veto was used, again, when Argentina brought forward a resolution on Soviet 'interference' in Czechoslovakia during February, 1948 (when no evidence of Soviet interference of any kind was produced). And on 11th October, 1949, after Chiang Kai-shek's appointee had vetoed a Soviet proposal for a census of all troops and armaments, including atomic weapons, the French delegate proposed another resolution for a census *excluding atomic weapons*. The Soviet

<sup>3</sup> N.Y. *Herald-Tribune*, 14th June, 1951.

delegates vetoed this proposal on the ground that a census which excluded atomic weapons was not realistic.

During recent months, the Soviet Government has used the veto against the continuation of the war in Korea, and against other U.S. proposals that involved the risk of a war on China, putting forward alternative proposals on which a compromise over Korea could be reached; in consequence decisions such as the recent one to impose an embargo on trade with China have been taken outside the Security Council.

This factual picture of the status and the use of the veto is very different from the picture many people have been persuaded to accept, of wise and reasonable policies at U.N.O. being met by unreasoning Russian vetoes!

## CHAPTER VIII

### ATOM BOMBS

THE CHARGE against the Soviet Union on the atom bomb is that, by rejecting the 'Baruch plan' put forward by the U.S.A., it has made agreement for the abolition of the bomb impossible, and has thus kept alive a horrible weapon which the U.S.A. was anxious to abolish! It seems curious to-day to suggest that the U.S.A. wanted to abolish the atom bomb, in the light of all the American boasts of what can and will be done with the atom bomb. The U.S.S.R. on the other hand has for over twenty years led the demand for the abolition of all forms of indiscriminate weapons which involve wholesale injury to civilians, and has taken the same line specifically in its support of the 'Stockholm Petition', which called for the abolition of atomic weapons. But the accusation must be answered in detail.

The story begins on the 24th January, 1946, when the General Assembly of U.N.O., on a resolution advanced by Britain, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R., in accordance with an agreement made at the Moscow Conference in December, 1945, set up an Atomic Energy Commission, with instructions to make specific proposals for 'the control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to ensure its use only for peaceful purposes', and for 'the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction'.

On the 14th June, 1946, Mr. Bernard Baruch brought forward the proposals which bear his name. They sought to vest in the 'Atomic Development Authority' the ownership or control not only of all sources of raw materials for the production of atomic energy, but also of all plants engaged

on its production, anywhere in the world, and the power to license—or refuse to license—at its own discretion the operation of any such plants. This Authority was not to be subject to 'veto', which meant, as I have made clear above, that the U.S.A. would have a majority on it, at any rate for a long time to come. By this majority, it could, for example, be led to say that the plants existing in the U.S.A. were sufficient for an indefinite period, and that no others could be licensed!

Russia could scarcely feel confident that in such circumstances plants for developing the new source of power for peaceful ends would be authorized in the Soviet Union or its neighbours; for the U.S.A. does not want the U.S.S.R. to grow strong, both for military reasons and because she might become a dangerous competitor in the world's markets. This view was disclosed in an article in the *New York Post*, which stated that, from the viewpoint of the White House and the State Department, 'one more obstacle' as regards settlement of the atomic question was that the Soviet Union intended to set up a network of atomic stations for *peaceful purposes*, showing an intention to step over the age of steam and electricity, and so surpass the West! And a report in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* of the 1st May, 1946, indicated that the Baruch Plan, if adopted, would preclude the development of atomic energy for such peaceful purposes. In the same journal, two months later (the 1st July, 1946), Norman Collins and Thomas K. Finletter wrote 'A Review of the Acheson-Lilienthal Report'—the Report on which the Baruch Plan was founded. They mentioned:

'several conditions which the consultants were apparently directed to take into account: One . . . that the State Department was anxious to assure Congress that any plan of international control, should it fail, would still enable the United States to retain its "relatively secure position, compared to any

other nation". Another . . . specified in Mr. Acheson's introductory letter of transmittal, that the United States would still be allowed to manufacture its atomic bombs after a plan of international control was put into operation, although "at some stage" such discontinuance would probably be required. They continued:

'Now these are of course impossible conditions. It is internationalization with a "but". It precludes any true internationalization of atomic energy or anything else. It might be possible to meet these conditions in such a way as to provide the appearance of internationalization, but the substance would be that of a most-favoured nation treaty—for the United States. All the nations in the world would be asked to surrender their sovereignty in the mining, processing, and manufacture of fissionable materials, but the United States would still be permitted to stockpile its own atomic bombs. Appealing and reassuring as this may sound in the Senate of the United States, it is as myopic as it is impractical. Are we to suppose that other nations would ever agree to such conditions? Or that, if they did agree, they would not do everything possible to give themselves the same advantage that we feel our own national interests demand? It seems clear that any plan of control would be no more than a thin façade behind which all the old struggles for power—in to-day's terms atomic power—would move inexorably to a climax.

'Such conditions mean that this government, after two world wars, is still holding back on any measures of world organization with any real starch of workability.'

The plan did not provide for any prohibition of the continued manufacture of the atom bomb, nor any destruction of stocks, nor even the communication to the Atomic Development Authority of the 'know-how' on the production of atomic energy, until an indefinite future date, i.e., when 'an adequate system of control of atomic energy, including the renunciation of the bomb as a weapon, has been agreed on and put into effective operation, and condign punishments set up for violations of the rules of control'.

This meant that, whilst the new Authority could decide to what extent atomic energy plants, vital to the production of peaceful industrial energy in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, should be used, the U.S.A. could meanwhile continue to manufacture atom bombs, withhold the knowledge of how to make them, and stockpile them for use as and when it thought fit. This was, moreover, to continue indefinitely, and the U.S.S.R. and all other countries, including Great Britain, were to remain inferior, for war or for peace, until the U.S.A. should choose to regard the condition mentioned above as fulfilled. As Professor Blackett wrote in *The Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy*, the U.S.S.R. could not but reject a plan which

'would have put the Soviet Union in a situation where she would have been subservient to a group of nations dominated by America. Since America would keep her atomic bombs till a late stage of the process of setting the control scheme in operation, the Soviet Union could have no firm guarantee that, when the stage was reached at which the bombs should be disposed of, some technical point would not be raised to justify retaining them. In the meantime she would have thrown her land and economy open to inspection and so inevitably to military espionage.'

Such a proposal could only be accepted by the U.S.S.R. at the sacrifice of its scientific and economic future and its reputation for intelligence. (But Mr. Earle, a former U.S. Minister to Bulgaria, when addressing Congress in 1947, demanded an immediate resort to atom bombs against any country which refused to accept the Baruch proposals!)

The U.S.S.R. made counter-proposals to renounce atomic weapons, to prohibit their production or storage, to destroy existing stocks within three months, and to establish machinery for the exchange of scientific information. She accepted—and indeed demanded—the principle of control

and inspection on the widest scale necessary to ensure full observance of the Convention by all parties.

She has repeatedly modified her proposals since that date, in an effort to achieve a compromise. But the Baruch Plan is obstinately maintained by the U.S.A., which must have known that it could not be accepted. Nothing can be done until she moves from the Baruch Plan.

With this deadlock, little progress was made towards control of atomic energy or bombs; but in the autumn of 1949 the U.S. and British Governments announced that the Soviet Union had solved the problem of producing atomic energy (and thus of producing the atom bomb)—a fact which, incidentally, had been made pretty clear by Mr. Molotov *nearly two years* earlier. Mr. Vyshinsky on the 10th November, 1949, after this announcement, explained the Soviet attitude to the General Assembly thus:

'We are utilizing atomic energy, but not in order to stock-pile atomic bombs, although I am convinced that, if, unfortunately and to our great regret, this were necessary, we should have as many of these as we need—no more and no less. . . . We are utilizing atomic energy for our economic needs in our own economic interests. We are razing mountains; we are irrigating deserts; we are cutting through the jungle and the tundra; we are spreading life, happiness, prosperity and welfare in places where the human footstep has not been seen for thousands of years. We are doing this because we . . . are required to account for this to no international organ of control. This is what these gentlemen want to thwart and wreck; they want to wreck it although they do not believe that their own plan is the panacea for salvation, the cornucopia of welfare, as they would have us believe.'

Two days later he said:

'We open our doors to control, but you have distorted the word control. To us it means to verify and check, but to you it means management. The Soviet Union will not, and never shall, allow foreign ownership of its lands and enterprises.

'That is once and for all.'

Mr. Vyshinsky added, on the charge that Russia was unwilling to open up her territory to inspection:

'That is not so. The Soviet proposals provide for a full system of control, including the elaboration of rules for technological control. The Soviet proposals provide for the international control organ to have full rights of access to the Soviet Union and other states.'

And later, in the same month, he said:

'Two years ago, the Russian representative made it clear that inspection would entail inspection of all enterprises, starting with mines and winding up with plants for production of nuclear fuel. . . . Periodic inspection means inspection at intervals—not at set intervals, but as determined by necessity, whenever the international control commission deems it necessary. It is obvious that there would be no unanimity rule, no veto. To put an end to slander and insinuations, we make it quite clear that decisions would be by a majority of votes.'

This shows that the Soviet Union has not obstructed the supposed desire of the U.S.A. to get rid of the atom bomb. It is a good illustration of reasonable behaviour of the Soviet Union in U.N.O., presented to the world by the American and British Press as obstinate folly. The U.S.A. puts forward an impossible proposal, and stands by it; Russia presents a reasonable alternative, and offers repeated modifications in the hope of achieving a compromise. The public is told again and again that 'Russia says No'. And the atom bombs continue to pile up, blasting our hopes of a peaceful future even before the bombs are dropped.

## CHAPTER IX

## REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS

THE NEXT topic is that of proposals for the reduction of armaments. This is a story, almost unknown to most of us, of long and consistent efforts by the Soviet Union to secure such reductions.

It begins before the foundation of the United Nations. Almost the first act of the newborn Soviet Republic in November, 1917, was to propose immediate peace to all the belligerents in the First World War; and she has been demanding agreement for peace ever since, both when she appeared weak and when she was seen to be strong.

At the Genoa Conference of April, 1922, Mr. Chicherin, her Foreign Secretary, proposed a general limitation of armaments, with the absolute prohibition of 'gas, aerial warfare, and other weapons aimed primarily at the civilian population'. (So, at this early date, the Soviet Union manifested its objection to indiscriminate weapons affecting civilian populations. And it is an interesting and comforting historical fact that in *no* war in which the Soviet Union has been involved since its foundation has it resorted to the use of indiscriminate weapons aimed at civilian populations.)

Both the general proposal for disarmament and the particular proposal on prohibition of special weapons were among the 'promises' already made in the Treaty of Versailles; but the proposal was nevertheless rejected by the Conference. Mr. Chicherin then suggested summoning a universal peace congress; and this was rejected too.

The preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, which Versailles had also promised, met in November, 1927, and Mr. Litvinov submitted a proposal for

universal disarmament within four years, worked out with the technical details for its actual achievement under international supervision.

After some four months, the Commission rejected the proposal. The Soviet delegation immediately put forward an alternative proposal for partial disarmament by percentage reductions specified for each Power, *with the total prohibition of indiscriminate weapons of chemical warfare and bombing*. This was rejected too.

Then came, in 1932, the Disarmament Conference itself. The Soviet Union, then carrying its first Five-Year Plan to success and slowly increasing its prosperity whilst every other country was in a depression, first proposed complete disarmament, and then proposed specifically the abolition of tanks and long-range guns, of warships over 10,000 tons, of aircraft carriers, of naval guns over 12 inches calibre, of *heavy bombers and all stocks of bombs, of chemical, bacteriological and flame warfare, and of air bombing*.

The other Powers consulted over this in private for many weeks, but could find no solution. After four months President Hoover tried to cut the knot by proposing a flat all-round cut in armaments. (This proposal copied one of the Soviet proposals to the Preparatory Commission five years before, substituting the figure of 33½ per cent. for the Soviet Union's 50 per cent., and serves to refute British and American criticisms of Soviet proposals for percentage reductions as impracticable.) The U.S.S.R. welcomed Hoover's proposal, whilst others gave it lukewarm praise. But the Powers in general did not want it, and by the end of July nothing had come of it but a pious resolution with little meaning. The Soviet delegation put forward the Hoover plan as an amendment to this resolution. The amendment was defeated, every Great Power, *including the United States*,

*the author of the proposal, voting against it.*

No country could do much for disarmament for some years after that; for the world was re-arming for the Second World War. The U.S.S.R., feeling more gravely threatened than others, also rearmed. It was well for us that she did!

The struggle for reduction of armaments restarted after the foundation of the United Nations. On the 14th December, 1946, on the insistence of the Soviet Union that disarmament should be placed on the agenda, on which it had not at first appeared, the General Assembly passed a resolution calling for reduction of armaments and armed forces, and the formulation by the Security Council of practical measures to that end; for the expeditious fulfilment of its duties by the Atomic Energy Commission (mentioned above) in order to eliminate atomic and similar weapons and establish international control of atomic energy; and for proper provisions for inspection in support of that control.

The response of the U.S.A. and of those countries, such as our own, which follow her lead, to this demand for disarmament has been, at every stage, to continue rearming at constantly increasing rates. They have scarcely even pretended to do anything to implement the resolution, or to respect the pledge involved in their membership of U.N.O.

The next step came on the 18th September, 1947, at the Second Session of the General Assembly. Western rearmament was speeding up, and no progress was being made towards agreement for the reduction of armaments or the control of atomic energy. Mr. Vyshinsky spoke as follows:

'The statement made by Mr. Bevin at Southport' (the Annual Conference of the British Labour Party at Whitsun, 1947) 'to the effect that he does not intend to assist in disarmament provides a convincing answer to the question as to

the causes of the unsatisfactory state of affairs with regard to the implementation of the Assembly's decision on a reduction of armaments. The same thing is revealed by a recent speech delivered by Mr. Truman in Petropolis, when he emphasized that the armed forces of the U.S.A. would be preserved, and when he did not mention by a single word the undertaking to effect a reduction of the armed forces—an undertaking assumed by the United Nations in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly.'

Mr. Vyshinsky went on to make specific proposals for the condemnation of propaganda for war, for legislation in all countries to prohibit such propaganda, and for the earliest fulfilment of the Assembly decision of the 14th December, 1946. Nothing came of this proposal beyond a watered-down resolution condemning propaganda for war; and the U.S.A. and its group went on rearming.

The next event was the curious episode of the 'Bedell-Smith' offer, which illustrates the attitude of the two main Powers to negotiations for peace. On 4th May, 1948, Bedell-Smith, U.S. Ambassador in Moscow, on instructions from Washington, proposed to Mr. Molotov direct discussions between the governments of the two countries on the differences outstanding between them. 'As far as the United States is concerned,' he said, 'the door is always wide open for full discussion and the composing of our differences.'

The Soviet Government accepted, within five days, unconditionally, this clear invitation to direct conversations. The British Government displayed concern lest the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. should reach 'agreement behind our backs' to the detriment of our hoped-for trade with U.S.S.R. But it need not have worried, for the Americans soon showed, by a string of inconsistent explanations, that they had no intention of holding any discussions.

A few months later that same year, shortly before the

Presidential Election of November, 1948, there was another curious incident, namely, an abortive proposal of President Truman to send Mr. Vinson, Chief Justice of the United States, to Moscow to discuss matters. *The Times* of the 11th and 12th October, 1948, reported that the President decided on this visit shortly before the 5th October and arranged to announce it personally over the radio on the 5th. Mr. Marshall, then Secretary of State, was in Paris at the time; he returned to Washington at the week-end of the 9th-10th October to discuss the matter with the President, and as a result the project was abandoned. The President announced officially on the 11th that he had been considering the idea of sending the Chief Justice to Moscow to talk directly with Mr. Stalin in the hope of improving relations and securing peace, but that Mr. Marshall had dissuaded him from doing so!

American Press comment described the proposal as an 'error', as a 'disastrous course', and as tending to wreck the solidarity of the Western Powers. *The New York Times* expressed suspicion that the proposal 'emanated from Mr. Truman's campaign headquarters in a search for some drastic gesture to boost his election prospects'.

Whatever the precise reasons for the failure of the Bedell-Smith and the Vinson proposals, the blame cannot be laid on the Russians. The first episode shows the *bona fide* desire for peace of the Soviet Union, and both demonstrate the reluctance of the U.S.A. to improve relations.

Those who determine U.S. policy no doubt had in mind such comments as that of the American official *Journal of Commerce*, on the 23rd March, 1948, to the effect that 'only an improved international situation can dim the business outlook'. It is a tragedy that the slumps which capitalist countries like the U.S.A. always have to fear can be temporarily

averted by a 'vicious circle' policy of stimulating industry through rearmament orders. This was illustrated in the *New York Times* of the 3rd October, 1950, by American economist, Roger Babson, who wrote:

'If it hadn't been for the Korean affair, which has given business and employment a shot in the arm, this bubble'—of prosperity—'would be bursting now.'

And on the 5th January, 1951, the *U.S. News and World Report* wrote:

'Armament will prime the pump of business in rising volume during 1951. Armament then will underwrite continued boom levels in 1952 and maybe 1953.'

The General Assembly met again in September, 1948. Western rearmament was still increasing, and the atomic energy problem was still deadlocked. Mr. Vyshinsky this time put forward a resolution to the effect that the five permanent members should reduce within one year all their existing land, naval and air forces by one-third, and that the atomic weapon should be prohibited. All that resulted was an emasculated resolution, entitled 'Prohibition of the Atomic Weapon and Reduction of Armament and Armed Forces of the Permanent Members of the Security Council by One-Third', which produced no result in practice.

In February, 1949, Mr. Malik, the Soviet delegate, brought before the Security Council a draft resolution calling for a plan for the reduction of the armaments and armed forces of the five permanent members by one-third by the 1st March, 1950; for the submission by the 1st June, 1949, of draft conventions on the prohibition of the atomic weapon and on atomic energy control; and for the submission by the 31st March, 1949, by the permanent members of full data on their armed forces and their armaments of all types, including the atomic weapon. Nothing could have been more concrete; but nothing came of it.

At the General Assembly session which began in September, 1949, Mr. Vyshinsky again brought forward proposals that the General Assembly should condemn the preparations being made for a new war, should condemn the use of *poison gas and bacteriological warfare as well as atomic warfare*, and should call upon the five Great Powers to conclude a pact for the strengthening of peace.<sup>1</sup>

In September, 1950, the General Assembly met again, and Mr. Vyshinsky submitted a declaration which he proposed that the General Assembly should make. It condemned propaganda for war, proclaimed an unconditional ban on the atomic weapon—with strict international control—condemned as a war criminal whatever government should be the first to use the atomic weapon or any other means of mass extermination, and called upon the five permanent members to conclude a pact for strengthening peace between themselves, and for reducing their present armed forces by one-third of the personnel in the course of 1950.

This is a long story, and I have omitted from it much that would make even clearer the Soviet Union's will to peace; but these samples of her behaviour in U.N.O. give a true picture of her international conduct, very different from any that our radio or our Press ever give.

<sup>1</sup> It was at this session that Mr. Vyshinsky made the speech of the 10th November quoted on p. 60.

## IMPERIALISM!

THE NEXT accusation is perhaps the most unreal of all. It is that the Soviet Union is 'imperialist', aiming at world domination, and exploiting her neighbours by using their labour and land and raw materials for her own benefit.

A Socialist state, by definition, cannot be imperialist. Imperialism is a development of capitalism. Many people think of it in terms of a colonial empire, either by direct rule—like Nigeria—or by effective control over 'client states'—like Cuba, Liberia, or Iraq—run for the private profit of the ruling classes of the colonial power. Imperialism includes that, but it goes much further. It involves 'monopoly capitalism', i.e., great concentrations of economic and financial power, which control not just markets and raw materials at their source but the whole economies and policies of the imperialists' own countries and of other (theoretically independent) states. The means of such control are monopolies, combines and cartels, with their whole apparatus of restricted production, price-rings, protective tariffs, dumping, and other such devices.

The Soviet Union has no colonies; those of Tsarist days—Georgia, Armenia, Uzbekistan, and many others—are now free states, and the former 'colonials' have equal rights with all other Soviet citizens. The Soviet Union has no monopolies or combines owned or controlled by a handful of rich men; the land, the farms, the raw materials, the industries, belong to the people. No one draws private profit through exploiting the labour of others; there are no stocks or shares or dividends, and money works only as the servant and not the



master of the people. The economic bases for imperialism simply do not exist in Russia.

I should examine two other changes labelled as 'imperialism'; the first, that the Soviet Union has 'swallowed up' various countries in Eastern Europe and Asia, and the second that she exploits those countries for her own profit.

The 'swallowing up' has allegedly been of—Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Albania—Yugoslavia being treated as one which has, as it were, escaped. Before the war, these countries had reactionary and oppressive governments; all of them, indeed, were fascist except Czechoslovakia. When the war ended, there was a cleavage in all of them between the old ruling class of landowners, bankers, and industrialists, who had largely collaborated with the Nazis, and the working class and peasant forces, who had in many cases fought the Nazis in guerrilla and partisan movements, and now wanted to rule their countries themselves. This did not suit many interests in the United States and Great Britain, who wanted governments which would accept 'Western' control, in order to avoid any extension of Soviet influence.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, would naturally want the working classes and peasants to win power in these countries; and, if it were ever practical politics for one country to impose a Socialist government on another by force, it would have been militarily easy for Russia to instal any government she desired in these countries; she was in occupation, and public opinion was in her favour. She did not, however, do anything of the sort; she did no more than make plain that she would not tolerate fascist governments in any of those countries, and would expect the new governments to be friendly with her.

All the peace treaties with these countries contained sub-

stantially identical clauses dealing with this point. One, the Rumanian, may be cited as an example:

'Rumania, which in accordance with the Armistice Agreement has taken measures for dissolving all organizations of a fascist type on Rumanian territory, whether political, military or para-military, as well as other organizations conducting propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union or to any of the other United Nations, shall not permit in future the existence and activities of organizations of that nature which have as their aim denial to the people of their democratic rights.'

Large sections of the population in these countries were and are very well disposed towards the Soviet Union. In Poland, for instance, where the old hatred for Tsarist Russia took a long time to die, the people, seeing for themselves the advantages of Soviet friendship, have moved from passive acquiescence to increasing support of friendship with the U.S.S.R. Often during the last five years, the Soviet authorities have helped the Poles at critical moments, when a bad crop or severe winter weather set plans back for a time, simply giving the help and then going quietly home. This behaviour has inevitably resulted in making the ordinary citizen friendly.

An example of the relations between these formerly hostile states is the exchange of territory between Poland and U.S.S.R., announced on the 2nd June, 1951. It was made at the request of Poland, and was carried out on the basis of square kilometre for square kilometre. A mixed Commission is to fix the new boundaries; no compensation will be paid on either side; and the parties will transfer to each other the State property on the territories. The reason for this transfer was stated by the Polish Deputy Prime Minister to the Polish Parliament as follows:

'The basic factor which decided the Polish Government to make the proposal to exchange the sections in question is the

oilfields, including a considerable quantity of active oilfields, and the resources of natural gas, which are on the territory ceded to us by the Soviet Union. . . . Owing to this Agreement we can obtain fuel that is particularly valuable and indispensable to our economy. On the other hand, the Soviet Union derives from this Agreement certain advantages for railway transport.'

It is really not good 'Imperialism' for the 'dominant state' to cede to the 'colonial state' valuable oilfields without compensation!

Moreover, in spite of propaganda, Socialism is extremely attractive to ordinary workers and peasants, especially to those who have lived in grinding poverty under oppressive governments, without hope of improvement even for their children. It is most attractive to be rid of the exactions and tyranny of a bad employer (or even of dependence on a fairly good one) and of the risk of dismissal at a moment's notice; to own your own factories and run them yourselves; to build schools and hospitals and other social services and amenities out of public funds; to learn to read and write; to see nobody enjoying comforts which he has not fairly earned; to own the land you till and till the land you own; to shake off a fascist ruling-class; and to elect a government which you feel is your own and to control it for yourselves.

This cannot be made unattractive by labelling it 'Communist'! 'Bogey words' for the progressive forces are invented in every country and every age. The abuse hurled against Communists in Britain to-day can be paralleled almost textually by what was said and written three-quarters of a century ago of Mr. Gladstone, then the embodiment of progress in British politics. When he was gone, and the main force of progress lay in the Radical section of his party, the attacks swung to the Radicals. Later, when progressive leadership passed to the Labour Party, it in its turn was

reviled, and accused of being run by 'foreigners'. Now it has become relatively immune, and the Communist Party is the object of attack; and newspapers are apt to describe as 'Communist' anything that their proprietors do not like. But workers and peasants in countries which have been occupied by Nazis, where the old forces have been recognized for what they are and what they cost, are not so easily fooled.

Soviet philosophy would in any case hold it futile to attempt to 'impose Socialism by force'; it holds that each country must work out its own salvation, and Socialism cannot be conferred or imposed from outside. 'Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow.' Efforts to socialize countries by outside force would be wasted labour, and would merely alienate hesitant elements which, if the revolution is 'home-made', will gradually accept Socialist government when they realize that it can solve economic problems and raise living standards.

A whole world of new international relations is in fact growing in Eastern Europe and Asia, which makes an enthralling story. A new form of inter-state co-operation is growing in the new democracies, where goods are exchanged on the basis of planned economy, and long-term developments will—unless war comes—achieve miracles in the next few years. Of course, they have their difficulties, increased at times when, for example, our governments, on the orders of the United States, direct British firms to break their contracts with East European and Chinese governments at short notice, on flimsy pretexts. But their difficulties are not 'colonial'; the peoples are not working for 'foreign bosses' but for themselves, and they do not have to export goods they need themselves to a powerful neighbour at cheap prices. On the contrary, the neighbour assists them with raw materials and machinery and expert advice, and asks for no control in

return. No rich men in the Soviet Union draw dividends from the industries of Czechoslovakia, the coal mines of Poland, or the oil wells of Rumania; where Soviet capital resources are used to develop basic industries, it draws modest returns, paid in goods and raw materials. This is not 'Imperialism'.

But, it is said, these countries are forced to develop on Socialist lines by the presence of Soviet troops on their territory. The truth is that not a single Soviet soldier stands on foreign territory save under agreements to which the British and Americans were parties, as in Germany and Austria. No Soviet soldier moved when Rumania got rid of King Michael, nor when Czechoslovakia changed the composition and balance of its government in February, 1948.

The story of the Soviet Union 'swallowing up' other countries reaches perhaps its most ridiculous point in the suggestion that China has been devoured! Whatever may be the precise intimacy between these two great world Powers—and people who do not like either of them are busy speculating as to whether the 486,000,000 Chinese are 'puppets' of the 200,000,000 Russians, or on the contrary quarrelling with them behind the scenes—it is surely clear that the Chinese have won their independence by their own efforts, without much help from anyone; that they can look after themselves very well; and that as and when they become fully Socialist, or Communist, they will do so in their own way, without dictation from anyone.

The accusation that the U.S.S.R. exploits her neighbours for her own profit, by forcing them to supply her with goods on favourable terms, and indeed that that is how she has built up her present prosperity, is equally baseless. It is not even plausible, for all the European neighbours put together are neither large enough nor rich enough\* to make much

difference to Soviet prosperity. Russia would scarcely, in any case, be so foolish as to antagonize these key countries by treating them harshly. In fact, her trade with them is, as I have indicated above, so planned and conducted as to benefit both sides, and there are many instances of generous help by the Soviet Union to its neighbours, and to other states too, in times of difficulty.

Even on China, we are told that Russia was foolish enough to antagonize one-fifth of the human race by 'plundering the country', removing all the industrial equipment from Manchuria, and even taking food out of China when it was facing serious famine. Of the innumerable answers to these fictions I will quote two examples. One is by Madame Sun Yat Sen, who said on the 5th March, 1950:

'Among the first arrivals in China from the Soviet Union were railway technicians. They rendered support that put the restoration of our rail system months ahead of schedule. They came without benefit of fanfare . . . and not one single thing was asked in return. . . . This summer the north-eastern province of China suffered a plague epidemic. We did not have enough doctors and technicians, so we called on our neighbour. Medical teams were soon on the scene. They gave their help, and when they were finished they went home. There was no thought of repayment or concessions to be sought. They did not ask the right to do anything except to serve the Chinese people.'

And on the 23rd January, 1951, a minor news item from Peking announced:

'people throughout China are acclaiming the great friendship displayed by the Soviet Government in transferring all former Japanese property in North-east China to the Chinese Government. This fully proves the respect of the Soviet Government for the rights of the Chinese people, and the greatness of the principles of Soviet foreign policy. It proves that the friendship between the peoples of China and the Soviet Union is growing ever closer and stronger.'

## 'ARMING TO THE TEETH?'

THE MOST serious and untruthful story of all is that the U.S.S.R. is arming to the teeth, and intends to launch a war of aggression in Europe. What are the facts?

I do not discuss here the natural need and desire for peace of a country with a Socialist philosophy and economy, the terrible experiences of war that the Soviet peoples have endured, and their obviously peaceful and friendly attitude to nearly every section of other peoples. I deal with two points only: firstly, the strong evidence given by her present expenditure for civilian purposes against any possibility of preparing for aggressive war; and secondly, the actual facts of her armament expenditure.

Life in the Soviet Union to-day shows increasing spending, not merely on food and other things for private use, but also on the arts and sciences, the social services and building programmes, and still more on great hydro-electric and irrigation projects, which can give no help, even indirect, to war for years to come. Our own experience of restrictions on urgently needed building and other useful things, in a country relatively richer and much less damaged by war, helps us to appreciate that the U.S.S.R. could not take on much extra war expenditure, let alone the vast burden of arming *for aggression*, without shortages becoming evident at once in daily life.

To give one concrete illustration of this, it is worth noticing that the hydro-electric projects announced in 1950 alone, will absorb millions of tons of *steel*, which is a commodity in ever-increasing demand, and above all, one of the materials most needed for armaments.

The significance of such continued expenditure on civilian ends was explained by Mr. Vyshinsky in a speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations at Paris on the 12th October, 1948. After pointing out that 'the characteristic of the post-war period in the U.S.S.R. is the reduction of expenditure on war needs and the ever-growing increase in expenditure on the needs of the development of the national economy', he went on to say:

'Are you aware of what the damage and ruin that were inflicted on the Soviet Union by this war means in reality and as expressed in values, as expressed materially? Are you aware that the Soviet Union has to eliminate these after-effects of the war? For it needs houses, since millions of people do not possess them; for it needs factories, since tens of thousands of factories were destroyed; for it needs railways, since hundreds of thousands of kilometres of railway track were destroyed; for it needs hospitals, since tens of thousands of hospitals were put to flames, plundered and destroyed; for it needs tractors, since thousands of tractors were carried off or destroyed; for it needs to rehabilitate the soil since sown areas were also destroyed and the seeds perished; we need horses and cattle, since millions of horses were destroyed.

'All this has to be restored. Otherwise the country cannot live, breathe, work, perfect itself and advance. . . . When the land of Socialism sets itself the task . . . of rehabilitation and development of the national economy, the task of ensuring the advance of agricultural production, industry and the means of consumption, and on this basis of raising the pre-war level of national income during the five-year period by one and a half times, of creating an abundance of foodstuffs and consumer goods in the country, of ensuring the full flourishing of the material well-being of the peoples of the Soviet Union, of abolishing the rationing of supplies to the population, . . . this requires funds, gigantic funds, but there is no other source for providing these funds, than that source from which the military expenditure also has to be provided. . . .

'We have, as it were, two vessels which are filled from a common reservoir of a definite volume. If you pour more

liquid into one vessel, then less liquid will remain for the other one. The two vessels are war expenditure and other expenditure, and we say that the mass of expenditure is absorbed by the task of fulfilling the plan of restoration of the national economy.'

In 1950 alone the total output of Soviet industry rose by 23 per cent. (nearly a quarter) over the previous year; capital expenditure rose in the same proportion; and the total national income went up 21 per cent. (60 per cent. above pre-war); 27 per cent. (over one quarter) more food and 35 per cent. (over one-third) more manufactured goods were sold to the population; real wages rose by 15 per cent., and individual incomes went up by 19 per cent. (nearly 4s. 1d. in the £). Meat sales actually went up 35 per cent.!

Large price reductions, without any reductions in wages, came in April, 1948, in March, 1949 (10 per cent. to 20 per cent., i.e., 2s. to 4s. in the £) and again in March, 1950 (10 per cent. to 50 per cent., i.e., 2s. to 10s. in the £). As a contrast, wholesale prices in Britain rose by just under 42 per cent., i.e., 8s. 4d. in the £, from January, 1946, to January, 1950.

Anyone knowing of these improvements in standards and in civilian consumption in the U.S.S.R. must have waited anxiously in the early weeks of 1951 to see whether these improvements would be maintained and increased in spite of the vast intensification of military expenditure in the U.S.A. and other Western countries, or whether the Soviet Government would find it necessary to curtail the hydro-electric schemes, to cut down civilian standards, and devote more of the national effort to increases in armaments, in reply to the American drive. It was therefore most encouraging to learn in March, 1951, that the Soviet Government had found it possible to make further price reductions. The new reductions

covered a wide variety of goods and ranged from 10 per cent. to 22 per cent. (i.e., 2s. to 4s. 1d. in the £). Bread and bakery products, meat, and many other foodstuffs came down by 15 per cent. (1d. in 7d.), furniture by 20 per cent., and petrol by 20 per cent.

Nor is the 1951 progress confined just to prices. It was announced early in January, 1951, that the building materials industry plans to increase its output by over 20 per cent. in 1951, raising the civilian building programme correspondingly. The same industry's capital construction is to be nearly double that of 1950; the production of units for the 'assembly' method of house construction, with its great saving of time and labour, will increase by 150 per cent. in the Russian Republic alone; and the amount allocated for the development of the industry in Moscow is four times as great as 1950.

And all the time the four or five great schemes for the development of hydro-electricity and irrigation that had been announced and begun in 1950 are going ahead rapidly, absorbing skill, energy, materials, and machinery on a huge scale.

It is this sort of activity, and not war, that interests the Soviet peoples. What *Pravda* wrote on the 3rd September, 1950, is typical of the spirit inculcated in the people:

'People of all ages and professions perceive the greatness of the Stalin Plan for transforming the Volga and the Caspian regions. There, where over an area of thousands of miles the dry wind burned out all life, deep canals dug by the Soviet people will stretch. There, on once barren lands, electric tractors will plough fertile soil, combines will pass like ships over endless wheat fields. There, where "black winds", the terrible dry winds, held under permanent threat the harvest of the whole Volga Region, at the will of the Bolsheviks rich gardens and fields will blossom, forests will be laid, and

countless collective farm herds will graze on the green meadows.'

Turning from statistics to my own observations and those of many other Western visitors, one can report every sign of increasing prosperity and security. After all their efforts and trials the people now prosper. They have plenty of food, unrationed, at prices which they can afford, in good variety, and of excellent quality. Few buy margarine, because they prefer butter, and can afford it. The shops are thronged until midnight six days a week by crowds of every range of income. These people, buying silk blouses, fine embroidered linen, caviar, high quality sausages and canned goods, are the ordinary factory and transport workers, engineers and cotton operatives, who work in Moscow, and go home by bus or underground every evening.

The ordinary things of life, from soap to table linen, are now to be had in wide variety. Even clothes are no longer scarce, or bad, or very dear. Cars are cheap and good, and advertisements urge you to buy them. The opera, the ballet, the drama, literature, poetry, sculpture, architecture, are all maintaining or improving their standards, and public expenditure on them is lavish and unstinted. Books are printed in enormous editions; they are cheap, and sell out quickly. Education is constantly improving and extending; more and more university places are provided; practically every student has a maintenance grant; and a new university is being built in Moscow with 8,000 separate apartments for students and staff.

Prosperity leaps to the eye, especially for those who have seen the country in previous years and remember the modest standards of earlier days. Reports to the same effect come from every visitor, including British workers who spent long periods investigating the home conditions of people in the

same industries as themselves. (Their accounts of what they saw are substantially excluded from the British Press.)

Mr. Harrison E. Salisbury, the Moscow correspondent of the *New York Times*—hardly a 'Red' paper—wrote a series of articles for his newspaper in the summer of 1950.

Let me quote him:

"There are no queues to-day in front of food stores in Moscow. The price of butter has not risen. There is no hoarding of sugar. There are more shoes for sale in Moscow than there were last spring. Prices are lower and quality has been somewhat improved. Those statements are not Soviet propaganda. They are plain truths. . . . Whatever may be the cause and whatever the underlying factors, there is not to-day in Moscow anything that an honest observer could possibly describe as "war scare" or "war hysteria". . . .

"The Soviet Government has made no radical alteration in its economic programme as a result of the war in Korea and Soviet-United States tension. Food supplies in Moscow markets are as ample as they were last spring, but more varieties of foods are now available. This is true, for example, of meats and vegetable oils, two categories that are extremely sensitive in any shift from a peacetime to a wartime economy. The same thing is true for textiles and leather goods. There has been a steady increase in the quantity of pots and pans, copper and brass samovars, lighting fixtures, radios and electrical equipment. Here again the items that are listed are good barometers. If the Soviet Government is making available to ordinary citizens increasing quantities of items made from cotton, wool, leather, brass, aluminium and steel, it would appear the Kremlin does not anticipate requiring these basic materials for war production at some early date. But most significant of all from the economic point of view is the enormous expenditure of money, labour and materials that the Soviet Government is now putting into the construction and repair of purely civilian and entirely non-military facilities.' . . .

Nor is it only in 'consumption goods' that expenditure is increasing. Research in every field, and all branches of scien-

tific work, receive lavish grants. When a score of erudite members of my own profession described to me recently the elaborate research work they are carrying out in the law and jurisprudence of most of the countries of the world, I asked them whether they received adequate grants. They replied, almost indignantly: 'Sir, we are scientists in a Socialist state!'

Housing, a nightmare in every country to-day, is improving so rapidly in the U.S.S.R. that overcrowding, whilst still serious, is substantially diminishing; and the quality of the new housing is very good.

Here, too, Mr. Salisbury has something to tell us:

'Americans who have travelled in the Soviet Union this summer . . . found large-scale building programmes in progress in virtually all the cities of European Russia that they visited, particularly in the cities that had suffered serious war damage. . . . But what strikes the visitor to the capital is the fact that in the summer of 1950 this programme, far from being curtailed or reduced, has obviously been expanded. . . . Improvements have not been confined to the main city squares and boulevards. When the visitor turns off into the narrow side streets and steps into obscure courtyards he sees that even here the builders and painters have done their work. . . .

'Every few blocks along Gorky Street new blocks of apartment houses are being erected. The most ambitious of these projects is at Sandy Street, near the city outskirts, where foundations are now being dug on the last block of twenty-seven new four-storey and six-storey apartment houses in simple and attractive white brick. In the centre of the apartment group is a new four-storey red-brick school for children of this new community. . . . Sandy Street is only one of scores of apartment houses being erected on all principal boulevards and particularly around the outskirts of the city.

'Many foreign observers in Moscow, including this correspondent, are convinced that the construction programme in the summer of 1950 has been considerably larger than in any other year since the war.'

I have spent some days myself in a holiday home, typical of those which are being made available in increasing numbers and variety, in the most healthy and beautiful parts of the country. All workers are entitled to go to them for two or three or four weeks' holiday, on full wages, paying for their stay on an average about one-third of the bare cost. The old Trekhgornaya textile mill in Moscow spent Rs. 1,800,000 this year building a week-end camp for its workers, and included sculpture in the equipment. In comfort, in ease, in security, and the feeling among all sections that this is their own country in which they can live and work and rest and develop, the country is developing a new civilization, with high moral and ethical standards of behaviour, which ranges from keeping the Metro tidy because it is 'our own' to a refusal to report sensational crimes.

I come now to Soviet armament expenditure. How does it contrast both with past Soviet expenditure and with present expenditures in the U.S.A. and Great Britain, now unprecedented in peace time and scarcely less intense than during the Second World War? I shall give from official figures the facts both of military expenditure (i.e., all expenditure that can fairly be attributed to the navy, army and air force, and their equipment and administration) and of civilian expenditure. I see no reason to doubt the published figures of Soviet expenditure; their army, for example, is known to consist normally, apart from officers and some of the N.C.O.s, of two years of conscription service, and it would be impossible to conceal from the public either any increase in the size of the army or the increased expenditure that this would entail.

The Soviet budget figures are, of course, given in rubles. It is not helpful to convert these rubles into sterling, and even comparisons of percentages of budget expenditure on military purposes in the different countries are not wholly

satisfactory, owing to the variations in budget composition in different countries. I do give these percentages, both because they form some guide and because anti-Soviet propagandists, by confusing percentages of *budget expenditure* with percentages of *national income*, produce wholly misleading results, suggesting that the Soviet Union spends more of its total effort on armaments than other countries! (If this were true, it would mean that the Soviet Union, carrying so much military expenditure side by side with the now lavish and increasing expenditure on civilian goods, capital development, and social services, would be much richer than the United States, which it certainly is not yet!)

The warning against calculating on percentages was expressed by Mr. Vyshinsky at U.N.O. on the 28th October, 1950:

'Speaking of budgets I did not compare the budgets for military needs of the U.S.S.R. and America. . . . It is difficult to draw comparisons here because of specific features of the very structure of the Budget of the Soviet Union and of the Budget of the United States of America. . . . I compared the military expenditures of each State budget *year by year*--the U.S.S.R. separately, the U.S.A. separately.'

The really significant factor is, of course, as Vyshinsky says, the rise and fall in each country from year to year. The Soviet expenditure has risen very little in the face of the rising hysteria in America, its open clamour for war, and its growing war expenditure.

The figures from the Soviet budgets, each figure representing Rs. 1,000,000,000, are as follows:

## 'ARMING TO THE TEETH?'

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|                 | 1947   | 1948  | 1949  | 1950  | 1951  |
|-----------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| A.              |        |       |       |       |       |
| Total of budget |        |       |       |       |       |
| expenditure     | 361.6  | 378.8 | 412.4 | 412.8 | 461   |
| B.              |        |       |       |       |       |
| Military        |        |       |       |       |       |
| expenditure     | 66.28  | 66.28 | 79.2  | 82.8  | 96.36 |
| C.              |        |       |       |       |       |
| Percentage of   |        |       |       |       |       |
| B to A          | 18.33% | 17.5% | 19.2% | 20.2% | 21%   |

Thus, during four years of mounting tension, and great military preparations for war in the U.S.A., the Soviet barometer has kept steady. This is the only instance in history of a vast armaments drive unmistakably directed against a single power, and answered by that power refusing to quicken its own pace by more than a fraction.

This quiet calm is most reassuring. Let me quote Mr. Salisbury again:

'There are no recruiting posters in the streets, nor have there been any appeals for recruits in the public Press. . . . No additional classes have been called to the colours. No reservists have been summoned to duty. No classes have been kept in the Soviet Army beyond their normal release dates. . . .

'The Soviet Government has not neglected its programme of military defence. The Soviet Army is well trained and well equipped. The Soviet Air Force is armed with latest technical devices and planes of the most modern types. The Soviet Union possesses military forces incomparably superior to those of any other power on the entire land mass of Europe and Asia. But there is nothing new about this. It has been true since the end of World War II. What is interesting is that as of to-day, so far as research can determine, there has been no substantial change-over of the economy from its predominantly peace-time aspect to one of preparation for, or anticipation of, war.



This was confirmed by Admiral Kirk, the American Ambassador in Moscow, when passing through Frankfurt on his way to Washington in December, 1950. The *U.S. News and World Report* of the 15th December quoted him thus:

'Admiral Kirk detects none of the signs of war that experts watch for. For example, Soviet Army units are remaining at peace-time strength. No over-age classes are being called up. No extraordinary movements of troops or supplies have been detected. There is no drive in Russia to build bomb shelters, or restrict civilian consumption of critical materials. There is no shifting of labour away from peace-time to war-time industries.'

The corresponding figures for the U.S.A., which is surely not threatened with invasion, even if one were to regard the Soviet Union as meditating aggression against anyone, are astonishing. The expenditure, actual and estimated, (each figure representing \$1,000,000,000) is as follows:

|                                | Year<br>ending<br>30.6.1950 | Year<br>ending<br>30.6.1951 | Year<br>ending<br>30.6.1952 | Year<br>ending 30.6.52<br>(if additional<br>authoriza-<br>tions are<br>fully used) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>A.</b>                      |                             |                             |                             |  |
| Total of budget<br>expenditure | 40.155                      | 47.211                      | 71.596                      | 95.312   |
| <b>B.</b>                      |                             |                             |                             |  |
| Military<br>expenditure        | 17.105                      | 25.721                      | 48.77                       | 72.013   |
| <b>C.</b>                      |                             |                             |                             |  |
| Percentage of<br>B to A        | 42.6%                       | 54.5%                       | 68.2%                       | 74.4%  |

For the purposes of comparison, it may be mentioned that the corresponding figure of U.S. military expenditure in the year ending 30th June, 1939, was 0.8904. This means that the U.S.A. spent in 1950 *nineteen times* and proposes to spend in 1952 either *fifty-five or eighty times* as much, as in 1939. In the Soviet Union, the expenditure in 1940 was 32 per cent. of the budget.

These vast American figures, only a fraction below those of the most costly war years, do not include expenditure on war pensions or war-loan interest. They cover only 'military services' and 'international security and foreign relations', the two categories which President Truman, in his Budget message of the 15th January, 1951, says 'are devoted in their entirety to the broad objectives of national security'. Figures of this order give no hope of a secure or peaceful world, still less of any respect for the Charter of U.N.O.

These figures and facts make it clear that the Soviet Union is not preparing for aggressive war, which involves four or five times as much military expenditure as preparation for defence. That she is not preparing psychologically for war, I have already, I hope, made clear. In the face of their war experience, it would require years of propaganda to reconcile the Soviet people to the idea of aggressive warfare—that is, the gratuitous invasion of foreign territory. The Soviet Union far from using any such propaganda, is calling for the branding of all war propaganda as criminal, and has herself adopted legislation to that effect. This is really not the way to carry people into war on a wave of Jingo enthusiasm.

*BERLIN 'BLOCKADE' AND KOREA*

THE SO-CALLED 'blockade' of Berlin is often advanced as evidence of the belligerent attitude and intentions of the Soviet Government. What are the charges? And what is the true position?

The accusation itself is simple. It is that in June, 1948, the Soviet authorities in Berlin, for no reason save a desire to work up a war situation and freeze the British and Americans out of Berlin, cut off communications between Berlin and 'Western Germany', and thus 'blockaded' the populations of the 'Western' sectors of Berlin to the point of starvation. From this fate, the story goes, they were 'rescued' by the 'air-lift', that is, by British and American planes supplying their sectors of the City from the West.

I must explain the geographical situation. When Germany collapsed in 1945, her territory was temporarily divided into Zones, occupied by the British, Americans and Russians respectively, an area being reserved for France. Berlin lay deep in the Soviet Zone; but it was the capital of Germany, and all parties were pledged to establish a united democratic Germany as soon as possible, and meanwhile to control the country jointly. It was therefore agreed that central control should be exercised by the Allies jointly from Berlin; and, since they had to be there, the City was divided into sectors, which each of them administered separately. This was most unbusiness-like, but all parties accepted it, probably because it was not expected to last long; and it worked fairly well for a time. The population of Berlin moved freely in and out of the various sectors of the City; and there was one German currency over the whole country, including Berlin.

Unfortunately, one government for Germany was never set up. (The Russians put the blame for this on the Americans and British, saying that they intended to keep control of the important heavy war industry area of the Ruhr and to stop the Russians sharing in its control, and also wished to create a West German Army for eventual use against the Soviet Union. Although it is not essential for us here to decide whether the Russians were right in this assertion, subsequent developments in the Ruhr and in the rearming of Western Germany under former Nazi generals seems to make it probable that they were right.)

The so-called 'blockade' began when the Americans and the British decided to establish a separate West German State. That decision was a breach of the Potsdam Agreement, and by stopping all central control of Germany, ended any justification for the presence of the Western powers in Berlin. The Russians might have demanded their withdrawal on this ground alone; but they did not do so, nor did they justify the so-called 'blockade'—the cutting of land communications from the West—on this ground. What drove them to this was the action of the Western Powers in suddenly issuing a separate currency for West Germany, which had been secretly printed in America and imported in the previous January. If the Russians had not acted immediately, this would have had a disastrous effect on the economy of Eastern Germany. Currency is in some ways a dangerous thing; if there is too much of it, prices go up perhaps a hundredfold, producing uncertainty, hardship and often ruin. When Western Germans learnt that the money they had hitherto been using was no longer legal tender in Western Germany or the Western sectors of Berlin, they saw that if they sent it into Berlin and across the sector boundaries, it would be worth its face value in the Russian zone.

Had this money reached Eastern Germany in any quantity, the results would have been disastrous.

The Soviet authorities accordingly took steps to prevent this by closing down the land routes leading through their zone to Berlin. This was bound to create temporary hardship for the inhabitants of the Western sectors of Berlin, and the Russians accordingly offered to supply the needs of West Berlin from their own resources. Their offer was rejected, but in fact nearly 1,000 tons of supplies were delivered every day from East Berlin to the Western sectors throughout the 'blockade', which weakened the pressure on the Western Powers and incidentally made nonsense of the description of the situation as a 'blockade'

The Western Powers sought to supply their sectors of Berlin by air—with such results as, for example, a freight charge for coal of not less than £30 *per ton*—and the matter looked like developing into a serious quarrel. Negotiations for settlement began, however, and by the 30th August, 1948, an agreement was made in Moscow between the representatives of all parties for simultaneously lifting the Soviet restrictions on land communications and introducing a uniform currency for Germany, which would have removed the danger of currency chaos in the Soviet Zone. This very sensible agreement was repudiated by the United States; and the deadlock continued. The Soviet Union expressed its readiness to negotiate again, and indeed another agreement was soon made on the same lines as that of Moscow; but the United States would not accept this either, and insisted on bringing before the Security Council of U.N.O.—which had no right to deal with it, as it has no concern with matters turning on relations between the war Allies and the defeated Powers—a resolution providing for the immediate removal of the traffic restrictions, and for the introduction of the new

uniform currency *a few weeks later*, thus retaining the opportunity to create financial and economic chaos after all. The Americans can hardly have expected or even desired that the U.S.S.R. would accept such a proposal, and it was plainly impossible for her to do so.

More efforts were made, however, including one by Dr. Evatt, then Australian Minister for External Affairs and President of the General Assembly of U.N.O., and Mr. Trygve Lie, the Secretary-General. These were all rejected by the U.S.A., causing the *New York Times* correspondent, Mr. Michael Hoffman, writing from Geneva on the 21st January, 1949, to observe that:

'Neutral sources believe the United States Government does not want to settle the issue through United Nations machinery.'

How correct was this surmise was revealed a day or two later, on the 24th January, 1949, by Mr. John Foster Dulles, the Republican adviser to the State Department, at that time chief United States delegate to the meeting of U.N.O. in Paris. Speaking 'off the record' to the Overseas Writers' Association, he said:

'1. There could be a settlement of the Berlin situation at any time on the basis of a Soviet currency for Berlin and our right to bring in food, raw materials and fuel to the western sectors.

'2. The present situation is, however, to U.S. advantage for propaganda purposes. We are getting credit for keeping the people of Berlin from starving; the Russians are getting the blame for their privations.

'3. If we settle Berlin, then we have to deal with Germany as a whole. We will have to deal immediately with a Russian proposal for withdrawal of all occupation troops and a return of Germany to the Germans. Frankly I do not know what we would say to that. We cannot keep up the airlift indefinitely.'

Mr. Dulles, a week after his use of these very frank words, gave an interview to the *New York Herald Tribune*, in which

he made it plain that the U.S.A. did not want the Berlin dispute settled until the North Atlantic Pact had been brought into existence, and Western Germany had been 'integrated' into Western Europe.

Nevertheless, the dispute was in the end settled, months later than it need have been.

I must also examine here the accusation which is repeatedly made that Russia is rearming Eastern Germany. This is put particularly in the Notes of the 22nd December, 1950, delivered by America, Britain and France, in reply to the Soviet invitation to talks to discuss the proposed rearmament of Western Germany by the Western forces. A 'German military force', the British version runs, '. . . has been for many months established in the Soviet Zone, which is trained on military lines with artillery and tanks'.

What are the facts? Why has Russia done whatever she has done? And why is this particular story told? The facts are that the only German armed forces in Eastern Germany are 60,000 armed police called *Bereitschaften*, similar to the police forces existing in Western Germany. They have been there for many months, and there is no sign that they are increasing either in numbers or in power. The Soviet authorities claim that they are lawful under the Directive of the 6th November, 1945, given when the central control of Germany by the allies was still working. A police force is very different from a military force, and would obviously be of no importance if a war broke out.

This accusation would probably never have been made had not the Western Powers wanted to use it as a pretext for their own activities. That the force is of no military importance was admitted in the *Manchester Guardian*, a newspaper now pretty hostile to the Soviet Union. On the 12th December, 1950, it reported:

'Considering that they had these weapons in the spring (of 1950), that they still have them, and that their armament does not seem to be increasing, it cannot be supposed that the Russians regard them as fighting troops.'

And on the 8th January, 1951, it stated that the Russians 'appear to have left the *Bereitschaften* to their own devices, unarmed and with no clear directive as to their future employment'.

And Pastor Niemöller, the famous leader of the German Evangelical Church, by no means friendly to the Soviet Union, said in London on the 23rd February, 1951:

'I must state for truth's sake that I have not found a single human being in Eastern Germany—and I have questioned hundreds—who could say: "Yes, the Russians have trained me to use a tank, a machine gun or an aeroplane".'

Not only are the forces unimportant, but the East Germans are not even making an issue of their retention. *The Times* of the 31st January, 1951, reported that the East German Parliament had appealed to the Federal Parliament of West Germany, suggesting that there should be discussions on the police of all Germany, and expressly stating that the East German Government, 'should it be considered necessary, will reduce the strength of its police in East Germany, even before the unification of Germany . . . on jointly agreed principles which would apply also to West Germany'.

The only importance of this accusation is that the Western Powers use it as an excuse for their decision to rearm Western Germany, and to make a separate peace with her, just as they use the pretended rearmament of Russia as an excuse for piling up armaments against her. This decision was made public on the 19th September, 1950, after months of official and semi-official hints and statements, designed to prepare public opinion in the Western Countries, and above all in France, with her grim memories of German invasion and occupation, for a step so dangerous to peace. The true

reasons were scarcely concealed. The Atlantic Pact countries, dominated by the U.S.A. which determines 'Atlantic Pact' policy, intend to maintain large forces in Europe to fight against the U.S.S.R. The U.S.A. and the eleven other 'North Atlantic' states cannot muster enough troops of their own, and so wish to recruit mercenaries; and they are prepared to employ in this capacity the efficient Germans, notwithstanding the execration which they earned from the civilized world in the Second World War. The United States is even releasing Nazi war criminals, sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for abominable outrages, both to conciliate Nazi opinion and to provide leaders for the armies, while General Eisenhower has stated publicly his opinion that the German soldier never 'lost his honour', and that the time has come to let bygones be bygones!

Britain cannot enter this scheme without breaking treaties, in particular the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of the 26th May, 1942, made 'to contribute after the war to the maintenance of peace and to the prevention of further aggression by Germany', and to 'provide for mutual assistance in the event of an attack upon either High Contracting Party' (Britain or U.S.S.R.) 'by Germany'. Among the express promises made by the two countries were 'not to negotiate or conclude except by mutual consent any peace treaty with Germany', and 'not to conclude any alliance and not to take part in any coalition directed against the other High Contracting Party'.

Another binding treaty is the Potsdam Agreement of July-August, 1945, which states:

'The purpose of the occupation of Germany by which the Control Council shall be guided are:

(i) The complete disarmament and demilitarization of Germany and the elimination or control of all German industry that could be used for military production. To these ends:

(a) All German land, naval and air forces . . . shall be

*completely and finally* abolished in such a manner as permanently to prevent the revival and reorganization of German militarism and Nazism;

(b) . . . The *maintenance* and production of all aircraft and all arms, ammunition and implements of war shall be prevented.'

Finally, in addition to the Treaty and the Potsdam Agreement, there were the solemn obligations undertaken by each member of U.N.O. to the others, binding them not merely to seek to solve disagreements by negotiation and not by war, but also to reduce armaments in accordance with the resolution of the 14th December, 1946.

How do the new proposals conflict with these obligations? They involve the indefinite division of Germany into two more or less hostile halves. They clearly constitute an 'alliance or a coalition directed against the Soviet Union'. They turn the 'complete demilitarization of Germany' agreed at Potsdam into the restoration of Western Germany as an armed state. The 'complete and final' abolition of her land, naval and air forces becomes quite simply their re-establishment. The permanent prevention of the revival of her militarism and Nazism changes to the revival of her militarism, the release from prison of many leading Nazis, and their re-employment, with many more of their fellows, in the command of her new armies. The maintenance of aircraft, arms, ammunition and implements of war, instead of being prevented, is expressly sanctioned; and the question whether they shall also be *produced* in Germany will presumably be decided by the U.S.A. according to her own convenience.

The duty to U.N.O. is, of course, ignored, and the pretence is scarcely even made that the Atlantic Pact is consistent with the U.N.O. Charter. Joint control of the Ruhr, the great centre of German armament production, is

gone. British proposals for its nationalization were brushed aside long ago by the Americans, and it is now managed and controlled partly by its former Nazi controllers, and partly by the Americans.

So far from observing Treaty obligations to help the Soviet Union if attacked by Germany, preparations are clearly being made for war against the Soviet Union, in which American and British troops will march side by side with such Germans as volunteer for the fighting.

And just as after the First World War German atrocities were condoned, the myth that they had not lost the war and were worthy of all honour was encouraged, and their rearmament and remilitarization were sanctioned, at first surreptitiously and then openly, in the hope that they would fight against the Soviet Union, so now we see the same condonation and the same myth, with proposals, this time not furtive and ashamed but open and shameless, for their rearmament and remilitarization.

It is not surprising that the Soviet Union solemnly warned the Western Powers on the 18th October, 1950, that she 'will not tolerate such measures of the United States, British and French Governments aimed at reviving the German regular army in West Germany'. For, once a German army is created, there will be no way to limit its strength, to secure that it will not start a war except on American orders, or to prevent it fighting its Western creators, as it did in 1939.

This step, an important and dangerous stage in the preparations for a Third World War, is justified on the existence of the 60,000 policemen! It is put as follows:

'If the participation of German units in the defence of Western Germany is being discussed, it is solely because Soviet policy and actions have compelled other nations to examine all means of improving their security.'

It is difficult to imagine a weaker excuse for tearing up three treaties, relaunching the horrors of Nazism on the world, and preparing a third World War, in which we would be allied with the fascists of Germany, Japan, and Spain. It is clear that the Western Powers have no justification for rearming Western Germany and its Nazis, and that if the 'Bereitschaften' of Eastern Germany were disbanded they would continue to rearm it unless public opinion in Britain and France and elsewhere prevents it.

I want now to deal briefly with allegations about Soviet intervention over Korea. If space permitted, one could adduce a volume of evidence, drawn largely from U.S. sources, and the speeches and activities of Syngman Rhee and his ministers, to show that the war was started in June, 1950, by South Korea and not by the North, as I have mentioned earlier; but as I am only concerned with the Soviet Union it is enough to say that there is not a tittle of evidence that the Soviet Union has intervened in any way in the Korean conflict, nor given any pretext at any stage of the unhappy story, for implicating her in the hostilities. Soviet munitions may well have been used by the North Koreans, although the only 'sample' produced at the United Nations as evidence of supplies after the date in 1949 which the Soviet representatives said was the latest date of deliveries proved on examination to be of Korean manufacture! But International Law permits anyone to supply munitions to belligerents without any breach of neutrality. To supply arms to Korea *before* war breaks out, which is all that the Soviet Union says that it has done, is of course even more remote from breaking any rule.

This seems sufficient to show that the Soviet Union is not thinking of aggressive war.

## HOW THEY BEHAVE AT HOME

THERE REMAIN the charges that the Russians have no freedom, that we are not allowed to go and see their country, and that they keep millions of their people interned in concentration camps.

Their views on freedom are not our business, and the people who spread these stories worry little about what happens to freedom in capitalist countries. But the stories are told to create a hostile attitude to the Soviet Union, and to persuade workers in the West that life in Socialist countries is unhappy and oppressive.

What is the truth? Are the Russian people free? And do they feel that they are free? Freedom, to be a reality, must rest on a sound economic base, on security of livelihood, on equal education, and on equal opportunity for all races, colours, religions, and for both sexes—particularly for colonial peoples and national minorities. On that basis, the Soviet peoples claim to be the free-est in the world.

But critics assert that there is in the Soviet Union less freedom to criticize, or to express minority points of view, than elsewhere—less freedom, for example, for artists to express themselves as they wish. They say that the Press conceals or distorts foreign news, and that foreign radio is barred. (And the criticisms continue unabated whilst in America and Britain freedom to criticize, or to move, or to hold unpopular political views, or to earn your living if you do, is curtailed more and more each day.)

In fact, freedom to criticize the working of the government is at least as great, and as fully exercised, in the U.S.S.R. as anywhere else. The advocacy of counter-revolu-

tion, of the restoration of private property in land or factories, would not be allowed; but few people (and those rapidly diminishing in numbers) in the Soviet Union feel any desire for that, any more than we here hanker for the 'right' to return to the feudal age. Feudalism here, and capitalism in the Soviet Union, have passed out of practical possibility.

As to the freedom of the artist, let me quote Mr. Leslie Hurry, the painter and stage designer, who visited the Soviet Union in November, 1950:

'Art in the Soviet Union is visibly and unmistakably part of the life of the people, as dear to it as any other part of life, and much more effectively so than anywhere in Western Europe. The artist feels himself part of his people; he seeks inspiration in them, he offers his work for their judgement and criticism, and they respond in generous measure. . . . It is quite untrue that the artist here is a kind of government servant, regimented and controlled, unable to give free expression to his conceptions. The artist whose work is in contradiction to the taste of the majority is as free to continue painting according to his own lights, and to sell his paintings privately to those who wish to buy works of art—and they are very many—as in any country of the world.'

As for Press news, over one-fourth of the news-space is given to foreign news, and, to take the Korean war as an example, the full communiqués of the 'United Nations' forces and of Reuter, as well as those of the North Korean Command are published. On foreign broadcasts Mr. Salisbury wrote:

'Soviet citizens are not forbidden by law to listen to the Voice of America programmes, which are designed to present to Soviet listeners the American viewpoint on world affairs. Soviet citizens also are rather widely equipped with short-wave receivers capable of receiving such transmissions. . . . But the Voice of America programmes have few regular listeners among Soviet citizens in Moscow. This correspondent has

occasionally encountered Russians who have heard Voice of America transmissions. Even among these Russians, however, there is no sympathy for the American viewpoint.'

On the question of tours to the Soviet Union, these were freely permitted before the war, when there were many material shortcomings for 'Westerners' to see and to criticize; but now, when the new prosperity and peaceful reconstruction makes such an overwhelming impression on the visitor, and the proud and cheerful Soviet people want as many people as possible to see their country, it has not yet been possible to give general permission for individual tourists to visit the country. It is certainly necessary, for security precautions in the present tense atmosphere, to sift applications for entry somewhat carefully; but the practical reason against general permission is that, if the restrictions were raised, many thousands of people from various countries would want to visit the country at once, and the available accommodation, after the appalling destruction during the war, is quite inadequate to deal with them. (In Kiev, for instance, the retreating Germans blew up every hotel in the city before they left.)

Nevertheless, the Soviet Union takes as many visitors as it can; and month by month, the number and variety of delegations of almost every country, almost every range of occupation, almost every pre-conceived attitude, favourable or unfavourable, about Russia and about Socialism, increases, and the visitors to that country amount to many thousands every month.

What about the 'Camps'? Many of the grim stories that are retailed come from the war period, when many people in all countries were detained in the public interest. Much improvization was necessary, and acute hunger, cold and other privations were the lot of millions of free and loyal

Soviet citizens. Stories of mere hardship in 'internment camps' might well be partly true of this period. But what we are asked to believe is that millions of ordinary citizens are interned, in peace time, without charge or trial, in 'slave camps', under conditions of appalling hardship and with a very high death rate.

These stories are just not true. To begin with, no one in the Soviet Union to-day is confined in any place of detention unless he has been sentenced by a court of justice after being convicted of a crime. And the Attorney-General, whose power overrides the Ministry of the Interior, has every place of detention inspected once a week to see both that the legal provisions as to their humane administration are properly observed, and that no one is unlawfully detained. Most convicts are certainly in camps ('labour corrective camps', to give them their official title) where in other countries they would too often be in enclosed prisons. The Russians think it is better for people to live and work in camps under conditions as near to normal as possible, rather than in prisons. I have visited prisons in a good many countries, including the Soviet Union; I have spent some hours in a labour corrective camp in the Soviet Union; and I have watched with sympathy the efforts of the Prison Commissioners in Great Britain to establish something a little less like the conventional prison and a little more like a corrective camp! I agree with the Soviet view that camps are better than old-fashioned prisons. In these camps, prisoners certainly work; they work, under better conditions than some workers in the 'free world', under trade union conditions, for almost the full trade union rates, at ordinary work; and almost all of them 'make good' when they return to normal life.

The 'concentration camp' story, as normally retailed, carries its own refutation in its inherent absurdities. It is



generally said to be used to maintain production; but free labour is always more productive than forced or slave labour, and the way to keep up production is to imprison as few people as possible. (I was interested to see in the labour corrective camp I visited, in September 1950, that it applied all the usual methods of encouraging production, progressive piece-work bonuses, 'tables of honour' with photographs of the best workers, censure of 'slackers' by a general meeting of the workers, challenges by one workshop to another for competition to increase output, and slogans in the workshops.)

Another absurdity in the stories is that of the numbers involved. Critics give figures ranging from 5,000,000 to 18,000,000. Think what this means. Take 10,000,000 as a figure; that is nearly 10 per cent. of the adult population. With their relatives and friends and sympathizers added on, perhaps one-third of the adult population will be affected—and disaffected. If that were the position, Russia could not have endured one-tenth of the strains and stresses of the War; and those who spread such stories, if they believed them, would say: 'Well, no government could start a war with a population as hostile as that. We need worry no more about Soviet aggression; we can go home and reduce our armaments.'

## CONCLUSION

THIS BOOK has been written because the world has been brought to the brink of war, and every citizen has the duty to think and to work actively to preserve peace.

To think and to work to good purpose, one must be fully informed. But great forces of propaganda have been at work for some years now to misinform people, to persuade them that the danger of war is due to Soviet aggression, and to prevent the contrary views and arguments being presented in the Press or over the radio.

If the story of Soviet aggression is untrue, as this book, I hope, proves, the scene can and must change for the better. We can halt the armaments race, and bring relief from tension, danger, anxiety and ruin.

Whence, in fact, comes the danger of war? Is it from Russia, who preaches continuously that the Socialist and Capitalist worlds can find ways to live in peace in the same world; or from American leaders, who say that 'Communism' and Capitalism cannot live in peace, and preach a world crusade against the former?

Does the danger come from Russia, who has scarcely increased her armaments at all, and spends on them little more than before the war, in a world engaged in the maddest armaments race in history; or from the U.S.A., who is almost doubling for 1951-52 her 1950-51 rate of military expenditure, and is spending nearly sixty times as much on 'defence' as before the war?

Is the danger from Russia, who has no troops or bases outside her own territories, except under agreements with her Western allies; or from the U.S.A., who has her troops and her bases all round the world, and does not even pretend that they are not aimed at the Soviet Union?

Is it from Russia, who both before and after the Korean war began has behaved quietly and correctly, without panic, without threats, and without intervening in any of the wars at present raging; or from America, who preaches and practices war and the threat of war and intervention in Korea, the Philippines, Formosa, China, and Indo-China?

Is it from Russia, who encourages peace campaigns, forbids war propaganda, and incessantly demands reduction of armaments and prohibition of atom bombs and other indiscriminate weapons; or from the U.S.A., who bars peace propaganda, openly preaches 'preventive war', counters all proposals for armament reduction and atom prohibition by increasing her armaments and her threats, and even orders the Atomic Energy Commission—established to develop atomic energy and abolish atom bombs—to produce newer and more awful types of atom and hydrogen bombs?

Is it from Russia, who calls for a conference for peace with Germany, and warns solemnly against the rearmament of that country; or from America, who seeks to evade such a conference and to revive, and re-equip, the Nazi generals and their armies, establishing in defiance of treaties and of common decency a new and terrible focus of aggression in the heart of Europe?

Is it from Russia, whose people need peace in order to carry forward their great schemes of peaceful development; or from America, who admits that any lessening of the armament race would bring her people crisis and unemployment?

Is it from Russia, whose economy needs no markets nor colonies for which she would have to fight; or from the U.S.A., whose capitalist economy cannot live without expanding her markets and dominating foreign countries?

I end with a warning from a Conservative politician who

had a good record in relation to the Soviet Union, even if he has of late been deceived by anti-Soviet propaganda. The warning was what I would have given—indeed, often did give—myself; he gave it as a Minister, in the House of Commons, on the 28th February, 1945, when British hearts were full of gratitude to our allies for their timely help, and when Mr. Churchill was paying his own glowing tribute to Marshal Stalin. He said—and it was Mr. Anthony Eden who spoke:

'As I listened to some of the speeches I could not help feeling that some of my hon. Friends had . . . in mind . . . the fear that Russia, flushed with the magnificent triumphs of her Armies, was also dreaming dreams of European domination. This, of course, is the constant theme of German propaganda. It is poured out day by day and night after night and comes to us in all sorts of unexpected forms and guises. It was their theme before the war. It was then the Bolshevik bogey, and how well Hitler used it! How often visitors to Nuremberg were told by the Germans they met, of the fear of Russia. I have had plenty of it chucked at me at interviews with Hitler myself. Can anyone doubt that that theme, before the war, was an element in making it difficult for us to establish an understanding with Soviet Russia? Can anyone doubt that, if we had had, in 1939, the unity between Russia, this country, and the United States that we cemented at Yalta, there would not have been the present war? I go further. Can anyone doubt that, so long as we hold that unity, there will not be another war? We do not say that we can establish conditions in which there will never be war again, but I believe if we can hold this unity we can establish peace for twenty-five years or fifty years or—who can say? But unless we can hold it there will be no peace for anything like that period of time.

'Finally, may I say this word, again to my hon. Friends? Make no mistake. The moment this fighting ceases, Germany will be out on the old theme of propaganda again. She will again try to play us off against Russia, and Russia against

America and ourselves. She will play on their pity, which she knows so well how to do. The whole orchestra of German self-pity will work up again to *fortissimo*. Let us be very careful that we do not fall victims to that.'

And so I draw the only possible conclusion—and it is a very happy one. The Soviet Union is as devoted to the maintenance of peace as she was magnificent in her fight for victory over Nazi Germany. But, if the Americans insist on war, the danger is great for this densely populated island, dotted with American bomber bases and destined to suffer more severely than any other country.

Yet there is also hope, for there are two thousand million people who want peace; we have sufficient democratic power to compel our government to tread the path of peace; we have only to stop the armaments race and shake off the American clamour for war. We, too, can build for Peace!

