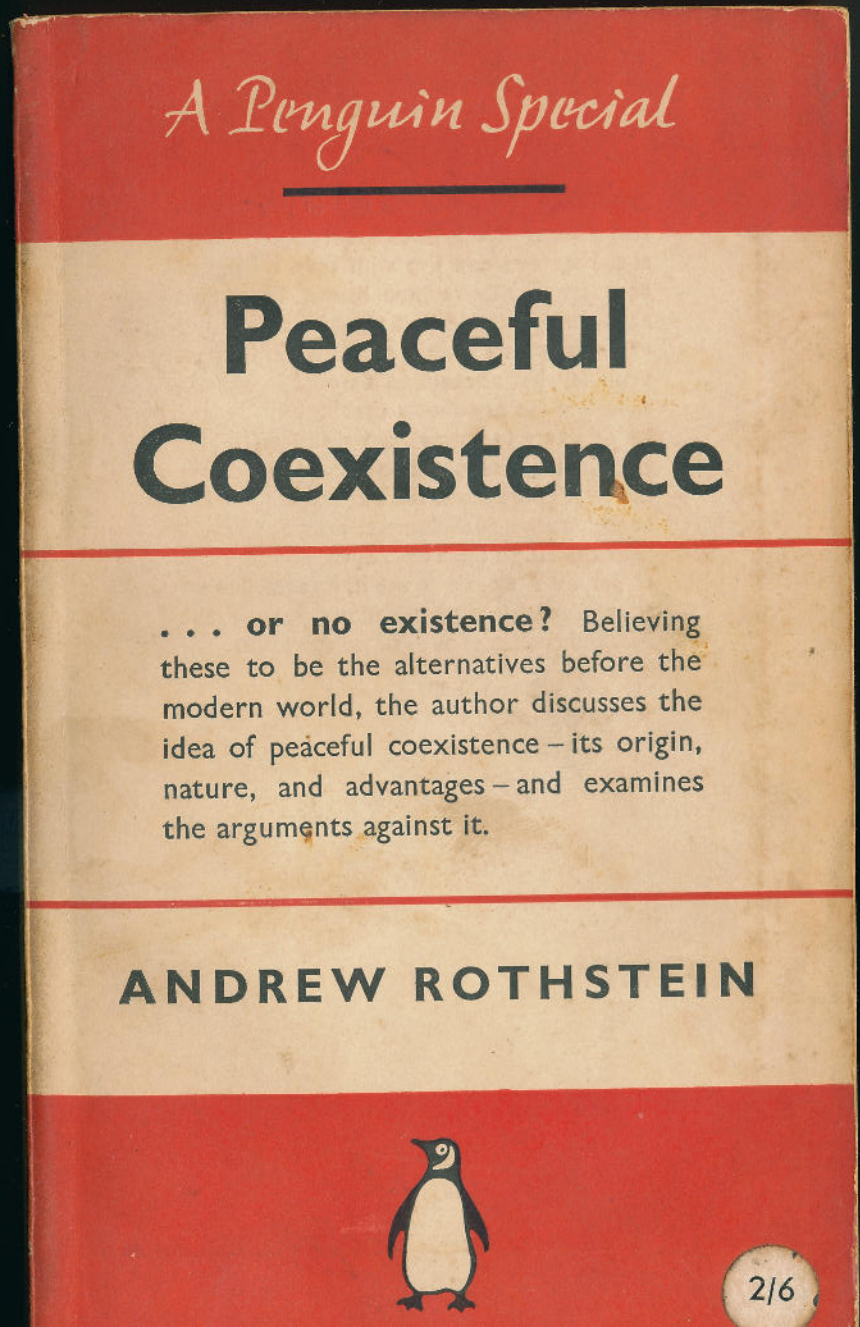
A Penguin Special
Peaceful Coexistence
. . . or no existence? Believing these to be the alternatives before the modern world, the author discusses the idea of peaceful coexistence – its origin, nature, and advantages – and examines the arguments against it.
ANDREW ROTHSTEIN
2/6

THE idea expressed in the title of this book is that nations with quite different economic and social systems can live with each other and co-operate for their mutual benefit. The author explains how the idea of peaceful coexistence arose, considers what it would mean in practice and what advantages it would bring, and examines the arguments usually put forward by doubters to throw cold water on it. He believes that peace and co-operation between the nations are much too important to be left to statesmen and diplomats: everyone should take a hand. In these days of the H-bomb and of perpetual threats to use it, he asks, Do we all realize the alternatives clearly enough? Peaceful coexistence . . . or no existence.

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A PENGUIN SPECIAL
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PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

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Contents

Preface 6

PART ONE : ORIGINS AND PROGRESS

1. *What is this peaceful coexistence?* 7
2. *Why did the idea arise after 1917?* 16
3. *The Soviet Union and peaceful coexistence* 28
4. *Our side of it* 54

PART TWO : DOUBTS

5. *'The Russians believe that Communism is inevitable'* 71
6. *The 'head-on clash'* 84
7. *'Out to conquer the world'* 91
8. *'Russian Imperialism'* 102
9. *'You can't trust the Russians'* 124
10. *'The Russians want to divide us from the U.S.A.'* 135
11. *'Let the Russians show by deeds that they want peace and compromise'* 139

PART THREE : PROSPECTS

12. *Peaceful coexistence to-day* 147
13. *From coexistence to co-operation* 167
14. *Britain's opportunity* 186

PREFACE

SINCE the main text which follows was completed, in the late autumn of 1954, there has been a deplorable increase of international tension.

It may prove to be temporary. That is, some new means may be found of preventing the rearmament of Germany, by agreement between the three Western Powers and the Soviet Union: and diplomatic negotiations may dispel the war danger caused by American maintenance of the Chinese ex-dictator in the territories from which he would otherwise have long ago been expelled. In that case two great obstacles to peaceful coexistence and co-operation of the Powers will have been overcome.

Or the tension may be protracted. The mounting popular campaign in West Germany, France, and Great Britain – for immediate negotiations with the U.S.S.R. rather than rearmament of Germany – may not prove strong enough, which will lead to a new alignment of forces in Europe. The conflict in the Far East may go from bad to worse. In that event the immediate prospect for peaceful coexistence will obviously be less promising than they were last year.

Yet even so, unless tension were to lead swiftly to a third world war – when nothing less than the prospect of the end of a very large part of the human race would take their place – the common sense of the peoples and their insistent demand for peaceful settlement of disputes must reassert themselves before long. If this book can help, to some small extent, in bringing this about sooner rather than later, it will have served its purpose.

February 1955

Part One: Origins and Progress

CHAPTER ONE

What is this peaceful coexistence?

PEACEFUL coexistence is being talked about everywhere. Scarcely a newspaper but brings it into its leading articles once or twice a week when discussing world affairs. Politicians of every hue, talking about the international situation, feel it their duty either to say how much peaceful coexistence is needed or to give their own views of what the Russians or Chinese really mean when they talk about it. The Pope, Prime Ministers, and famous generals have expressed their opinion about it during the last twelve months. So have W.E.A. lecturers, shop stewards in the factories, and local politicians in the pub. From being a subject almost indecent in polite company during the years 1947 to 1952, it has become all at once, since approximately the early winter of 1953, one of the most talked-of subjects – in accents of hope or scorn, according to the political tastes of the contributor to the great discussion.

Here are a few examples of how it has been discussed.

In December 1953, the writer of this book, together with ten other British men and women, was visiting the Soviet city of Minsk, in one of the western republics of the U.S.S.R. When the Nazis had evacuated the city during their great retreat in 1944, they had blown up or burned down all schools, academic institutions, theatres, cinemas, the 101 factories, and both power-stations. Eighty per cent of the dwellings were destroyed. Even the tram-lines were torn up and taken away as scrap. The lovely opera-house, shattered by bom-

bardment, was used as a stable. The art gallery was looted. Photographs taken in various parts of the city on the day of liberation (3 July 1944) showed one or two crumbling ruins and all else a desert of rubble stretching to the horizon.

After showing us round the almost completely rebuilt city, far more handsome and distinguished than it was before, the Chairman of the City Soviet spoke to us of the trials which London had suffered during the war. He asked us if we saw better now why Soviet citizens wanted to live at peace with all nations; to which we truly answered that we did. He asked us to convey the sincere greetings of the citizens of Minsk to the citizens of London, adding: 'During the years of the second world war, we fought under the same banner, and nothing to-day ought to be allowed to create differences between our peoples.' In doing this, as we wrote on our return to the Lord Mayor of London, Mr Dlugoshevsky was only echoing what hundreds of people had said to us during the week we were in the city. In his reply, the private secretary to the Lord Mayor wrote that His Lordship 'would be grateful if you would express to the Chairman of the City Soviet his warm appreciation of this message, with the sentiments of which he is entirely in agreement. His Lordship would also like to take this opportunity of reciprocating the good wishes of the Citizens.'

That was one expression, between two cities, of the desire for – and belief in, which is just as important – peaceful coexistence. Here is another.

On 29 April 1954, the Government of the Republic of India and the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China concluded an agreement on trade and cultural intercourse between Tibet and India. 'It was not difficult for both our sides, actuated by a similar outlook of friendship, mutual goodwill and understanding, to agree upon common principles that were to guide these negotia-

tions,' said the Indian Ambassador, Nedyam Raghavan. 'These great principles are formally set out in the agreement. They are principles close to the heart of both India and China.' What were these principles? (1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) mutual non-aggression; (3) mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (4) equality and mutual benefit; and (5) peaceful coexistence.

There are of course many people, particularly in newspaper offices, who know better than the benighted 360 million Indians and 600 million Chinese, and tell us that these five principles are mere platitudes. Such is not the view taken all over South-east Asia by the mass of the people – and innumerable reminders of this are constantly producing surprises for the wiseacres.

Here are two editorials from very well-known newspapers. 'The British view, while no less wary [than the American] of Communist intentions and no less ready to resist a clear case of Communist aggression, tends to oppose the concept of a world divided between sheep and goats – between countries with which it is possible and impossible to make agreements. British experience suggests that international agreements can be used to reconcile conflicting interests as well as to set the seal on interests held in common. Some of the most durable of British agreements – such as those with France in 1904 and Russia in 1907 – have sprung out of conflict. On this reasoning, coexistence can be something more than the negative avoidance of war. . . . If every international action is judged by a strict code of law and morals, all good actions – or nations – must be rewarded and all bad ones punished. This leaves no half-way house between fraternal alliances and open war – and, for the matter of that, no half-way house is left in war between total victory and total defeat. The world inevitably becomes divided into police and gang-

sters. But the example of the Holy Alliance shows that an attempt by some nations to order the world along moral lines of their own choosing is apt to split the alliance without reforming the world' (*The Times*, 5 August 1954).

And here is another voice. 'Soviet people hold the only correct view that every nation must itself decide the question of the character of the social and State system of its country, and no one from outside has the right to impose on it any other system whatever it may be, whether good or bad. The peoples of our country have established the Soviet system, and have achieved very great successes on the Socialist road. They consider the Socialist system to be the best, and are filled with determination to defend their achievements against any foe. By the will of the masses of the people, a new and genuinely democratic system has been consolidated in China, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania. The working people of these countries are reconstructing their life on new Socialist foundations. On the other hand, in the U.S.A., in Britain, in France, and many other countries there exists the capitalist system. The destinies of capitalism in each country are determined by the internal processes of development of these countries, by the struggle of the masses of the people. Only the British people can decide whether capitalism in Britain should exist or not, only the French can determine what system should exist in France, only Italians have the right to choose the social and political system for Italy. . . . At the present time there has begun in the U.S.A. and in some other capitalist countries a campaign, patently inspired by ruling circles, which aims at discrediting the idea of the peaceful coexistence of the two systems. The recognition of the possibility of the peaceful coexistence of capitalism and Socialism would deprive the policy of "positions of strength" of any meaning, would open up opportunities for the peaceful settlement of disputed

international problems, and would lead to a much more healthy international situation' (*Pravda*, 28 July 1954).

There seems to be a good deal in common between the two approaches, doesn't there? And what of these two important churchmen?

'I was happy to learn from the press that that highly eminent representative of the Anglican Church, the Archbishop of York – our guest in 1943, and whom I had the pleasure of visiting in Britain in 1945 – has added his influential voice to the voice of all peace-loving mankind in stating that an attempt can be made to find a *modus vivendi* between peoples holding different ideologies. . . . His Grace also supports the idea of the peaceful coexistence of nations with different political systems. This idea is vigorously upheld by the Russian Orthodox Church at peace conferences and congresses, for it sees in it realization of the Christian ideals of friendship and brotherhood' (from a statement by Metropolitan Nikolai of Krutitsy and Kolomna in the Moscow journal *News*, 1 October 1953). 'War is never inevitable,' said the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Fisher, in an interview at Edmonton, Alberta, on 19 September 1954 (according to an Associated Press cable). 'I do not regard another great war as likely to happen.' If a coexistence plan were arranged, armaments could be reduced and concern over atomic bombs eased. 'Coming after the cold war, let us have a cold peace,' he said. 'But we would have to have this on both sides of the Iron Curtain.' Dr Fisher, apart from urging maintenance of defensive armaments, said that Western countries should tell Russia: 'We are prepared to coexist with you if you will play the game and abide by it without interference.'

More such parallel statements could be quoted. They are couched each in their own national idiom, in the style peculiar to the language of the country concerned, and make

sometimes their own reservations. Nevertheless, no thinking person can deny that the resemblances between them are much more striking than the difference. It must indeed be perfectly obvious that there is something in this idea of peaceful coexistence.

Before looking more closely at where the idea comes from, what it means, and whether there is anything in it, let us realize that there are some things quite specific about it.

First of all, it is more than the simple idea that countries ought to, or can, live at peace together. For thousands of years, perhaps from the days when men first began to live together in tribal communities, there have been discussions and speculations about whether man – man in general, so to speak – can live at peace with man. Any history of international arbitration, the peace movement, attempts at international organization, and the like, will provide the reader with examples. But while analogies with the animal world, or with members of the same family, or with past ages when people used more primitive weapons, have led innumerable philosophers and politicians to draw one or the other conclusion – either that men are bound by nature to fight each other, or else that man's nature is bound to lead him ultimately to agreement with his fellow-man – the idea of peaceful coexistence of countries *with different social systems* never arose. This was partly because the speculation was all about man in general – man as a type, so to speak – without much reference to the particular communities living around them. Partly it was due to the similarity, on the whole, except for very short periods, of the social systems in the different organized communities existing side by side. For something like seven thousand years, at any rate, societies of free cultivators – at first living in tribal communities, then later either governed by slave-owning aristocracies, or all more or less slave-owners themselves – or feudal societies, or capitalist

nations, have successively provided the characteristic and predominant form of social organization distinguishing each succeeding epoch. More primitive forms of society fell under the rule of the more advanced, and usually by methods of conquest, as a matter of course.

The feudal States struggled among themselves or (like the Anglo-Normans in Ireland or the principalities around in the Swiss valleys) strove to conquer the neighbouring free peasant communities. The first capitalist States, from the seventeenth century onwards, fought the feudal States for markets or raw materials and built up a lucrative slave trade by destroying tribal societies in Africa. Later, in the nineteenth century, the capitalist States fought to divide the world among themselves, and strove to adapt conquered feudal States in Asia and Africa to their own requirements, as sources of cheap labour as well as of raw materials. At all these stages, States of course had periods of peace among themselves; but the question of peaceful coexistence of countries with different forms of society, as a matter of principle, never arose.

When the Socialist movement began to develop, in the operation of the capitalist system itself as it expanded in the nineteenth century, it began to discuss at once whether capitalist States as such could ever live in lasting peace – and, answering this question in the negative, it seemed thereby to reply in advance to the purely hypothetical question of whether the Socialist States of the future could live in one world with capitalist States. In his *The Iron Heel* (1907), written under the vivid impression of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and its violent suppression, Jack London foresaw war between the two kinds of States as a natural outcome.

The question of whether countries with such different social systems can coexist peacefully has arisen in men's

minds at a new and distinct stage of history – when for the first time, by the side of States based on private ownership of land, industry, finance, and commerce, there have actually appeared States based on common property in all these things. Only after 1917, when the Soviet Republic was established in Russia, did the question become a real issue, for study in principle as well as for political polemics and diplomatic practice.

Furthermore – and connected with this simple fact of history – the question only appeared at a time (so far as we know, the first time in man's history with the possible exception of the tiny city-states of ancient Greece) when considerable bodies of ordinary people who had hitherto been silent in foreign affairs all of a sudden began interfering actively in them as a regular everyday matter. There were individual occasions which foreshadowed this – for example, when great masses of British workers threw their weight behind peaceful relations with the United States in 1863–4, after their startled and infuriated ruling classes had made up their minds to back the Southern slave-owners; or when the working-class of St Petersburg in November 1905 declared a general strike in support of the Polish people oppressed by Tsarist martial law, the first mass action in history against the oppression of a subject people. But the continuous intervention of millions of people in foreign affairs, which began in Great Britain with the Labour movement's struggle against the invasion of Soviet Russia in 1919 and has since spread to one country after another, on various issues – but always with the object of preserving peace from some particular threat – is something new in history. And it made its appearance precisely when the first State with a totally new social order, not based on private property, had come into existence.

One other remark. Is it purely by chance that, after a

period of several years since the end of the second world war, during which peaceful coexistence was not a genteel subject of discussion, the situation has changed in this respect at the very moment when literally hundreds of millions of people have realized with a shock that (in the words of a delegate at the Scarborough Labour Party Conference in 1954) 'the alternative to coexistence is no existence'?

The answer to this can hardly be in doubt. It was only the explosion of the hydrogen bomb that persuaded the leaders of the Labour Party in Britain – the largest Socialist organization in the world outside the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies – to demand what they had hitherto stubbornly opposed, namely a meeting between the heads of the principal States for the purpose of coming to a peaceful agreement on this particular question.

So there is something in this idea of peaceful coexistence. There is more in it than the pious aspirations of amiable dreamers. Peaceful coexistence is something that tens of millions of people are becoming articulate about, not only through their representatives but as individual men and women. It deserves some closer attention. Let's look at it more closely.

CHAPTER TWO

Why did the idea arise after 1917?

THE revolution of November 1917 in Russia brought about a new situation in the world and was the direct cause of the appearance of this new principle in international relations. But this was not how the rulers of the rest of the world saw the future of relations with the new Russian Republic.

The appearance of Soviet Russia in the international political arena was greeted with immense fear and hostility. There might be disagreement with the famous *Daily Telegraph* editorial of 5 January 1918, which wrote of the Bolsheviks that 'no sane man would give them as much as a month to live'. But there could be no doubt that Mr Churchill was speaking the mind of many governments and influential property-owning classes when he wrote of the 'hatred and scorn with which the Bolsheviks were regarded by the Allies' (*World Crisis*, Vol. II, Part iii, Chapter 17) – and this applied not only to the Entente Powers but also to the Central Powers.

The first consequence of the November Revolution, therefore, was not peaceful coexistence but its opposite. First Germany, Austria, and Turkey; then Britain, U.S.A., and Japan; and finally a total of fourteen States sent their armies into Soviet territory and their navies to bombard or blockade or occupy Soviet ports. Bad as Russia's condition had been in 1917, it became worse as a result. The war in Eastern Europe continued for twenty-four months after the last shots had been fired in the west. To Russia's four million dead between 1914 and 1917 were now added nearly one and a

half millions. Enormous material destruction, particularly of railways, factories, and mines, was wrought.

But unlike what had happened in the French Revolution, foreign hostility did not succeed in getting the better of the revolutionary government in the long run. On the contrary, its power was consolidated, its personnel experienced, its programmes and policies given practical tests under the most adverse conditions, its military strength built up, its political appeal enormously widened. The Soviet Government was at the height of its military strength when the last foreign soldiers left its European territories in the autumn of 1920 and its Asian territories in December 1922. Meanwhile the strain of invasion, carried on for many months after the end of the German war, had produced many internal convulsions in European States, ranging from the soldiers' strikes in Britain of January 1919 to the threat of a General Strike in August 1920, and from the revolt of the French Black Sea Fleet in 1919 to the occupation of the factories by the Italian workers, led by the Socialist Party, in 1920. All over the colonial world there were unprecedented upheavals, but particularly in Egypt and India. The remedy used against Bolshevism in Russia had only made the disease worse, from the point of view of the politicians who had used it.

But now arose, at the end of 1920 and the beginning of 1921, the problem of how further relations were to develop with the revolutionary government in Russia. External attacks had failed to overthrow or even to deflect it, and it had hit back at its enemies even harder than they had been able to strike it. The other States, defeated in their policies and considerably weakened as a result, remained States with a capitalist economy – private ownership of the means of production, private investments in colonial territories – and were not as yet seriously threatened by revolutionary movements from within. Was there to be inevitable and per-

manent hostility between the two sections of the world, with only the necessary breathing space before a new round of wars? Or could some new way be found to meet this unprecedented situation – in which the revolutionary newcomer had not been tamed and fitted out with a new set of rulers, old-fashioned but determined 'not to set out on their travels again' (like England in 1660 and France in 1815), but, on the contrary, was more *effectively* revolutionary than four years before?

It was in these circumstances that the idea of the peaceful coexistence of different social systems was first publicly expressed. To be strictly accurate, as will be shown in the next chapter, it had been born much earlier; but there was no such opportunity to give it international publicity as now arose. At this stage it will be best to look at the idea from the two opposing points of view – that of the Soviet Republic and that of the capitalist States.

From the point of view of Marxist doctrine, there was nothing whatsoever to dictate permanent wars of a Socialist State with capitalist States. There was a well-known letter from Engels to Kautsky (12 September 1882), saying that one thing alone was certain about a future Socialist State: 'The victorious proletariat can force no blessings of any kind upon any foreign nation without undermining its own victory by so doing. Which of course by no means excludes defensive wars of various kinds.' Thus Engels clearly foresaw the possibility of a Socialist State living in a still non-Socialist world, rejecting any attempt to carry Socialism beyond its borders by force of arms, while prepared to defend itself if attacked. The only possible deduction from this could be that it would have to try to establish normal relations with the capitalist States – and must refrain from attempting to create (as Lenin pointed out in 1916) a kind of 'Socialist' colonialism by 'trying to settle down on someone else's back

after making a social revolution in its own country'.

The one thing that began to be clear, in fact, after the establishment of Soviet power was that the advance to Socialism involved colossal efforts and colossal awakening of energies and initiative, among millions of ordinary people, which were totally incompatible with the strain and wastage of war. It was necessary to transform a backward agrarian economy by building up modern large-scale industry, with the likelihood that this would not come through the importation of capital from abroad. It was necessary to make the country able at a pinch to provide all the necessary machinery both to defend itself and to open up its natural resources. It was necessary to bring universal education to the mass of the people, so that the children of all workers and peasants should have the same educational opportunities as the children of the well-to-do had had, not merely in Russia but in the most advanced countries in the world. It was necessary to give every villager (and he represented the majority of the population) the same access *in practice* to theatres, libraries, art exhibitions, concerts, health, and sanitation as the most advanced town dweller. With all these material transformations were to go changes of a deeper moral character: overcoming the heritage of sloth, of bureaucracy, of a weakness for taking advantage of one's fellow-man and of the public, and, above all, self-centredness, lack of interest in public affairs, which were the heritage of hundreds of years of exclusion of the common man and woman from control of their own lives and of society. How could any of these material or moral aims be pursued except in peace? Yet without pursuing them the whole purpose of the revolution of 1917 – to lay the foundations of a Socialist order of society, then to build Socialism on those foundations and ultimately to build Socialism into Communism – would be frustrated.

On the other hand, sober recognition of the fact that the capitalist link had snapped in Russia, under pressure from the working-class, just because it was the weakest link in the international capitalist system, led to the conclusion that a Socialist State at peace with the capitalist world could benefit greatly by exchanging its products with the other countries, by importing their more advanced technique and learning from it, by exchanging the achievements of science and culture with the capitalist States and absorbing the best of the national cultures of other countries, just as it was attempting to absorb for the people the best of the cultural achievements of past ages in Russia. There were not wanting people to argue that this meant strengthening capitalism as well as strengthening the Soviet Republic. Lenin emphasized again and again, however, that the Soviet Republic had never undertaken to change the world by its own forces alone. It had quite enough to do to make a success of Socialism at home, to show that it was possible and to prove by example that it would ultimately produce a better way of life for the ordinary people than the capitalist world.

The real problem for a Socialist State was whether peaceful coexistence with capitalist States was possible at all, not whether it was desirable. Here Lenin's remarkable genius had already provided the answer, even before the Revolution. The *unequal* rate of development of the great capitalist States in the age of monopoly, of finance-capital, and of the export of that capital, not only produced a constant aspiration to redivide the world, setting the have-nots against the haves, but it constantly and necessarily divided the capitalist States into those which were interested in maintaining peace, and those few which were ready or aiming to launch into war, each for their own material reasons. It was not necessary for Soviet Russia to practise any complicated intrigues in order to rally the forces of peace. The number of States

not interested in war at any given moment far exceeded those which were ready for a war adventure. The smaller States in particular had no future to look forward to in war, and everything to gain as a rule by remaining at peace. The diplomacy of a Socialist State should therefore aim at what was a perfectly feasible objective – making friends with the peaceable majority, in order, if possible, to deter the warlike minority. Moreover, this divergence of interests between war and peace affected the internal life of the capitalist States as well. In the conditions of ultra-modern warfare, where professional armies no longer sufficed and in which the mass of the people tended to be drawn into military operations, the forces opposed to war in any capitalist country included the vast majority of the working people, more energetic in defending their own interests than ever before in history. Thus a potential bloc for peace existed in the capitalist world, thanks to that very imperialism, the most advanced stage of capitalism, which produced the peril of greater and greater wars (and in Russia had made possible the Socialist revolution). The bloc consisted of those greater States which for the time being had no interest in war, the vast majority of the smaller States, and the majority of the working populations within all capitalist States. The business of Socialist diplomacy was to find a basis of mutual understanding with all these forces for peace: since at this point, and for probably generations ahead, the material and moral interests of the nation building Socialism coincided with theirs.

Look at it now from the point of view of the governments of the capitalist States, who in 1920–1 faced the unpleasant fact that the Soviet Republic had survived three years of attack and was now far stronger than in 1917–18.

In modern times war had now been repeatedly shown to present a deadly peril to the capitalist system itself, and to governments constituted by the possessing classes – in Paris

in 1871, in Russia in 1905 and in 1917, in Hungary and parts of Germany in 1919. The modern Labour movement in all countries had been committed since 1907 (the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart) to using the discontent and difficulties created for capitalist society in modern war to put an end to that society altogether. Although this decision, repeated at the Copenhagen Congress in 1910 and a special Congress at Basel in 1912, had not been acted upon in 1914, no one could tell whether, after the Russian example in 1917, it might not become the menace which it was intended to be. Unlike earlier wars, those of the twentieth century depended on the co-operation of an industrial working-class – one totally different in traditions, in sense of its power, and in organization from the artisans and craftsmen of earlier societies. The modern working-class (and to some extent the majority of the citizens of the modern State) were less easy to control when there was a threat of them all starving or being massacred; they were becoming more and more aware of their power when constituted into great political and industrial organizations. In these conditions, why should a State where the ruling class were, on the whole, satisfied with their possessions and their opportunities in the world, or because of the size of their resources could not hope to carve out new empires for themselves, adventure all in a war? And if that was so, they had to take stock of their position in good time, and see that they were not dragged into continuous adventure by the irreconcilability of some other ruling class, in some other country with its own axe to grind. Such, for example, was the position of the mass of the British capitalist class in 1921, as opposed to that of the investors who still controlled French policy.

Secondly, continued hostility to this new-comer in the world of States meant a permanent shrinkage in the already very disorganized world market. This was a serious consideration for any trading nation. Russia before 1914 accounted for a quarter of the world exports of wheat, a third of the British imports of butter; its export of poultry and eggs was much larger than that of other European countries; it furnished the world with over 75 per cent of the flax then used; it was first among the nations in the extent of its timber resources. To exclude these foodstuffs, raw materials, and semi-finished goods (Mr Lloyd George, then Prime Minister, pointed out on 10 February 1920) was a very serious thing. No less serious was the continued denial of this export outlet to the machinery and other capital goods of the industrially advanced countries – much greater than the outlet existing in Tsarist days – which would be opened by the effort of a Socialist State to carry out fundamental changes in its economy. Thus permanent hostility to a Socialist State was not only an uncertain thing, it was economically unprofitable.

Moreover, a real rise in living standards of the nations of the former Russian Empire, which hitherto had subsisted at a very low level, meant opening up entirely new fields for export – and not only of material values, but of cultural values as well. Increasing competition among the industrially more advanced countries meant that traditional markets in their own and less-developed countries were already changing hands and causing serious difficulties to the previous monopolists. Peaceful relations with a nation of 150 millions which was determined to improve its living conditions, but for many years would not be able to do so fast enough for its liking, could help, at any rate, to solve some of the export problems, and incidentally create a fund of goodwill among potential customers. And there also was an intellectual, artistic, and scientific world which could not afford to be cut off permanently – on either side – from some of its major sources of inspiration. For such people peaceful

coexistence meant something as dear as his dividend to the investor or his profit to the trader. 'Amid arms the Muses are silent.' The very first reports of visitors to the Soviet Republic – Arthur Ransome's *Six Weeks in Russia in 1919* and William T. Goode's *Bolshevism at Work (1920)* – owed their great success in considerable measure to their account of cultural advances there.

Furthermore there were far-sighted people who understood that hatred of Socialism, if pursued by force of arms, might achieve the opposite of what was intended. If Socialism at home, after the world war, was a menace, it was because the mass of the working people were by their conditions of life being more or less rapidly (according to the country involved) persuaded of its advantages. War against the Soviet Republic, refusal to maintain normal relations with it, would not convince them – rather the reverse. And perpetuating, maybe intensifying, the vast international difficulties existing in 1920–1 as a result of the first world war might make working-men still more susceptible to the allurements of Socialism. If the capitalist or the anti-Socialist was convinced of the superiority of his system as the Socialist was of his, it would be safer to let the systems stand the test of rivalry and mutual display in relative peace. And even those who, in their heart of hearts, regarded peace as only a breathing-space, and the only real answer to Socialism to be throttling it by violence, realized (at any rate, in many countries) that the crude kind of propaganda pursued during the period of active war against Socialist Russia from 1917 to 1920 was bankrupt, no longer served its purpose, and required to be replaced with something more subtle.

Thus on the capitalist side the survival of the Soviet Republic against all shocks created a variety of interests which came together, so to speak, at one point – the need to find some way of living in the company of the Soviet Republic,

within the same world, if only for a time, and refusing to follow other countries or other political groups still bent on overthrowing the Soviet State by immediate war.

Peaceful coexistence of countries with opposed social systems was, therefore, not an artificial creation and not a clever stunt. The idea of it grew in 1920–1 out of realistic consideration on both sides of their needs and possibilities. The idea arose, in fact, just because the interests of the Socialist State *coincided* for a considerable time to come – no one could say whether it might not last for generations – with the interests of a very large section of the States, and of the overwhelming majority of the working population, in the capitalist world.

Since the second world war a similar situation has arisen with regard to the People's Democracies in Eastern Europe and in China. In the case of the first group, there was no preliminary stage of a second invasion, as in the case of Russia thirty years before. Every means short of that – internal subversion, financial and credit blockade, refusal of diplomatic relations, denial of their place in the United Nations – was tried. But it did not succeed. Under the protection of the U.S.S.R., these States succeeded in weathering the storm. And they are not entirely negligible. Together they have a population of about one hundred millions. They are far from being new-comers in the arts of modern industry and agriculture – although, as the Royal Institute of International Affairs pointed out in 1940, 'the cardinal facts about the countries under survey are that they are agricultural, over-populated and poor', and their industrial development 'cannot be said to be great'; indeed, industrialization was their 'chief hope of betterment' (*South-eastern Europe*, pp. 85, 100, 135). True, the policy pursued since 1944 was not that suggested by the Royal Institute during the war – that 'the British Commonwealth and the United

States will probably have to play a major part by providing capital goods on a basis of long-term credits' (*Occupied Europe*, 1944, p. 71). The Soviet Union has had perforce to step into the breach. But the fact remains that these peoples are determined to industrialize themselves, they are determined at the same time to expand their agriculture on modern lines and to raise their standards of living; and they have achieved substantial results in all these respects so far. They are much stronger than they were in 1944. So what is the sense of pursuing a policy of boycott of trade and normal relations with them, political, cultural, and scientific, when that policy is manifestly bankrupt? All the arguments which arose thirty-five years ago in the case of the Soviet Union have been renewed over these countries.

Even more does this apply in the case of China. This vast country of six hundred million people, one-quarter of the population of the globe, now has a government about which opinions differ according to one's political likes and dislikes, but which is beyond question determined to industrialize its country, to make available its enormous natural resources, to raise the standard of living of its people, and never again to allow control of its economy by foreign capital. The first five years since the Central People's Government was established saw some very remarkable achievements in all respects. Moreover, in the absence of aid from the Great Powers which formerly traded with or had investments in China, the Soviet Union has had here also to come forward as the main helper. By October 1954 there were 141 large industrial undertakings under construction with Soviet help; an agreement signed on 11 October 1954 provided for another 15 to be started. These undertakings alone have involved industrial credits to a total of some £100 million. There is no secret made, by friend or foe, that these are but small beginnings compared with the immense requirements

of China. In her case history bears a close parallel to that of the early years of the Soviet Republic. Not only did the United States intervene in the Chinese civil war up to the end of 1949 with fire and sword, from the air and sea and on the land, under a thin disguise which was quite irrelevant since it deceived no one; but for many years past other States maintained, by their loans and in other ways, the condition of feudal anarchy, and then of military dictatorship, against which the leaders of the present Chinese régime waged war for over twenty years before the final victory of 1949.

But why should this unfortunate background present a search on either side for more profitable relations once the page has been turned? One may say, indeed, that in relation to China this stage seems to have been reached more quickly than with either the U.S.S.R. or the People's Democracies of Europe.

Author says: once an ideology has been firmly entrenched – let it grow; true – if that belief comes from the majority and when it is unconsciously forced upon the populace – measures should be endorsed which would precede further growth – one anything stops growing it soon withers away

CHAPTER THREE

The Soviet Union and peaceful coexistence

THROUGHOUT its thirty-seven years of existence, the Soviet Government has lost few opportunities of putting forward the idea of peaceful coexistence of countries with different and opposed social systems.

At the Second Congress of Soviets which adopted the Decree on Peace on 8 November 1917, the day after the revolution, Lenin spoke on the need for reviewing old treaties between Tsarist Russia and other countries, and for rejecting all clauses which provided for plundering and violence against other nations. 'But all clauses where good neighbourly conditions and economic agreements are provided we shall welcome, we cannot reject them.' The founder of the Soviet State saw nothing incompatible in its existing side by side with capitalist Powers. The Decree on Peace itself proposed 'to all warring peoples and their Governments to begin immediately negotiations for a just and democratic peace'. The Soviet Government considered that this should be one without annexations and without indemnities. At the same time, it stated that these conditions of peace were not put forward as an ultimatum, and that it was ready to consider any other terms proposed by any other of the warring countries. It suggested that an armistice for a period of three months should be concluded, in order to make a peace settlement possible.

During the next month the Soviet Government followed up this initiative with no fewer than five distinct approaches. One was a Note to the Allied ambassadors (21 November),

enclosing the Decree and asking that it be regarded 'as a formal proposal'. Two days later this was followed by a Note to the diplomatic representatives of the neutral States – Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Spain. They were asked to transmit the proposals to the Entente Governments, since the Allies had not responded to the Decree. On 27 November the German High Command agreed to open negotiations for an armistice; but the Soviet Government proposed that negotiations be held up for five days, in order to make a last call to the Allies to join them. The following day (28 November) the Soviet Government appealed by radio to the Allied nations, saying that, while Russia wanted a general peace, negotiations would be carried on alone with the Germans if the Allies did not join in. On 30 November a further Note was sent to the diplomatic representatives of the Allies, repeating that the Soviet Government wanted simultaneous negotiations which would include them, in order to make sure that a general democratic peace was reached as rapidly as possible. This, too, was ignored, and negotiations began at Brest-Litovsk on 3 December. Two days later the Soviet Government published a communiqué on the course of the negotiations, repeating the previous warning. Furthermore, the Soviet Government refused to sign an armistice until the Germans, on 5 December, agreed that there should be no transfers of troops to the Western front. This was done once again to emphasize the bona fides of the Soviet Government. The agreement in the first instance was for ten days; and the Soviet Government took advantage of the interruption in hostilities to send yet a further Note to the Allied ambassadors (7 December) – once again without any response. Only after this, on 15 December, was a new armistice agreement concluded for twenty-eight days – once again transfers of troops being forbidden – and full peace negotiations were begun.

It soon became clear that the Germans were conscious of the now complete diplomatic isolation of the Soviet Government, and were preparing to impose the most painful terms. The situation was hardly one in which the pros and cons of peaceful coexistence with capitalist States could be discussed, except in the desperate sense of continuing the war or signing a disastrous peace. Yet it is noteworthy that, in one of the discussions in the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, the question was put whether economic treaties between a Socialist and an imperialist State were 'admissible'; and a large majority voted in favour. Again, at the end of February 1918, Lenin in *Pravda* denounced those who thought that no peace with imperialists was possible, arguing: 'A Socialist Republic among imperialist Powers would not be able, taking its stand on such views, to conclude any economic treaties, and could not exist without flying away to the moon.'

However, at this stage Europe was still locked in combat between the giant Anglo-Franco-American and German-Austro-Hungarian blocs, and practical questions of peaceful relationships could hardly be discussed in an atmosphere of reality. But at two moments during the subsequent Allied invasions of Soviet Russia there appeared to be the prospect of a victorious end to the war – in March 1919, and again in December of that year. Each time an important declaration of principle was made. The Eighth Congress of the Bolshevik Party, on the first occasion, adopted a new programme, the first change since 1903. One of its points read: 'Care must be taken to extend economic collaboration and political connexions with other peoples, striving at the same time to establish a single economic plan with those among them who have already gone over to the Soviet system.' The latter reservation made it perfectly clear that the opening sentence referred to the capitalist States as well. A further

Party Conference, on 4 December 1919, adopted a draft resolution to be put forward at the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which was opening the next day. This resolution declared the purpose of peaceful relations with capitalist States: 'The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic desires to live at peace with all peoples and to turn all its forces towards internal construction, in order to organize production, transport, and social management on the basis of the Soviet order.'

During the whole of the foreign invasions the Soviet Government, while organizing resistance more and more successfully, did not cease from offering to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the invading Governments – sometimes, as on the occasion of the so-called 'Prinkipo proposals' (February 1919), and of the visit of President Wilson's emissary William C. Bullitt (March 1919), on extremely onerous conditions for the Soviets. The resolution of the Seventh Soviet Congress just mentioned enumerated ten such offers. In all, during the invasions, fourteen offers were made – in vain. But in 1920 four Peace Treaties were signed with Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, and Finland.

When the foreign invasions ended at last, in the autumn of 1920 (except for Japanese occupation in the Far East which continued for another two years), the problem of peaceful coexistence, as a matter of principle, immediately came once again to the fore. To have it in a Party programme, adopted during a brief interlude of the war, was one thing; to make the Soviet working-class, who for three years had lived in the most desperate atmosphere of war with international capitalism, grasp that to live in peace with it was possible was something very different. We find Lenin in speech after speech driving in the essential why and wherefore of the idea.

In an interview with the *New York Evening Journal* on

18 February 1920, he said: 'Our plans in Asia? The same as in Europe; peaceful coexistence with the peoples, with the workers and peasants of all nations.' So far as obstacles to peaceful relations with capitalist countries were concerned, Lenin declared that on the Soviet side there were none. Trade negotiations with Britain began soon after this statement; but they were slowed down by a Polish invasion of Russia, and only got under way properly again in November.

On 21 November 1920, Lenin addressed a Communist Party conference of the Moscow province. Surveying the new international situation, he said that this was no longer a mere breathing-space, it was 'a new period in which our basic international existence in a network of capitalist States has been won'. Conditions had been secured in which 'we can exist side by side with capitalist Powers, who are now obliged to enter into trading relations with us'. This was a most tremendous factor, he repeatedly underlined.

On 6 December of the same year Lenin made a speech at a meeting of active members of the Communist Party of Moscow – a speech which was not published at the time, and therefore must be regarded as in the nature of a special 'directive' for Communists in the most important city of the Soviet Republic. Once again he emphasized that the Soviet State, like any other, was living now 'in a system of States which, in relation to each other, are in a condition of a certain political equilibrium'. What conclusions should be drawn from this equilibrium 'on a capitalist basis'? he asked. He unfolded a broad programme of economic concessions, which should encourage the capitalists to develop as yet untouched resources in Soviet Russia, accumulating great profits for themselves, but in return helping the Soviet Republic to get on its feet after the frightful destruction of the last six years. This was a means at the same time of helping to restore the whole of world economy, he said, since Rus-

sian raw materials were essential for that purpose. In this respect they could hope to interest not only workers but also 'sensible capitalists'. Some of them in all countries, at any rate, would scratch their heads and say: 'Well, perhaps the time has come; let's sign a trade agreement.' Lenin revealed that the draft of one such agreement – received from Great Britain – was already under discussion.

On 21 December 1920, Lenin addressed Communists from all over Soviet Russia, who had assembled as delegates for the Eighth Congress of Soviets, opening next day. This speech to the Communist fraction of the Congress remained unpublished for ten years, for the same reason as before. Here, too, he contrasted the chaos existing at that time in the capitalist world, where millions were starving in countries beaten in the war, like Germany, while elsewhere huge supplies of foodstuffs were rotting, with the proposals being made by the Soviet Republic: 'We have hundreds of thousands of dessiatinas [1] of excellent lands which can be broken up with tractors, while you have tractors, you have petrol, and you have trained technicians. Now we are offering all peoples, including the peoples of the capitalist countries, to make restoration of the national economy a foundation stone and the salvation of all peoples from hunger.' Lenin emphasized that this was not an *absolute* guarantee against war – the capitalists might attack again. But the peril would be less once Soviet Russia had a minimum of means of production, locomotives, and machinery.

In his public speech at the Congress on the 22nd he developed this idea further, again pointing out that the danger of capitalist attack might diminish. 'We are convinced that given the continuation on our side of a peaceable policy, given the concessions which we are making (and we must make them in order to avoid war), and in spite of all the

1. One dessiatina = 2·7 acres.

intrigues and plots of the imperialists – who will, of course, always be able to involve one State or another in a quarrel with us – in spite of all this, the basic line of our policy, and the basic interests which flow from the very essence of imperialist policy, are gaining the upper hand, and are more and more forcing a closer linking-up between the R.S.F.S.R. and the neighbouring States growing up around it. And this is a guarantee that we shall be able to engage thoroughly in the work of economic construction, and will be able to work quietly, steadily, and confidently for a longer period of time.' As for the trade agreement with Great Britain, he drew a distinction between a majority, not only of the workers but of the British capitalists, and those groups in British ruling circles who wanted to prevent an agreement being signed, and even to try their hand once again at an armed attack on Soviet Russia.

In March 1921, the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party met. In his report Lenin insisted on the need for co-operation between the capitalist and the Socialist systems, and underlined that peaceful coexistence was not a mere act of policy but an historic necessity. 'There is a power bigger than the desire, will, and decision of any of the hostile Governments or classes. That power is the general world-wide inter-relationship of economies, which obliges them to enter this path of intercourse with us.' At the time, it was necessary to insist on the need for the capitalists to enter into relations with the Soviet Republic. By the Ninth Soviet Congress it was clear that both sides stood to gain practical benefits. 'Economic stability in the capitalist States, no less than in Soviet Russia, now requires definite mutual relations between them,' said Lenin (23 December 1921).

In fact, by this time the first Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement had been signed, and was yielding beneficial results to both countries. Agreements were also being discussed with

other States. A law offering concessions to foreigners had produced the first few small inquiries. And on 28 October the Soviet Government had taken matters a step further by offering in principle to recognize the pre-war debts of Tsarist Russia, on condition that credits became available for the restoration of Soviet economy – the essential condition for making payment possible.

This Note led to lively discussions between the Allies, and ultimately to the decision to call an international economic conference at Genoa in April 1922. The time had now come to state the policy of peaceful coexistence in set terms. This was done first in a Note to Britain, France, and Italy (15 March 1922): 'The Russian Government is under no illusion as to the fundamental differences that exist between the political and economic régime of the Soviet Republics and that of the bourgeois States: but nevertheless it believes it entirely possible that an agreement can be come to which will lead to fruitful collaboration between them in the economic field. . . . The Soviet Government will enter the Genoa Conference with the firm intention of engaging in close economic co-operation with every State which will give a reciprocal guarantee of the inviolability of internal political and economic organization, in conformity with the first article of the conditions laid down for the Conference.'

At the Conference itself the Soviet representative Chicherin began by stating the general case again: 'While itself maintaining the point of view of Communist principles, the Russian delegation recognizes that in the present period of history, which permits the parallel existence of the old social order and of the new order coming into being, economic collaboration between the States representing these two systems of property appears imperatively necessary for general economic reconstruction. The Russian Government as a consequence attributes the greatest importance to the

first point of the Cannes resolution which speaks of reciprocal recognition of the different systems of property, and of the different political and economic forms which at present exist in various countries. The Russian delegation has come here, not with the intention of making propaganda for its own theoretical views, but to engage in practical relations with the Governments and commercial and industrial circles of all countries, on the basis of reciprocity, equality of rights, and full and complete recognition.'

But Chicherin outlined more than the theory of economic collaboration. The practical proposals he put forward would have meant economic integration to a considerable extent, and political co-operation in many important fields, between the Soviet Republics and the capitalist world. He proposed the following programme which his government was offering:

1. 'Deliberately and voluntarily to open its frontiers for the creation of international transit routes.'

Only those who remember or can study the wild stories then current about what was going on inside the Soviet frontiers can appreciate the self-confidence of this offer.

2. 'To release for cultivation millions of hectares of the most fertile land in the world . . . to grant forest concessions, coal-mining and mineral concessions of infinite wealth, chiefly in Siberia, and concessions of all kinds throughout the territory of the R.S.F.S.R.'

This offer was refused because the Soviet Government had nationalized foreign-owned works and mines which had been set up in Tsarist days. The Soviet Government offered to come to some reasonable arrangements for liquidating these at a subsequent conference at The Hague. These, too, were rejected, because of the general confidence that Soviet Russia would soon collapse.

3. Investment of capital annually for this purpose which 'would constitute only a small fraction of the annual expenditure of the countries of Europe and America on their armies and navies.'

This was again rejected on the ground that the Soviet Government could not offer 'security' – an attitude supported by the big banks which had made unwise investments in Russian Tsardom.

4. 'The general limitation of armaments,' with 'the absolute prohibition of the most barbarous forms of war like poison gases, aerial warfare, and the use of means of destruction against the peaceful population.'

Although the Versailles Treaty had promised a discussion on these questions, the Soviet proposals were angrily rejected by the French and other Governments. By this time the Disarmament Conference met in Geneva in 1932, economic rivalries and rearmament had reached a pitch which made practical results impossible.

5. 'To participate in revision of the Charter of the League of Nations, in order to transform it into a true league of peoples without the domination of some over others, and without the present division into victors and vanquished.'

The Soviet proposals were not even discussed. The U.S.S.R. entered the League only twelve years later. Meanwhile the distinction between victor and vanquished had been wiped out when Germany came into the League in 1926, as part of a scheme which rearmed and refinanced her aggressive imperialist ruling class.

6. 'Technical commissions to sketch out and elaborate a programme of economic reconstruction of the world' – including international trade routes by rail, river, and sea, use of international ports, the opening up of the riches of Central Siberia for general use – the commissions to be appointed by a World Conference.

Only in 1933, when the world was locked in desperate economic and financial contradictions, was the first World Economic and Monetary Conference opened in London. It proved sterile. The technical commissions were not even considered.

7. 'The redistribution of existing gold reserves among all countries in the pre-war proportion by means of long-term credits, without injuring the interests of the countries at present possessing this gold . . . combined with a rational dis-

tribution of the products of industry and commercial activity and a distribution of oil, coal, and other fuels according to plan.'

Only fourteen years later did the technical commissions of the League of Nations begin to study such ideas (1936–7) – when there was little hope of bringing them into effect owing to the existence of the powerful aggressor bloc of Hitler, Mussolini, and the Mikado. When Chicherin made them they were completely ignored.

Thus early in its life did the Soviet Republic put forward a full programme of peaceful coexistence and co-operation with capitalist countries. Again and again since then, during more than thirty years, these proposals have been brought forward in one shape or another. The principles proclaimed in March and April 1922 have remained the basis of the Soviet attitude towards the problem of living at peace with other countries, the social system of which it likes no more than they like the Soviet system.

1. *In the economic field*

One of the first examples was the agreement for mutual settlement of debts and claims, concluded with Germany at Rapallo in 1922. A still more far-reaching agreement was concluded with the British Labour Government in 1924, but refused ratification by the Conservative Government which replaced it. In spite of this failure, the Soviet Government pushed on to develop economic relations and sign economic agreements with very many countries. In this respect the decision of February 1918 was closely followed.

But the Soviet Union also went on trying to popularize the idea of peaceful coexistence on broader lines. Thus in May 1927 the Soviet Union took part in a conference on economic questions held by the League of Nations, although it was not as yet a member of the League. The conference rejected a

resolution, proposed by the Soviet delegation, recommending 'to all States to develop their relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of the pacific coexistence of two different economic systems'. But it did commit itself to declaring that it regarded 'the participation of members of all the countries present, irrespective of differences in their economic systems, as a happy augury for pacific co-operation of all nations'.

There was a quarrel between Britain and the U.S.S.R. the same month, leading to a temporary rupture of diplomatic relations. Stalin, however, stuck to the point. In September 1927, answering a question put by an American Labour delegation, he said: 'I think that the existence of two opposite systems, the capitalist system and the Socialist system, does not exclude the possibility of agreements. I think that such agreements are possible and expedient in conditions of peaceful development. Exports and imports are the most suitable ground for such agreements. We require equipment, raw material (raw cotton, for example), semi-manufactures (metals, etc.): while the capitalists require a market for their goods. This provides a basis for agreement. The capitalists require oil, timber, grain products and all require a market for these goods. Here is another basis for agreement. We require credits, the capitalists require good interest for their credits. Here is still another basis for agreement, in the field of credit. It is well known that the Soviet organs are most punctual in their payments.

'The same thing may be said in regard to the diplomatic field. We are pursuing a policy of peace, and we are prepared to sign a pact of non-aggression with bourgeois States. We are pursuing a policy of peace, and we are prepared to come to an agreement concerning disarmament, including complete abolition of standing armies, which we declared to the whole world as far back as the time of the Genoa Conference. Here is a basis for agreement on the diplomatic field.

'The limits to these agreements? The limits are set by the opposite characters of the two systems between which there is rivalry and conflict. Within the limits permitted by these two systems, but only within these limits, agreement is quite possible. This is proved by the experience of the agreements concluded with Germany, Italy, Japan, etc. Are these agreements merely experiments? Or can they be of a more or less prolonged character? That does not altogether depend upon us alone. It depends also upon the other parties. It depends upon the general situation. A war may upset any and every agreement. Finally it depends upon the terms of the agreement. We can never accept conditions of bondage.'

At the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in December 1927, Stalin declared: 'The maintenance of peaceful relations with the capitalist countries is an obligatory task for us. Our relations with the capitalist countries are based on the assumption that the coexistence of two opposite systems is possible. Practice has fully confirmed this.'

In 1931 the long-delayed world economic crisis was in full blast. The League of Nations had the previous year set up a European Commission to consider ways of reducing the antagonisms which this situation was creating. In May, Litvinov proposed that the Powers there represented should issue a joint declaration, which he called a 'Pact of Economic Non-Aggression'. It should undertake to reduce all prices on the home market to the level of export prices, and thus prevent 'dumping' while expanding the purchasing power of the people in each country. It should contain a pledge that there should be no discrimination, by preferences or other means, between country and country. The proposal was never adopted – but never rejected. By November he had succeeded in persuading the sub-committee for resolutions to adopt one put forward by the U.S.S.R., and thus in making some pro-

gress compared with its predecessor of 1927:

'1. The Committee approves the general idea underlying the Soviet proposal regarding a Pact of Economic Non-aggression.

'2. The Committee records the possibility of peaceful coexistence of States having a different economic and social structure.'

However, the resolution remained on paper. Every country with the exception of the Soviet Union went on cutting down its imports, and the crisis became deeper. By 1933, in desperate straits, the Governments assembled in London for a World Economic and Monetary Conference. Here once again the Soviet delegation proposed a Pact of Economic Non-aggression, pledging 'peaceful co-operation of all States in the economic field, irrespective of their political-economic systems'. Litvinov also announced that the Soviet Government, given credit terms, was prepared immediately to increase imports of metals, engineering material, rubber, and consumer goods of various kinds, to the value of 1,000 million dollars. These imports would have absorbed 100 per cent of the world's output of ships in 1932, 100 per cent of the world stocks of some consumer goods, one-third of the world's yearly exports of machinery, and from 25 to 60 per cent of world stocks of non-ferrous metals. While the Soviet offers were not accepted as such, in fact Soviet imports of such goods went on increasing, though not on the scale which international endorsement would have brought about.

The policy was again summed up in Stalin's declaration at the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. in March 1939: 'We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position, so long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and so long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country.'

It is now 1956 – time produces changes

2. *Disarmament, Non-aggression, Mutual Assistance*

The disarmament proposals made by Chicherin also had a considerable subsequent history. For one thing, their rejection at Genoa did not prevent the Soviet Government, in December 1922, holding a conference of its Baltic, Finnish, and Polish neighbours to which it proposed a 75 per cent cut of its own armaments and all others within two years. When this was rejected, it proposed a 25 per cent cut in its own forces within one year, asking only that the other countries represented should offer appropriate reductions in their forces. These offers were not forthcoming.

From 1927 until 1934, the Soviet Government took an active part in the protracted sessions, first of the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament sitting at Geneva, and then in the Disarmament Conference itself, which met there at intervals from 1932 to 1934. In the course of these meetings, the Soviet Government proposed first general and total disarmament within twelve months (with a detailed schedule of what had to be done), and then, on rejection of this proposal, a reduction of 50 per cent in all armaments over a period of four years. Immense enthusiasm was aroused in very many countries among trade unions, co-operative societies, women's organizations, etc., by the Soviet proposals; but they were rejected. In July 1932 the Soviet delegation at the Disarmament Conference took up an American proposal for reductions of one-third in all the principal armaments, and made it the basis of a detailed Soviet amendment to a majority resolution (of a vague declaratory nature). Here, too, the Soviet proposal was rejected by the Great Powers (including the U.S.A.).

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union had adopted other methods of demonstrating its belief that peaceful relations with capitalist countries were not only possible but could be or-

ganized. Between 1925 and 1932 it signed nine pacts of non-aggression with various neighbours. In 1928 a treaty signed at Paris by a number of countries (the Briand-Kellogg Pact) declared their renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. The Soviet Government, when invited, added its signature to the treaty and ratified it; and in February 1929 made the ingenious proposal that, as there was some delay in its ratification by other States, all those countries in Eastern Europe which had signed it should come to an agreement among themselves to regard it as already binding upon themselves. This was partially successful; the representatives of Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Rumania, and the U.S.S.R. signed the 'Moscow Protocol' to this effect on 9 February. It meant an extra obligation to keep the peace, Litvinov underlined in his speech at the ceremony of signature.

Stalin gave a popular explanation of the policy as the Soviet Union saw it, in November 1930, to Mr Walter Duranty, the American journalist (*Russia Reported*, 1934, p. 205): '*Duranty:* You see no reason why the capitalist and Communist systems should not exist side by side without fighting? *Stalin:* They have not fought for ten years, which means they can coexist. We don't want to fight, and some of their people don't either.'

On 25 July that year, after taking over the duties of People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Litvinov had once again drawn attention (in a talk with foreign pressmen) to the permanent material interest of the Soviet Union in keeping the peace:

'At the foundation of the foreign policy of the Union lie the principles of the great October Socialist Revolution; and the defence of the achievements of the revolution from foreign pressure and interference is one of its basic tasks. No less important a task of Soviet diplomacy is the assuring of

peaceable conditions and freedom from external convulsions for our Socialist constructive work. The more important are the plans of our construction, and the more rapid its tempo, the greater is our interest in the maintenance of peace. ... We have to build Socialism in one country, surrounded by capitalist countries which occupy five-sixths of the globe. We cannot and do not ignore this fact, and therefore strive to discover and put into effect methods of peaceful coexistence of the two social systems.'

With the coming of Hitler to power, the menace to world peace necessitated more active means to preserve it. In June 1933 the Soviet Union secured the signatures of a number of countries to a pact defining the aggressor and aggression. In 1934, as a means of widening the possible area in Europe in which peace could be preserved, the Soviet Union offered Germany and Poland a 'Baltic Pact' guaranteeing the integrity and independence of the Baltic States. When the proposal was rejected, the Soviet Union offered to conclude an 'Eastern Locarno', which would provide for mutual assistance against aggression by the U.S.S.R., Germany, France, and the countries of Central Europe, as well as the Baltic States. Germany refused the offer (September) – a fortnight before the U.S.S.R. joined the League of Nations – but the Soviet Union signed a protocol with France three months later, undertaking, nevertheless, to bring about an Eastern Pact. This proposal was also supported in a joint Anglo-Soviet statement, in Moscow the following March, at the end of a visit by Mr Anthony Eden. Germany still refused to join, however, and in May 1935 France and the U.S.S.R. signed a pact of Mutual Assistance between themselves. It carried with it the provision that it was open to Germany to join at any time. A similar pact was signed with Czechoslovakia a fortnight later.

The broad lessons of this period of other intense diplo-

matic activity were expressed in a resolution adopted by the Assembly of the League of Nations in October 1937, appropriately on the joint motion of France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. The resolution alluded to the possibility that peaceful coexistence could mean more than the prevention of war: 'Recognizing that the political atmosphere of the present times is unfavourable, that international mistrust is widespread, that war is threatening, and that actual hostilities have broken out in certain parts of the world; being of opinion that in these circumstances the closest co-operation is essential both in the economic and in the political field for States which are anxious to maintain peace; considering that such co-operation must be based on the renunciation of recourse to violence and war as instruments of policy, and on the strict observance of international obligations – invites all States to follow the guidance of these essential principles of international co-operation, failing which real progress in the economic and financial sphere will prove impossible.'

The history of the Spanish civil war and the German–Italian invasion of the Spanish Republic (1936–9), of the fruitless Chinese appeals for support against Japanese invasion (1937–41), of the unopposed seizure by Hitler of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Memel (1938–9) and by Mussolini of Albania (1939), explain why this declaration of principles, too, was not translated into practical agreements. This, however, is not the place to examine the history of these attempts to 'localize aggression' – the direct opposite of peaceful coexistence and international co-operation – and of the outbreak of the second world war.

3. *The Soviet Union's vested interest in peace*

If at this point we look back over the years since the revolution, one thing that stands out is that the Soviet Union had

nothing whatsoever to gain from either entering war itself or from the existence of a state of international tension.

The foreign invasions and civil war of 1917–20 added 1,350,000 dead and 3,000,000 cripples to the 4,000,000 dead and nearly 10,000,000 cripples which were left to Russia by the war of 1914–17. The material ruin, of course, was gigantic.

From 1920 to 1929 the Soviet Government's plan for the bare reconstruction of its economy over a period of ten years, with a relatively small development of electric power supply, involved the spending of 17 milliard roubles; which it hoped to secure by profits on foreign trade to the amount of 11 milliards and by concessions and trade credits to a total of 6 milliards. But the condition of diplomatic boycott, and then of credit and financial blockade, to which Russia was subjected during these years, together with the costs of maintaining substantial armed forces in view of the constant uncertainty, led in fact to the fulfilment of the plan dragging out in some respects for twelve, thirteen, or as long as fourteen years.

The first Five Year Plan (1929–32) – for the large-scale reconstruction of industry and agriculture on the basis of social ownership – was fulfilled only 96 per cent, and the Soviet consumer suffered very heavy privations, because in 1931 and 1932 a large section of industry had to be switched over to defence.

During the second and third Five Year Plans (1933–40) the existence of the Nazi menace to the U.S.S.R., and its only too obvious encouragement by the West after the first few years, necessitated a heavy burden of defence expenditure. From 4 per cent of the budget in 1933, it rose to 33 per cent by 1940. All who visited the Soviet Union between 1936 and 1939 saw how the economy of the country was being adversely affected by the need for war preparations.

The Soviet Union's vested interest in peace was of course re-emphasized terribly by the losses of the second world war. Seven million Soviet citizens lost their lives and one-third of the national wealth was destroyed: far more than was lost either by Britain and the U.S.A. or by Germany. And even in October 1954, nine years after the end of the war, the head of an official British Parliamentary delegation was to admit that he had not realized how far-reaching was the destruction of which he even then could see the traces.

It was this that Stalin, in the first post-war Soviet elections, had in mind when he said that the aim of the new Five Year Plan was 'to restore the afflicted districts of the country, to restore industry and agriculture to their pre-war level, and then to exceed this level to a more or less considerable degree', with special attention 'to the extension of production of consumer goods, raising the standard of living of the working people by means of the steady reduction of the prices of all commodities' (9 February 1946). To achieve this, Molotov said in the same election campaign, the Soviet Union needed a lengthy period of peace and assured security. 'The peace-loving policy of the Soviet Union is not some transient phenomenon: it follows from the fundamental interests and essential needs of our people – their desire as quickly as possible to raise their material standards, their tremendous urge to create their own new, cultured Socialist life, and their deep confidence that the Soviet Union will successfully accomplish all these tasks, provided the gang of aggressors is chained up. This is why the Soviet people display such vigilance when possible sources of violation of peace and international security, or intrigues towards that end, are in question' (6 February 1946).

So far as material standards are concerned, the U.S.S.R. began rebuilding its shattered trading relations with other countries as rapidly as possible in order to ensure fulfilment

of the post-war plan. In spite of all difficulties, Soviet foreign trade greatly expanded, and by 1953 reached a yearly total of 23 milliard roubles (over £2,000 million) or nearly four times the pre-war level. At the end of 1953 the Soviet Union was trading with 52 countries, 41 of them capitalist; and out of the 25 States with which it had long-term or one-year trade agreements 14 were capitalist States.

4. *After the War*

During these years the campaign for the principle of peaceful coexistence continued.

On 17 September 1946, after a speech by Mr Henry Wallace (who was then a supporter of friendly American–Soviet relations), Stalin gave the following replies to questions by Alexander Werth, Moscow correspondent of the *Sunday Times*: '*Question:* Do you believe in the possibility of friendly and lasting co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Western democracies despite the existence of ideological differences, and in the "friendly competition" between the two systems to which Mr Wallace referred? *Answer:* I believe in it absolutely. *Question:* During the recent sojourn here of the Labour Party delegation you, as far as I understand, expressed certainty of the possibility of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Great Britain. What could help in establishing these relations so profoundly desired by the broad masses of the British people? *Answer:* I am indeed convinced of the possibility of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Great Britain. The strengthening of political, commercial, and cultural ties between these countries would considerably contribute to the establishment of such relations. . . . *Question:* Do you believe that with the further progress of the Soviet Union towards Communism the possibilities of peaceful co-operation with the

outside world will not decrease as far as the Soviet Union is concerned? Is "Communism in one country" possible? *Answer:* I do not doubt that the possibilities of peaceful co-operation, far from decreasing, may even grow. "Communism in one country" is perfectly possible, especially in a country like the Soviet Union.'

Again on 21 December 1946, when Elliott Roosevelt asked Stalin whether he believed it possible for the U.S.A. to live peaceably side by side with 'a Communistic form of Government like the Soviet Union' without mutual interference, Stalin replied that it was not only possible, but 'wise and entirely within the bounds of realization'. When Henry Wallace sent him an open letter giving proposals for a settlement of American–Soviet differences, Stalin (17 May 1948) urged its acceptance as a basis for agreement, adding that, despite the differences in economic systems and ideologies, 'the coexistence of these systems and the peaceful settlement of differences between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. are not only possible but absolutely necessary in the interests of the universal peace'. This was less than a fortnight after Molotov had informed the American Ambassador of Soviet readiness to discuss with the U.S.A. all outstanding differences between the two countries with a view to settlement. In January 1949, Stalin replied to Kingsbury Smith, European general manager of the International News Service, that the Soviet Government would be prepared to consider issuing a joint declaration with the Government of the U.S.A. (as Smith had suggested) 'asserting that the respective Governments have no intention of resorting to war against one another'. Stalin added that naturally the Soviet Government would co-operate with that of the U.S.A. 'in taking measures designed to implement this pact of peace and leading to gradual disarmament'.

Long before Stalin died, the Supreme Soviet of the

U.S.S.R. had, on 12 March 1951, adopted a Peace Defence Law proclaiming war propaganda a crime against humanity, and providing for severe penalties for such propaganda.

In a reply to fifty American editors, published on 2 April 1952 – they had asked him: 'On what basis is the coexistence of capitalism and Communism possible?' – Stalin said: 'The peaceful coexistence of capitalism and Communism is fully possible given the mutual desire to co-operate, readiness to perform obligations which have been assumed, observance of the principle of equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.'

It was also in the presence of Stalin that Georgi Malenkov, in his report at the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (5 October 1952), had reaffirmed the Soviet attitude to the U.S.A., Britain, France, and other bourgeois States. 'The U.S.S.R. is still ready to co-operate with these States with a view to promoting adherence to peaceful international standards and ensuring a lasting and durable peace.' This was 'based on the premise that the peaceful coexistence and co-operation of capitalism and Communism are quite possible, provided there is a mutual desire to co-operate, readiness to carry out commitments and adherence to the principle of equal rights and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States'. Mr Malenkov set out a programme of practical steps for co-operation, to which we shall return later.

One of the very last public statements by Stalin was on 21 December 1952, when he replied affirmatively to a question by James Reston of the *New York Times*, who asked him if he would welcome 'diplomatic conversations with representatives of the new Eisenhower administration, looking towards the possibility of a meeting between yourself and General Eisenhower on easing world tensions?'

Malenkov succeeded Stalin as Soviet Premier, and has

constantly reiterated the Soviet desire for practical steps to secure peaceful coexistence. On the day of Stalin's funeral (9 March 1953) he affirmed the Soviet Union's continued adherence to 'Lenin's and Stalin's principle of the possibility of prolonged coexistence and peaceful emulation of two different systems – the capitalist and the Socialist'. At the session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., held six days later, Malenkov added: 'At the present time there is no disputed or unsolved problem which cannot be solved by peaceful means, on the basis of mutual agreement of the interested countries. This refers to our relations with all States, including our relations with the United States of America.' He developed this idea still further at the next session of the Supreme Soviet, on 8 August 1953: 'We stood and we stand for the peaceful coexistence of the two systems. We consider that there is no objective ground for a collision between the United States and the Soviet Union. The interests of the security of both countries as well as international security, the interests of the development of trade between the United States and the Soviet Union, can be safeguarded on the basis of normal relations between the two countries.'

'In the sphere of foreign policy, our immutable line is to ensure peaceful conditions for the building of Communist society in our country', said Malenkov in an election speech on 14 March 1954. 'The Soviet Government stands for the further easing of international tension, for a firm and lasting peace, and resolutely opposes the cold war policy, because that policy is one of preparing a new world war which, given the modern means of warfare, spells the destruction of world civilization.' Any disputed issue, no matter how difficult it may be, can be settled peacefully, said the Soviet Premier.

In the budget debate at the first session of the newly elected Supreme Soviet (26 April 1954), his speech gave first

importance to the fact that 'a certain relaxation of tension had occurred recently'. This could be continued progressively, providing there were 'peaceful co-operation among the nations irrespective of their social structure'. The primary condition for this, in turn, was for the nations concerned to observe 'the principles of equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations', and to carry out their commitments unreservedly.

The leaders of the Chinese People's Government have been as emphatic as those of the U.S.S.R. on this subject.

On 1 October 1949 – the day of the establishment of the People's Republic of China – Mao Tse-Tung formally proclaimed to the whole world: 'This Government is willing to establish diplomatic relations with any foreign government which is willing to observe the principles of equality, mutual benefit, and mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty.' The fundamental fact determining the peaceful foreign policy of the new China, said Chou En-Lai on 23 September 1954, at the National People's Congress in Peking called to adopt a new Constitution, was that 'all our efforts are directed towards building our country into a prosperous and happy Socialist industrial country. We are proceeding with peaceful labour, and we want a peaceful environment and a peaceful world.' He referred to the five principles for peaceful coexistence which were quoted in Chapter One, and declared that, in the opinion of the Chinese People's Republic, they 'should likewise be applied to the relations between our country and Ceylon, Pakistan, and other Asian countries, as well as to international relations in general'. In his speech on the fifth anniversary of the People's Republic (30 September 1954), Chou En-Lai returned to the point that, because China aims at raising living standards and strengthening her national security, she 'can only have world peace as her objective, and can have no other line of

policy'. China firmly believes 'that countries with different social systems can coexist peacefully'; she is willing to live in peace with any nation in the world provided it sincerely desires the same thing – and 'of course we are also willing to live in peace with the United States'.

Surveying the long road travelled since 1917, it is certain that at no other period in world history has there been such a sustained and insistent campaign by the leaders of great States on the advantages, and still more the necessity, of finding a way to live in peace with other countries, the fundamental social, economic, and political systems of which were opposed to their own.

Man does not often do what he says he will.

CHAPTER FOUR

Our side of it

FROM 1917 onwards there have been periodical political struggles in the non-Socialist world over the question of whether or not peaceful relations with the Soviet Republics were either possible or desirable. It was the defeat of armed intervention in Russia by the beginning of 1920 that really gave the first opportunity to those spokesmen of the capitalist countries who stood up for peaceful coexistence.

The Allied Supreme Council on 25 April 1920 decided to discuss with Soviet delegates headed by Krassin 'the best method of removing the obstacles and difficulties in the way of the resumption of peaceful trade relations, with the desire of finding a solution in the general interests of Europe'. Before many weeks were past, negotiations had begun in London over an Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement, and supporters of the agreement necessarily found themselves stating the principles of such coexistence in language not so very different from that used by Lenin.[1] Already on the eve of the Supreme Council's statement, in a speech at the Guildhall on 8 November 1919, Lloyd George had declared his hope that, when the winter was over, 'an opportunity may offer itself for the Great Powers of the world to promote peace and concord in that great country'. This was carried forward in the speech from the Throne when Parliament was reopened on 10 February 1920, which stated that peace and prosperity in Europe *required* the restoration of peace and

1. For an account of the political discussions which this aroused, see Coates, *History of Anglo-Soviet Relations* (1943), Chapters I–III.

normal conditions in Eastern Europe and Russia. 'So long as these vast regions withhold their full contribution to the stock of commodities available for general consumption, the cost of living can hardly be reduced nor general prosperity restored to the world.' And Lloyd George as Prime Minister underlined this interdependence in his speech the same day, saying: 'Europe needs what Russia can give . . . The withdrawal of Russia from the supplying markets is contributing to high prices, high cost of living, and to scarcity and hunger.'

He made the same point when defending the Trade Agreement after it had been signed, in a debate on 22 March 1921: 'It is a small world, and nations are very dependent on each other. We are dependent on Russia, and Russia is dependent on us. It was done not only in the interests of Russia but of everybody all round.'

The Trade Agreement implied a form of recognition of the Soviet Government: although political differences still prevented full diplomatic relations with the Western countries being established until the beginning of 1924. Great Britain agreed to exchange Ambassadors only in 1929; the United States established diplomatic relations in 1933, and Czechoslovakia in 1934. Little by little, however, influential voices began to be raised in the countries of private enterprise in favour of peaceable co-operation with the U.S.S.R., on the basis of recognition that its economic and social system had come to stay.

Thus trade treaties with the Soviet Union were signed in August 1924, by the first British Labour Government, as mentioned earlier, which would have settled a number of disputed financial questions and made possible a rapid expansion of Anglo-Soviet trade had they been ratified by the Conservative Government which took office a few months later. In 1925 the point of view of the overwhelming majority

in the Labour movement was stated by the official delegation of the British T.U.C. General Council which had visited Russia in the previous November and December: 'There can be no peace and progress in European civilization until the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics is admitted on a basis of general agreement to a free and friendly footing in the community of peoples.'

During the next ten years relations with the U.S.S.R. became one of the favourite footballs of home politics in a number of countries, and a clearer picture began to emerge only after Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933.

When the Nazi régime began to show signs of menacing not only the U.S.S.R. but other States farther west which had thought themselves to be immune from peril because of the anti-Soviet propaganda in which Hitler had up till then indulged, the necessity of co-operation with the U.S.S.R., if possible, became clearer in quarters which might have been regarded as permanently opposed to it. In March 1935, Lord Privy Seal Eden went to Moscow to discuss a system of collective security in Europe. The communiqué issued after his talks said that 'there is at present no conflict of interest between the two Governments on any of the main issues of international policy, and this fact provides a firm foundation for the development of fruitful collaboration between them in the cause of peace'. Mr. A. J. Cummings, in the *News Chronicle* (20 April 1935), called this event an 'unexampled movement towards rapprochement between Bourgeois and Bolshevik States'.

Mr C. R. Attlee, M.P., as leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party, returned to the subject at a dinner in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the U.S.S.R., which had been organized by the London Trades Council and the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee (24 November 1937):

'There are many people who still profess a fear of the U.S.S.R., but that fear is not because they think that there is an aggressive State that is out to conquer. It is not really a fear that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is what they call a Godless State, because those same people are very happy to make friends with States that persecute religion. The real fear of Soviet Russia is a fear lest you should have a great success in this respect: that you should have a State going forward based on a new principle, based on the principle of social justice. That is the really alarming thing to reactionaries all over the world.

'They used to talk for quite a number of years of the U.S.S.R. being a terrible failure. Now they talk about it being a great success. That success I think causes a good deal of ill-will towards the U.S.S.R. That is really the wonderful thing for all of us looking to the future: the successful maintenance over so wide a part of the world's surface of a State which out of chaos is building a new society – a new society on the basis of social justice.'

Mr Attlee, in paying this tribute to the Soviet Union, was anxious to stress the international significance of the social justice which it practised. He said: 'While we stand for no exclusive alliances, we believe in the union of the free peoples, combining together not merely as political allies but also on the economic field, to develop the resources of the world and to show to the rest of the world the better way of co-operation and world brotherhood.' He gave the toast of 'The Soviet Union and World Peace'.

However, the hostility of which Mr Attlee spoke so penetratingly continued to exist. Its reflexion is to be found in numerous political and diplomatic memoirs of the time.

It was of this period that Mr Eden subsequently spoke on Red Army Day (23 February 1943) at the highest pitch of the war when he said at the Albert Hall: 'I must utter a

word of warning. Where Hitler's generalship has failed the wiles of Goebbels are now in play. Every effort has been made, and will be made, to foster suspicion and to encourage dissension between the Allies. All the old paraphernalia is out again. A part in this puppet show is played by the bogy of Bolshevism. Fortunately we do not find it hard to recognize this highly coloured figure. He is an old friend, a survival from the earliest days of the Nazi régime. A good deal of the sawdust has run out of him, and he does not answer very convincingly to the manipulation of Goebbels, but still it is as well to recall his record.' Reminding his listeners that this bogy had been used 'to frighten Europe' while Hitler conquered country after country, Mr Eden spoke of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Alliance which had been signed the previous May, in which the two countries 'agreed on the broad principles which shall underlie our collaboration in peace'. Mr Eden called it 'an historic turning-point in the relations between our two countries'.

Indeed, a new note, envisaging the possibilities of permanent good relations and peaceful coexistence of the U.S.S.R. with capitalist States, had begun to be heard very soon after the Soviet Union was attacked in June 1941. Thus, on 21 November 1941, Mr Eden said:

'I am fully convinced of the fundamental truth that on the main issue of international policy there is no reason for a conflict of interest between the Soviet Union and Great Britain. I felt that proposition to be true in 1935. It has certainly proved to be true in fact in 1941, and it will be proved true in the future.'

This spirit was manifest in the Anglo-Soviet Treaty signed on 26 May the following year. It pledged the two Powers 'to work together in close and friendly collaboration after the re-establishment of peace for the organization of security and economic prosperity in Europe' (Article V). In the next

Article the two parties agreed 'to render one another all possible economic assistance after the war'. Finally, in Article VII, 'each High Contracting Party undertakes not to conclude any alliance and not to take part in any coalition directed against the other High Contracting Party'. Thus the Treaty was the first diplomatic instrument for putting into effect the principles of peaceful coexistence between the two States. This was stressed by Mr Eden in reporting on the Treaty to the House of Commons (11 June 1942). 'Without the closest understanding between Great Britain and the Soviet Union there can be no security and stability in Europe either for ourselves or for any of our Allies', he said.

The Times, in an editorial on the anniversary of Hitler's attack on the U.S.S.R. (22 June 1942) wrote: 'The structure of European peace must be truly international, and must be founded on the freedom and co-operation of the peoples of Europe. But Great Britain and Russia will remain the essential pillars on which the whole framework rests. So long as they are intact and erect, the structure of peace will stand unshaken. If they fall asunder, nothing else will avail.'

Peaceful coexistence and co-operation between Britain and the U.S.S.R. as the essential support for peace and co-operation throughout the world – a truly striking proposition, coming from such a quarter. Much else of the same kind was said during the war years. And even as late as 3 June 1945, when the first majority Labour Government had taken office, Sir Stafford Cripps was saying: 'Any suspicions on either side, any lack of understanding, will tend to drive both Russia and our country to resort to private schemes of security which will bring us into an inevitable clash of interests. If once we allow ourselves to be drawn into the position of rival spheres of interest, one in the West and another in the East, we are risking a century of antagonism and struggle.'

But by this time the first steps were being taken towards the cold war, and the question of peaceful coexistence was soon pushed on one side. Mutual name-calling began. Mr John Lawrence (war-time Press Attaché at the British Embassy in Moscow) spoke on the subject as follows at the Liberal Summer School in August 1946: 'During the war, the Soviet press stopped criticizing the political systems of Allied countries and, in particular, there was a truce to attacks on the British Empire. In the autumn of 1944, when civil war broke out in Greece, there was for several months no attack on British policy there, in spite of heart-searchings by some party members. It was only when our press began to criticize Russian goings-on in Rumania and Bulgaria that the Soviet press began to attack British policy in Greece. Since then the slanging match has gone from bad to worse.'

Later we can look at the reasons put forward on both sides for this change, which had the most profound effect on world affairs. A new period of 'warlike coexistence' had opened, and was fated to last for a number of years. Yet at last here, too, there came a point at which sheer necessity began to dictate an alternative policy.

On 12 January 1954 the American Secretary of State in a public speech declared that 'the way to deter aggression is for the free community to be willing and able to respond vigorously at places and with means of its own choosing'; and that the President and the National Security Council had made a 'basic decision' in this sense. The following day the President endorsed this policy, which in fact meant that atomic weapons could be used without reference either to Congress or to America's allies, and that it would be for the small body of military advisers around President Eisenhower to decide to what they were 'retaliating'. The world-wide anxiety which this caused was strengthened when the President at his press conference on 10 March 1954 said that

he could see no useful purpose at present in talking about a Big Four meeting; and when this was followed up by the announcement on 18 March that at the beginning of the month a hydrogen bomb had been dropped in the Pacific which was six hundred times more powerful than that used at Hiroshima. On 29 March Mr Dulles carried the matter still further. He demanded united action involving 'serious risks' if Communism made any progress in South-east Asia 'by whatever means', i.e. even if the peoples should themselves decide in favour of the system. And in a reference to the forthcoming conference on Far Eastern questions, he said that the Chinese People's Government 'gets no diplomatic recognition from us by the fact of its presence at Geneva'. This speech meant that Mr Dulles was declaring in advance that peaceful coexistence, short of the whole world accepting the dictates of the United States as to what form of government it preferred, was out of the question.

So great was the alarm that the Labour Party in Parliament moved in the House of Commons on 5 April 1954 a resolution asking that the British Government should take the initiative of bringing about a meeting of the heads of the United States, Soviet, and British Governments to consider reduction and control of armaments and 'positive policies and means for removing from all peoples of the world the fear which now oppresses them, and for the strengthening of collective peace through the United Nations Organization'. This resolution (the first of its kind ever proposed by the Parliamentary Labour Party) was adopted unanimously by the House of Commons.

A revulsion of feeling began to show itself in a number of ways almost immediately. In the first place it was soon revealed that at Geneva practical co-operation between Britain and the U.S.S.R. was quite possible. In the meantime Mr Churchill made a speech at a Primrose League meeting in

London on 30th April which, in its evident desire to present an alternative to Mr Dulles' scheme of things, necessarily had to begin a return to the principles of peaceful coexistence. He said: 'We should establish relations with Russia which, in spite of all distractions, perils, and contradictions, will convince the Russian people and the Soviet Government that we wish them peace and happiness, and ever-increasing prosperity and enrichment of life in their own mighty land. We must convince them that we long to see them play a proud and splendid part in the guidance of the human race.' The Soviet Union welcomed this statement, in a TASS communiqué of 8 May 1954. 'Leading Soviet circles', it said, 'were convinced that improved British–Soviet relations and the development of co-operation between the two countries would benefit all. The need to extend the co-operation and mutual economic relations among States, even if they belong to different social systems, is being recognized and supported by a constantly growing number of statesmen.'

More and more specifically now the return to recognition that peaceful coexistence was possible began to appear in the speeches of Western statesmen. On 23 June, in a report on the progress of the Geneva Conference, Mr Eden said that improved relations with China were 'a real contribution to peaceful coexistence, which is still our aim and object with every country'. The Berlin and Geneva Conferences, by establishing closer relations between the Powers and reducing international tension, were making it possible to hope that 'a measure of tolerable coexistence' could be got. Five days later Mr Churchill returned to the subject, in a press conference at Washington after he and Mr Eden had had talks with the American leaders about the situation at Geneva and in the Far East. He was of the opinion, he said, 'that we ought to have a real good try at peaceful coexistence, though anyone can see it doesn't solve all problems'.

After an almost affectionate reference to the Russian workers, he advocated a development of trade and cultural contacts with the Soviet Union, while suggesting that there ought to be 'an examination of Russia's national interests', and not merely criticism of her policy. Two days later President Eisenhower, while showing great reluctance to commit himself and complaining of an 'aggressive attitude on the other side', for the first time admitted that 'we have got to find ways of living together', and even agreed that peaceful coexistence was 'the hope of the world'.

For this he was complimented by Mr Churchill in a speech in the House of Commons on 12 July: 'What a vast ideological gulf there is' [he said] 'between the idea of peaceful coexistence vigilantly safeguarded and the mode of forcibly extirpating the Communist fallacy. It is indeed a gulf. This statement is a recognition of the appalling character which war has now assumed, and that its final consequences go even beyond the difficulties and dangers of dwelling side by side with Communist States.' He hoped that the 'widespread acceptance of this policy' might in time lead 'to the problems which divide the world being solved, or solving themselves, peacefully'.

On 20 July the signature of a series of agreements at Geneva for a settlement of the conflict in Indo-China raised the general hopes of peaceful coexistence still further. By 9 August *The Times* was writing in its leading article of 'the great search for coexistence between the Leviathans of East and West, of which the Berlin and Geneva meetings were only stages'. Once more, as this editorial shows, the prospect of peaceful settlements and co-operation was taking the place of dismal foreshadowings of ultimatums, instant and massive 'retaliation', the alternatives of complete surrender of one side or another, or else the total destruction of world civilization. It was characteristic of the new mood that on

11 August the Speaker and the Lord Chancellor announced their acceptance of an invitation from the chairmen of the two Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to send a Parliamentary delegation from Britain.

Before they left, a British Labour Party delegation had made an important visit to the Soviet Union and to China. Of the many statements made by the Labour Party leaders who took part in the visit, only a few – which are typical, however – can be reproduced here. Mr Morgan Phillips, the Secretary of the British Labour Party, for example, underlined that in their talks with the Soviet Premier they 'returned again and again to the problem of achieving a basis for peaceful coexistence', and that this 'was the underlying theme of our exchanges throughout'. In 1946, he recalled, the Labour Party delegation in talks with Stalin had gained the impression 'that notwithstanding ideological and other differences it might be possible for the Communist and non-Communist worlds to live peacefully and prosperously side by side'. After all the adverse events of subsequent years, 'my recent stay in Moscow, brief though it was, has convinced me that there are grounds for a renewal of optimism'.

In China the delegates formed that impression, according to their statements, even more definitely. At Melbourne on 12 September Mr Attlee paid tribute to the honesty and efficiency of the Chinese Government, and added: 'I believe that coexistence is possible: to think otherwise is to anticipate the destruction of civilization in a third world war infinitely more terrible than its predecessors.' At a press conference at Wellington, New Zealand, on 15 September Mr Attlee said he 'believed that the Communist Powers were prepared to meet the West to find a common basis for peaceful coexistence. ... A common meeting ground between East and West was possible.'

In 1954 there was a series of displays in Britain of Soviet

culture and sport without any parallel in history – not excluding the remarkable years before the first world war when the Russian ballet and opera visited London. The Beryozka State Ensemble of women dancers was followed by the Obraztsov State Puppet Theatre, and towards the end of the year by a number of brilliant artists from the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and elsewhere. These were met most warmly, and with a keen appreciation of their art, by ordinary British people; so were the Soviet oarsmen who won prizes at Henley, an outstanding team of chess players, the large company of Soviet athletes who competed with some of the best British athletes in London and Manchester, and the 'Spartak' football team in November. At a reception to the athletes on 15 October, the Labour Party chairman of the London County Council recalled 'the years during which our people stood together' and went on: 'Now in times of peace let us create a situation in which the only battles of the future will be those of sport.' British artists were represented in the U.S.S.R. by a group of musicians who received an enthusiastic welcome everywhere, and British sport by the Arsenal football team.

By this time some 150 British business-men had visited Moscow since the beginning of the year, and had come back with large orders, or with offers only held up by political difficulties; and delegations of the Federation of British Industries and the National Union of Manufacturers were leaving on the same quest for Peking.

It was clear, too, that the voice of support for peaceful co-operation and coexistence between the two worlds was finding a sympathetic audience. But it would have been a dangerous and costly error to imagine that the most stubborn resistance was not yet being met.

One of the examples of this was a characteristic message from Moscow to the *Manchester Guardian* on the Labour

Party delegation (13 August 1954), which did not conceal that it presented the 'analysis' of 'Western embassies', narrowed down in the course of the message to 'American opinion in Moscow'. The hospitality shown to the delegates was an attempt, said the message, 'to create a breach between the Labour and Conservative Parties' and to 'soft-soap British opinion at the expense of Anglo-American relations'. The message warned British opinion that 'it would be most unwise to take much heart in the talks', and at the same time suggested that the delegation itself might possibly have been 'fooled'.

But more important people than special correspondents were voicing hostility, during the months after April 1954, to any serious discussion of peaceful coexistence.

Thus on 6 June 1954 Senator Bridges (temporarily, as senior Republican, President of the Senate) said in a television programme that the atom bomb should have been used in Korea, and ought to be used against China 'to save American lives'. On 6 July the Republican leader, Senator Knowland, demanded that the United States should give notice to the United Nations 'that there is clearly a choice between Communist China and the United States', i.e. that the latter would leave the United Nations if China were admitted.[1] This was an echo of the decision of the United States Government which had been revealed three months before, in the evidence of an assistant Minister at the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, that 'the best way to hasten the "disintegration" of the Communist régime in China was to "maintain pressure" against it. We shall oppose any measures calculated to ameliorate the consequences which they have brought on themselves' (*Manchester Guardian*, 15 April 1954). That is to say, the United States Government in April was looking forward to a per-

1. *The Times* Washington Correspondent, 7 July 1954.

manent 'warlike coexistence' with the Chinese People's Republic.

Again, there was published in August a series of articles by General Mark Clark, formerly American High Commissioner for Austria, then Deputy Secretary of State, later United Nations Commander in the Far East and now in charge of an official inquiry into the United States intelligence machinery (*Daily Telegraph*, 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11 August 1954). In these articles General Clark denounced in the most violent language not only the Soviet Government but the Russian people, saying that 'honesty was not part of their national character', and that it was necessary 'to resign ourselves to an eventual show-down with the Russians'. True, these remarks were reproduced from a statement made in 1947, but he underlined that by 1949 he already 'felt vindicated'. Hoping for peace, he also spoke of 'the next time we are called to war against Communism'. On the day before publication of his final article, the General informed the Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee that he favoured breaking off American diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. and reorganizing the United Nations, by getting rid of the Communist members, 'against the Soviet Union'.

The day before this, a Congressional Committee which had gone to Europe for its hearings on the question of 'Communist aggression' urged the ending of all trade and diplomatic relations with 'Communist Governments', and explicitly proposed the rejection of the policy of peaceful coexistence because it would 'lull the West into impotence while the Communists prepare for a universal war'. On the same day an article by William C. Bullitt, former U.S. Ambassador in Moscow and Paris, appeared in the magazine *Look*, advocating that the United States should either destroy the places in the U.S.S.R. at which hydrogen bombs were being produced or else swing the world balance of

power so that Russia would not dare to use these weapons. This could be done by liberating the Chinese mainland from the Communists, and this in turn meant allowing the U.S. Navy to blockade the Chinese coast and the U.S. Air Force to bomb appropriate targets. The pronouncements by General Clark and by the Congress Committee produced a repudiation of preventive war by President Eisenhower as 'completely unthinkable'. This was repeated by the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, General Twining, on 21 August 1954. But in his speech, delivered at Omaha, he referred to the Soviet Union throughout as 'the Communist enemy', as did an official of the State Department, Robert Murphy, who sneered at the possibility of peaceful coexistence being achieved through the 'spiking' of atomic weapons, i.e. through agreed disarmament (*Manchester Guardian*, 21 August 1954).

Where this kind of talk leads was shown in the report of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labour to their annual convention at Los Angeles on 20 September 1954. It referred to the Geneva Conference – generally welcomed in Great Britain and Western Europe – as 'a major Munich-like disaster'. It insisted that trade with countries 'in the Soviet orbit' should be cut off, that China must be kept out of the United Nations, and that for the time being there should be no talk of 'peace through negotiations'. The Federation's President, Mr Meany, denounced the Labour Party delegation to the U.S.S.R. and China, and expressed the impression that they did not 'represent the feelings of the British people'. The only way to peace for the United States was to reject 'Communist suggestions for coexistence and neutralism' (*Daily Telegraph*, 21 September 1954).

Two small examples, out of many, of the practical consequences of such talk: a group of editors of American

student newspapers were allowed to visit the U.S.S.R. in 1953, and so were a body of undergraduates from various Universities. Each extended return invitations to Soviet students. But when, in due course, Soviet student editors and a student delegation to the U.S.A. applied for visas, they were unsuccessful.

Hostile voices in the United States had their echo in Great Britain. Here, too, there were indefatigable preachers of endless cold war, an unending armaments race, and contempt for talk of peaceful coexistence. Russia and her satellites were seeking as vigorously as ever to conquer the world, the Minister of Defence at that time, Lord Alexander, informed his audience at Vancouver on 2 August. But indefinite continuation of cold war could be expected; and the disappearance of Western Christian civilization might happen if this cold war were not 'met'. Lord Alexander did not indicate how it was to be met, apart from more weapons, but nothing in his speech suggested that negotiations for peaceful coexistence might be the means (*The Times*, 3 August 1954).

Nearer home, in the Parliamentary debate on 23 June, Mr J. B. Eden (Bournemouth West) had maintained the political traditions of that warlike resort by saying he was convinced that the Communist Powers had an 'over-all, carefully premeditated plan' for a series of coups, and that the way to meet this was 'global defensive organization' of the non-Communist States. Although the Foreign Secretary was at pains to repudiate any responsibility for his nephew's views, and, as we have seen, himself suggested there was a possibility of peace through understanding, the fact remains that the speech was cordially applauded by a number of Conservative M.P.s.

One untiring critic of the idea of peaceful coexistence is the *Economist*. The only difficulty in this case is one of

selection from abundance. On 28 August 1954, for example, the journal strongly criticized Mr Churchill. It wrote: 'The consolidation of the Atlantic Alliance began to waver from the moment, in May 1953, when the Prime Minister first trod the path that has led to "peaceful coexistence".' Nor is it only Mr Churchill who is at fault. On 9 October it found that in the United Nations Assembly 'wishful thinking about a general relaxation is sadly prevalent'. On 16 October it returned to Mr Churchill, who at the Conservative Party Conference at Blackpool had expressed a new hope that 'peaceful coexistence with the Russian nation' was possible. A great deal of water must flow under the bridges 'before there can be any serious hope of negotiating a lasting relaxation in the cold war', the *Economist* instructed him.

At the beginning of 1955, the *Manchester Guardian* (3 January) was still dismissing the idea of peaceful coexistence, 'with all its sham protestations of good will', as a mere 'Communist line'—oblivious of (or indifferent to) the explicit support it had had from Conservative politicians in this country and in the U.S.A. And a few days before Mr Dulles, American Secretary of State, had stated to the Press at Washington that the Indo-Chinese armistice had been 'one of the major Western setbacks in 1954' (*Daily Telegraph*, 1 January 1955).

Much else of this kind could be quoted. The important thing about these contrary opinions, however, is not who voices them, but on what doubts and hesitations in the minds of the people they seek to play.

Part Two: Doubts

Yes, the principles are all right. Sabre-rattling or bomb-swinging are not the way to peace. We would like to see Churchill, Malenkov, and Eisenhower get together. But is practice abreast of theory? Don't the actions of the Russians and the Chinese belie their words? This is the kind of feeling that many people express who are already impatient of the long-drawn-out tension in international affairs and the perpetual slanging-match between East and West. They have doubts, and the doubts have been left behind by the slanging match itself – a turbid, murky sediment of what during the war was called 'anti-Soviet folk-lore'. At that time many people, in public as well as private life, vowed that they would never be taken in again. We have already seen how Mr Eden, for example, reminded a great audience in 1943 of the use made of the anti-Bolshevik bogy by the enemies of world peace. But memories are short, and the old concert began again before even the last shots were fired at Berlin. And many people now ask: 'Isn't it the Russians' own fault? Is peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union and People's China possible?'

Let us look more closely at some of these doubts – always remembering that in the U.S.S.R., China, and the European People's Democracies the same doubts also arise about Britain and America.

CHAPTER FIVE

'The Russians believe that Communism is inevitable'

THIS was the argument put forward in a recent correspondence about peaceful coexistence in the columns of the *Economist* (7–28 August 1954). The Russians were even charged with believing that Communism is superior to capitalism.

But it is not only the Russians who believe Communism

is inevitable. The Socialist movement in all countries has always believed it inevitable. It was first proclaimed by the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 and repeated subsequently in innumerable articles, pamphlets, and manifestoes, in all countries where there was a Labour movement, that Socialism was inevitable; and all Socialists – long before the Soviet Union appeared to trouble the capitalist world – have always believed (if they concerned themselves with theory) that ultimately Socialism must develop into Communism. Marx devoted considerable space to this idea in his world-famous *Criticism of the Gotha Programme* (1875).

William Morris wrote in 1885 (*The Hopes of Civilization*): 'Pure Communism is the logical deduction from the imperfect form of the new society, which is generally differentiated from it as Socialism.' In 1888 (*True and False Society*) he said that Communism was 'simply the necessary development' of Socialism, which implied 'a transition period during which people would be getting rid of the habits of mind bred by the long ages of tyranny and commercial competition, and be learning that it is to the interest of each that all should thrive'. In 1893 he wrote: 'Communism is in fact the completion of Socialism' (*Communism* – published, incidentally, by the Fabian Society). In the same year Robert Blatchford, in his *Merrie England*, explained to hundreds of thousands of readers: 'For convenience sake, Socialism is generally divided into two kinds. These are called – 1. Practical Socialism. 2. Ideal Socialism. Really they are only part of one whole; Practical Socialism being a kind of preliminary step towards Ideal Socialism, so that we might with more reason call them Elementary and Advanced Socialism.' And he proceeded to give a description of 'Elementary Socialism' as he saw it, which was as like as two peas to the economic and social system now prevailing in the U.S.S.R. Then he gave a description of 'Advanced Socialism', which

closely resembled Lenin's description of Communist society in the fifth chapter of his *The State and Revolution* (1917).

But William Morris was no Russian: he was the greatest Englishman of the nineteenth century. Blatchford was no Muscovite, and always thought of himself as a 'true-born Englishman'.

Not only, however, have there for the last century been people in all countries who say that Socialism and Communism are inevitable; in most countries there still are very large numbers of people, especially in the ruling parties of these countries, who say that capitalism and private property in the means of creating wealth are inevitable. They say that the instinct to private property is rooted in the nature of man, and that you can't change human nature. These views were laid at the foundation of the theory of modern society put forward in the three great revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – by John Locke in his second *Treatise of Civil Government* (1690) for the English Revolution, by the Declaration of Independence (1776) for the United States, and by the Declaration of the Rights of Man (1789) for the French Revolution.

But these views, on one side and the other, are views as to man's future which only the future can decide. They provide no adequate reason why two groups of States whose people hold such views cannot maintain peaceful relations with each other. The real question is, do the Russians believe that it is their job to *force* other nations to adopt Socialism or Communism? No one has ever been able to bring a single reliable piece of evidence, either in precept or in practice, to justify such an assertion (although wars *have* been waged to try to overthrow Socialism in the U.S.S.R.). Even President Eisenhower, in his *Message on the State of the Union* on 6 January 1955, spoke of 'the proclaimed intentions of the Communist leaders to communise the world' –

in a context which showed he was referring to the Soviet leaders; but failed to bring any evidence.

The remark of Engels on 'Socialism by force' has already been mentioned. He was, in fact, only restating a much earlier principle, for which his great colleague Marx had been responsible in drafting the *Provisional Rules* of the Working Men's International Association in 1864: 'The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves' – an idea embodied in the Socialist songs of many countries in after years, beginning with *The International* itself. Both Marx and Engels are often quoted in this connexion for the instruction of the Soviet people.

But the Soviet leaders have never hesitated to do the same. In the discussions as to whether Soviet Russia could sign peace with imperialist Germany, Lenin repudiated the idea that revolution in other countries could be secured by 'prodding', and that this required war, as 'completely at variance with Marxism' (1 March 1918). In a speech which was a kind of programme for the period of peaceful co-existence with capitalist States and of uninterrupted transformation of society in Russia, for which the Bolsheviks were hoping in the spring of 1918, Lenin said: 'The Russian who took it into his head, taking Russian strength as his justification, to raise the question of overthrowing international imperialism would be a man who had gone mad' (29 April 1918). In a short breathing-space of the Civil War less than a year later, when revolution sweeping Central Europe might have been expected to turn men's heads in Russia, the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party heard a report by Lenin on its new draft programme, mentioned earlier. Replying to Bukharin and others who argued that it was possible to preach self-determination only for the working-class, i.e. that Russia could impose workers' rule

in countries ruled by capitalism, Lenin said caustically: 'No decree has yet been issued that all countries must live according to the Bolshevik revolutionary calendar, and if it were issued it wouldn't be carried out. . . . It's not by means of violence that Communism is implanted' (19 March 1919). When the Civil War had come to an end, and Lenin at the Moscow Provincial Party Conference was answering suggestions abroad that business relations with capitalist States were a sign that Communism was collapsing, he retorted: 'To put this forward as a proof would be possible if we had promised or aspired to refashion the whole world with the forces of Russia alone. But we never reached such a degree of insanity' (21 November 1920).

These observations, quoted again and again in Soviet literature on the foreign relations of the U.S.S.R., might suffice. But there are equally important statements by Lenin's successors at the head of the Soviet Government. One is the answer of Stalin to the American journalist Roy Howard, who was discussing this very point with him (1 March 1936): 'We Marxists believe that a revolution will also take place in other countries. But it will take place only when the revolutionaries in those countries think it possible or necessary. The export of revolution is nonsense. Every country will make its own revolution if it wants to, and if it does not want to there will be no revolution.' These words were quoted by Malenkov sixteen years later again, in his speech – in Stalin's presence – to the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (5 October 1952), with the comment: 'We are confident that, in peaceful emulation with capitalism, the Socialist system of economy will year by year more and more strikingly demonstrate its superiority over the capitalist system of economy. But we have not the least intention of forcing our ideology, or our economic system, upon anybody.'

Nowhere and at no time has anyone been able to bring forward any statements of the tenets or beliefs of the Soviet leaders to contradict this assertion.

But someone may say: What about the 'Cominform'?

The Information Bureau of Communist Parties is not an International, i.e. it is not a body claiming to lay down principles for the parties composing it, or to control their activities. It is a body formed by a relatively small number of Communist Parties for the exchange of experiences. It was formed in October 1947, after events in France and Italy had revealed that a drive was in progress, not only of a military kind against alleged aggression by the U.S.S.R., but also of a political kind against Communist Parties taking part in the governments of their countries, if the country concerned wanted to get American dollars. The British and the majority of other Communist Parties are not even members of this body. Not a single example has ever been produced where the 'Cominform' has interfered in, dictated to, or financed its affiliated parties – much less those not affiliated.

But in return it may be asked, why should the Social-Democratic parties be entitled to form their international organization and not the Communist Parties? Is it because some of the Communist Parties hold the reins of power in their respective countries? But so do a number of Social-Democratic Parties, or did at different periods, like the British Labour Party (from 1945 to 1951), the Belgian and Dutch Socialist Parties, and those in Scandinavia.

In a recent newspaper article (*Observer*, 24 October 1954), Mr Christopher Mayhew, formerly Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the post-war Labour Government, attempted to answer these obvious points which had been put to him by Mr Malenkov, the Soviet Premier. He said that the Socialist International (i) 'is a much looser and less disciplined body; (ii) it 'does not maintain ties, openly

or secretly, with groups of people in Russia hostile to the régime'. Neither of these arguments was very convincing to those who know both organizations. The Socialist International elects two executive bodies – a Council and a smaller Bureau – to guide and advise its affiliated sections: the 'Cominform' does not. The Socialist International is constantly sending delegations for this purpose; for example, the delegation headed by Mr Attlee to the conference of Asian Socialist Parties (Rangoon, January 1953). The Information Bureau does nothing of the kind. As for 'ties', it is unfortunate for Mr Mayhew that, whereas the 'Cominform' has no British or American groups either affiliated to it or keeping up connexions with it, the Labour Party Executive's annual report to the Scarborough Conference in September 1954 (as in previous years) stated (pp. 73–4) that the Socialist International has *affiliated* to it Social-Democratic Parties 'in exile' from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland – parties which constantly boast of their activities in their former countries 'hostile to the régime', as do other affiliated parties claiming to be Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian. The Socialist International, further *recognizes* (which we learn on p. 23 means 'maintains contact with') bodies of Russian and Georgian Mensheviks and Armenian Dashnaks, who have boasted of their hostile contacts in the U.S.S.R. for over thirty years.

It is of course fashionable to attribute strikes, insurrections, civil wars, and even social reforms in countries far removed from the U.S.S.R. – like Great Britain, Malaya, Guatemala, and British Guiana respectively – to some kind of 'Russian influence', operating in no form perceptible to the most hawk-eyed journalist or State Department propagandist. But one cannot really take seriously the anguished roars of certain trade-union leaders about 'Communist machinations' every time their rank and file take unofficial

action, notably in this country. Unofficial action is an old tradition, here and elsewhere. Forty or fifty years ago there was even more of such action than to-day, although there were no Communists, no 'Cominform', and no Soviet Union. Readers interested in this subject might find it useful to refer to the *Labour Monthly* for June 1950, which reprinted an article by Fred Knee, a famous member of the London Society of Compositors and Secretary of the London Trades Council from 1913 to 1915. The article was reprinted from the old *Social-Democrat* (15 November 1910) – and in those days the term 'Social-Democrat' meant a revolutionary Marxist and had not been appropriated for very different uses by the Labour Party leaders. In this article Fred Knee trenchantly defended unofficial action as essential in the armoury of the British working-class, and derided the arguments of certain trade-union leaders that this was 'unconstitutional'. Yet no one, even his bitterest critics, ventured to accuse him of importing an alien doctrine, or acting as the channel of 'alien influences'. Unofficial strikes, like revolution, cannot be exported, and the Soviet leaders have always ridiculed the idea that they can.

In this, too, they have authoritative guidance in a document which also was innocent of Soviet authorship – the *Address on the Civil War in France*, issued by the International Working Men's Association on the proposal of Marx in May 1871: 'The police-tinged bourgeois mind naturally figures to itself the International Working Men's Association as acting in the manner of a secret conspiracy, its central body ordering, from time to time, explosions in different countries. Our Association is, in fact, nothing but the international bond between the most advanced workingmen in the various countries of the civilized world. Whenever, in whatever shape, and under whatever conditions the class struggle obtains any consistency, it is but natural that

members of our Association should stand in the foreground. The soil out of which it grows is modern society itself. It cannot be stamped out by any amount of carnage. To stamp it out, the governments would have to stamp out the despotism of capital over labour – the condition of their own parasitical existence.'

No association of the kind which Marx and his colleagues founded in 1864 now exists. Certainly the Russian Communists have no bond, secret or otherwise, with Communists in other countries except that of political sympathy. But the essential point remains. The Soviet Union and its Communists bear no responsibility for the troubles which capitalist classes have in other countries – except the responsibility of having come into existence in 1917 and having built a Socialist society with increasing success ever since.

Mr Mayhew, however, in the article quoted earlier, was not satisfied. He still wanted the Soviet Union to 'liquidate' its non-existent 'ties' with Communist Parties abroad; and when challenged by the Soviet Ministers to give examples of these 'ties' fell back upon somewhat far-fetched suggestions.

The first was that 'the parties themselves openly stated that they looked to the Soviet Union for leadership': but was unable to give a single piece of evidence. The Communists of all countries have often said that the Russian working-class was the first to put into practice Marx's advice to the proletariat (in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848) to 'raise itself to the position of ruling class', and then to 'sweep away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally'. Communists have often pointed to the Soviet Union as leading the fight for peace and economic co-operation. But nobody could bring forward any proof that British Communists, for instance, stated that they 'looked to the Soviet Union for leadership' of their party or its activities.

Next came the charge that 'subversive literature' printed in the U.S.S.R. – for example *New Times*, published in many languages – was 'giving a strong lead to local Communist parties all over the world'. Mr Mayhew did not explain how the review of foreign affairs referred to, published weeks later than the events its articles discussed, could give this 'strong lead': one can imagine what the effect on any political party in any country would be if it had to rely for its 'leads', and even for its everyday propaganda, on journalistic comments in another country under these circumstances. When Labour Party Conference delegates at Scarborough in September 1954 were buying hundreds of copies of the *Daily Worker* every morning, for example, it was news of events of the previous day, and the British Communists' comments thereon, they wanted – which no Moscow sorcerer could supply.

Then came the suggestion that another form of Soviet support for foreign Communists was 'the granting of special favours to Communists and Communist supporters'. Pressed for evidence, Mr Mayhew 'instanced the award of the Stalin Peace Prize to the Dean of Canterbury', and also 'conference, personal contacts, correspondence, broadcasts, the supply of propaganda films and literature, special favours and awards'.

These complaints can hardly be regarded as convincing. Apart from the fact that the Stalin Peace Prize is awarded, not by the Russians but by an international committee, who should get the Stalin Peace Prize except men and women distinguished in the campaign to preserve peace between the Socialist and capitalist countries, and to rally hundreds of millions of people for that purpose? All that critics of the Dean of Canterbury had to do, if they wanted to prevent his receiving a Stalin Peace Prize, was to show themselves even more anxious and energetic campaigners for peaceful

and friendly relations between countries with utterly opposed economic social and political systems than he did.

At what conferences did the Soviet Union give support to Communist parties where other parties, including the Labour Party to which Mr Mayhew belongs, would not have been welcome? Mr Mayhew did not tell the *Observer*. Why should 'personal contacts' between the Soviet Government and, say, Mr Attlee and Mr Morgan Phillips, or Mr Mayhew and Lord Coleraine, not be considered 'support' for them and their parties? Mr Mayhew did not explain. Nor did he state what correspondence and what broadcasts had ever been used by the Soviet Union for the support of foreign Communist parties.

Mr Mayhew apparently objected to films and literature depicting life in the Soviet Union differently from the way certain propaganda literature published in the U.S.A. and Great Britain depicts it. But how does it become support of foreign Communist parties if Soviet writers in their novels, and Soviet producers in their films, tell what they consider the truth about their country? Its enemies and detractors still retain freedom to misrepresent it if they can get them accepted by the book-buying and cinema-going public. Mr Mayhew calls all this a 'one-sided, somewhat eccentric interpretation of coexistence'. Can his conception be that the detractors of the Soviet Union should have freedom to run it down, while the Soviet Union, even within its own borders, should not be entitled to publish a different picture? Would that be *not* one-sided?

At no point was Mr Mayhew's logic more unrelated to facts than his complaint that the Soviet Minister of Culture was 'apparently quite happy that the cultural relations between our countries should be conducted by the Communist-controlled Anglo-Soviet Friendship Society'. He pointed out to a high official, he said, that the individuals

running this Society in Britain were 'unrepresentative and unpopular'; and that Anglo-Soviet friendship 'should surely be put on a firmer and more respectable basis'.

But who was stopping the frustrated Mr Mayhew, all these years, from developing Anglo-Soviet friendship in his own way? Who has ever prevented the British Government, for that matter, from continuing to develop Anglo-Soviet cultural relations as it did during the war, when a special division of the Ministry of Information existed for the purpose?

The answer is: no one, except Mr Mayhew and the British Government themselves. It was his government which wound up the useful Soviet Relations Division of the Ministry of Information – not the U.S.S.R.

Cultural relations between Britain and the Soviet Union have indeed been promoted since the war – not 'conducted', since only the writers, artists, sportsmen, scientists, and other cultural workers themselves could do that – mainly by the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R., a non-party and non-political organization existing since 1924, to which Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour Party members belong. This was not because of any monopoly or charter granted to the S.C.R. by the Soviet Union; it was because the British Government dropped any interest it had in the matter when the war ended. At any moment, had it wished, it could have established with the Soviet Union something 'firmer and more respectable'.

The same applies to the British Soviet Friendship Society, which from 1952 onwards, even before the tide of opinion in favour of resumed friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. began to rise so obviously, expanded its activities so as to extend cultural relations in fields directly accessible to the mass of the people – the invitation of Soviet artists during Friendship Month (November 1953), the invitation to the superb Beryozka Dance Ensemble in 1954, etc. If trade

unions and factories to-day, wanting to send delegations of the rank-and-file, elected by their fellow-workers, to inspect conditions in the U.S.S.R., naturally turn to the British Soviet Friendship Society for assistance, it is not because of any fancied prerogative granted to that organization (which includes many Labour Party supporters), but because of boycott by other organizations, including the Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

The real truth is, of course, that in the years since the war, Under-Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs (and of course very many others) have been less concerned for friendship with the U.S.S.R. than for the opposite. And in the absence of such 'respectable' support, those individuals who wanted it had to get along with their own poor wits, and work for friendship in voluntary organizations, even though unblessed with Under-Secretaries of State in their ranks. One might almost imagine that Mr Mayhew had in mind as desirable the type of organization which tried, with official inspiration, soon after June 1941, to conduct 'unofficial' relations with the U.S.S.R. without 'exaggerated enthusiasm' or, as its more frank supporters put it, 'without allowing the Communists to cash in'. The inept attempts in question died a natural death before very long, when the public discovered that the real purpose of its spokesmen was to air their anti-Soviet prejudices instead of promoting Anglo-Soviet friendship – a bizarre substitution which was even more unpopular with the British people in 1941 and 1942 than the British Soviet Friendship Society has been with Mr Mayhew in recent years. It is not the Soviet Union which seems to have 'eccentric ideas' on co-existence.

The conception that peaceful coexistence requires support by the Soviet Union for foreign Communist parties is a mare's nest.

CHAPTER SIX

The 'head-on clash'

THEN there is the widespread belief that in the opinion of the Russians a head-on clash between the Socialist and the capitalist countries is inevitable, and therefore that everything must be subordinated to getting ready for it.

The keyword in Stalin's formulation of peaceful coexistence was 'temporary', wrote the *Economist* (3 July 1954). When the Stalinists say 'peaceful coexistence', they mean 'war without shooting, in preparation for war with shooting and with hydrogen bombs', Professor H. Seton-Watson has revealed to the readers of the *Manchester Guardian* (20 August 1954). 'Probably the greatest obstacle in the path of peaceful coexistence is the Soviet belief in the inevitability of conflict between the Communist and the non-Communist worlds,' writes the American Democratic politician Adlai E. Stevenson (*The Times*, 16 October 1954).

On what evidence are these and similar statements based? Among the many hundreds of passages in the writings and speeches of Stalin and other Soviet leaders about relations with the non-Socialist countries which said the opposite, just three have been found which seem to lend colour to the catastrophic conclusions just quoted. Indeed, they are quoted so often that it is pretty clear very little else could be found by diligent research.

The first comes from Lenin's report to the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (18 March 1919). It was the very middle of the Civil War, but there was a tiny interlude in the fighting. Voices were already being raised to

the effect that the prodigious efforts in progress to expand the armed forces on strictly centralized lines were unnecessary, militaristic, and even dangerous, since they involved making use of officers of the old Tsarist army as specialists; guerrilla organization would be quite adequate for the Red Army. Lenin was opposing this idea. He reminded the Congress that, a year before, he had had to explain that 'without armed defence of the Socialist Republic we could not exist'. Now there was a new situation. 'We are living not only in a State, but also in a system of States, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with imperialist States for a long time is unthinkable. In the end either one or the other will conquer. But before this end comes, a number of the most terrible conflicts between the Soviet Republic and bourgeois States in inevitable.'

This most favoured quotation is often distorted by slipping in the word 'the' before the reference to bourgeois States, thus making it appear that Lenin was predicting wars with the *whole* bourgeois world. But there is no definite article in the Russian language. There is nothing in the Russian text to indicate that Lenin had in mind the *whole* bourgeois world. And we have seen on numerous occasions in the spring and summer of 1919, and again from 1920 onwards, that Lenin saw the unequal rate of development of capitalist countries as, on the contrary, making certain that there would always be a large number of them at any given moment more interested in peace than in war. Soviet diplomacy, then and thereafter, was explained by both Lenin and Stalin as based on precisely this idea. Shortly before Lenin spoke, the Soviet Government had made two daring offers of a peace settlement to the Allies, and through them to the Russian Whites holding sway in various territories of the former Russian Empire, also based on the same concep-

tion (the 'Prinkipo proposals' and the terms handed to William C. Bullitt).

And when Lenin spoke of existence side by side with bourgeois States being 'unthinkable', he meant precisely what he had said at a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet six days before: 'So long as the world movement of the proletariat has not brought victory, we shall have either to fight or to buy off these bandits with tribute, and we see nothing shameful in it.' That is, when the workers in other countries ended capitalism, the necessity would disappear. This idea reappears again and again in Lenin's remarks on foreign relations. Moreover, when Stalin quoted Lenin's observations at the 1919 Congress in his *Problems of Leninism* (1926), it was to show that, in Lenin's view, while Socialism could be built in Russia alone, she had no guarantee against attack from outside until the workers had been victorious in several imperialist countries.

Thus the sum total of what Lenin was saying at the most painful moment of Russia's miseries, under invasion from fourteen States, herself reduced to the size of sixteenth-century Muscovy, was that even if she won peace, she must beware of attacks from warlike and revengeful bourgeois States; and that this vigilance must continue so long as the workers of those countries had not replaced bourgeois States by Socialist States. All else is a mare's nest. Moreover, Lenin gave no definition of what period he understood by the phrase 'for a long time'; only experience could show that.

This experience was alluded to by Stalin, eight years later, at the Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (18 December 1925). He said that 'what we at one time regarded as a brief respite, after the war, has become a whole period of respite'. There had been established between the U.S.S.R. and the countries of the capitalist world 'a certain temporary equilibrium of forces', and this

in turn had determined a 'certain period of "peaceful coexistence" between the bourgeois world and the proletarian world'. In this situation Stalin attributed particular importance to a new factor which had not existed in previous years, but which he called 'decisive at the present time'. This was that, despite the fact that Socialism had not yet conquered in the other European countries, there were now 'workers' pilgrimages' to the U.S.S.R., fraternal inspection of the country and its activities by workers' delegations – many of them 'still convinced that the working-class cannot do without the bourgeoisie'.

What conclusion did he draw from this new situation? Was it that the time was ripe for launching some 'terrible conflict' with the bourgeois countries? Not at all. It was that the Soviet Union was getting additional protection against the 'interventionist machinations' of imperialism, that the working-class in the West was becoming convinced that the Soviet Union ought to be defended against capitalism, that 'war against our country becomes impossible' if the workers refused to fight against it. That is to say, Stalin was extending still further the prospect of respite from war; and though his estimate of the *inclinations* of capitalist countries might not be flattering to them, he had a more optimistic view of their probable action.

Stalin even spoke in this speech of coexistence having begun to develop into 'a sort of "collaboration" with the capitalist world'. Not surprisingly, therefore, he suggested that the equilibrium was 'temporary', but not in the sense that the Soviet must prepare to make war on the capitalist countries – as the *Economist* (3 July 1954) appeared to imply when quoting a small portion of this speech with the would-be portentous remark that 'temporary' was the 'key-word'. On the contrary. Stalin defined as the very first of the Communist Party's tasks in the sphere of Soviet foreign policy:

'To work in the direction of fighting against new wars, in the direction of preserving peace and ensuring so-called normal relations with the capitalist countries. The basis of our government's policy, its foreign policy, is the ideal of peace. The struggle for peace, the struggle against new wars, exposure of all the steps that are being taken to prepare a new war, exposure of those steps that cover up actual preparation of war with the flag of pacifism – such are our tasks.'

The third favourite quotation for amateur detectives of the hidden menace in Soviet foreign policy comes in Stalin's report to the next Party Congress, in December 1927. Here he drew attention to the revival of interventionist tendencies among the imperialists and of the policy of isolating the U.S.S.R. This was hardly surprising, in view of events in the preceding half-year – Britain's rupture of diplomatic relations the previous May; strained relations with France, which had refused to accept a new Soviet Ambassador; the assassination of the Soviet Minister to Poland at a railway-station in Warsaw; and a series of military and police raids on Soviet diplomatic offices in China. Stalin thought that there was every ground for asserting that the period of peaceful coexistence was receding into the past.

Nevertheless, there were a number of other capitalist countries which were reluctant 'to being involved in war with the U.S.S.R., preferring to establish economic intercourse with it'. A struggle was going on between these two tendencies, and it was possible to some extent for the U.S.S.R. 'to take these contradictions into account for the purpose of maintaining peace'. Stalin reminded his hearers: 'We must not forget what Lenin said about very much in our work of construction depending upon whether we succeed in postponing war with the capitalist world, which is inevitable, but which can be postponed either until the moment when the

proletarian revolution in Europe matures, or until the moment when the colonial revolutions have fully matured, or, lastly, until the moment when the capitalists fight among themselves over the division of the colonies.'

In spite of all that Stalin says in this speech about the increased contradictions of the capitalist countries and their differences over whether to attack the Soviet Union or not, the seekers after hidden meanings usually insist that the three words in the passage just quoted – 'which is inevitable' – are proof positive that the Soviet Union regards war with *all* capitalist countries as certain some time or another. Yet the whole of the rest of the passage makes it clear that, even at this time of increased peril to the U.S.S.R. Stalin was *not* anticipating war with the whole capitalist world, but at worst attacks by those capitalist States which were interested in war. He was indeed looking forward to a period when the most dangerous capitalist adversaries – the great Empires – would be immobilized by their internal problems, and that they would be immobilized, not for defence against a Soviet onslaught, but for attack against the Soviet Union. The latter's one concern was to get on with its work of construction of Socialist society. Barely six weeks before, at a joint session of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the Communist Party on 23 October 1927, Stalin had said: 'The aim of our foreign policy, if we have in mind our relations with bourgeois States, is the preservation of peace. . . . And this is important for us, since only in conditions of peace is it possible to push ahead with the building of Socialism in our country as speedily as we desire' (*Works*, Vol. X). The Soviet Union was content to leave revolutions in other countries (as we have already seen) to the workers of those countries. This was why, after the statement to the Congress just referred to, Stalin went on to make the assertion quoted in Chapter Three about main-

tenance of peaceful relations with the capitalist countries being an 'obligatory task', and about practice having 'fully confirmed' the assumption that 'the coexistence of two opposite systems is possible'.

The prophets of woe who seize on the three isolated passages mentioned above always refrain from quoting *these* words, just as they refrain from quoting the scores and scores of other statements by Lenin and Stalin which tell against them. Stalin's speech at the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (March 1939) has been mentioned earlier. But equally they prefer to forget that Molotov at the same Congress, on behalf of the Central Committee, linked the question of Socialist society in the U.S.S.R. going on to its later stage (Communist society) with the task of 'developing economic emulation between the U.S.S.R. and the decisive capitalist countries'. This emulation was not a threat, he said: 'Such peaceful emulation cannot bring injury to anyone.' Moreover, the Soviet Government continued to think collaboration with the bourgeois countries desirable. 'We have no intention of renouncing this in the future either, but will strive for the extension of this collaboration with our neighbours, and with all other States, as much as possible.' Collaboration and peaceful economic emulation with the countries of capitalism – these were the aims proclaimed by Molotov, and were greeted with loud cheers.

This speech, too, is never quoted by those who spread doubts about the ultimate aims and prospects of the U.S.S.R. – because it likewise exposes the idea that the Russians believe themselves foredoomed to war with the whole capitalist world.

CHAPTER SEVEN

'Out to conquer the world'

THERE is a third myth. 'The Russians are out to conquer the world. We demobilized after the war, they didn't. They wasted a fund of goodwill accumulated during the war. We wanted to live in peace with them, but they didn't.'

It is not necessary once again to go into the theory of the thing. Indeed, those who spread the myth usually contend that what is at fault is not so much Soviet theory as Soviet post-war practice. So let us look at the practice.

1. *Did the Soviet Union demobilize?*

When Mr Attlee was Prime Minister he said, on 26 January 1951: 'The nations of the British Commonwealth and the United States gladly demobilized the immense forces which had been raised at such sacrifice. . . . Soviet Russia kept in being a vast military machine, spread out over its neighbours' territories as well as its own.' He went on to say in the House of Commons (12 February 1951): 'Soviet Russia did not demobilize its forces at the end of the war' – when there were over twelve million men in the Soviet armed forces. This in itself was a somewhat incautious assertion, but there is more in it than that.

Is it really true that the United States and Great Britain 'gladly demobilized' after the war? Did the U.S.A. and Great Britain demobilize the atom bomb, which had already been dropped twice on Japanese cities? No, they went on developing it, and President Truman announced, on 27

November 1945, that the U.S.A. had increased its expenditure on this, and would go on doing so; although, so far as the United States and British Governments knew, the Soviet Government was not making atom bombs.

As late as 1949, Britain and the U.S.A. had between them 22 battleships and battle-cruisers, 115 aircraft carriers, 94 cruisers, and 449 destroyers. Did they scrap these or reduce their naval forces to the level of those possessed by the U.S.S.R. – 3 Russian battleships built before 1916, 1 ex-Italian and 1 Lend-Lease battleship, no aircraft carriers, 14 cruisers, and less than 50 destroyers (*Statesman's Year-Book*, 1950)? Emphatically they did not. Did the U.S.A. give up a single one of its scores of bases in foreign countries after the war? No, it went on adding to them.

Thus the 'glad' demobilization to which Mr Attlee referred had no bearing on those arms in which the British and United States Governments imagined that they had a cruising superiority to the Soviet Union. Those who knew international politics before 1914 will realize that obtuseness to what Anglo-American 'navalism' looks like in the eyes of other nations, did not begin with Mr Attlee. His claims really refer only to the alleged tardiness of the Soviet Union in demobilizing its manpower, compared with the other two States.

But what was the manpower of the Soviet Union in 1950 and 1951? Here an interesting and perhaps unique revision of estimates took place.

On 25 July 1950, Mr Shinwell, Minister of Defence, said that the Soviet Army consisted of 175 divisions, while the armed forces of the U.S.S.R. numbered 2·8 million men. On 26 January 1951, Mr Attlee, in his speech already quoted, repeated these precise figures. But then they suddenly began to grow like Sir John Falstaff's men in buckram in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. On 8 March 1951, Mr Strachey, then

Secretary for War, repeated the figure of 175 divisions, but said that the strength of the Soviet Army was 'about 4 million'. On 22 April 1951, Mr Shinwell stated that the Soviet army had 200 divisions. On 15 July the same year, Mr Woodrow Wyatt (Under-Secretary for War) stated that the Soviet Army had 215 divisions. On 27 July 1951, Mr Shinwell repeated the figure of 215 divisions, but now stated that the Soviet armed forces comprised 4,600,000 men, of which total 3·2 million men *and women* were in the army?

These statistics resemble those of the fat knight, in their incoherence no less than in their breathless rate of expansion. But the true reason for the sudden rise in the first half of 1951 can be seen if we compare the armed forces of the three Powers, as they stood in June 1950, with the respective populations and lengths of vulnerable frontier. It will then be seen that Great Britain with armed forces totalling 690,000, *excluding* colonial levies, for a population of 50 millions, had almost the same proportions of men under arms (13,800 per million) as the Soviet Union with an armed force then credited at 2,800,000 out of a population of 200 millions (14,000 per million) – while the United States, with 3,000,000 under arms out of a population of under 154 millions, had 19,500 per million. Again, out of a total Soviet frontier of 40,000 miles, some 24,000 miles are vulnerable to invasion by land or sea (excluding the common frontier with China and the Arctic seaboard). If all Britain's 4,800 miles of frontier be treated as vulnerable, the British armed forces in proportion to the frontier they needed to defend were larger than those of the Soviet Union. The comparison with the U.S.A. was even more striking. The American frontiers on the Atlantic and Pacific are protected by thousands of miles of sea on either side, the Canadian frontier is as difficult for an overseas army to get at, and the same applies to the frontier with Mexico. Thus with a frontier

almost invulnerable to a foreign enemy, the United States had, in June 1950, forces numerically exceeding those of the U.S.S.R., which had an enormous frontier to defend.

But in reality, the Soviet figures were not even those given by the Ministers at the beginning of their essays in political arithmetic. The Soviet Union had demobilized 23 age-groups by the end of 1945,[1] another 7 by the end of 1946,[2] 3 more in the course of 1947, and all the remaining senior age-groups at the beginning of 1948.[3]

The numerical strength of the total armed forces of the Soviet Union on 24 February 1951 (stated a Soviet Note on that date) was 'equal to the numerical strength of the armed forces of the U.S.S.R. before the outbreak of the second world war in 1939'. At that time they stood at 1,900,000 at the beginning of the year (League of Nations *Armaments Year-Book*, 1939–40, p. 348), with the 1937 class, due for demobilization in September 1939, retained with the colours – less the normal wastage. This left a maximum figure of 2,300,000. This, curiously enough, was the precise total which was blurted out by an American spokesman in Washington, on 17 February, *a week before the Soviet Note*, when Stalin's trenchant reply to Mr Attlee, in an interview with *Pravda*, was received by cable. The total forces under arms in the U.S.S.R., said the spokesman, were 'about the level of 1939'; and he gave exactly the figure just mentioned. It is also noteworthy that the Soviet Note put the numerical strength of the armed forces of the U.S.A., Britain and France at 'more than five million men', taken together,

1. *Sunday Times* Moscow Correspondent, 21 October 1945.
2. *The Times* Moscow Correspondent, 25 October 1946.
3. Tass statement in *Soviet News*, 17 March 1948. The bulk of the Soviet forces now consisted of two age-groups (1926 and 1927), it announced. An age-group, less the unfit and exempted, totalled 800,000 before the war (*Armaments Year Book*, 1939–40, p. 346).

which was 'more than twice as great as the numerical strength of the armed forces of the U.S.S.R. at present'. *Thus the proportion in favour of the Western Powers was even greater than that which the figures given in 1950 implied.*

The world had to wait another two years before another American admitted the truth. On 19 February 1953 Congressional leaders of both parties were called to the White House 'to receive a briefing on defence problems' from General Omar Bradley, chairman of the joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S.A., and Allen Dulles, chief of the Central Intelligence Agency. The Congress leaders were informed by these experts that the Soviet Union now had 'about 2,500,000 men under arms' (*The Times* and the *Daily Herald*, 20 February 1953).

No wonder Admiral Kirk, the American Ambassador in Moscow, told the *United States News and World Report* (15 December 1950) that he 'detects none of the tell-tale signs of war that experts watch for', no drive to 'restrict civilian consumption of critical materials', and no shifting of labour 'away from peace-time to war-time industries'. On the contrary, retail sales of consumer goods in the U.S.S.R. went up in 1949 by 20 per cent, in 1950 by 30 per cent, in 1951 by 15 per cent, in 1952 by 10 per cent, in 1953 by 21 per cent, and in the course of 1954 by another 18 per cent, compared with the corresponding period a year before. Thus retail sales in 1952 were double what they had been in 1948, and in 1954 were nearly treble. Nor was the basic reason for this a mystery. Quickening speed in the growth of output by the consumer goods industries had made possible seven price-cuts in the spring of successive years, until by May 1954 the foodstuffs, manufactured consumer goods, and household necessities which cost 1,000 roubles in 1947 cost only 433 roubles – as though what cost £1 in Great

Britain in the former year had been brought down to 8*s*. 4½*d*. by the time these lines were being written.

How could this be compatible with the maintenance of the 'vast military machine' of which Mr Attlee spoke? How could it be reconciled with his charge that Russia was continuing 'to burden her people and those of her satellites with this huge weight of armaments'? The answer is that the facts of the situation in the U.S.S.R. could not be reconciled with Mr Attlee's charges, because the latter were based on a myth.

In fact, the Quaker delegation which visited the U.S.S.R. in the very year when Mr Attlee spoke reported, in the words of one of their most well-known members, Mr Paul S. Cadbury (a manufacturer and a non-Socialist): 'We saw practically no soldiers on the streets, except men on leave. We saw quite as many of these here' [in the U.S.A., where Mr Cadbury was speaking] 'as we did in Moscow or Kiev, and we saw no signs whatever of military display. . . . We were not conscious of a great military power' (*Quakers Visit Russia*, p. 99).

'Premier Attlee should know from his own experience, as well as from the experience of the United States,' said Stalin in his reply of 16 February 1951, 'that an increase of the armed forces of a country and an armaments drive lead to expansion of war industry, to curtailment of civilian industry, to the suspension of big civilian construction projects, to an increase in taxes, to a rise in prices of consumer goods. It is clear that if the Soviet Union does not reduce but on the contrary expands civilian industry, does not curtail 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.'

2. *Was there a fund of goodwill?*

And is it in fact true that at the end of the war there was 'an immense fund of goodwill' which the Soviet Government threw away?

What is true is that the mass of the people in Western countries had in the war years displayed their gratitude and goodwill to the Soviet peoples. But it is equally true that long before the war ended there had begun in the U.S.A. and Britain a policy of systematically 'cooling off' these sentiments.[1] The policy in question was deliberately conceived, and was founded upon a clearly held theory. This was that Russia stood for 'barbarism': that it was not one of the 'ancient States of Europe' (although in fact the Russian State dating from not later than the ninth century was as old as any of them, and older than many); that 'culture and independence' were the monopoly of these other States (including Turkey, Franco-Spain, the Rumania of 1939, the Hungary of Horthy, etc.); that there was a possibility of a 'measureless disaster', namely of Russia 'overlaying' these alleged cultural centres (in plain English, a danger that when Fascism was broken in Europe by the Red Army, the unpolished workmen and peasants would rearrange their countries' affairs to suit their own direct interests); and therefore that a United States of Europe should be founded against Russia after the war.

This theory was embodied in a Cabinet memorandum cir-

1. See, for the U.S.A., Sayers and Kahn, *The Great Conspiracy against Russia*, 3rd edition, 1946, Chapters 22–24; and Marziani, *We Can Be Friends*, 1952, Chapters 6 and 7. For Great Britain, see Rothstein, *A History of the U.S.S.R.*, Chapter VIII, sections 4 and 5.

culated by Mr Winston Churchill in October 1942 (and published only in part seven years later). By no stretch of the imagination could the memorandum be mistaken for an expression of 'goodwill'. Moreover, the idea was not left to moulder in the files at 10 Downing Street. It took shape, obviously by particular arrangement, in the internationally advertised speech of General Smuts on 25 November 1943, in which this member of the War Cabinet warned Europe that the Soviet Union after the war would bestride the Continent like a 'new Colossus', and advised the formation of a Western bloc around Great Britain – a country which General Smuts explained in his own Parliament on 25 January 1944 was 'the bulwark of Western civilization'. Privately, in February 1943, the British Ambassador at Madrid had already promised the Foreign Minister of Franco-Spain – discussing exactly the same topic – that Britain after the war would not 'shirk our responsibilities to European civilization'. The Soviet forces, after losing several millions of dead, were just then breaking into the territory of the Axis organized by Franco's ally, Hitler. The gist of the conversation was widely known in London a few months later.

Whatever one's opinion of the arguments used, it can hardly be denied that these statements showed no 'fund of goodwill' among those holding power in this country, and there were many parallels in the U.S.A. It was with singular clarity of vision that a leading article in the *News Chronicle* said on 6 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 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 intention in his heart is a dealer in the black market of human calamity.'

The only detail that was wrong in this noteworthy anticipation was that its author expected the possibility of a de-Nazified Germany being used for the purpose. Even his lively imagination could not conjure up the vision of a Germany being harnessed to the service of 'Europe' which was pullulating with rehabilitated Nazis in the highest positions of industry, banking, commerce, the machinery of State, and the restored armed forces.[1]

Nor did the policy of the first post-war British Government provide so very much evidence of that 'fund of goodwill'. Its Foreign Secretary, Mr Ernest Bevin, was a party to the policy of building up the atom bomb in secret from the Russians from 1943 onwards, and to its use in August 1945, more to overawe them than because it was essential to destroy two Japanese cities (as to that, Professor Blackett has told the story in Chapter 10 of his *Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy*).

Although the Potsdam Agreement had provided for the

1. And even less, no doubt, could the *News Chronicle* leader-writer have foreseen that, towards the end of the war in 1945, while the blood of thousands of Soviet soldiers – the allies of the British people – was still flowing in torrents in Eastern Germany, Sir Winston Churchill would be telegraphing to General Montgomery that he should carefully put by the arms of the hundreds of thousands of Nazi-indoctrinated troops who were surrendering in the west without causing the death of a single British or American soldier – 'and whom we should have to work with if the Soviet advance continued', to quote the statement of the Conservative Party leader himself (23 November 1954). A most convincing proof of the 'fund of goodwill'!

complete disarmament and demilitarization of Germany in the interest of future peace, the Allied Control Council reported on 1 January 1947 that out of 1,554 war plants in the three Western zones of Germany, only 3 had been stripped – and Mr Bevin was an active party to this policy.

Although frightful wreckage of the economic resources of the U.S.S.R. had been carried out by the Germans, to a total of about £40,000 million, one-third of the national wealth of the Soviet Union, and although in Western Germany as well as Eastern Germany there were ample material values both in capital goods and in current production, which could be used to replace what had been destroyed: Mr Bevin before long took up the cudgels on behalf of Germany; for example, complaining (13 March 1947) that reparations would make her 'an economic cesspool'. This amounted to saying that if there were to be devastated areas in Europe, it would be better for them to be on Soviet territory rather than on German. As late as 8 December 1948 *The Times* was able to report that the Soviet Union had secured from Western Germany reparations to the value of no more than about £40 million – one-thousandth of what had been destroyed.

In full accord with this policy of 'goodwill', Mr Bevin (after some show of resistance) took an active part in maintaining Nazis in leading business and political positions in Western Germany, in failing to confiscate the property of the big German manufacturers who had supported Hitler, and in vetoing the action of the North-Rhineland–Westphalia regional Parliament in the British zone which decided (6 August 1948) to nationalize the Ruhr industries, centre and base of modern German militarism (see *Betrayal*, by A. D. Kahn, former chief editor of intelligence, American Military Government in Germany, and Zilliacus, *I Choose Peace* (Penguin), 1949, pp. 153–6, 203–5).

Where did the fund of goodwill come in?

As for the United States attitude in the closing days of the war and immediately afterwards, even the highly expurgated *Forrestal Diaries* (the 1952 English edition) show that consideration of the immense losses and privations of the Soviet Union in the war, or of its right to assistance, certainly took last place compared with anti-Soviet politics (e.g. in Ambassador Harriman's dispatches and conversation, pp. 55–7, 63, 91; or in President Truman's 'strong-arm' policy, pp. 64–5, 95–6, etc.).

CHAPTER EIGHT

'Russian Imperialism'

THIS brings us to one of the main arguments used to reinforce doubts about the Russians. They showed themselves, said Mr Attlee on 26 January 1951, 'the inheritors of Russian imperialism'. They had 'conquered by force or fraud' a number of countries. Around these countries, Mr Churchill had said at Fulton, Missouri, in March 1946, and Mr Attlee now repeated, an 'iron curtain' had descended. The U.S.S.R. after the war, it is asserted, imposed its political and economic systems on countries which did not want them. All through the years of cold war the details have been dinned in daily and nightly by newspaper and radio.

But is that the whole story? Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, Poland – was not every one of these countries ruled before the war by police régimes, in which full control of the parliaments was in the hands of the open spokesmen of dictatorship by landlords, big business, and military men? The only left-wing parties allowed to exist were those permitted to do so by the secret police of the ruling classes. These régimes had one and all collaborated closely with Hitler or Mussolini before the war. Even in Czechoslovakia, where a pro-Western orientation and a measure of democracy had been maintained up to 1938, the Benes administration had handed over power in that year to the pro-Germans without a struggle, and a full terrorist régime dominated by the Gestapo had been installed the following year.

Poland before 1939 was described by far from Communist jurists as under the rule of a 'combination of chau-

vinist militarism with the interests of the landed aristocracy', with 'governmental control of the trade unions' (Keeton and Schlesinger, *Russia and her Western Neighbours*, 1942, pp. 68–70). Hungary and Albania were 'controlled by feudal oligarchies', while Bulgaria, Rumania, and Yugoslavia were under 'military, semi-Fascist dictatorships' (*ibid.*, p. 115).

During all the years before the war the ruling classes of these States had been treated with great favour and friendship in the Western countries. There was no complaint then of imperialism or of puppet régimes. On the contrary, the British Prime Minister in 1938 publicly recognized the special interest of Germany in this whole region of Europe.

How could it be expected that the régimes in all these countries, which maintained themselves only by practising the utmost violence against the vast majority of their fellow-countrymen, and by 1939 were all acting as military and political tentacles of the Fascist rulers in Berlin and Rome, would dream of giving up power without at least as much violence being used to dislodge them? How could it be supposed that, even if dislodged, they would not use every means and every loophole, from secret conspiracy and enlisting of foreign aid to economic sabotage and the use of legal means of organization (which they had previously denied to their opponents), in order to overthrow the new post-war governments of anti-Fascists and to restore the old order? How could it be supposed that the workmen and peasants of these countries, the vast majority of them living and working in conditions of almost medieval misery and oppression (apart from the more industrially advanced areas of Czechoslovakia), would not identify the old régimes with the capitalist system which these régimes always upheld? How, finally, could it be supposed that the Soviet Army which broke the armed forces of Hitler, and with them the satellite forces of the ruling classes in all these countries

(military, political, police, etc.), would intervene by force in order to re-establish the old régime, which had been the spearhead of Fascism and anti-Soviet activity?

Stalin had given a plain warning that this situation would arise, years before. If a new imperialist war were unleashed in Europe as a result of turning the forces of Nazi Germany against the U.S.S.R., or of failing to restrain the forces of Nazi Germany in the hope of dividing up the territory of the U.S.S.R. (he said in his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., on 26 January 1934), 'it is sure to unleash revolution and jeopardize the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries, as was the case in the course of the first imperialist war'. As a result of that war, said Stalin, 'they did get the smash-up of capitalism in Russia, the victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia, and – of course – the Soviet Union. What guarantee is there that a second imperialist war will produce "better" results for them than the first? Would it not be more correct to assume that the opposite will be the case? . . . What guarantee is there that the same thing will not result from an imperialist war against China?' asked Stalin. As for a direct war against the U.S.S.R., he said it would be the most dangerous war of all for the bourgeoisie. 'Let not the bourgeois gentlemen blame us if some of the governments so near and dear to them, which to-day rule happily "by the grace of God", are missing on the morrow of such a war. . . . It can hardly be doubted that a second war against the U.S.S.R. will lead to the complete defeat of the aggressors, to revolution in a number of countries in Europe and Asia, and to the destruction of the bourgeois-landlord governments in those countries.'

But this idea of what would happen in Europe in such circumstances was by no means confined to the Communists. At the Labour Party Conference before the

General Election of 1945, great cheers were won by Mr Healey, an officer in uniform, who warned the delegates that a Socialist revolution was already firmly established in many countries of Eastern and Southern Europe. The upper classes in these countries were 'selfish, depraved, dissolute, and decadent': yet they were looking to the British Army to protect them against the just wrath of the people. The struggle for Socialism in Europe, said Mr Healey, had not been like the struggle in this country. 'During the last five years it has been hard, cruel, bitter, merciless, and bloody' (and for many years before that, Mr Healey might have added). He warned the delegates against criticizing the workers on the Continent for being 'extremist', and for finding it necessary 'to introduce a greater degree of police supervision, and more immediate and drastic punishment for their opponents, than we in this country would be prepared to tolerate'. [1]

Social emancipation, in other words, was for the vast majority of the working people in all these countries a necessary condition of national independence. And who was for their emancipation, who against?

They found the Soviet forces, and later Soviet diplomacy, protecting them while they took steps to guarantee both social emancipation and national independence. They found the British Labour Government, supported by the United States, proposing 'to grant foreign interests the same advantages as they enjoyed before the war . . . arguing the case of liberalism and free competition' (*The Times* Paris correspondent, on discussions in the European Economic Commission, 13 September 1946). They read that the British and American Foreign Ministers were demanding that there should be unfettered entry into their countries of

1. See the graphic description by Mr K. Zilliacus in his *I Choose Peace* (*Penguin*, 1949), pp. 103–4.

the goods and capital of the Western countries (*The Times* editorial, 12 October 1946), i.e. that the foreign bankers and investors and merchants who before the war were the financial support of their worst oppressors should get an opportunity once again to establish a foothold. And they heard the most violent denunciations of the régimes which were radically changing their living and working conditions for the better.[1]

It is idle in these conditions – and it is certainly not an argument against the possibility of peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union – to say that the peoples of Eastern Europe have become the 'satellites' of the U.S.S.R. They turned to their natural friends, that was all. As for being satellites, their dependence so far as the mass of the people are concerned is infinitely less in relation to the Soviet Union than was the relationship before the war of the ruling classes of Poland, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria to Germany, of Albania to Italy, and of Czechoslovakia to France and Britain.

For what is this Soviet 'imperialism' that is supposed to be exploiting these countries, and to which Mr Attlee alluded in his speech of 26 January 1951?

Are the People's Democracies being kept as agrarian reservoirs of foodstuffs and raw materials – one of the outstanding characteristics of exploitation by foreign imperialism? On the contrary, their economic treaties and agreements with the U.S.S.R. have enabled them to acquire machinery and technical aid to build themselves a balanced economy, able at a pinch to stand on its own feet. One of the most famous examples has been the importation by Rumania, first of Soviet oil-cracking machinery and then of the equipment for producing such machinery: so that a

1. See on this, Doreen Warriner, *Revolution in Eastern Europe*, 1950, Chapters V, VII, IX.

country which has in the past been able only to export primarily crude oil for other people to refine is now in a position to develop its own refining industry with its own engineering resources – while the Soviet Union, judged by ordinary commercial standards, has 'killed its own market'. The same has happened with all the other countries concerned, to a greater or lesser degree – indeed, the charge is also heard nowadays that 'excessive industrialization' (certainly not a feature of imperialist relations with any other colony in history) has been forced upon the unfortunate People's Democracies.

Is cheap labour in the People's Democracies being exploited by the Soviet Union for its own purposes, and kept at a standard of existence lower than that of the U.S.S.R. itself? No one who examines any colonial economy could fail to know that this is another of the features of exploitation by foreign imperialism. But in the People's Democracies the standard of living has risen at breakneck speed since the war. Real wages in Hungary in 1953 were 57 per cent above the level of 1938, and the average real income of a peasant family in January–June 1954 was 50 per cent above 1938. In Poland wages in 1953 were about 40 per cent above the level of 1938, while the real incomes of the peasants were about 75 per cent above pre-war. Consumption per head in Czechoslovakia, compared with 1936, showed an increase by 1953 of 37 per cent as regards meat, eggs 23 per cent, sugar 17 per cent and so forth. Infant mortality, which in the same country stood at 117 per thousand during the first twelve months of life in 1937, had fallen to 83 by 1948, and by 1953 was 45. Similarly in Rumania the infant death-rate was 179 per thousand in 1938 and by 1952 had fallen to 80. Infant mortality is one of the most complete indices of general well-being of the people.

Are the People's Democracies falling into the position of

perpetual creditors of one of the Great Powers, forced to dispose of their produce and minerals to it by monopoly arrangements, and never able to get back the full value in equipment or other necessities? The very countries of Eastern Europe which are supposed to have become Soviet 'satellites' since 1944 had been placed in this position by Nazi Germany, with the help of 'frozen marks', before the war – a constant subject of discussion at the League of Nations. They were 'bound to Germany by a double bond – as the principal market for their produce and as a debtor who was unwilling or unable to liquidate his debt except by specified exports (Chatham House, *South-eastern Europe*, 1939, p. 36). Many British colonies are in exactly the same position to-day, thanks to the operation of the so-called 'sterling balances': selling their produce to Britain, and accumulating hundreds of millions to their credit in pounds sterling in British banks, but unable to spend them on what is needed to develop industrially and in other ways. But this is not the case with the People's Democracies. Their trade is on a self-balancing basis with the U.S.S.R., either immediately or (apart from industrial credits) over a short term of years – and the credit is given by the Soviet Union to the less-developed country, for huge advances in respect of industrial equipment, not involuntarily by the less-developed country to the more advanced one, in the shape of unpaid deliveries of its agricultural produce and minerals, as used to be the case in Hitler's day. Thus, thanks to credits totalling 2,200 million roubles (about £200 million), Poland was able to equip a great iron and steel works at Nowa Huta, a lorry factory at Lublin, an automobile factory at Zeran, a new cotton combined works at Piotrkow, and a cement works at Dychow, etc. These credits would be paid off by the normal Polish exports within a few years. It was thanks to imports from the Soviet Union that Bulgaria has

been able to build several big chemical works (the Stalin Chemical Combine and the Karl Marx Soda Factory), power-stations, iron and steel works, etc. The case of Rumania has already been mentioned. All these enterprises are the property of the countries concerned, not of the Soviet Union, to whom they bring in no 'dividends'.

Are there great Soviet monopolies installed in these countries as a result of these arrangements? This indeed is frequent in the colonial world: examples are only too familiar. At one time it was alleged that the 'mixed companies' set up in the People's Democracies were a new variety of such foreign monopoly. In reality they had nothing in common with the foreign investing companies of the colonial empires. The capital was divided equally between the two sides – that is to say, the bare land and often primitive structures were assessed at the same value as the up-to-date Soviet equipment, initial raw materials and technical aid from the U.S.S.R. The enterprises had to obey the labour laws of the People's Democracy concerned, and their production plans fitted into the national economic plan. Both in management and in distribution of profit there was equality. The bulk of their output went into the market of the People's Democracy, not of the Soviet Union. The net effect has been to develop ultra-modern industries where previously primitive methods were employed, to create new industries which did not even exist before, and to train thousands of technicians and workmen in the shortest possible time – without the Soviet Union acquiring a single permanent shareholding. Thus in 1954, after operating in a number of different industries (coal, oil, tractor, chemical, metal, and others) for several years, the Soviet interests in twelve such mixed companies were transferred to the Rumanian State, on easy payments over a period of years. By agreement between the Soviet and Chinese Govern-

ments, four mixed companies of this kind were set up in 1950–1 – for mining non-ferrous metals in Sinkiang, for working oilfields in the same province, for shipbuilding and ship repair at Dalny (Dairen), and a civil aviation line – and transferred to China (or, more precisely, the Soviet share was transferred) as from 1 January 1955. The Soviet interests in the three such companies working in Bulgaria were also transferred in 1954; and those in the Hungarian bauxite-aluminium and oil industries, shipping and civil aviation likewise, together with a Soviet bank for trade and industry set up after the war.

Perhaps there is no more striking illustration of the change from colonial status which these countries have undergone than the fact that the Soviet Union supplies them with raw materials and semi-finished products – like the cotton, rubber, flax, ores, vegetable fats which are sent to Poland – while it is the formerly undeveloped countries which are exporting some of their industrial manufactures, such as rolling-stock from Poland, electrical machinery from Hungary, chemicals from Czechoslovakia, cement from Rumania, to the U.S.S.R.

Of the economic and financial basis of imperialism, therefore, there is not a trace in the relations between the Soviet Union and its associates in Eastern Europe. So far from the relations between them proving that the Soviet Union intends to conquer the world, they prove the opposite.

But it is sometimes alleged that the Soviet Union dictates their political activities even without this economic basis. That would really be something novel in world history. But beyond the natural basis of association described earlier, and consisting in the fact that the working-classes of the various countries have taken over control, no practical evidence has ever been given of this domination. The stock 'example' is usually the alleged 'rape of Czechoslovakia'.

This is supposed to have been the last straw which convinced the long-suffering Western Powers that the Soviet Union was intent on world domination. But what are the facts?

The facts are that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had secured 38 per cent of the vote at the 1946 General Election, and was by far the largest party. With the Social Democrats who had over 12 per cent, the two parties made up a majority in Parliament. The Communist Party had had a million members in 1946, and at the beginning of 1948 (elections were due in May) had 1,400,000. It was therefore campaigning with confidence for an absolute majority at the election; no more improper than the similar requests always made to the British electorate by the Conservative and Labour Parties. But it was denounced by the secretary of the chief capitalist party, the 'National Socialists', in December 1947, for making such a demand as preparing for 'dictatorship'. Meanwhile the capitalist parties themselves were doing their utmost to delay the various economic and political reforms being applied by the coalition government, of which the Communist leader Gottwald was Premier. Only mass protests forced them to give up their opposition, after the bad harvest of 1947, to a capital levy for the relief of drought-stricken peasants. The capitalist parties protected black marketeers. The infiltration of the right-wing 'Democratic Party' in Slovakia by the prohibited Fascist organization (which needed a legal cover for resuming its activities) was protected by the authorities in that country. Civil service wage increases were held back, land reforms delayed, and the new constitution postponed by the opposition of the capitalist Ministers.

Finally in February 1948, by arrangement with Dr Benes, the twelve capitalist Ministers resigned on a trumpery pretext, hoping – as their spokesmen have since admitted – to

precipitate a constitutional crisis, and to secure from Dr Benes the formation either of an all-capitalist Ministry without Communists (as had already happened in France and Italy) or of an allegedly non-party government of officials. Did the Soviet Union intervene? Did a single Soviet soldier appear on Czechoslovak territory? Were any formations of Soviet troops moved to the frontier? Was there any threat that Soviet economic and financial aid would be refused unless the crisis was solved in a particular way? No scrap of evidence whatsoever has ever been brought forward to back up such a suggestion. What did happen was that a great meeting of 200,000 Prague workers demanded acceptance of the resignations. A conference of Works Councils, which had been called (12 February) eight days before the resignations, assembled on 22 February, and by an enormous majority (7,904 to 10) its delegates, who represented 2 million workers, resolved to support Premier Gottwald, to demand acceptance of the resignations by the President, and to insist on a sweeping programme of further nationalization and other radical reforms. Previously the T.U.C. Council had taken the same decision by 117 to 3. On 24 February, two days later, these demands were supported by a one-hour general strike of 2½ million workers in 24,000 enterprises; only 32 factories with 1,494 workers abstained from striking. The President gave way, and the new Government was formed, with 12 Communists and 5 Social-Democrats instead of 8 Communists and 3 Social-Democrats in the old Government, and with 6 representatives of the capitalist parties instead of 12.

Where in this was there any 'rape of Czechoslovakia'? Where was Russian interference? Why could Sir Samuel Hoare be forced out of the Foreign Office in Great Britain by public uproar in 1935, and twelve resigning Ministers not be kept out of office by organized labour in Czechoslovakia,

which commanded a majority of Parliamentary seats, in 1948? The truth about the alleged 'rape' was, not that Russia had anything to do with it or that thereby it had in some mysterious fashion established its 'imperialist domination' over Czechoslovakia, but something quite different. Hitherto the ordinary mechanics of parliamentarism laid it down that twelve Ministers and a President were far more weighty than 2 million industrial workers, and could manipulate the Constitution accordingly. Whereas now the Czechoslovak working-class had come to the conclusion that this was all wrong, and that if the Constitution provided even a loophole for such manipulation, the working-class must take over the reins and prevent such things happening for the future.

This indeed is the crux of the alleged 'imperialist' domination of the People's Democracies by the Soviet Union (although the charge wears a little thin when applied to China with its 600 million people, and the mythologists are frequently uncertain whether to play the 'Soviet domination' card or the 'independent Chinese' card). The fact is that by an optical illusion the former propertied classes – those 'selfish, depraved, dissolute, and decadent' upper classes of whom Mr Dennis Healey had spoken in 1945 – have contrived ever since then to present the undoubted fact that they have been 'dominated', and even 'dictated to', by the common people whom they used to consider dirt beneath their feet, as though it meant that their countries have been subjected to the same process. This of course is quite natural. It is good propaganda from their point of view, and in addition they probably are quite unable to believe that common working-men and peasants could really run their country.

Another charge of 'imperialism' is made against the Soviet Union in connexion with the alleged forcible incor-

poration of the Baltic States against the will of their people. But this charge, too, is based on total ignorance of the facts.

In 1905 (during the first Russian Revolution) there were great general strikes and uprisings under working-class leadership in all these territories, in which the Social Democrats, sympathetic to the Russian Bolsheviks, took the lead. They were stubborn struggles, which resisted Tsarist punitive expeditions for well-nigh two years. They were carried on under the red flag everywhere, for social emancipation and not for national independence, an issue which never arose. The well-to-do classes – the Baltic-German landlords and native merchants – sided with Tsardom.

When the revival of the Russian labour movement began in 1911–12 after several years of reaction, the Baltic provinces responded in full measure with great political strikes. By 1917 they were notorious as a hive of revolutionary sentiments among the great mass of the workers. Latvia and Lithuania were occupied by the Germans by November 1917, but the Lettish (Latvian) rifle regiments of the old army were among the most strongly pro-Bolshevik units that opposed Kerensky. In Estonia, Soviets were set up by the workers in March 1917, and took power without bloodshed under Bolshevik leadership in November, proclaiming an 'Estonian Labour Commune' as part of the Russian Soviet Federation. It was overthrown by the German Army in February 1918.

At the end of that year, as the German Army began to break up after the armistice in the west, Soviet Republics were set up by the workers and peasants in all three States. No Russians took part in this operation—and no native forces of any consequence supported the capitalists, who had been co-operating for the most part with the Germans. And the way the Soviet Republics were overthrown is most significant – in Estonia (January 1919) by a combination of

a British naval force, a regiment of Baltic Germans, a unit of Russian Whites, and 5,000 Finnish Whites sent over by the anti-Bolshevik General Mannerheim; in Latvia (May 1919) by German Army units, left there by direction of the Allies after the Armistice and strengthened by right-wing volunteers recruited in Germany, to a total of 35,000 men, by 2,000 Baltic Germans, a White Russian unit, a Polish army which invaded from the south, and a force from Estonia, all directed and organized by a British naval mission; in Lithuania (April 1919) by the Polish Army under General Ridz-Smigly, which later went on into Latvia. Thus Socialism was suppressed in these countries in 1919, as it had been in 1918 and in 1905–7, by outside interference.

From 1920 to 1940 all three peoples were ruled by terrorist methods, so much so that even the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), in its book on the Baltic States published in 1938, found it necessary to record that 'democratic institutions ... never functioned properly from the time of their inception until their abrogation'. And they were abrogated – in 1926 by an open army dictatorship in Lithuania, and in 1934 by a military dictatorship in Estonia, and a Fascist corporate State in Latvia. Throughout this period the mass of the working-class in town and country had as little to say in its own affairs as under the Russian Tsar.

In 1939 all three States were saved from incorporation in Germany by Red Army garrisons introduced under treaties of mutual assistance with their Governments – garrisons which, by the way, would have been Anglo-French if the Soviet proposals made to Britain and France in August 1939 had been accepted. The popular upheavals, led by the local Communists, which took place in 1940 because the mass of the workers were no longer afraid of their rulers, thus represented the righting of a wrong done to them mainly by

foreign invasion twenty-one years before. The full story, in far greater detail and based entirely upon anti-Bolshevik sources, can be found in the little book by Philip Farr, *Soviet Russia and the Baltic Republics* (British Soviet Friendship Society, 1944).

In all three Baltic Soviet Republics to-day the people have a far higher standard of material life, of educational opportunity and cultural amenities, than before 1940. It is based, moreover, on a more balanced and flourishing economy. The stories often told about the alleged 'russification' of the countries are belied by the newspapers, books, plays, films, higher education, and so forth which in their overwhelming bulk are produced or conducted in the native languages.

To accuse the Soviet Union of 'imperialism' in these circumstances is even less convincing than accusing France of imperialism because she reannexed Alsace-Lorraine in 1918 after its forcible separation from her by Prussian arms in 1871.

One other instance of the Soviet Union's alleged attempt to establish world dominion, frequently referred to, is that of Germany. What are the facts?

For seventy-five years, from 1864 to 1939, aggression in Europe came from the Prussian landowning class which supplied the officer caste, and was reinforced from the '90's onwards by the German banking and industrial monopolists. This was generally recognized in wartime, and the common hope of the man in the street in Britain was that 'the Russians may get to Berlin first'. The expectation behind this was expressed by the Labour Party Conference on 27 April 1944, when it adopted a document, 'The International Post-War Settlement', which demanded that the power of the militarists, the landowners, and the industrialists 'must be destroyed', and that reparations should take the form of deliveries in kind or of German labour. This

policy was in fact embodied in the Potsdam Agreement (August 1945). And the Potsdam Agreement in this respect was carried out by the Soviet Union, while the British and United States Governments failed to carry it out.

In the Soviet zone of occupation, now the German Democratic Republic, the land was divided among the peasantry – which broke up and annihilated the Junker class. All large industry and the bulk of medium-sized industry was nationalized without compensation – which utterly destroyed the power of the cartels and the monopolists. Most managers of factories and most persons in public administration of every kind were drawn from the working-class, from known anti-Fascists, and only in a very few individual exceptions from persons who had ever held any position of trust under the Hitler régime – which ensured that the new economic and political system would be administered by its sympathizers, not by its opponents. The trade unions and works' committees were given an enormous part to play in economic, social, and political life. Reparations were secured both by removal of capital equipment and by current production for a number of years, until in 1952 they were brought to an end, as a sign of confidence in the peaceable intentions of the German working people who now held control in Eastern Germany. These were the same small people of whom 'the Tiger' – Clemenceau – had once written: 'Unquestionably and naturally, in Germany as everywhere else, the workmen, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie are true pacifists, and view the possibilities of new butcheries with horror' (*Grandeur et Misère de la Victoire*, 1930, p. 327).

In the Western zones the land was not divided; big landowners remained in possession of economic and ultimately of political influence. Industry was not socialized or even nationalized, and by 1954 a list of the directors of the big-

gest industrial and banking companies revealed almost the same names as in Hitler's day.[1] Most managers of economic life and public affairs were drawn from the former Nazis. Trade unions were reduced to a secondary position in public life. The British Labour Minister for these territories, Mr Hynd, admitted there were Nazis in important positions, 'but it was necessary to maintain essential services'. As a result, German industrial and commercial monopolies were already in the saddle behind the scenes by 1948, and reparations became a farce.

Of course it was urged that the Soviet Union was refusing to carry out Point 14 of the Potsdam decisions, namely that Germany should be treated as an economic unit. But how could this happen if the previous 13 points, which laid down a uniform process of transformation of German economy and public life, throughout the whole of Germany, were not being fulfilled in the Western zone? How could there be unity in economic matters between the smaller part of Germany, where large-scale landowning and trusts had been destroyed in favour of socially owned industry and peasant landholding, and the greater part of Germany where great estates and private monopolies were being maintained or re-created? The only possible effect would have been to put the smaller part under the control of the greater, to wreck the economy of the only part of Germany where Potsdam was being fulfilled, and thus to ensure that the repudiation of the Allies' pledged word would extend to the whole of Germany instead of to the greater part of it. To speak of the Russians in these circumstances refusing 'economic unity' requires an extremely credulous audience.

1. See the details in the Labour Research Department's booklet, *Who Controls German Industry?* (1954); and in Kahn, *Betrayal* (1950). On reparations, see Clay, *Decision in Germany* (1950), pp. 39–40, 42. For Mr Hynd, see *Daily Herald*, 11 May 1946.

Matters came to a head in 1948 when the Allies, who had in December 1946 amalgamated the British and American zones to form 'Bizonia', proceeded in June 1948 to take in the French zone into 'Trizonia', and rounded off their revision of Potsdam by the dispute over Berlin, after introducing their own currency into Western Germany.

What happened in Berlin in 1948? The Allies had refused to agree to an all-German currency: but they had undertaken not to introduce the Western currency into West Berlin, since the city was in the heart of the Soviet zone in which the old currency was circulating, and had free economic intercourse with the surrounding territory. Then without warning they broke their own pledge, and introduced their own currency into Western Berlin. This meant the disruption of the financial and economic planning of the Soviet zone, if it were allowed to operate unchecked, since both goods and currency moved freely over the Berlin borders into Soviet-occupied territory. The Russians took protective action by setting up customs barriers around the city – which was immediately denounced as a 'blockade'. An air-lift was started, with a huge amount of publicity about Russian 'inhumanity'. The Soviet authorities in reality made huge supplies of foodstuffs available in their shops for the West Berliners, who could freely cross the zonal frontier in the city. Mr John Foster Dulles, on 10 January 1949, revealed in an off-the-record talk to journalists that '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. The present situation is, however, to United States 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.' Needless to say, negotiations failed for months to reach an agreement over

this ingenious obstacle – even when a draft agreement was reached in Moscow, and open repudiation of it had to be resorted to by the United States, in which the British Government concurred, at the Security Council. Meanwhile there was world-wide talk of war – and an attempt to bring it about narrowly averted.[1]

It is hardly surprising, with this pre-history, that matters reached the point of two separate States in East and West Germany within the next few years. But what in all this represented the 'imperialist ambitions' of the Soviet Union?

The Soviet side of the picture

It must be remembered that there is a Soviet picture of post-war relations, which is not confined to its own version of the events described in the previous sections of this chapter. And when the Soviet Union, nevertheless, presses for peaceful coexistence, it does so in full knowledge of the difference between its picture and that of the Western Powers. Here is that picture.

If there was any meaning in the retention and development of the atom bomb, secretly from the U.S.S.R., and when the Soviet Union was being bled white by bearing the main brunt of the war, it was that the British and United States Governments intended to have the decisive say in the world settlement at the end of the war. Indeed, this was precisely what was said by Sir Samuel Hoare (now Lord Templewood) to the Foreign Minister of Franco-Spain in February 1943 – particularly when he explained that, if the Allies won, there would 'undoubtedly be great British and

1. The story can be found in Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly*, 1947, pp. 202–8; in Burchett, *Warmongers Unmasked*, Part 1, pp. 33–6, and Part 4, pp. 41–5; and in the *Forrestal Diaries*, pp. 385–7, 424–33, 440–1, 449–59. Zilliacus, *op. cit.* p. 247, gives Mr Dulles' statement, quoted from the *National Guardian*, 24 January 1949.

American armies on the Continent', equipped in the most modern way and composed of fresh troops, their ranks not 'previously devastated by years of exhausting war on the Russian front' (*Spain*, 22 March 1948).

It was Britain and the U.S.A., in other words, who in the Soviet view intended to dominate the world, relying on the combined strength of the atom bomb and their unexhausted military forces.[1]

They immediately began drawing back from their engagements in respect of Germany and Japan, which they had solemnly accepted at Potsdam, just because the idea was that the restoration of capitalist monopolies and military strength in those two countries would enable them to demobilize their own land forces. The great drought of 1946 in the Soviet Union, which obliged the Soviet Government to continue rationing for at least twelve months longer than had been intended, was additional confirmation to the British and American Governments that they had the Soviet Union where they wanted it (there is interesting testimony on this in the *Forrestal Diaries*, p. 232). The Marshall Plan of 1947 – discussed in private by experts on both sides long before it was produced in public by General Marshall in a speech at Harvard (*The Times* and *Daily Express*, 7 June 1947), and accepted with a great pretence of surprise by Mr Bevin – was an attempt to establish American domination over the economies of European countries, through the 'Steering Committee' which was to decide how much American aid they needed, as a further step in the direction of isolating the U.S.S.R. The refusal of the Soviet alternative suggestion, that mutual economic assistance should be rendered through the body specifically created within the

1. Some vivid recollections of Mr Churchill's private attitude to the U.S.S.R. in wartime were put down by General H. Arnold, in his *Global Mission*, 1949, pp. 230, 474.

United Nations for the purpose – the Economic Commission for Europe – demonstrated the real intentions of the American-British bloc beyond any question. The subsequent formal division of Germany, and the preparations for its re-Nazification and remilitarization, were but the logical development of the policy. Similarly the formation of Western Union in 1948, ostensibly to 'contain' a rearmed Western Germany, in reality was only to pave the way for drawing her into a consolidated anti-Soviet alliance.

Those who, in the different atmosphere which has developed since 1953, are seriously concerned about the chances of peaceful coexistence, must realize from the foregoing that, once mutual accusations begin, the Soviet Union can give as good as it gets; which means that efforts to find a basis for a new start in everyday relations will get nowhere.

Moreover, there is another and quite serious danger. It is that certain anti-Soviet politicians, who as we have seen in Chapter Four are still quite numerous and influential, will begin thinking on the old lines of 1933–9 directly they see a chance of a militant, revived, aggressive Germany. The old lines were that this is an evil like a law of nature: it cannot be prevented once it has been brought into being, and the only thing to be done is to head it off against the Soviet Union. This looks like a substitute for another world war; in reality, of course, it is the surest means of promoting one. Are people with this bee in their bonnet so rare? Unfortunately, no. On 24 February 1954, Mr Herbert Morrison, in a speech in Parliament discussing the dangers to peace, spoke of the 'horrible menace' of guided missiles, and said: 'We must as a nation take the view that, if there is to be trouble, the further east the trouble is kept the better for Europe and for us.' Much the same sentiments were expressed about German rearmament by the *Economist* (31 July 1954) when it said that it was 'understandable' that

the Russians should not like a rearmed Germany. 'The Germans may or may not be sincere democrats; they may or may not be trustworthy. But in any event it is better that they be with us than against us.'

This kind of ingenious strategy was already exposed by the historian, Professor Sir Lewis Namier (*Diplomatic Prelude*, p. 146), when he wrote of the pre-war British Government: 'If there had to be aggression, they like everyone else hoped that Hitler would start on some country other than their own, and as great a distance from it as possible.' At that time, however, the mass of the British people did not hope for that, and did not believe that aggression was inevitable, if Britain, France, and the Soviet Union came to a tight agreement against it. Nor did the Soviet Government cherish any such hope, if once aggression were permitted. It was those who thought that 'if there is to be trouble, the further east the trouble is kept the better' who frustrated the efforts at a pact of mutual assistance with the U.S.S.R., which would have given security to all Europe and thus helped to promote the second world war.

It is not by delving into mutual charges of imperialism that a basis can be found for a political settlement of the world. It is time now to leave them to the historians, and to turn attention to means of reducing tension in the world as it stands to-day.

CHAPTER NINE

'You can't trust the Russians'

THIS kind of doubt is generated by the carefully fostered idea that the Russians don't and can't keep their word, that they are treacherous by nature, and so forth. In a sense it began to be encouraged in the days of Rudyard Kipling and the fears of the 'Bear that walks like a man'. But as, for generations before then, British foreign policy had been denounced by many critics as the work of 'perfidious Albion', we may put it down that one legend balanced the other.

Between 1921 and 1939, in spite of innumerable prophecies to the contrary, Soviet business contracts and bills were scrupulously honoured, at a time when repudiation was only too common in other countries. As trading relations were the main field of contact between Britain and the U.S.S.R. in those years, the experience of the British business community had a marked influence on public opinion, at any rate, if not on the Governments successively led by Mr Baldwin, Mr Macdonald, and Mr Chamberlain. During the war, again, when the principal field of collaboration was the military one, the Soviet Union kept its engagements with remarkable precision, as Mr Churchill found (for example) when he appealed in January 1945 for an accelerated Soviet offensive to relieve the unexpected German pressure in Eastern Belgium; and as the Japanese found when the Soviet Union attacked them on the precise date which it had promised to its Western allies.

It is since the war, then, that there has been a sustained effort to re-create the idea that 'the Russians can't be trusted'.

To some extent, naturally, the earlier myths discussed in this chapter have played their part. But in addition a number of people and journals have attempted to show 'documentary evidence' that double dealing is a Soviet article of faith.

Thus, for example, they quote a passage in Lenin's *Left-wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder* (1920). Lenin, they say, advised Communists 'even – if need be – to resort to all sorts of devices, manoeuvres and illegal methods, to evasion and subterfuge'. The only thing these would-be enlighteners of the innocent forget to say is that this is in the passage referring to the use by anti-Communists of the police and the courts 'in order to prevent Communists from getting into the trade unions, to force them out by every means, to make their work in the trade unions as unpleasant as possible, to insult, to hound, and to persecute them'. That is to say, Lenin was referring to a situation in which Communists were driven underground, deprived of their legal rights – just as happened in Fascist Italy, in Nazi Germany, and in occupied Europe. During the second world war, the resistance movements of every complexion, not only the Communists, necessarily had recourse to these methods. Lenin was not giving advice for trade unionists able to work openly – and still less was he laying down any lines of conduct for the Soviet Union in its relations with the capitalist countries.

But there is another quotation often used; indeed, it has been made widespread through the medium of the B.B.C. This is a passage in Stalin's article, *The Elections in St Petersburg*, published on 25 January 1913. In this article he was dealing with the double-faced attitude of the Mensheviks in the 1912 elections, and wrote: 'When bourgeois diplomats prepare for war they begin to shout very loudly about "peace" and "friendly relations". When a Minister of Foreign Affairs begins to wax eloquent in favour of a "peace conference", you can take it for granted that his Government

has already issued contracts for the construction of new dreadnoughts and monoplanes. A diplomat's words *must* contradict his deeds – otherwise what sort of diplomat is he? Words are one thing – deeds something entirely different. Fine words are a mask to cover shady deeds. A sincere diplomat is like dry water, or wooden iron.'

Of course when Stalin wrote these words, the only diplomats existing, or even conceivable at the time, were bourgeois diplomats, i.e. those serving the governments of capitalist countries. Most of those who quote this passage tacitly admit this by omitting the first sentence. But some have had the temerity to assert that this remark in a political polemic, four years before the revolution, is proof positive that Soviet diplomacy is conducted forty years later according to Stalin's recipe for the functions of a diplomat.

However, they are careful to avoid the genuine statements by leaders of the U.S.S.R. since the revolution about what Soviet diplomats should be. The reason will be perfectly clear if we take three typical examples.

On 23 December 1921 Lenin was giving the report of the Government to the Ninth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which was meeting, as he pointed out, after the Soviet Government had suffered no major armed attack for twelve months, and had begun to some extent to heal the wounds of war and 'lay the foundations for Socialist constructive work'. He had necessarily to deal with Soviet policy in the world of capitalism – the old world. 'This old world has its old diplomacy, which cannot believe that you can speak frankly and openly. The old diplomacy argues: that's just where there must be some trick or other.' When the Soviet Government had told William C. Bullitt that it was willing to sign even an extremely unfavourable peace with Kolchak and Denikin because it valued the blood of the workers and peasants, shed for so long, this was the point at which the

old world 'decided that we certainly must be deceivers', and refused to make peace. As a result, of course, Soviet Russia in the end had got a better peace than it had offered – a little lesson, Lenin said. He added: 'I know that we can't learn the old diplomacy, just as we can't become other than ourselves.'

You don't hear much about *this* explanation of the difference between bourgeois and Soviet diplomacy.

On 13 December 1931 Stalin was talking with the German writer Emil Ludwig. The latter had mentioned the fears of some German politicians that Soviet agreement with Poland would mean a worsening of relations with Germany. Stalin reassured him. 'We are politicians, if you like, of a particular sort. There are politicians who promise or declare one thing to-day, and the next day either forget or deny what they said, without even blushing. We cannot act in this way. What we do outside the country inevitably becomes known inside as well, becomes known to all the workers and peasants. If we said one thing and did another, we should lose our authority among the masses of the people.'

This remark ought to be remembered also when we look a little later at the Soviet and capitalist treatment of diplomatic Notes.

A third speech of importance in this connexion was made by Maxim Litvinov, then People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, when, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday, he received the Order of Lenin at a session of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets (10 November 1936). Litvinov said: 'If bourgeois wisdom defines a diplomat as a man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country, the Soviet diplomat is distinguished by the fact that he always speaks the truth, and for the good not only of his own country but of all working people, of all humanity. Soviet diplomacy is the struggle for peace, and peace is needed by

all humanity. . . . We offered peace to the peoples when this offer might have been falsely interpreted as a sign of weakness. We offered, and do not cease to offer, peace to-day as well, when such suppositions cannot arise, and when the whole world is convinced of the unconquerable strength and inexhaustible capacity for defence of our State.'

This quotation, too, is conveniently forgotten when people are sowing doubt about the principles on which Soviet diplomats work.

Yet there is a very interesting and practical way of judging which diplomacy is sincere. It is to test by practice which side acquaints its own people more freely with the point of view of the other. And here for many years the practice has been almost unchanging: the Soviet daily newspapers, in Moscow and the other capitals of the Constituent Republics of the U.S.S.R., print the Allied Notes textually by the side of their own Government's replies, while newspapers in countries like Great Britain, printing full texts or adequate summaries of their own Government's Notes to the U.S.S.R., scarcely ever print even an adequate summary, much less the full text.

Thus on 19 February 1951, *The Times* published the full text of a British Note to the Soviet Government, filling one and a half columns of closely set type, in which the post-war foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. was denounced with bell, book, and candle, not a single corner of the world in which the Soviet Government might be accused of creating trouble being forgotten. When it came to printing the Soviet reply, exactly a week later, however, *The Times* devoted just under one column to it. But on reference to the Soviet newspapers of 25 February, which printed both Notes in full, it turns out that, while the British Note occupied just over two columns of the Soviet journals, the Soviet reply filled more than four columns, i.e. it was twice the length of the British

Note and not two-thirds of it, as might have been supposed from the version in *The Times* the next day.

This is not a question of fairness; the point is, who is afraid of letting his own fellow-citizens know the other man's point of view? The same question could be asked just as pointedly of a number of other British papers that day, which printed far less than *The Times*.

Again, later in the year. Mr Herbert Morrison, then Foreign Secretary, made a statement to *Pravda*, containing a number of pointed and blunt accusations against the home and foreign policy of the Soviet Government. *Pravda* on 1 August 1951, and all other daily newspapers in the U.S.S.R. the next day, published the full text of Mr Morrison's indictment together with Pravda's reply, which was a trifle longer. But among the leading British papers only the *Daily Herald*, the *Manchester Guardian*, and the *Daily Telegraph* printed the full text of the *Pravda* reply. The *News Chronicle*, without indicating that there were omissions, left out the equivalent of sixteen large and small paragraphs, while other newspapers printed even less. This incident threw some light on Mr Morrison's remark in opening his message: 'Knowledge of the truth is essential to understanding between peoples. But truth can only be arrived at if there is freedom to hear different points of view.' No one in the U.S.S.R. who ever studied the practice of the British press before 1939, however, could subscribe to Mr Morrison's statement that they were 'always ready to publish declarations by your leaders'.

Shortly before these lines were written, there was an exchange of Notes between the Soviet and Western Governments on the question of a new Four Power Conference. The exchange was printed in full in the Soviet newspapers of 24 October 1954 – the Allied Note occupying just over a column and the Soviet reply just over three columns. *The Times* gave to each Note (in summary form) approximately

the same space about 350 words. The *Daily Telegraph* did much the same. The *Manchester Guardian* printed the full text of the British Note, but only some 200 words of paraphrase and comment on the Soviet reply. The *Daily Express* summarized the British Note in about 150 words, but gave the Soviet Note only 25 words, with a great deal more comment of its own. Similarly the *Daily Mail* gave some 350 words to a summary of the British Note, and only 10 words to an extract from the Soviet Note, again with a mass of comment. The *News Chronicle*, which had given a front-page splash to the British Note, which it summarized in 9 inches of type – perhaps 250 words of them being direct quotations – allotted 70 words to the Soviet reply, but that only in a paraphrase of its own.

This kind of thing has gone on ever since 1945. No one who was not specially alert to the process would realize how little by little, by the presentation adequately of only one side and the almost complete suppression of the other, he was being gradually conditioned, or as the French say having his cranium stuffed. This is not new: it went on for many years before the war. The curious thing is that many people who practised the art both before and after the war swore in the years 1941–4 that it would never happen again. And, above all, it should make us realize that it is an unsafe thing to judge whether it is possible to live in peace and co-operation with the U.S.S.R. by the simple test: 'You can't trust the Russians.'

For, indeed, there is a lot of history to be lived down in that respect, quite apart from the handling of diplomatic correspondence; and there may even be Russians who, in their simple way, are asking themselves: 'Can we trust the British – or the Americans?'

Thus there is the famous memorandum of the British War Cabinet on 21 December 1917 – six weeks after the revolu-

tion – which laid down that 'we should represent to the Bolsheviks that we have no desire to take part in any way in the internal politics of Russia and that any idea that we favour a counter-revolution is a profound mistake'. At the same time, 'as quietly as possible', money should be supplied to the anti-Bolshevik forces in the Ukraine, the Caucasus, and among the Cossacks, and also there should be sent 'agents and officers to advise and support the provincial Governments and their armies' (these were the White anti-Bolshevik Governments). The reader can find more on this in Lloyd George's *War Memoirs*, Vol. II.

There is the case of Mr Bruce Lockhart, the British diplomatic representative in Moscow in 1918, who describes in his own book (*Memoirs of a British Agent*), how while accredited to the Soviet Government he knew of, and helped, British anti-Bolshevik agents who were organizing espionage and insurrection.

There is the famous case of the forged *Pravdas*, produced by the Home Office for smuggling into Russia in February 1921, at the very moment when the negotiations for the first Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement were in their last stages. The forged literature contained anti-Soviet propaganda. Readers will find more of this in Coates' *History of Anglo-Soviet Relations*.

There, too, and in a report by the General Council of the T.U.C. to its affiliated bodies in 1925, they will find many particulars of the forged 'Zinoviev Letter', launched by the Foreign Office in a form which decided the General Election of October 1924.

It found its parallel, nearly a quarter of a century later, when a British political intelligence officer in Berlin launched the forged 'Protokol M', supposed to show the horrible activities of the German Communists, and described in an official release by the Foreign Office on 16 January 1948, as

having been 'known to the British authorities for some time'. The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr Hector McNeil, assured the House of Commons five days later that the British Government 'believes this document to be genuine' – although its inept contents, stupid vocabulary, and so forth were as obvious marks of the forger as in the case of the Zinoviev letter. Only on 19 April the same year, after a great deal of persecution of the Communists in the Western zone of Germany had taken place, did Mr McNeil admit that 'the authenticity of the document now lies in doubt' – although, as the *Manchester Guardian* wrote, the document 'even to uninstructed observers like ourselves appeared to be doubtful on the internal evidence alone'.

Or take some striking examples of the contrast between words and deeds. On 4 May 1948 the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow, General Bedell Smith, in the course of a statement to Mr Molotov deploring the bad state of American-Soviet relations, declared: 'As far as the United States is concerned, the door always remains open for exhaustive discussion and settlement of our differences.' On 9 May the Soviet Government took him at his word, and Molotov told him that it agreed to the proposal to proceed 'to the discussion and settlement of differences existing between us'. Great was the consternation in Government circles of the United States, which in reality were preoccupied with very different ideas on the future of American-Soviet relations; the curious will find plenty of lurid details in the notorious *Forrestal Diaries*. But there must have been many in the Soviet Union who remembered the exact parallel, some twenty-nine years before, when the Allied Governments then warring against Soviet Russia had invited (by radio) both the Soviet Government and the White Governments to a Conference on Prinkipo Island (in the Sea of Marmara) being certain that Moscow would not accept – and were utterly discomfited when it

did accept, and they were in the unpleasant situation of having to drop their own proposal. We have seen earlier how, at the Disarmament Conference of 1932, the Soviet delegation had put the Americans in the same embarrassment by moving as a resolution proposals which had been made, evidently only for rhetorical purposes, by President Hoover in a message to the Conference.

What is the Soviet man in the street to think of Mr Churchill's latest revelations about his own attitude to the U.S.S.R. in May 1945, when officially he was sending Stalin warm assurances of friendship (*Second World War*, vol. VI, p. 477), while privately he was expressing the wish that the Americans should violate their agreement with the U.S.S.R. by occupying more German territory than they were entitled to (*ibid.*, p. 438) – and was instructing General Montgomery to prepare to rearm Nazi troops to fight the Russians if *they* broke that agreement?

Or, again, a different kind of contrast might be remembered. On 13 January 1951 the Commonwealth Prime Ministers assembled in London declared to the world that 'we would welcome any feasible arrangement for a frank exchange of views with Stalin or with Mao Tse-tung. We should in the name of common humanity make a supreme effort to see clearly into each other's hearts and minds.' And how did Mr Attlee, who was the host on this occasion, set about preparing for such a 'supreme effort to see clearly'?

In the course of his speech of 26 January, already cited, he stated that 'the present rulers of Russia are the inheritors of Russian imperialism . . . [their doctrines] preach slavery and the negation of human happiness . . . [they are] men who reject the moral values on which our civilization has been built up . . . slavery, without compensation or relief: that is what they would bring us'. Mr Attlee, of course, believed what he was saying, and possibly thought it quite

in keeping with the tones of earnest desire 'to see clearly' which had been adopted in the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' statement. But is it too difficult, or perverse, to imagine the Soviet man in the street saying: 'You can't trust the British' – however much Mr Attlee also spoke of peace?

As in the case of the other myths, this one is a dangerous starting-point for asking oneself if it is possible to be on friendly terms with the Russians. There would be too many charges that the pot was calling the kettle black.

CHAPTER TEN

'The Russians want to divide us from the U.S.A.'

THIS, the *Economist* thinks, was 'the wider objective' of Soviet policy ever since the end of the war (31 July 1954): the Soviet idea of peaceful coexistence is 'one camp without America', it states (7 August 1954).

What is this charge based on? Simply and solely that in its proposals for a general European treaty for collective security in Europe, made at the Berlin Four Power Conference on 10 February 1954, its original draft proposed inviting the Governments of the U.S.A. and the People's Republic of China 'to send their representatives as observers to the bodies set up under the Treaty'. This suggestion caused great indignation among those who consider that the United States is by nature a European Power, just as Turkey nowadays is an Atlantic Power, while China is not in South-east Asia at all.

But the Soviet Government had no intention of outraging the principles of the new geography. As soon as the United States and the United Kingdom objected, the Soviet proposal was modified. On 15 February Molotov said: 'This clause can perhaps be otherwise expressed, the special position of the U.S.A. can be otherwise defined, or the clause excluded altogether. We are ready to discuss proposals which would satisfy everyone.' In fact, the suggested European Security Treaty was not seriously discussed at all; but Molotov returned to the question in his election speech of 11 March: 'It has been said that a situation in which the United States would be left outside the Treaty of Collective Security in

Europe would be undesirable. But even during the Berlin Conference no one ever denied the possibility of examining appropriate amendments to the draft that had been submitted. In a Note of 31 March the Soviet Government declared that it 'sees no obstacles in the way of a favourable adjustment of the problem of United States participation in a general European treaty for collective security in Europe'.

Nor is it true that the idea was to 'disrupt N.A.T.O.', and thereby achieve the same object in a different way. Even in the original draft, Clause 10 of the proposed European Security Treaty read: 'The present Treaty shall not interfere in any way with the obligations contained in international treaties and agreements among European States, the principles and purposes of which are in line with the principles and purposes of the present Treaty.' Molotov indeed twice made it clear in the discussions that the Treaty was directed against the so-called European Defence Community, not against N.A.T.O.; he denounced as 'an invention' the suggestions that the Soviet proposals 'require as a preliminary condition the liquidation of the North Atlantic bloc'.

The Note of 31 March went even further. It recalled British, French, and American assertions at Berlin that N.A.T.O. was purely defensive in character. If that were so, there could be no objection if all the Great Powers which co-operated in war-time were members. It offered 'to join with the interested governments in examining the question of the Soviet Union's participation in the North Atlantic Treaty'.

This was by no means a sudden improvisation by the Soviet Union. When the North Atlantic Treaty was first signed, the U.S.S.R. complained that it 'from the very outset' excluded participation by the People's Democracies and the Soviet Union (29 January 1949). This complaint was re-

peated in a memorandum sent to the signatories on 31 March the same year, and again by Vyshinsky at the United Nations on 14 November 1949. In the Note of 24 February 1951, which has been mentioned above, it was pointed out that 'of the Great Powers who had formed the anti-Hitler coalition, only the Soviet Union was excluded from membership of the North Atlantic group'. And *Pravda*, in its reply to Mr Morrison's professions of peace later the same year, asked: 'Why did not the initiators of this Pact invite the Soviet Union to participate? Why did they shut themselves off from the Soviet Union?'

It may be recalled here that in 1934, when France had proposed a pact to guarantee peace in Eastern Europe based on a treaty of mutual assistance between the Soviet Union, Germany, and France, it was Germany which refused – and even the British press at the time agreed that this indicated aggressive intentions. Similarly the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance, signed in 1935, was accompanied by a protocol to the effect that both parties continued to regard as desirable the agreements earlier contemplated with Germany. When Germany refused to accede to these agreements, it was an obvious conclusion that while she wanted peace in the West, she had in the East 'political ambitions which it may be impossible to satisfy without war' (*Sunday Times*, 31 March 1935). The Soviet Union was evidently desirous of entering the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance precisely as a proof of its bona fides – more particularly as it would assume the same far-reaching obligations under the treaty as any other State – and certainly was not suggesting that the U.S.A. should thereby be put outside the alliance.

This was re-emphasized by Premier Malenkov on 26 April 1954, when in a speech to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. he reiterated: 'We have no intention of isolating the United States of America from Europe. We see no

obstacle preventing the Government of the United States from signing the General European Treaty on Collective Security in Europe.'

The only difference between the proposed European Security Treaty and all others concluded since the end of the war is that it proposes effective guarantees for the security of every country without exception on the European continent, 'without regard to their social systems', and is open to all of them.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

'Let the Russians show by deeds that they want peace and compromise'

Is that really so much in doubt?

Take the Potsdam decisions, adopted by Britain, the Soviet Union, and the U.S.A. in July–August 1945, so far as they referred to Germany. On the one hand, if applied conscientiously, they would have shattered the structure of German monopoly capitalism, with its heavy industry overgrown to a degree explicable only by the purpose of making war and keeping less-developed countries of Eastern Europe in economic subjection, and with its specially Prussian flavour of an alliance with the big Junker landowners who supplied the military caste of the Prussian State from the beginning of the eighteenth century. To this extent Potsdam carried out the policy of disarming Germany as Stalin had called for it to be done, on 6 November the previous year, 'both in economic and in military-political respects'. This was a guarantee, not only for the Soviet Union, but for the Western Powers as well.

On the other hand, the decisions gave ample scope for private enterprise to continue, on the understanding that 'all members of the Nazi party who have been more than nominal participants in its activities, and all other persons hostile to Allied purposes', would be removed from positions of responsibility in such private undertakings. It was laid down that agriculture and peaceful industry were to be encouraged to expand. Only *monopolist* organizations were to be eliminated, not capitalist factories. Therefore the Pots-

dam decisions (on Japan, incidentally, no less than on Germany) established 'control aimed at preventing the revival of aggressiveness in those countries, but which does not hinder their development and progress as democratic peace-loving States' (Molotov, 6 November 1945).

Thus Potsdam set forth aims which were common to all the Great Powers engaged in the war against Fascism. It left the German people free to decide their own road of economic and political development: the German workers and the German capitalists were free to strive for their respective aims without the issue being tipped in favour of militarism as it was in 1918–19, when arms were deliberately left to the German capitalists, Junkers, and militarists for political purposes. All the Allies, East and West, undertook to do was to remove the sources of danger to all Europe, as proved in two terrible wars.

Was not this a compromise in favour of peace? I have shown earlier (pp. 117–120) who broke it up.

Or take the handling of countries liberated from Nazi occupation.

From September 1944 onwards, in conquered Rumania, Bulgaria, and Finland, the Soviet Union had shown that, providing the native Quislings, direct organizers of aggressions by their national armies against the U.S.S.R. under Nazi guidance, were eliminated, it was prepared to refrain from any interference with the puny capitalist or backward agrarian structure of those countries. It accepted the Governments in these countries which included politicians guilty, from 1941 to 1944, of supporting the war against the U.S.S.R. – Maniu and Bratianu in Rumania, Petkov in Bulgaria – providing they fulfilled the armistice agreements honestly and loyally. This was a compromise, which left the outcome of political struggle in those countries to the people themselves – admittedly weighted in favour of the workers

and peasants by the destruction of the monopolists and big landowners who were involved in the pro-Nazi régimes: but not predecided by any interference of the Soviet Government.

It is quite true that in February 1945 and later the Soviet occupying authorities in Eastern Europe did not interfere when mass movements overthrew the Governments first set up after September 1944. But is it really so very clear that the Russians could be accused for that reason of refusing concession and compromise, and that the British and Americans were its champions?

Put yourself in the position of a Soviet citizen looking at what happened in Belgium and Greece at the end of the war. In December 1944, the British armed forces intervened openly against the Belgian resistance movement, and thus saved from nationalization the big private banks of Belgium and the great industrial corporations which had been easily the biggest and most organized collaborators of the Nazis in Europe. Even more emphatic was the British intervention, also in December 1944, to crush the main resistance movement in Greece, the E.A.M. As a result, there was reinstated in power substantially the same Royal Fascist régime, protecting the interests of merchants, bankers, manufacturers and military chiefs, that had controlled Greece from 1936 onwards under the dictatorship of General Metaxas. And in February 1945, when the Government set up in this way violated the 'Varkiza Agreement' with the E.A.M., under which the latter had disarmed with every expectation of British protection, none was forthcoming.[1] Where were the compromises, where the concessions?

Or take a third example, the question of the atom bomb,

1. Some interesting American sidelights on this are to be found in Leland Stowe, *While Time Remains* (1946), and Howard K. Smith, *The State of Europe* (1949).

built up during the war in complete secrecy from the Soviet ally of the American and British Governments. Naturally the first call of the Soviet Union, faced with the necessity otherwise of devoting to atomic armaments a large part of its national resources sorely needed for reconstruction after the war, was for the banning of atom bombs and the destruction of stocks. This was opposed with the famous 'Baruch Plan', which laid down that there should be an international authority to which should be handed over all atomic resources, from their natural state to the finished product, and that atom bomb production should only cease when the U.S.A. was convinced it was safe. Such a plan would put the most important resources of the Soviet Union under the control of an international body in which capitalist Governments had the overwhelming majority (and among them the United States in post-war conditions was by far the dominant Power). It was only thinkable if the Soviet Union were ready to give up its sovereignty and, before very long, its power of self-defence and its Socialist system. Even the very much milder control of coal and iron resources involved in the 'Schuman Plan' for Western Europe was rejected by Great Britain, for precisely the same reason. The Soviet Union therefore rejected the Baruch Plan; but offered a reasonable compromise – that there could be no question of total loss of sovereignty, yet that part might be yielded up, in the establishment of an international inspecting body with its own rules, working by majority decisions and able to carry out periodical or sudden inspections as it pleased.

Did this evolution of the Soviet attitude show unwillingness to make concessions? Evidently not in the opinion of *The Times*, for example, when it wrote (on 2 October 1951): 'If ever a system of international control could be established, it might be nearer to the Russian plan than to the arrangement proposed by Mr Baruch' – an arrangement

which it described a little later (1 December 1951) as 'Utopian'.

Or take, lastly, a more recent example – the series of gestures for friendship and relaxation of tension which the Soviet Union made in the course of 1953.

To the United Kingdom – the £90,000 sent as aid to the flood victims (February – before Stalin's death); the welcome given by *Pravda* to Mr Churchill's suggestion on 11 May for top-level Great Power talks; the dispatch of the cruiser *Sverdlov* for the celebration of the Coronation (June); the first offer to exchange consumer goods – matches against textiles (June); the offer of a Five Power Conference to reduce international tension, and of a Four Power Conference on Germany, when it was clear that Mr Churchill's suggestion was being side-tracked (September); the invitation extended by a Soviet football delegation to Arsenal to play in the U.S.S.R. the following summer (October).

At the United Nations – the acceptance of Mr Hammarskjold as the new Secretary-General, and proposals at the Economic Commission for Europe for expansion of East–West trade (March); the offer of a settlement *en bloc* of outstanding applications for admission to U.N.O. from fourteen States (September); a further offer that at least the five States entitled to enter under the Peace Treaties should be admitted (October).

In the Far East – intervention with the North Koreans for the release of British, American, and French civil internees (March); support of China's scheme for handing over prisoners unwilling to return to their own country to neutral States (March); proposal at the Executive Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies, supported by the British Red Cross, for a cease-fire in Korea during armistice negotiations (May).

In Germany – the proposal of a conference on air safety (March); the opening up of blocked waterways (March); the substitution of a civilian High Commissioner for a military governor (May); proposals for reduction of the total burden of occupation costs in all zones to 5 per cent, with other proposals to promote free elections (August).

In respect of some other countries may be mentioned: the admission of ten American journalists for an extensive visit to the U.S.S.R. (March); a Note to Turkey renouncing all territorial claims (May); the exchange of ambassadors with Yugoslavia (June); the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, broken off in February after a bomb outrage at the Soviet Legation (July).

This period of intense activity, directed to making relations with other countries more normal, can hardly be classed as a sign of unwillingness to make concessions or to back words by deeds. But let the reader put himself in the position of a Soviet citizen looking for a response to these actions, and what will he see?

An orgy of speculation in the newspapers as to the consequences of the death of Stalin, with no word of sympathy for the millions of Soviet citizens who were lamenting the loss of a great national leader. Cheap sneers throughout the year about the Soviet 'peace offensive', 'cooing', 'new look', etc., with lofty injunctions that this was not enough, that there must be 'deeds as well as words' – and scarcely a gesture in reply. And as far as Great Britain is concerned, while the mass of the people responded with all their hearts to the visit of the Soviet sailors for the Coronation, no responding gesture from official circles on the occasion of the national holiday on 7 November: the only country in Europe from which no greetings came, either from the Head of State or from the Prime Minister or from the Foreign Secretary. Even the American Ambassador in Moscow, by

direction of his Government, squeezed a few reluctant words out of himself on that occasion; not so Downing Street.

On whose side, in 1953, was the unwillingness to make concessions?

The fact is, and it must be faced, that there is a school of thought which considers that the concessions must all come from the U.S.S.R. Take, for example, a fairly typical editorial in the *Daily Mail* of 13 July 1954. It quotes Eisenhower and Churchill as favouring peaceful coexistence, and continues: 'It depends so much upon what is meant by "peaceful coexistence" – and especially what the Reds mean by it. If they mean non-interference with the West, well and good. But we have a feeling that they do not mean that. We suspect that to them "peaceful coexistence" means infiltration, subversion, and revolution in our half of the globe. . . . We should also like to know whether they are prepared to practise what they preach in South-east Asia. . . . There must be a collective anti-Communist defence system in South-east Asia. A line must be drawn beyond which the Reds must not advance.'

It obviously did not even cross the mind of the leader-writer that a Soviet journalist might say: 'When the London papers say "well and good", we suspect that to them these words mean that the Mutual Security Act of 1951, passed by the United States Congress, will continue to operate. The 100 million dollars voted to aid "selected persons who are escapees from *or residents in* the Iron Curtain countries to form them into national units, or for other purposes" [1] will continue, we suspect, to be available for the same purposes of interference and subversion in Eastern Europe. And so will the Central Intelligence Agency headed by Mr John

1. Congressman Kersten, moving the Bill in these words, added: 'Let us make some trouble for Joe Stalin in his own backyard' (20 October 1951).

Foster Dulles' brother, which spends some 75 million dollars a year on "dirty tricks", "playing cops and robbers back of the Iron Curtain" [Mr James Reston in the *New York Times*, 9 December 1951]. . . . We should also like to know whether the West are prepared to practise what they preach in South-east Asia – by allowing self-determination in Taiwan [Formosa], by giving orders to Chiang Kai-shek to stop bombing Chinese cities with American airplanes, stop seizing Polish and Soviet ships under the protection of the U.S. Navy, and so forth.' There is much else that the Soviet leader-writer might say, but all of it would be no more than tit-for-tat.[1]

One of the advantages of adopting the principle of peaceful coexistence would be that, in this and many other cases, the two sides would agree to sit down together and examine all the points at which mutual concessions would be to the mutual advantage.

1. John Gunter described the C.I.A. in *Look*, 12 August 1952.

Part Three: Prospects

CHAPTER TWELVE

Peaceful coexistence to-day

SUPPOSE we abandon the washing of dirty linen and arguments about who started it, and turn our minds to what the interests of the two countries Britain and the Soviet Union require in a framework of world peace. What obligations would peaceful coexistence impose?

Some of the answers to this question can be put in general terms; others refer to specific problems which representatives of the two countries, if they sat down to make what the diplomats call a tour of the horizon, would undoubtedly dwell on.

First, of course, comes the long-overdue declaration by the two States (and this applies equally to the relations of France and the United States with the U.S.S.R.) that they will immediately act on the principles laid down in their wartime treaties. In the case of Great Britain, Article III of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 26 May 1942 pledged the two countries 'to unite with other like-minded States in adopting proposals for common action to preserve peace and resist aggression in the post-war period'; a pledge which was further elaborated in Article V when the two parties agreed 'to work together in close and friendly collaboration after the re-establishment of peace for the organization of security and economic prosperity in Europe'. This distinct obligation was quite independent of treaties into which both Governments have entered since. A meeting or conference of the British and Soviet Governments, to examine all the points

in dispute between them and to find practical compromise solutions which would relax international tension, would really be giving a lead to the world, and particularly to other countries with similar obligations towards each other. Such a joint examination would cut the ground from under the ceaseless discussions of who could atom-bomb or hydrogen-bomb whom the soonest and the most destructively. Such an examination would put an end to the constant speculation, when the other side makes a move that on the face of it seems friendly, as to 'what's behind it?' It would open the way, not only for a reduction of international tension, but for the reduction of armaments.

Once in Anglo-Soviet history there has been such a survey – when Mr Eden visited Moscow in 1935. Some twenty years have passed since then. Apart from the psychological effect internationally and the practical value in reducing points of friction, it would perhaps restore the principle agreed upon when the first Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement was signed in 1921, that complaints against each other should be discussed privately before being acted upon in dramatic ways – like the Arcos raid of 1927.

A second principle necessitated by peaceful coexistence is respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This means that it is time to end the vain and provocative talk of 'liberation', which goes on incessantly among generals and politicians without repudiation by their Governments. If there are frontiers in dispute or territories in dispute, it is time to weigh up soberly and in business-like fashion whether any of them are worth a world war to have reversed. If not, then obviously the time has come to put down in black and white what has been agreed to *de facto* so that it becomes *de jure*. There are a number of disputed questions of this character in the world which, if they were eliminated, would make possible of themselves a

great reduction in the number of military bases on other people's territories – a constant source of alarm and suspicion in the world.

Thirdly, hostile alliances and coalitions, against which Britain and the Soviet Union pledged themselves by Article VII of their 1942 Treaty, should be brought to an end. This does not necessarily mean the rupture of all existing ties. As the example of the Soviet offers in connexion with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization shows in a positive way – and the transformation of Western Union from ostensibly an alliance for mutual protection against Germany into one for co-operation with a re-militarized Western Germany also shows in a negative way – existing agreements are capable of modification. The problem is only one of how to modify them so as to reduce international fears and promote international co-operation.

Next comes non-interference in each other's internal affairs – which does not mean refraining from advertising one's own material, cultural, scientific, and social achievements. On the contrary, the first experience of a tiny improvement in the atmosphere during 1954 as between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R., shows that there is a great thirst on either side for knowledge of the achievements of the other. But it does mean putting an end to incitements to revolt, circulated from radio stations, propaganda balloons, and the like. It means putting an end to the organization of desertion, and to propaganda in its favour, by surreptitious leaflets thrust into unsuspecting visitors' hands and coat-pockets, shouting at docksides, and so forth. Non-interference also means giving up the use of financial and economic pressure on the internal politics of other countries – of which there have been plenty of examples since the war.

A fifth distinctive feature of peaceful coexistence is trade on a basis of equality, without discrimination against each

other and without restriction, except for such obvious requirements of national security as arms and ammunition. When Stalin pointed out, in his *Economic Problems of Socialism* (1952), that as a result of the political cleavage in the world 'the single all-embracing world market disintegrated, so that now we have two parallel world markets, also confronting one another', and when Malenkov, in the same year, proclaimed the aim of 'the expansion of trade between countries, the restoration of the single international market', the response in this and other countries from official circles was not encouraging. But here there has been a distinct change. The President of the Board of Trade on 22 March 1954 declared unambiguously: 'If the world were divided into two separate halves, it was an unhealthy world for trade.' Mr R. A. Balfour, Deputy President of the Association of British Chambers of Commerce, said at Newcastle on 16 September 1954 that 'the biggest short-term hope for an expansion of overseas markets lay in an increase in East–West trading'.

This coincidence of British and Soviet views was no accident. At the meeting of the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations in March 1954 the Soviet Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade, Mr Kumykin, pressed for the reconvening of the Committee on Development of Trade, which had not met for five years. The aim of the meeting should be, he said, the removal of existing difficulties in the way of East–West trade, inter-regional co-operation (Europe with the Far East and Latin-America), the working out of long-term multilateral payments agreements in which all countries could join, and more meetings of business men under international auspices. The British and American delegates objected to the first of the aims mentioned, as likely to bring in the political question of the embargoes on 'strategic goods'. By private negotiations,

what the Geneva correspondent of *The Times* (18 March 1954) called 'a fair compromise' was reached, and a draft jointly sponsored by the British and Soviet delegations was submitted to the Commission and unanimously adopted. It led to a highly successful meeting of the Committee on Development of Trade the following October. A number of other useful decisions were taken, in which the Soviet Union and its associated States co-operated with Western countries.

By 66 votes to 6 with 1 abstention, the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe – a body into which no impious Communist foot has ever been known to enter – decided on 22 June 1954 that 'East–West trade may contribute to peaceful coexistence'. We have already seen that the Governments of China and India, representing between them nearly half the human race, have declared for this very principle in their treaties. Obviously it is time for a fresh approach and for the restoration of the single world market.

A few words will not be out of place here, perhaps, about the so-called 'strategic' controls mentioned earlier. The Soviet Union by agreement is building and reconstructing for China 156 large enterprises in the iron and steel, coal-mining, engineering (including machine-tools), non-ferrous metal mining and processing, oil cracking, and electric power industries. Obviously nothing like this could take place unless the Soviet Union were exporting to China the heaviest equipment of all kinds, usually classified as 'strategic'.

Again, Mr Dabrowski, the Polish Minister of Foreign Trade, revealed in his speech at his party Congress in March 1954 that thanks to Soviet help Poland was exporting in large quantities locomotives, railway wagons, machine-tools, mining machinery, and sea-going ships; entire sugar refineries were being sent to China – something Poland had never dreamt of before. Rumania is exporting tractors,

equipment for oil refining, machine-tools (as well as her traditional raw material exports). Nothing of all this could possibly have happened without the initial supply to these formerly mainly agrarian countries of heavy 'strategic' equipment by the U.S.S.R.

Thus it is clear that the 'strategic' ban imposed officially by the Battle Act (and unofficially long before) has not only been a failure but has helped to defeat its own ends by stimulating industries which did not exist before in the banned countries. The ban, in fact, only injures British and other exporters, not the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies – although obviously it slows down the process of making available their natural resources for consumer needs, which is the ultimate objective of their planning system. The resumption of trade without discrimination would enable British exporters and those of other countries to take a share in the constantly expanding market of all the countries, from Poland to China, at present falling under the ban.

A sixth principle, essential to peaceful coexistence, is the utmost government support for the exchange of scientific and cultural experience between the two countries. This does not mean that voluntary activities which have maintained peaceful connexions, very tenuously but very stubbornly, during the years of cold war must be frowned on – as the comic reproach of Mr Mayhew, that they are 'unrepresentative' and even have no M.P.s associating with them (!) might suggest. On the contrary, voluntary activities of these kinds should be encouraged in every possible way. The reciprocal visits of British and Soviet football teams, the visits of Soviet field athletes and rowers to Britain, and (we hope) speedy return visits to the U.S.S.R., visits by singers and other musicians, by artists of the stage and film, are best promoted by voluntary organizations; but the Government

can and should make them easier, as they have much experience in doing in recent years. Similarly, universities have an enormous field of potential contact and beneficial study before them through organized visits; it is for the Governments to refrain from giving the kind of 'advice' (*it is quite safe, but it wouldn't be politic*) which prevented British universities from taking part in the six hundredth anniversary of the Charles University in Prague in 1948, or stopped American and other astronomers from holding their international congress in the U.S.S.R. in 1952, as they had previously agreed. There is room for every kind of initiative, official and unofficial, to promote bona-fide visits, lectures, performances, displays to and in each other's country. With these of course should come the beginning of individual tourism once again.

Even a beginning, by a formal declaration of such principles and by the first steps to put them into practice, would make a tremendous difference to the world atmosphere.

But equally urgent is the need for compromise settlements on the main disputed issues in the world, as between the two groups of States, on which British-Soviet conversations would be of the highest value in promoting agreement.

Thus, on the question of Germany, the fact is that both sides have declared for free elections over the whole of Germany. The British, American, and French Governments, however, interpret this as meaning that election laws are worked out by the occupying Powers, and the elections take place in the presence of the forces of occupation, under the supervision of foreign Powers. The Soviet view is that the election laws should be worked out by the Germans themselves, i.e. by the representatives of Eastern and Western Germany, with occupation forces reduced to a bare defensive minimum, and agreed police forces of both sides under Four Power inspection. In spite of the argument that West

Germans won't sit down with East Germans, at any rate on the official level, it has been shown in practice that North and South Koreans, who have been actually at war with each other, have done so; Viet Minh 'rebels' and Viet Nam 'puppets' have done the same. Obviously if the Powers backing the two sides in Germany give their minds to a reasonable compromise, beneficial results can be got with West and East Germans too.

In fact, ever since 9 January 1952 the East German Government had repeatedly said it is willing to accept the pre-Hitler election laws as a basis; the Soviet Union stated on 23 October 1954 that it was willing to discuss afresh proposals for elections in Germany put forward by the British Government the previous February; and on 15 January 1955 it offered to accept international supervision of German elections in a form agreed by both German Governments. It may be argued that such agreement is impossible; but how do we know until it has been sought by negotiation?

Again, both sides have not disguised their dislike of rearming Germany (perhaps with the exception of a certain number of open preachers of preventive war against the U.S.S.R.). A good part of the arguments in defence of E.D.C. were concerned with showing how it would allegedly prevent a rearmed Western Germany becoming a menace like Kaiser Germany and Hitler Germany. The question of 'controls' which will serve the same purpose was an extremely important part of the discussions at and after the Nine Power Agreements signed in London on 3 October 1954. As for the Soviet point of view, it is perfectly well known, and is embodied in the proposals made at Berlin in February 1954 and since, that a united Germany should be allowed arms for defence only, their levels and the strength of her armed forces being determined by Four Power agreement. When manoeuvres with card votes at

Labour Party Conferences are reduced to their proper place, it is quite beyond dispute that the overwhelming majority of the British Labour movement, so far as the rank and file is concerned, is at one with the clearly expressed will of the German Social Democratic Party and West German Trades Union Congress in opposing the rearmament of Germany.

A practical agreement between the four occupying Powers to prevent German rearmament is unquestionably possible given the determination to reach it. And in view of the record in European aggression of the German military caste since 1864, German rearmament is probably the most perilous single step that any Great Power could decide upon to-day, where our continent is concerned.

That a settlement is possible in Korea was in reality shown at the Geneva Conference in 1954. The obstacle on which the negotiations broke down was an artificial one, brought forward at the last moment. The Western States demanded that free elections should be organized under *United Nations* supervision, with foreign forces remaining in the country. The North Koreans, supported by People's China and the U.S.S.R., demanded that the elections should be organized by Koreans themselves, i.e. by a commission representing the two halves of the country, and that as a preliminary all foreign troops should be withdrawn. What was behind these two demands? The Western Powers feared pressure on the elections by China and by the North Korean forces. The North Koreans and their supporters treated the United Nations not as a detached authority but as a belligerent in the late hostilities: to accept its authority over the whole country, for the purposes of elections, would be not only capitulation after a war which the North Koreans did not lose but also, in their view, legalization of violent pressure by the United States, which commands a majority in the United Nations, and by the armed forces of Syngman

Rhee, who has again and again proclaimed his impatience at not being allowed to 'march north'.

Is this situation not susceptible of compromise, seeing that North and South Koreans, nevertheless, sat together at Geneva? The road to a solution obviously lies through resuming this process where it was left off in the Swiss city – by bringing them together to discuss practical questions of peaceable relations between the two States at present existing in Korea, and between their peoples, including that of elections, agreed mutual reduction of forces and the possibility of doing without foreign troops, side by side with every possible 'unofficial' contact between Korean citizens on the scientific, trading, cultural, sports, and other planes.

A third issue on which practical compromise is possible is surely that of the weapons of mass destruction – and of 'conventional' destruction as well. Both sides have declared their horror at the peril created by the hydrogen bomb and the atom bomb. On the one hand, the Soviet Union accompanied its announcements, first of atomic explosions and then, in 1953, of its explosion of a hydrogen bomb by renewing the statement of its desire to see such weapons prohibited, and offering to enter into negotiations immediately for this purpose. On the other hand, when the Labour Party in Parliament moved its resolution calling for a Three Power Conference on the question of banning such weapons and promoting a reduction in armaments, the Conservative leader declared his agreement (subject to the question of when the heads of the Powers concerned were to meet), and the resolution was adopted unanimously by the House of Commons (5 April 1954).

The crushing burden of armaments on both sides has been declared wasteful and a barrier to progress.

The obvious need, in these conditions, for some kind of compromise settlement is apparent to millions of people,

as shown by innumerable resolutions in all countries. No doubt it is recognition of this that produced agreement at the United Nations Assembly in October 1954, that the Five Powers most immediately concerned with the production of weapons should have another try, in the privacy of a sub-committee, to hammer out such an agreement. Reduction of armaments of the conventional type in the first stage; prohibition and elimination of the weapons of mass destruction as a second stage; the international inspecting body to function from the start – these three points are common to all Five Powers which entered the sub-committee. It should be remembered that likewise common to all States members of the United Nations was the decision of the General Assembly on 14 December 1946, that any such inspecting body must work 'within the framework of the Security Council', i.e. it has full autonomy in its inspecting functions, recommendations, etc., but the decisions as to what must be done on those recommendations and reports remains in the hands of the Security Council. Any other proposal would in essence bring the situation back to the Baruch Plan for imposing the will of one side, numerically in a majority as far as Governments are concerned, on the other.

But what relief it would be to the ordinary people of all countries, and how much it would improve the atmosphere for negotiations on this and other questions, if the Powers possessing atomic and hydrogen weapons were to make a declaration that, while continuing to possess them pending an agreement as to their elimination, they solemnly undertook not to use them in warfare! The Soviet Union proposed this on 21 December 1953. The principle is not new: the Powers in 1925 undertook similar obligations regarding chemical and bacteriological weapons, which they all possessed – and in fact neither poison gas nor germ bombs were used by either side in the second world war.

A fourth practical issue is that of the States still kept out of the United Nations by the vetoes of one side or the other. This is an old-standing question, dating from the end of the war. The United Kingdom and United States have persistently refused their vote for the admission of the countries in which revolutionary social changes took place in the last stages of the war – Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, in Europe; North Korea (Korean Democratic Republic) and what is now Northern Viet Nam (Viet Nam Democratic Republic) in Asia. They have consistently refused to recognize the Mongolian People's Republic, set up as long ago as 1921 when small units of the Siberian Red Army helped Mongolian poor peasants, who had risen in revolt against the Russian Whites occupying their country, to establish their independence. On the other hand, the Soviet Union has retaliated by refusing its support for the admission of candidates proposed by the U.S.A. and Great Britain – States which were no less on the enemy side than the first group just mentioned – Austria, Finland, Italy, Japan; States which were 'neutral' bases of Fascist activity during the war – Ireland, Portugal; States occupied by American and British forces after the war, and prevented in consequence from making the social changes carried out under protection of the Soviet forces – South Korea, Libya, and the three States of Indo-China (Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos); and States whose independence of foreign tutelage was recognized only after the war – Ceylon, Jordan, Nepal.

The deadlock on such candidates has been persistent since the foundation of the United Nations. Time and again the Soviet Union has proposed the obvious practical solution – that the whole group should be admitted *en bloc*, on the principle of the universality of the United Nations not admitting discrimination, provided the State concerned declares its acceptance of the Charter and is a recognized

sovereign State. Moreover, this view is not confined to the Soviet Union. As *The Times* has written: 'There is a strong case for abandoning this undignified bargaining, and for agreeing to admit all nations who can fairly claim to be independent and who are not engaged in a war of aggression. Membership of the United Nations is open to all "peace-loving States", and it cannot be seriously argued that Bulgaria, for instance, is more aggressive or less independent than Poland or Czechoslovakia' – or, one might add, than the United States so far as aggressiveness is concerned, or than the Philippines in independence. *The Times* leading article made the statement quoted in November 1951. Nothing has happened in the intervening three years to make the argument less forcible to-day.

But an even more crying problem of United Nations membership has arisen with the refusal to admit the Government exercising power in the mainland of China over a population one-quarter of the whole human race – the Government of the People's Republic of China. Of course there is a precedent for refusing it membership, on the ground that the Power controlling a majority in the United Nations doesn't like the economic, social, and political system of People's China. For the very same reason the founders of the League of Nations, a generation before, consciously and deliberately refused to consider Soviet Russia as a possible member. But one would have thought that the lessons of that refusal, and of the attempt to isolate Soviet Russia, were only too plain. Moreover, it is ridiculous to ignore the simple fact that China is by no means isolated as Soviet Russia was. Not only has she alliances of the closest character with other countries in the same camp as herself – the Socialist camp, totalling 900 million people – but she is in normal diplomatic relations with India (360 millions), Burma (20 millions), as well as Great Britain and the Scan-

dinavian countries, the whole bringing the total up to more than half the population of the world. To refuse to 'notice' China is all the more ridiculous after she played such a full part in the Geneva Conference on Far Eastern questions, and at a time when the most responsible British business organizations have gone to China to discuss economic relations.

The only semblance of an argument is that China 'committed aggression' by intervening in the Korean war. 'She must not be allowed to shoot her way into the United Nations,' say American politicians. But she did not intervene until the end of 1950, on grounds which may or may not be considered sufficient by American diplomats (neglect of her warning that she could not tolerate the approach of hostile forces to her frontier). But what had happened in the previous twelve months, after the Chinese People's Republic was set up, to prevent the United States from supporting her entry when she was not 'shooting her way', etc., etc.? And why should American action against China in the summer of 1950 be forgotten – intervention in the Chinese Civil War by suddenly sending the U.S. Navy to prevent the final defeat of Chiang Kai-shek in his island refuge on Taiwan (Formosa)? The North Koreans were not threatening to occupy the island; they had not attacked Chiang Kai-shek, even according to the United Nations indictment against them: Taiwan was not a base for the United Nations to use in their operations in Korea. The United States' virtual occupation of Taiwan was as wanton and uncalled-for an act of aggression against China, even if every word of the United Nations majority's denunciation of North Korea were accepted, as any in history. Two blacks don't make a white, we are told from our childhood. But in international politics, at any rate, they should preclude the use of high moral arguments to cover up an obvious act of prejudice –

namely, that because you don't like the political and social system of a country, you are not going to admit it to the United Nations. Of course it would be inconvenient for the United States officially to admit this reason, since Great Britain has formally repudiated it in establishing diplomatic relations with People's China. But the U.S.A. can still compel Great Britain into the most grotesquely illogical action at the United Nations, bearing in mind her diplomatic relationship with China, by voting against proposals to give China her rightful place in the United Nations and its governing counsels.

Surely if common sense calls for one practical compromise to make things easier in the world, this is an opportunity.

The list of questions on which early action of a compromise character could be taken does not end there. The question of Austria – of a Peace Treaty with her and of the evacuation of foreign troops – is in reality a question of the settlement to be reached in Germany. For what is frequently forgotten, when appeals are made to the Allies' promise in 1943 that they would restore her independence, is a very significant rider. The Allied Declaration on Austria went on to say: 'She has a responsibility which she cannot evade for participation in the war on the side of Hitlerite Germany, and in the final settlement account will inevitably be taken of her own contribution to her liberation.' In fact, she never made the contribution, because she was permeated with Fascism even before the Nazis occupied her in 1938, and her younger generation were more Nazified than any other in Central or Eastern Europe among the countries occupied by Germany. That generation took part to the full in the invasion, massacres, and other atrocities in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. All these Fascist forces, except to the extent that they were destroyed in battle by the Soviet Army or

broken up in the Soviet zone of occupation, remain intact. There are innumerable semi-legal, often only transparently disguised, Fascist organizations in Austria continuing their propaganda. Consequently the simple restoration of full sovereignty to Austria – just because the warning of 1 November 1943 remained unheeded except for the tiniest minority of anti-Fascists – would immediately make possible another *Anschluss* with Western Germany. Compromise is possible here in many respects; but the radical change can only come with a settlement one way or the other over Germany.

But there is one most important sphere of possible compromise, even if Germany remains divided and provided her two sections are only armed by agreement. This is the sphere of European security. It is time to remember that 'peace is indivisible': that seven States in Western Europe who guarantee peace among themselves (with the support of two more across the Atlantic) but refuse to admit to that peace twenty-five other European States, are not necessarily promoting peace for themselves; they may be guaranteeing war in Europe through the ambitions of one of their number. It may be argued that the Soviet Union has its own 'bloc', because it has treaties for mutual assistance with the Eastern democracies. But unfortunately for this logic in all these treaties – as in those with Yugoslavia and Finland – it is specifically laid down that mutual assistance is to be provided 'in the event of aggression by Germany or by other States allied with her'. The treaties are not operative in other cases.[1] Moreover, these arrangements do not provide for, and have not led to, the formation of any over-all general staff or other co-ordinating military body. It was only the prospect of the rearmament of Western Germany that

1. The same provision occurs in the British-Soviet Treaty of 1942 and the Franco-Soviet Treaty of 1944.

brought the decision of a conference of East European States (December 1954) to co-ordinate their defence measures, if the prospect became reality.

The Soviet Union put forward far-reaching proposals in the draft European Security Treaty submitted to the Four Power Conference at Berlin in February 1954. These proposals were to the effect that all countries in Europe, large and small, which desired to help in preserving European peace – including Western and Eastern Germany – should sign a pact of mutual guarantee for the purpose, with co-ordinating political and military consultative bodies to ensure its effective working. In fact, as many have pointed out, some of the clauses in the draft were modelled on those of the North Atlantic Treaty.

It was argued against this draft that it involved breaking up the link between Western Europe and the United States. We have seen earlier that this is a pure invention: not only would the U.S.A. be a member if it wished, but the U.S.S.R. was willing to join N.A.T.O. It was also argued that this would mean that Europe would be 'dominated by the Soviet Union'. But both at Berlin and in subsequent statements by Molotov (a report to the nation on 5 March and an election speech on 11 March) it was stated categorically that the Soviet Union was prepared to consider any possible suggestion for guarding against such domination, by itself or any other State. Another argument was that the Soviet Union 'would have access to every military secret of the Western Powers' – although the latter would in the same way have access to the military secrets of the Soviet Union.

Yet a further objection has been that the proposals 'envisaged the continued partition of Germany (*In Defence of Europe*, issued by the Labour Party). But in reality the proposals expressly say that the two sections of Germany should be in the pact so long as Germany remains divided; should

she be united, she would join as a single State. In any case, those who insist on rearming Western Germany in defiance of the warnings that this means the continued dismemberment of the country – warnings which come from the West as well as from the Soviet Union – cannot complain if the Soviet proposals take this possibility as a real one. In a statement published on 13 June 1954 the Soviet Government accordingly offered to establish cultural and economic relations with Western Germany; and on 15 January 1955 it offered diplomatic relations as well – pending German reunification.

Although the Soviet Union put forward its draft and argued strongly in its favour, it made perfectly clear that it regarded the draft only as a basis for discussion, and that it was prepared to consider alternative schemes aiming at the same end – a guarantee of security which united Europe instead of dividing it. It was in this spirit that, in a Note of 23 October 1954, it called for a Four Power Conference in November to discuss (i) restoration of the unity of Germany on peace-loving and democratic foundations and the holding of free all-German elections; (ii) withdrawal of the occupation troops of the Four Powers from the territory of Eastern and Western Germany; (iii) convening of a general European conference to examine the question of setting up a system of collective security in Europe. In a further Note on 13 November it suggested 29 November as the date for a conference on European security, to be held in Moscow or Paris. Ultimately the conference was held without the Western Powers.

One thing is certain – that peaceful coexistence of Britain, France, and the U.S.A. with the Soviet Union, China, and the States associated with them involves a beginning of discussions about such questions as those indicated. For the essence of peaceful coexistence of States with differing social

systems is that, while retaining the full right to have their own opinions about each other's internal arrangements, they seek out busily every possible point of friction in order to find some compromise means of eliminating it. Henry Wallace, former associate of President Roosevelt when the latter was pursuing a policy of friendship with the Soviet Union, put the point well in his 'Open Letter to Premier Stalin' of 11 May 1948: 'Ideological competition between Communism and capitalism is a different matter from misunderstanding between the Soviet Union and the United States. The latter can be solved in a way that would preserve peace. But competition between the capitalist and Communist systems will be never-ending. It is the concern of both nations to see that this competition remains constructive, and that it never degenerates into the status of such a religious war as the Thirty Years War, which so devastated Europe at the beginning of the seventeenth century. ... Undoubtedly many Communists and capitalists have expressed the belief that their particular system will inevitably dominate the world. But that does not mean that the Soviet Union and the United States must engage in a perpetual conflict. The two countries can agree on a *modus vivendi*, while the slow process of time determines the strong and the weak points of the two economic systems, and the free peoples of the world day by day make small choices which eventually will evolve, on the basis of empiricisms, systems which will be best adapted for the various individual countries.' (It was in reply to this Open Letter that Stalin said that the Soviet Government 'believes that Mr Wallace's programme could serve as a good and fruitful basis' for agreement with the U.S.A.)

Substituting Great Britain for the United States, Mr Wallace's statement in broad principle answers to British interests as much as it does to those of the Soviet Union and China. Its application to the particular problems which have

been poisoning the international atmosphere for so long would beyond question greatly assist in resolving them. And for this purpose an initiative by Britain would be of tremendous value to the cause of world peace.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

From coexistence to co-operation

ONCE the countries with different social systems accept the principle of peaceful coexistence for practical guidance in their everyday relations, things cannot and will not stop there. The idea is to prevent things drifting from bad to worse; but it presupposes an alternative – that things may get better. And for the sake of making things get better, it is perfectly obvious that from coexistence the nations must and will go on to positive co-operation. There is great work to be done in the world which requires the joint efforts of many or all countries. The difference in social systems need not be a bar to this – even though both sides will probably make the reservation that, if their view on what should be the social structure were generally accepted, things would go even better. Unfortunately, so small has been the practical experience of peaceful coexistence that not a great deal of time has been spent in discussion on the fields of positive co-operation. Yet, as shown earlier, those most active in preaching peaceful coexistence have not hesitated to refer to co-operation between the Socialist and capitalist countries.

A broadcast statement by Dr Edith Summerskill, chairman of the Labour Party, on 11 December 1954 offers an apt text: 'Peaceful coexistence does not imply necessarily the acceptance of all that the Government of another country stands for: it does imply, however, something more than the mistrustful non-belligerence which passes for peace to-day. We must rid ourselves of the idea that we can progress while one half of the world remains hungry.'

The first obvious and underlying field for co-operation is the economic, and in direct trade between the two groups first and foremost. Here there are very great opportunities, even as the economies of the respective sides stand to-day. As the United Nations *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* has pointed out, fourteen West European countries could potentially export at the present time goods to the value of 1,450 million dollars to the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies – but are exporting at present less than 470 million dollars' worth. They could import to the value of 2,000 million dollars, but their actual imports are less than 580 million dollars in value. These figures, or at any rate their general drift, are fully confirmed by the practical proposals which have been made by the representatives of countries like the Soviet Union and China.

At the International Economic Conference held in Moscow in April 1952, the Soviet representative Mr Nesterov (President of the All-Union Chamber of Commerce) pointed out that, provided there were serious intentions of expanding trade with the U.S.S.R., the latter would increase in two or three years its purchases from the capitalist countries of their usual exports and could sell them Soviet produce, to the aggregate value of £900 million–£1,300 million per annum – as compared with the highest figure reached since the war, some £450 million in 1948, and with about £1,000 million in 1931. But it was possible to expand the trade turnover still more rapidly if long-term agreements were concluded. The Chinese Vice-Minister of Trade said his country, given favourable conditions, could treble or quadruple its trade with the countries of private enterprise in the same period, raising it to as high as £800 million a year. The representatives of six European People's Democracies offered to double their trade with the same countries, raising it to an aggregate of some £2,500 million a year.

Although the proposals made at that Conference were made light of by the Governments to whom they were addressed, the course of Soviet foreign trade (for example) has since then fully justified Mr Nesterov's statement. It stood, in total turnover, at just over £540 million in 1940, nearly £1,100 million in 1949, £1,700 million in 1951, over £1,860 million in 1952, over £2,000 million in 1953, and in the first half of 1954 it went up another 30 per cent.

Only a country the economy of which was expanding at a tremendous rate could allow its foreign trade to develop so fast.

The Soviet Union is no more inclined to the principles of 'autarky', first proclaimed by the Nazis and often unjustly fathered upon the U.S.S.R., than at any previous time. Mr Kumykin, in a speech at the March 1954 session of E.C.E. already mentioned, declared: 'The Soviet Union delegation proceeds from the assumption that mutually beneficial trade between all countries, irrespective of differences in their economic and social systems, is one of the *basic prerequisites for peaceful economic development, for the improvement of standards of living of the peoples*, and for the consolidation and development of mutual understanding and friendship.' He recognized, that is to say, that Soviet economic development and Soviet standards of living must benefit from the expansion of foreign trade no less than those of their partners. Some idea of what practical forms this could take was given in the proposals made by the Foreign Trade Minister, I. G. Kabanov, in the list of possible Soviet requirements from the United Kingdom, for delivery between 1955 and 1957, which was handed to the group of British business-men who went to Moscow in February 1954. The long list included 181 vessels of all kinds (50 of them cargo ships), over £3,000 million worth of railway equipment, enormous quantities of electrical equipment, many hundreds of machine-

tools of all kinds, textile and food industry equipment to the value of nearly £30 million, and a vast amount of other equipment to the value of approximately £270 million. In addition raw materials, foodstuffs, and other consumer goods could be imported in the same years to the value of over £1,300 million.

China, according to the trade mission which visited Great Britain in July 1954, could begin by raising British-Chinese turnover to the value of £80 million–£100 million in one year when discrimination was ended (*The Times*, 14 July 1954). China needed chemicals, dyestuffs, fertilizers, pharmaceutical goods, textiles, electric generating plants, steel plates and tubes, locomotives and lorries, and much else. She could export (to pay for these) her traditional products like bristles, wood oil, soya, oil seeds, egg products, and also new commodities of which she had no surplus before. In 1953 the total trade between the two countries, both ways, was no more than £17 million.

Are these possibilities exaggerated? Of course, in a sense the ultimate test will come when the barriers to trade are removed. But it must be remembered that one direct piece of evidence on the absorbing and producing capacity of the Soviet Union and its associated countries already exists, in the shape of the surpluses of consumer goods, compared with (say) Tsardom in the case of the Soviet Union, or 1948 or earlier in the case of the People's Democracies. On this subject a great deal of nonsense is frequently talked which will not, however, stand the test of figures.

In the Soviet Union, taking into account population, total output, and exports, there were retained in the country between 1949 and 1953 12·2 cwt. of grain per head – as compared with 9·5 cwt. forty years before, in the peak period of the old Russia, 1909–13. In 1953, with a population of some 210 millions, the Soviet Union disposed of 3·6 million tons

of sugar; in 1913 with a population of 171 millions, Tsarist Russia had 1·3 million tons of sugar. In 1953 the Soviet Union put on to its markets, *apart from what was consumed in the State and collective farms*, 400,000 tons of butter, of which very little was exported; in 1913 Tsarist Russia marketed 100,000 tons, of which half was exported. It will be remembered that in 1953 the Soviet Union actually bought additional butter from abroad. But the increase in population was far outstripped in all three cases by the increase in output. The standards of consumption have gone up, of course; but it is quite certain that the Soviet Union can under these circumstances produce a marketable surplus for the foreign consumer – providing firm contracts over a period of years enable the planning authorities to know where they are (as the Economic Commission for Europe pointed out in its 1949 Report).

The Soviet Union produced 260 million pairs of leather footwear in 1953 and 140 million pairs of goloshes, as against 16 million pairs of leather footwear (one-half by handicraft methods) produced in 1913 and 28 million pairs of goloshes. Cotton textiles produced in 1953 were two and a half times the length of the 1913 figures, woollens were double, silks ten times as great. Whereas Tsarist Russia in 1913 assembled a few thousand bicycles from imported parts, the Soviet Union in 1953 manufactured 3 million bicycles. All these goods have been paid for over the counter by individual Soviet citizens, and have gone into their homes – as also has furniture from Finland and Czechoslovakia, perfume from France and Switzerland (under their trade agreements with the U.S.S.R.), and much else. Thus it is clear that there is a huge consumer market in the Soviet Union which expands with its production, because in the end the productive machinery is collectively owned by the individual consumers. One need not go any further into the

theory of it: the unmistakable fact is that the expansion of the consumer market in the U.S.S.R. gives great openings, direct and indirect, to British and other exporters.

The same in varying degrees applies to the People's Democracies. Czechoslovakia, for example, in 1953 increased her output of textiles nearly 40 per cent and leather goods nearly 20 per cent compared with 1948, her ready-made clothes over 200 per cent and underwear 150 per cent, with a total of employed persons nearly one-third more than in 1948 and an average real wage just over one-third more than it was in the first year of the alleged 'rape' of the country. In China, where of course much backwardness still has to be overcome, the purchasing power of the rural population – the huge majority of the people – showed in 1953 an increase of 76 per cent over the 1950 level; and in spite of all the difficulties, every visitor with a knowledge of China's past recognizes that the people live far better than a few years ago, and must soon demand improvements in every direction which the Trade Mission's import programme only begins to reflect.

But international trade now is not the only field of economic co-operation which is open. Direct economic collaboration in overcoming natural difficulties, and in mastering Nature for the benefit of man, becomes practically possible once peaceful coexistence is seriously accepted.

This question first arose, just as it did after the first world war, when the Great Powers were considering their reconstruction problems and their war-time pledges after the overthrow of Nazi Germany.

At that time, in 1947, there appeared the Marshall Plan; we have seen the differences which this aroused, and the outcome. But now that those particular controversies are passing into history, the suggestions then made by the Soviet Foreign Minister can be examined in a new light. M. Molo-

tov said that the Soviet Union was in favour of the countries of Europe drawing up estimates of their needs themselves, on the basis of their own complete control of their own resources, developing them to the utmost, and submitting what additional aid they would require from the United States in the form of credits and deliveries of goods. It would be possible for a committee of assistance of the European Powers to collect this information, co-ordinate it, and, subject to co-operation with the European Economic Commission of the U.N.O., discuss with the United States how it could help.

This approach to the question of international co-operation – as distinct from peaceful coexistence pure and simple – would be useful in a still wider sphere than that of post-war reconstruction.

Already in 1952 Premier Malenkov spoke of the idea of aid from the stronger countries to the weaker, on the basis of equality and respect for their national sovereignty in another connexion. In the same speech at the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party in which he dwelt on the 'peaceful coexistence and co-operation of capitalism and Communism', he also put forward the conception that commercial relations between them could 'keep industries in the industrially developed countries running for many years to come, ensure the sale of products of which one country has an abundance to other countries, *help to raise the economy of the under-developed countries, and thereby bring about lasting economic co-operation*'. By this time, too, a good deal had been said about help to under-developed countries in the United Nations, and in connexion with national schemes like the British Colombo Plan and the American 'Point Four'. In one way or another, it has been generally recognized that by raising the standard of living and expanding the economy of the under-developed coun-

tries, the industrialized Powers can ensure that there will be developed a boundless field for assistance, offering scope to every industrial country, and at the same time developing an enormous potential market.

Professor de Castro, chairman of the Council of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, said in a speech at Stockholm (November 1954) that the 20 richest countries in the world, with 16 per cent of the population, have over 70 per cent of the world income; while the 15 poorest countries with over 50 per cent of the population, have less than 10 per cent of the world's income.

What is the chief difficulty of such countries as those of Latin America, Africa, and most of Asia? It is that they are in the main one-crop agrarian countries, or suppliers of minerals without the means of working them up; in either case, as a consequence, dependent on selling their materials to more advanced countries. Nearly 60 per cent of the export of all the Latin-American countries consists of coffee, sugar, fruit, and oil. The bulk of Malayan and Indonesian exports consist of rubber, those of Ceylon of tea, those of British Guiana and other West Indian countries of sugar. On the other hand, their heavy industry is almost non-existent. All the countries of Africa put together, with a total population of over 200 millions, produce 1,200,000 tons of steel a year, and all the Latin-American States put together, with a population of 170 millions, produce no more than 1,700,000 tons of steel a year – whereas Belgium alone, with a population of 8,700,000, produces 5 million tons of steel, which is more than all the under-developed countries, with a population of 1,000 millions, put together. This means that they are unable to modernize their agriculture, to provide alternative employment for their bitterly poor peasantry, and to open up their vast agricultural and mineral wealth, which would be of the greatest value to the whole world,

without foreign aid. Yet foreign aid in the past has been available only in the shape of 'investments', and in only those branches of economy which foreign monopolies regarded as profitable – thus ensuring that the greater part of the new wealth produced was exported abroad and that the economy of the under-developed countries remained as unbalanced as before.

Providing that peaceful coexistence is accepted as meaning, among other things, respect for the national sovereignty of all countries great and small, it should be possible to open a tremendous field for co-operation between the Socialist and capitalist countries in this sphere – aid which, disinterested so far as immediate profits are concerned, is nevertheless to the interest of the helping countries seen as part of a more prosperous world.

The essential feature should be that the national sovereignty of the weaker countries, economic as well as political, should remain unimpaired, i.e. that equipment, technical aid, and other services should be *sold* to the countries concerned, to be repaid on the easiest possible terms and making every allowance for their present difficulties; and not *invested* as capital, with the right to call on an annual dividend over a term of years or for ever. The Soviet Union has announced its readiness to engage in this kind of assistance. Mr Kumykin, at the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations on 22 July 1954, declared that the Soviet Union was ready (i) to expand trade with the under-developed countries on the basis of equal rights for both sides and the most advantageous conditions; (ii) to supply them in particular with machinery and equipment on easy terms; (iii) to sign long-term contracts and agreements with them, which would ensure stability in prices for the primary products with which they would pay for their imports; (iv) to explore the possibility of their paying in their own cur-

rencies, in that event, instead of having to find 'hard' currency, i.e. dollars. This was by no means the point of view of the Soviet Union alone. At the same session Mr Scheyven, the Dutch reporter on the subject of a proposed Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development, advocating the establishment by thirty countries of a fund totalling 250 million dollars (at the rate of one dollar for every 340 dollars spent on armaments), said: 'The primary need of the under-developed countries is for capital goods, the production of which is closely allied to armaments manufacture. It is only at a later stage that they will be able to buy larger quantities of consumer goods. Their development thus constitutes the best bridge between an armaments economy and a peace economy, and the first step towards the reconversion of the economy of the industrial countries.'

The Soviet Union, said Mr Kumykin, was of the opinion that foreign capital supplied in the way advocated by Mr Scheyven could be a supplementary factor in the development of the countries receiving it, providing it were attended by no conditions subordinating them politically or economically; indeed, it might offer 'distinctive advantages over the supply of private capital'. Although it could only be a secondary means of assisting them, compared with their own planned development of their national resources through trade and technical assistance, the Soviet Union was prepared to support the scheme. It is noteworthy that, on this issue, a significant united front was established between the representatives of all the trade-union internationals present at the Economic and Social Council in an advisory capacity. The representatives of the World Federation of Trade Unions, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, all spoke in its favour.

Technical aid to the under-developed countries is a second

way of direct economic assistance, in which the Soviet Republics have been taking part, with other States, through the United Nations, since 1953. In that year technical aid was granted to eighty-six countries, to a total value of about £6,000 million. Of this sum, three-quarters were spent on the dispatch of some 1,750 experts, 14 per cent on scholarships to enable people from the under-developed countries to study in the more advanced, and 10 per cent on the dispatch of model equipment. But this system could be vastly expanded.

At a meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East, held in Ceylon in February 1954, the Soviet Union representative, Mr Menshikov, offered technical assistance to the under-developed countries in developing their mining and processing of minerals, iron and steel industry, engineering industry (particularly machine-tools and agricultural machinery), textile and food industries, rubber processing, hydro-electric and thermo-electric power-stations, flood control and irrigation schemes; as well as technical aid in locust control and in training personnel. While Soviet experts could be sent to these countries through the United Nations scheme, the Soviet Union was also prepared to invite students to its own institutes of technological education and to its industrial establishments. As a beginning, it invited India, Burma, Ceylon, Pakistan, Malaya, British North Borneo, Nepal, Japan, Philippines, Thailand, Afghanistan, and Indonesia to send from two to five representatives each for a month or so, in the autumn of 1954, to study Soviet industry and agriculture according to their choice, at the expense of the appropriate Soviet economic organizations. A fair number of these countries took advantage of the offer.

At the same time, a number of trade and credit agreements have given examples of the practical applications of

the direct methods of development of balanced economy in the under-developed countries, on the basis of equality. Thus an agreement, signed between the Soviet Union and Argentina on 5 August 1953, provides for the sale to that country of Soviet equipment for the oil, coal, and power industries and for the railways, with payment on favourable terms over a period of years. It was not by chance that at the Economic and Social Council, a year later, the Soviet Union was the only industrial great Power which supported and secured the adoption of an Argentine resolution to set up a permanent consultative committee on the question of international trade in primary products, with a view to stabilizing prices and terms of trade for these, the main items of export of the poorly developed countries and the main source of their foreign revenue.

On 27 January 1954 the Soviet Union signed a credit agreement with Afghanistan, under which the latter will pay over a considerable time, in very small instalments, for the building on credit by Soviet contracting organizations of two elevators, a flour-mill, and a mechanical bakery. Rumania, under an agreement with Indonesia on 6 August 1954, will supply technical aid in building a cement works, drilling new oil-wells, and opening up other mineral resources. The Soviet Union has offered to build a steel plant in India, with an annual output of about a million tons, in about eighteen months, supplying both equipment and technical personnel. Moreover, the credit for this purpose is to be repaid 'in easy instalments at very low interest – about half that being charged by the United States and the World Bank' (*Manchester Guardian* New Delhi correspondent, 19 September 1954).

Of course such schemes invariably, in the atmosphere left behind by the worst years of the cold war, produce charges of 'propaganda'. The Secretary-General of the United

Nations gave an adequate reply to a question from an American journalist on this very point at his press conference on 29 July 1954. The journalist had asked whether the Soviet contribution to United Nations technical aid (about £450,000 a year) did not mean that the United Nations would have to send to the under-developed countries 'many experts of Communist type', whereas the 'United Nations programme is non-Communist'. The Secretary-General replied that the programme was 'neither Communist nor non-Communist', but a programme of the United Nations, in which all could take part.

The same applies to the whole field of help to the under-developed countries. There is no more or less advanced country which could not assist. The French Metal Workers' Federation has calculated that, in its country's currency, a new apartment of two rooms and a kitchen costs 1 million francs, whereas a medium tank costs 50 million francs. A prefabricated school unit costs from 40 to 50 million francs, whereas a fighter plane costs 77 million francs; a block of 200 working-class homes costs 325 million francs and a clinic 10,000 million francs, whereas an armoured division costs 100,000 million francs. Thus it would be possible to have 2,000 school units, or more than 300 blocks of homes, or 10 clinics, for the price of one armoured division.

Giving these figures at the International Economic Conference in Moscow in April 1952, Louis Saillant, General Secretary of the World Federation of Trade Unions, said: 'In all continents there exist public works projects which could very rapidly improve the situation of entire regions. These consist of great works of drainage or irrigation, fertilization of deserts, reafforestation, building of canals, bridges, and roads, electrical installations, the control of rivers, etc. There are also many projects of differing value which in general open up interesting perspectives, and which

have been spoken about for a long time without ever having been carried out, such as the irrigation of the Sahara, the improvement of the Niger Valley, the irrigation projects of the Middle Eastern countries, the Atlantic–Mediterranean Canal, the Denmark–Sweden bridge over the Baltic, the Channel Tunnel from England to France, etc. That such works are possible is shown by the example of the Danube–Black Sea Canal, the Don–Volga Canal and its adjoining installations, and the control of the Huai River in China. Sufficient financial resources exist for such works, but there must be an end to their use for military equipment and they must be used instead for peaceful equipment and for the raising of living standards.' At this point Messrs Saillant and Scheyven reached the point of contact, since Saillant went on to point out that if such works were undertaken, 'the result in conversion to peaceful production of industry now devoted to rearmament would create new conditions of considerable importance for trade'.

Co-operation, however, even in material things, is obviously able even at the present stage to go still further. On 8 December 1953 President Eisenhower addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations with a proposal that, pending agreement on the armaments race, the United States and other Great Powers should set up an international atomic energy agency under the United Nations, to receive contributions of a small amount of fissionable material to serve peaceful purposes, and devising means of applying atomic energy to the needs of agriculture, medicine, and power supply to impoverished countries. The Soviet Union, replying on 21 December of the same year, declared its willingness to take part in talks on this subject, but, as is known, insisted that the proposal might do more harm than good if unaccompanied by unconditional prohibition of atomic, hydrogen, and other weapons of mass destruction. Negotia-

tions were interrupted, after some months, in the middle of 1954; but at the time of writing are to be resumed. In the meantime, the Soviet Union announced that on 27 June 1954 its first atomic power-station, with a capacity of 5,000 kilowatts, was supplying power to industry and agriculture; while Soviet atomic power-stations of from 50,000 to 100,000 kilowatts are also under construction. In January 1955 the Soviet Government 'seeking to promote the development of international co-operation in this sphere', stated that it would present a report on the completed atomic power-plant and its working to the international conference on the peaceful use of atomic energy which had been convened for a later date the same year.

It is indeed obvious that, given conditions of peaceful coexistence, enormous opportunities for lightening man's labour, by the use of atomic energy for the purposes suggested by President Eisenhower, are possible. Professor C. F. Powell, F.R.S., moving a resolution for a meeting of Great Powers to ban atom and hydrogen bombs at the British Trades Union Congress in September 1954, pointed out that, if the hydrogen bomb could be harnessed for peaceful purposes, like atomic energy, it would create an inexhaustible supply of power; five bombs, he said, would supply the equivalent of 200 million tons of coal (almost the entire output of Great Britain for one year). This would involve peaceful collaboration between the scientists of the world for years, he added.

A small beginning in another field was proposed by Mr Arutiunian, the Soviet delegate to a European regional conference of the International Labour Office, in January 1955 – exchange visits between factory managements of western and eastern Europe.

Co-operation, however, would open possibilities still wider than these. In his report on the third Five Year Plan, at the

Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (March 1939) Mr Molotov said that the U.S.S.R. was anxious to take full advantage of the cultural heritage of other countries: 'Communism grows out of what has been created by capitalism, out of its best and numerous achievements in the sphere of economy, material life and culture.... We must without sparing our forces study the cultural heritage. We must know it seriously and profoundly. We must make use of everything that capitalism has provided in the previous history of humanity, and out of the bricks created by the labour of men in the course of many ages build a new edifice – convenient for the life of the people, spacious, full of light and sun.'

So far as the Soviet Union is concerned, part of its constructive work internally over these many years has been the exchange of cultures of its various nationalities. The great poets of Central Asia and the Caucasus have been available in Russian for a number of years, in mass prints, while regular displays of the drama, music, and dance of the non-Russian nationalities are common in the Russian cities. Russian poets and novelists have been translated into all the other languages of the U.S.S.R. But the heritage of foreign culture, particularly of literature, has also come down from the level of the rare aesthete to that of the ordinary Soviet household in these years, in the million-sale editions of the English, French, German, American, and other classics. It is perhaps a quaint comment on the widespread idea that the assertion of personality and its value is utterly foreign to Soviet principles that Shakespeare's sonnets, published in a new translation some years ago, sold out instantly in 50,000 copies, and had to be reprinted on an equal scale, while the poems of Robert Burns sold out in a cheap, beautifully printed pocket edition of over 100,000 copies.

There has been a beginning of exchanges of culture with

other countries, thanks to the efforts of voluntary societies like the S.C.R. In reply to the performances of Soviet artistes in Western Europe, the Comédie Française has had a short season in Moscow, a famous Greek singer has given a series of concerts in the U.S.S.R., the Indian national dance group has enthralled Soviet audiences, and some English musicians have performed at concerts and for Soviet television. Yet not a single British Shakespearean actor or theatre has interpreted to Soviet people the great heritage which the latter think of first when one mentions English culture. Indeed, the plays of Shakespeare, even more than those of Sheridan, Bernard Shaw, and Oscar Wilde, are a constant part of the repertoire in Soviet theatres – not only Russian, but in the languages of the remotest and smallest peoples. A British delegation, of which the writer was one, which saw *Othello* in the capital and the native language of the Ossetians, a small people of 400,000 in the Northern Caucasus, will never forget the great power and emotion with which it was rendered.

But if some beginnings have been made of presenting British culture to the Soviet people, how much more could be done to bring the heritage of the Russian and other peoples of the U.S.S.R. to Britain! The Russian language itself, becoming more and more necessary for the scientist and technician if he is to keep abreast of modern research, as well as for the historian and the philologist, is scarcely studied in the schools, and very little in the universities, of this country (in Soviet schools English is the main foreign language).

And all that has been said about the cultures of Britain and the U.S.S.R., closer intermingling of which would enrich both, applies of course no less to intercourse on a cultural field between other countries of the two world camps.

Moreover, the word 'culture' is elastic. It does not neces-

sarily mean only 'high-brow' subjects. Whatever makes man's life more civilized contributes to his culture. In this respect both sides can learn. Thus every trade-union delegation which has visited the Soviet Union since the war has commented with awe on how much could be learned from Soviet practice in such matters as the 'palace of culture' attached to the Soviet industrial enterprise, and the rest-homes available to Soviet trade unionists. The high degree of mechanization in the Soviet mines, coupled with miners' safety and health provisions, have produced specific expressions of regret, set out in the reports of successive official Scots' miners' delegations, that similar conditions are not available to all British miners. An official delegation of the National Union of Railwaymen in 1951 was amazed at the cleanliness maintained in locomotive sheds, expressed its opinion that shunting methods compared favourably with similar operations on British railways, and declared that the training of railwaymen in the technique of their industry, while similar in principle to that operating on British railways, was 'much more extensive'. Obviously on all these points there were useful lessons to be learned by closer interchange of experience with the U.S.S.R.

On the other hand, there is hardly a workers' delegation which has been to the U.S.S.R. since the war, whether sent by a national union like the N.U.R. or elected in the factories and trade-union branches, which has not commented adversely on the sanitary arrangements, particularly in the public lavatories, in many places. All the Scottish miners, whether in official delegations of their union or as members of mixed workers' delegations, have remarked that the pit-head baths in the Donetz coalfield were inferior to those existing in the coalfields of Scotland. The N.U.R. delegation found that the rolling-stock 'did not appear to be kept in the same condition as ours' – a remark similar to that

made by the Fire Brigades' Union delegation in 1950 about the appearance of fire appliances. An Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers' delegation in 1953 urged attention to 'obtaining a higher standard of craftsmanship on building sites'. Thus closer contact and interchange, co-operation in pooling of experience, could obviously be of benefit to the Soviet Union. So also Mr Mikoyan, Soviet Minister of Trade, told a conference of distributive workers in October 1953 that in the capitalist countries there were 'pretty good examples of the organization of trading establishments, of trading technique, of civilized service for customers, particularly the well-to-do customers. We cannot but censure those comrades who, on the pretext of combating subservience to everything foreign, ignore foreign methods, have ceased to be interested in them, have ceased to study them and utilize what is useful to us.'

So the list might continue. For many a valuable lesson that could be drawn from Soviet experience, there could be a useful contribution to the everyday practice of the Soviet community. How much more there could be to that of countries which, with all their enormous potentialities and capacity for outstandingly rapid acquisition of experience, are yet still backward economically, and thirsting for cultural development in every sphere!

So far this interchange – apart from a very brief period and on a very narrow front during the war – has been the work of voluntary organizations. That work will and must continue. But there is no reason why it could not be greatly assisted and expanded by assistance from the authorities, to the mutual benefit of all peoples, if the principle of co-operation between countries with different social systems were allowed to develop, as develop it must once the Governments have decided to live together in peace.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Britain's opportunity

In the preceding chapters we looked at the main doubts which usually arise – and when they don't are often busily spread – about the possibility of living in peace with the U.S.S.R. Seen at its very worst, the reader must agree that the case against the Soviet Union is by no means as simple, on all these questions, as it is usually presented. He will also probably agree that the Soviet people have themselves grounds for doubt which are hardly ever presented to a British mind, and are certainly not suggested, as a rule, in the press. But in addition we must remember that there may be interested parties – parties interested in spreading hostility against the U.S.S.R. and preventing the world settling down as it should. Mr Eden's remarks in mid-war have already been quoted. But how many remember that he repeated this warning towards the end of the war? On 28 February 1945, in the House of Commons, he warned members against the suggestion that 'Russia, flushed with the magnificent triumph of her armies, was also dreaming dreams of European domination' – a theme 'poured out day by day and night after night' by German propaganda (at that time), and coming 'in all sorts of unexpected forms and guises'. This theme, the Bolshevik bogy, before the war was 'an element in making it difficult for us to establish an understanding with Soviet Russia'. Mr Eden went 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?' Those who might be interested in a war against the Soviet Union, or People's China, or the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe, have most assuredly used the theme during the ten years since Mr Eden spoke.

We have seen, in the first part of this book, how the idea of peaceful coexistence has forced its way into the front of politics, both national and international, and in the minds and talk of ordinary men and women in every country. Today, wrote an American journalist whose article to his home paper in Virginia was reprinted by the *Manchester Guardian* (5 November 1954), the great majority of Britons were no more pro-Communist than the Americans. But 'having been involved in two devastating world wars in a quarter of a century, they realize what a third such conflict, with almost unbelievably terrible weapons, would mean to themselves and to all mankind. They feel that it is imperative to the survival of Western civilization that some sort of formula be devised for honourable coexistence.' The correspondent also added that trade with the rest of the globe was absolutely vital to Great Britain, and that the British did not believe that complicated and far-reaching international problems 'can be solved through a single dramatic conference or by statements, however sincere, about "massive retaliation" or "agonizing reappraisals" '. We may leave to the correspondent the responsibility for justifying the idea that civilization has geographical characteristics; but his record of what the British public thinks is truthful and memorable.

The results of the Congressional elections at the beginning of November 1954 showed to all appearances that what the mass of the American people were thinking – as distinct from their politicians and newspapers – was not so very far re-

moved from the thoughts of the British public. Almost immediately after the results were published, the newspaper and radio commentators began to draw the conclusion that among other things the American wants a less sensational foreign policy, with fewer alarms and crises and more stability. One could hardly say that the Democratic Party promised a radical change in foreign policy, but that the ordinary man and woman were tired of hysterical jingoism and incessant sabre-rattling can hardly be doubted. 'The idea of war has lost appeal since the Soviet Union acquired hydrogen bombs. The phrase "preventive war" has been another subject notable for its absence from the current campaign,' wrote one well-known commentator, Joseph Harsch, in the *Christian Science Monitor* (23 October 1954). 'Any alternative to coexistence is awful to contemplate,' wrote C. E. Sulzberger in the *New York Times* on 1 November 1954.

We have seen, further, that through the acceptance of the principles and practice of honourable and peaceful coexistence it would be possible not only to procure the survival of all civilization in the world, but promote its expansion by the way of mutual enrichment. Fruitful cooperation is possible between the two sections into which the world is at present divided, in entirely new conditions – conditions in which the nations have learned by bitter experience, which they never had before, that if they do not seek ways of improving their relations they can rapidly be brought to the point of complete self-extinction.

Now Britain and the Soviet Union, for permanent reasons grounded in their history and their place in the world to-day, are specially qualified to take the lead in such an improvement.

It was not accidental that the British Government, after having been the first, as we have seen, to decide on inter-

vention to overthrow the newly formed Soviet Government in 1917, in the middle of the first world war, likewise took the lead in March 1921 in signing the first Trade Agreement with the Soviet Republic. From the first moment of their direct contact, when Richard Chancellor landed in the mouth of the Northern Dvina in 1553, England and Russia have had complementary economies. For centuries the English navy depended on Russian masts, cables, pitch, and tallow. As early as 1568, English merchants were urging on the Privy Council that this made England free of dependence on sources of supply controlled by her commercial rivals. In those days Russia took English manufactured goods almost entirely for the needs of the Tsar's Court and of the higher nobility. Gradually, as Britain became a highly industrialized country in the course of the later eighteenth century and the world's workshop in the nineteenth, her demand for Russian produce expanded. From the 1830s onwards the increasing purchases of Russian grain by Western Europe accelerated the downfall of serfdom in Russia and its replacement by a more efficient means of agriculture. By the end of the century oil, flax, and timber in large quantities, as well as grain, were coming to Britain to be worked up or consumed by the British economy. In the meantime the exports of British manufactured goods, which had broadened greatly with the rise of a capitalist class in Russia, expanded still further at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, when machinery in increasing quantities began to be exported to Russia, for investment in production of the minerals (in particular) which British industry required, and also in the textile and certain other industries.

Throughout these centuries Russia's position in relation to Britain was that of a supplier of raw materials and foodstuffs, and a consumer primarily of manufactured goods. To-

day the Soviet Union is an industrialized country. But just as this does not mean that it is less of a market for British industry – on the contrary, as Britain's experience in the past with Germany and the United States has shown – so also it does not mean that the Soviet Union is a less abundant source of foodstuffs and raw materials. Figures quoted earlier show that its output of these essential products has increased greatly, and is still increasing – with the consequence that it has far more to spare for countries which will trade with it on a basis of equality than it had when it was their client. Britain, on the other hand, still is, and obviously must remain, short of any unthinkable catastrophe, one of the most highly industrialized countries in the world, depending upon imports of raw materials and foodstuffs to a considerable extent.

Thus Britain and the Soviet Union together, in an initiative to turn the mind of the world away from thoughts of destruction and towards economic co-operation, can present a model of solidarity of economic interests.

Nor was it accidental that Great Britain was the first among the Powers victorious in the first world war to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Government in 1924, after having been at the very centre of the far from diplomatic methods used in 1918–20 to try to overthrow it. The experience of a century and a half has shown that the relations between Britain and Russia can be a decisive power in Europe, either for good or for evil. Three times in war, as everyone knows, Britain and Russia have co-operated against the tyrants threatening to subjugate the whole of Europe – Napoleon, Wilhelm II, and Hitler. But what has attracted less comment is that in peace-time the periods of hostility between these two Powers have had the most sinister effect on the tranquillity of Europe. From the beginning of the 1850s, for half a century the mutual enmity between

the two States – with the Crimean War at the beginning of the period, the crisis over the Russo-Turkish War and the fears of Russia's designs on India in the middle of it, and Britain's support of Japan at the end – was taken full advantage of by a number of countries. Above all, it was taken advantage of by the military autocracy of Prussia to build itself up by wars and skilful intrigue into the German Empire – which ended by plunging the whole world into war in 1914. Again, during the twenty years between 1919 and 1939, the mutual hostility between Britain and the Soviet Union was skilfully used by the forces of militarism and aggression in Germany (preserved from destruction by the Allies in 1919 precisely because they seemed a protection against 'Bolshevism') to rebuild their forces again into a giant machinery of conquest, even more terrible than under the Kaiser. Thus enmity between Britain and the Soviet Union was a major factor leading to the second world war.

This fateful character of British-Soviet relations for the destinies of Europe is rooted in the vast economic strength of the two countries, the immense potential force they respectively represent on the sea and on land, and (not least) the great political experience and maturity of their peoples. Can anyone doubt that these advantages could be turned towards co-operation in peace, for the first time, bringing immense benefit to the world? Can anyone doubt, too, that such a joint lead would be welcomed by the whole of Europe irrespective of political colour, by all the impoverished and under-developed countries, and by the mass of the people of the United States?

What has to be done to bring this about? One thing above all – that the individual citizen shall bring to bear all the influence that he or she possesses, through the many organizations, great and small, with which public life

abounds, to press that the British and Soviet Governments shall sit down to consult together at last, not against the rest of the world or each other's Allies, but to give joint leadership to all for peaceful coexistence and international co-operation.

Another Penguin Special

THE COMMUNIST TECHNIQUE IN BRITAIN

Bob Darke

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Bob Darke, Hackney Borough Councillor, and for eighteen years a leading Communist until he resigned in May 1951, explains how the British Communist Party can exert an influence vastly out of proportion to its numerical strength. This is not an ex-Communist intellectual's *exposé* but the plain, factual account of a working man who tells us how Union after Union in the East End fell under Communist control. He explains the Communist technique of taking over a Union, organizing strikes, getting rid of non-Communist Union leaders. He reveals that the Peace Campaign sprang directly from Cominform instructions, and he accuses it of deception and forgery. He tells of his role as a Parliamentary agent when the Party tried desperately to win the South Hackney seat in the 1945 General Election.

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Andrew Rothstein, M.A., was born in London in 1898. His parents, then emigrants from Russia, were members of the SDF and BSP. He was educated at L.C.C. elementary schools, Owen's School, Islington, and Balliol (history scholar). From 1917 to 1919 he served in the Oxford and Bucks L.I., Hampshire Yeomanry, and Royal Engineers. In December 1920 he became Press officer to the first Soviet mission in London, and in April 1921 London correspondent, Russian Telegraph Agency (ROSTA, later TASS). Thereafter until September 1945 he worked for the Soviet Press as foreign correspondent in London, Geneva, and elsewhere. He is bilingual, and has been in the USSR sixteen times (1920–53); and has written and lectured much on Soviet history, economy, institutions, and foreign relations. From 1946 to 1950 he taught at the University of London School of Slavonic and East European Studies. Among his works are: *The Soviet Constitution* (1923), lectures on Soviet foreign policy in *Problems of Peace* (1936–8), *Workers in the Soviet Union* (1942), *Man and Plan in Soviet Economy* (1948), *A History of the U.S.S.R.* (Pelican, 1950), *A People Reborn, the Story of North Ossetia* (editor, 1954), and many articles and translations. He is a foundation member (1920) of the Communist Party: a member of the National Union of Journalists; and an ex-president of the Foreign Press Association in London.

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