

WORLD COMMUNISM TODAY

13 November 1958

*Speech before  
Inter-American  
Defense Board*

Before undertaking to consider the present position of the Communist Movement we may usefully recall its origins and development. It is now 110 years since Karl Marx published the Communist Manifesto, certainly one of the most portentous documents in world history. Since that time the development of the movement may be regarded as falling into three stages: (1) the period before the Russian Revolution of 1917; (2) from 1917 until 1945; and (3) from 1945 to the present.

During the second half of the 19th century, Marxist thought found considerable acceptance among working class and intellectual circles in Western Europe. In an age of expanding capitalist enterprise and the growth of industrial proletariats, Marx's analysis of historical trends and economic phenomena seemed to these people to be valid, and it was adopted by many social reformers, politicians, economists, and trade unionists. A number of the socialist parties which developed in the last decades of the century drew their doctrine from Marx and his collaborator and interpreter, Engels.

Marxian socialism conceived itself to be an international movement. It held that the class interests of the workers were stronger than national ties to capitalistic societies, which were by definition conspiracies of exploitation. To further the cause and to express their common class

interests, the socialist parties founded an international organization in 1884. This was called the Second International since a previous one had dissolved after the overthrow of the Paris Commune in 1871. The Second International ended amid the thunder of the First World War. To the disappointment of the doctrinaire Marxists, few members of the European working classes failed to respond to patriotic appeals in 1914.

The second phase of Communist development begins with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. We are all familiar with the story of how a comparatively small party of revolutionary socialists, led by Lenin, seized power in the disorganized and war-weary country of the Czars and after three years of bloody civil strife established its rule. One effect of the Russian revolution and the triumph of the Bolsheviks was to split the socialist parties throughout the world. A majority of socialists and their trade union allies rejected the brutal dictatorial methods of the Bolsheviks and determined to seek their objectives through democratic processes. Minority groups, however, advocated revolutionary methods and, calling themselves Communist parties, endorsed the Bolshevik model in Russia. With the Russian Communist Party they formed the Third International, the Comintern. Its headquarters were established in Moscow. The Bolsheviks considered this international organization of great importance, because, in keeping with Marxist doctrine, the permanence of the Soviet regime in Russia depended on

Communist revolutions in some of the more advanced industrial countries. Without such developments, a Communist Russia would succumb to capitalist encirclement and counter-revolution. Communist revolutions were promoted in Hungary and Germany, but they were eventually suppressed. Likewise, civil disorders instigated in Italy were quelled. By the end of 1921 it was clear that the Communist revolution was not going to sweep west across Europe.

The Comintern fell increasingly under Russian domination. Moscow became the source of doctrinal and financial support for the generally weak Communist parties outside of Russia and the haven for leaders exiled from their native lands. Soviet control of International Communism was tightened after Stalin triumphed over his Kremlin rivals and embarked on the policy of "building socialism" in one country. The protection of the Communist base became the first priority for all parties, and the Comintern developed into an agency of Soviet policy, a world-wide apparatus for subversion and espionage.

Stalin dissolved the Comintern in 1943. It was a handicap in his relations with the Western powers, upon whom Soviet Russia was heavily dependent at the time. Moreover, Stalin perhaps foresaw that the Comintern would be an encumbrance to Soviet maneuver in the post-war world.

This world since 1945 has, indeed, been a vastly different theater of action for International Communism. Besides preserving the USSR as the base of the world movement and giving that country the prestige of a victorious power, the war resulted in several gains for Communism. In the first place, it gave the Soviet Union control of Eastern Europe where, under the protection of the Red Army, Communist regimes were placed in power. Secondly, it ended the political isolation or active repression of many of the Communist parties. In most Western countries they achieved a temporary respectability, and in Italy and France they emerged as well organized mass parties. In the third place, the war weakened the Nationalist government of China to the extent that it succumbed on the mainland to the Communist armies of Mao Tse-tung.

These gains did not satisfy the Kremlin, and the post-war period has been characterized by continual aggressive action which has kept the non-Communist world on the defensive. The Communists have pursued their objectives by a variety of methods. They have instigated and supported armed insurrection in such places as Greece and Malaya. In Korea, they launched a satellite state on what they hoped would be a quick military conquest. Economic measures have varied from the strangulation tactics tried on Berlin to the attractive offers of trade

and aid held out to any takers. Meantime, a vigorous psychological warfare campaign has been waged. In keeping with the zigzag character of Communist tactics it has changed back and forth from dire threats to calls for peace and cooperation.

Two other aspects of the post-war period need to be noted. One is the rapid and substantial growth of the Soviet Union as an industrial power. Great advances have been registered in nearly all basic industries, and it is probable that the goals of the new Seven-Year Plan, which is soon to be presented at a party congress, will be substantially achieved. The Soviet consumer has not received a large share of this economic development, but his lot has slowly improved. The second point to observe is the consolidation of Communist rule in China. There we have been witnessing the transformation of an ancient society of more than 600 million people into a regimented order which will certainly be an increasing factor in the power configurations of the world.

To summarize this brief survey of the development of the Communist movement, we see relatively small party elites in control of a vast area stretching across Eurasia from the Elbe and Danube to the Pacific. These regimes consider themselves to be in a perpetual state of conflict with the rest of the world. They conduct this struggle, first,

through the agencies and with the resources of the states they rule, and secondly, through the world-wide apparatus of International Communism.

Let us turn now to a consideration of the present status of the Communist Movement. We may start by surveying its composition, then its direction and coordination, and finally its strengths and weaknesses for accomplishing the objective of converting the world to Communism.

Beyond the borders of the Bloc, the Movement consists of two principal elements: the Communist parties and an almost myriad number of organizations which we collectively term Communist fronts. There are approximately eighty Communist parties in the Free World. They exist in all countries except a few, such as Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia, where no organized political groups have developed. In addition, there are parties in a number of British and French colonial territories. Almost half these parties are illegal organizations, being outlawed either by law or administrative decree.

The Communist parties in the Free World vary greatly in size and influence. Accurate membership figures for even the legal parties are difficult to obtain, but the Italian party with probably about 1,500,000 members is regarded as the largest. Other large parties and their

estimated size are the Indonesian, 1, 000, 000; the French, 300, 000; the Indian, 200, 000; the Japanese, 80, 000; the Argentine, 80, 000; and the Brazilian, 50, 000. Most of the other parties are small, some having only a few hundred members.

Some of these parties have achieved a voting strength far exceeding their membership figures. The Italian party since the war has regularly polled more than 20 percent of the total votes cast in national elections. Until 1956, the PCI had an alliance with the Socialist Party of Italy which gave the two parties control of between 35 and 40 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Separately or in combination they have controlled a considerable proportion of the local governments in Italy. The Communist Party of France has attracted about one-quarter of the electorate since 1945. In the last general election of the Fourth Republic it received 5.5 million votes and won 149 seats in the National Assembly. The 80 percent affirmative vote for the DeGaulle constitution, which the PCF opposed, represented the first crack in this voting Bloc, and it will be interesting to see if the coming general election confirms this decline in the Party's electoral strength. It seems probable that it will, both because of popular enthusiasm for the new regime and because the revised voting system, abandoning proportional representation, is less favorable to the Communists. In a number of other European countries, Communist voters have far outnumbered party members, although the

totals of both are small in comparison to the whole electorate and the size of the major parties. In the Netherlands, for example, the Communist party received 275, 000 votes in the last national election in 1956, but the estimated membership of the Party is only 15, 000. In Norway, a Communist party with an estimated membership of 6, 000 polled ten times that number of votes in the general election of 1957. The Greek Communists, outlawed since 1947 but controlling a party called the United Democratic Left, won 22 percent of the vote in a national election earlier this year, although they are believed to number only about 20, 000 enrolled members. In India, 11 million votes were cast in 1957 for Communist candidates at a time when the Party had an estimated membership of 125, 000.

Explanations for the voting strength of Communist parties must be sought in the political and social conditions of each country. Studies of the political situation in France and Italy have revealed that relatively few of the voters who cast ballots for Communist candidates believe in the doctrine of Communism or consider the Soviet Union an earthly paradise. The great majority are protesting against economic and social conditions, as well as relieving many real and fancied grievances, and the Communist party appeals to them as the most effective agent to voice their complaints. Not burdened with the responsibilities of office, the Communists make liberal promises to all dissatisfied elements of the population.



It is this last aspect of Communist tactics that probably accounts for the movement's growth in South and Southeast Asia. Over the past decade, the parties in most Western countries have been relatively stable, more often showing declines in membership and voting appeal than increases. In countries such as India and Indonesia, however, a rapid growth has occurred. There we have densely populated countries with low living standards which are attempting to carry out ambitious development programs. Progress in the face of shortages of capital and skilled manpower is slow, and the inevitable difficulties and mistakes of inexperienced leaders are open to exploitation among people who expected independence to bring a rapid change in social and economic conditions. The Communist Party of India is estimated to have doubled its membership in the past two years. While still much smaller than the Congress Party, it forms the official opposition in the national parliament, and it controls one of the fourteen state governments, Kerala. The Indonesian party has recovered so quickly from the defeat it suffered a decade ago in an armed insurrection that it has threatened to become the country's leading political organization. Faced with this prospect, the government, acting under the prompting of the Army, has postponed the national elections scheduled for next year. It is the hope of the non-Communist leaders of the government that the other parties will utilize this postponement to compose some of their differences and improve their electoral chances.

Approved For Release 1999/09/08 : CIA-RDP80-01446R000100030004-0

To date Communism has gained only minor strength in Africa, but the situation is not one about which the Free World can feel complacent. In South Africa a bitter racial struggle is developing which appears almost made-to-order for Communist exploitation. To the north, several former colonial territories are embarking on the road of self-government, and their leaders face formidable problems in creating stable political systems and viable economies. Among the small educated classes in these countries there are high expectations of rapid material progress. They may be seduced by the promises of Communism if advancement in cooperation with the countries of Western Europe and the Americas fails to satisfy their hopes. Except for a small organization in Tunisia, there are no legal Communist parties in Africa. The Kremlin, however, will almost certainly extend its organizational efforts to Africa as the Communist Bloc countries establish diplomatic relations with the governments of that continent and as trade and economic aid are promoted.

Whether large or small, the Communist parties throughout the world are organized on the model of the CPSU. Local cells of individual members form the base of a pyramid capped by a central committee and an inner politburo. The larger parties have professional administrative staffs organized under a secretary of the central committee, and besides managing the party's affairs, these staffs publish newspapers and journals and often engage in a variety of business activities.

The leadership of the party is in many cases composed of individuals of ability and vigor. They have been trained in a rigorous school. Advancement in an organization notorious for feuds and conspiracies requires a ruthlessness and cunning not usually demanded of other political leaders. In addition, the stamina to survive official repression is often needed by the Communist leader. He has the benefit of an indoctrination that has elevated revolutionary activity to a science. It is taught in party schools at home and in the Bloc countries, and it produces, along with the practical experience of party life, the tough, unprincipled but dedicated leader we see in a Thorez, a Togliatti, ~~Proster~~, or a Bagdash. Wielding the strict disciplinary powers characteristic of all Communist parties, these leaders are faithful agents of the cause.

Besides operating as a political party where they are legally permitted to do so, the Communists are constantly seeking to extend their control and influence into all sectors of national life. Their publishing activities have already been referred to. In some countries these are very prolific. Daily newspapers, weekly and monthly journals, and books carry the party's message. The trade unions are always an important target. In France and Italy the Communists control the largest confederations of unions, and in Indonesia and India they have captured major elements of the labor movement. In many other countries of the Free World there are important unions which have Communists occupying

Approved For Release 1999/09/08 : CIA-RDP80-01446R000100030004-0

high positions. Key sectors of the national economy - mining, transportation, communications - are frequent targets of Communist effort in the labor field. Professional associations, schools and universities, government departments, cultural organizations, and organs of news and entertainment are all objects of Communist penetration. Wherever the Communist gains admission, his first loyalty is to the party, and he endeavors to exert his influence in accordance with party directions.

In countries where the party is outlawed, it attempts to operate as actively as the security services permit. The effectiveness of repression varies considerably from country to country. In some countries the police are alert and the laws against Communist activity are sternly enforced. In other places, several Middle Eastern countries for example, law enforcement is erratic, and the party operates with only occasional harassment. A few years ago it was revealed in Iran that a Communist cell was operating in a prison and maintaining regular communications with outside members of the party. The moral is that governments seeking to repress Communist parties must realize that they are combatting a most skillful and wily foe and that laws are dead-letters unless intelligently and consistently enforced.

This leads us to a consideration of the second major element of the Communist Movement, namely, the numerous organizations which

are promoted to enlist non-Communists in support of Communist objectives. There are a great many of these so-called fronts which operate on a world-wide scale, and they are supported by literally hundreds of local and national organizations. The methods of operation are ones which the Communists have skillfully developed. Some cause of wide appeal is seized upon and prominent citizens are invited to help found an organization. The Communists usually remain inconspicuous, but they work diligently behind the scenes to bend the organization to serve the purposes of the Movement. They utilize all the tactics at which they are adept of capturing key offices, managing meetings, and proposing innocent-sounding but "loaded" resolutions.

Currently, one of the most active of the global fronts is the World Peace Council. A review of its activities for 1958 illustrates the organizing effort devoted to a major front and the way the Communists exploit a laudable purpose. The WPC began the year by declaring March 1st the "Day for Banning Nuclear Weapons." Later that month it held a bureau meeting in New Delhi which was attended by delegates from twenty-nine countries. The delegates were received by Mr. Nehru, although later the Indian government had to deny a press report that he had addressed them in an official session. The WPC joined with the Afro-Asian Solidarity Council, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, and the World Federation of Trade Unions in proclaiming March 30th as "Day of Solidarity with Algeria." Through the International Institute

Approved For Release 1999/09/08 : CIA-RDP80-01446R000100030004-0

for Peace, the name under which its Vienna headquarters operates, the WPC opened an International Club in Brussels to entertain visitors to the World Fair. In May it was the sponsor of the Argentine Congress for International Cooperation, General Disarmament and National Sovereignty. At the end of the month the WPC held a meeting in Vienna to publicize the forthcoming Stockholm conference. This, the World Conference for Disarmament and International Cooperation, was the highlight of the year's activity. The attendance of 1265 delegates was smaller than expected, probably because the campaign to raise money for travel expenses did not produce as much as had been hoped for. Nevertheless, some well-known citizens - authors, scientists, professors, and politicians - of Free World Countries were enlisted as sponsors or delegates. Perhaps the tone of the speeches and resolutions is best conveyed in a report of Kuo Mo-jo, leader of the Chinese Communist delegation, in Peking on August 6th. He said:

In the past ten years the Peace Movement has been reluctant to show the US Government in its true colors; out of concern for our friends in the West, it has hesitated to post clearly the question of opposing imperialist aggression and colonialism . . . the Peace Movement has almost wandered on to the path of unprincipled pacifism. At this Stockholm conference, however, the US imperialist aggression was denounced in outspoken language and the anti-colonialist movement given firm support. We should record this as the greatest achievement of the conference.

Other activities of the WPC have included helping to organize the Fourth Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in Tokyo, the

of Afro-Asian Writers at Tashkent. Most of the resolutions of these meetings echo the current propaganda line from Moscow.

Two other fronts operating on a global scale are the World Federation of Democratic Youth and the International Union of Students. They conduct activities as numerous as the World Peace Council. They were the sponsors of the Moscow Youth Festival in 1957 which attracted approximately 35,000 foreign visitors. Another Festival, to meet in Vienna next year, is being planned. The WFDY claims a membership of more than 85 million through 200 affiliated organizations in 97 countries.

The principal Communist labor front is the World Federation of Trade Unions. Its identification with the political line of the Kremlin is well illustrated by the summarized statement of the main tasks for trade unions given by its secretary, Louis Sallant, at an executive committee meeting in Budapest last spring. These tasks were:

- (1) Unite the workers in each country and help them to unite with all sections who are actively working for peace.
- (2) Join with the national Peace Committees in preparing for the World Conference for Disarmament and International Cooperation, and send broad and representative delegations.
- (3) Be at the head of the mass struggle and every decisive action to obtain: (a) a summit meeting; (b) prohibition of rocket bases and atomic bomb flights; (c) the ending of thermonuclear testing, and ban on the manufacture and use of mass destruction weapons; (d) zones cleared of such weapons, as proposed by the Rapacki Plan; (e) development of trade and cultural relations between all countries.

- (4) Increase exchanges of fraternal delegations of trade unions and workers.

These points were faithfully repeated in resolutions adopted at conferences of international unions affiliated with the WFTU. The themes of "peace" and "banning atomic bombs" were prominent.

Among Communist fronts, the friendship societies comprise a whole galaxy. Societies for promoting friendly relations with the Soviet Union exist in many countries, and they are supplemented by Chinese and Satellite groups. They concentrate on the promotion of economic and cultural connections between a country and the Bloc and avoid the more obvious kinds of Communist propaganda activities. Thus they attract a certain number of well-meaning people who feel that they are contributing to peace and international understanding.

A listing of Communist fronts would be tediously long. Besides the national affiliates of the global fronts, such as the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Women's International Democratic Federation, there are usually scores of local societies. Some of them have only a temporary existence, perhaps organized to protest a governmental action, a court decision, or the military move of a Western government. Their purpose is to enlist the support of unwitting non-Communists, collect money, and spread propaganda without revealing the party label. They also serve to identify Communist sympathizers who can sometimes be



induced to engage in other useful activity, not excluding espionage.

All this vast effort must be recognized as an important element of International Communism. The Communist governments and the parties outside the Bloc devote tremendous amounts of organizing effort to these front activities, and we should not under-rate their usefulness to the Movement.

How is this tremendous network of Communist parties and fronts directed and the activities of all components coordinated? That there is central direction and coordination is clear from the unanimity and consistency with which Communists around the world take the same positions on international issues, praise and condemn the same things, and repeat the same slogans.

Some of this direction and coordination is easily achieved. Indoc-trination in Marxism-Leninism provides basic guidelines for Communists everywhere. For current tactics, Radio Moscow, Pravda, and other authoritative sources provide rapid guidance. If a comrade misses them, he will soon hear the echoes from Prague, Budapest, or Peking. For questions of a deeper, ideological nature there is the new monthly journal published in Prague. Called Problems of Socialism and directed by a former editor of the Soviet ideological journal Kommunist, it indicates what is currently orthodox and what is "revisionist" in doctrinal matters. It is printed in some fifteen languages.

Coordinating the activities of the global front organizations presents the Kremlin with no great problems. The headquarters and the essential offices in each case are occupied by experienced Communists who have good communications with an appropriate department of the CPSU in Moscow.

For the longer range and more complex aspects of Communist planning there exists the close liaison between the parties. In this the Soviet, the Chinese Communist, and the European Satellite diplomatic missions play a part. Their regular liaison with the national parties outside the Bloc is supplemented by numerous bilateral and multilateral meetings of party leaders. More than sixty party delegations gathered in Moscow last November for the celebration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, and for several days there were business meetings as well as social events. Scarcely a week passes without some Communist leader traveling to Moscow. Fraternal delegations are exchanged for party congresses and national celebrations. All these occasions provide opportunities for serious discussions of party problems and the securing of the Kremlin's counsel. Moscow's advice is very persuasive. For any leader who questions it, the whole apparatus can be mobilized to insure a rapid purging. Tito is the only Communist who has successfully withstood the wrath of the Kremlin.

One of the basic facts of our world is the existence of this powerful, expansive movement which, despite talk of peaceful coexistence, is in conflict with all nations and institutions that it does not dominate. No country, no people can stand aside and declare that the struggle is of no concern to it or them. The Communists will not accept a really neutral attitude. Given this situation, what can we say of the present state of the battle?

In general, we would have to admit, I believe, that the outcome is still in the balance. Two years ago, in 1956, the Communist world experienced a considerable crisis. Khrushchev's secret speech confessing to the mistakes and crimes of Stalin shook all the Communist parties and front organizations. It was followed by troubles in Poland and the bloody revolt in Hungary. For a few months Communism stood revealed as the tyranny it is. Some optimists in the West began to talk of its early collapse. They reckoned, however, without an understanding of the strong recuperative powers which the Movement possesses.

Faced with revolts in the Satellites, rumblings of discontent in the USSR and China, and defections in the parties outside the Bloc, the leaders of Communism set about stabilizing the Movement. By vigorous measures they have largely succeeded in reestablishing discipline and control. Casualties there were, but the wounds are proving to be far from mortal.

Contributing to this stabilization process have been the impressive economic and scientific achievements of the Soviet Union and the growth in power of Communist China. They have diverted attention from the despotic features of life under Communism and given the impression that progress can be achieved more rapidly by Communist methods.

The picture which the Communist Bloc presents of its real and anticipated achievements is especially attractive in many areas of Asia and Africa. Here people are seeking the same goals - industrialization, education, and rising living standards. The methods advocated by the Western world seem pedestrian and tainted by connections with a colonial past. The Communists are making a strong bid in the great belt across Africa and southern Asia. By political action and military aid they are posing as the friend and protector of newly independent states. Loans and trade agreements are readily arranged. The front organizations work assiduously to cultivate these people and convince them of an identity of interest between themselves and the Communist world. In all these efforts the Communists are registering successes. The Communist parties of India and Indonesia have been growing. While the Arab states are hostile to local Communists, they regard the Bloc countries as benevolent powers. Communism as the protagonist of nationalism and material progress has made a strong impression among

the young states of Asia and Africa.

One weakness to which the Communists admit - or at least they devote much time and effort to combatting it - is revisionism. This is a term of no precise content. In general, it means any tendency to question an article of faith in Marxism-Leninism. A revisionist may be one who questions the priority of heavy industry in a communist state, the party's monopoly of political power, socialist realism as the highest form of artistic expression, or the relevance of all Soviet experience in building socialism. Communist Yugoslavia is being denounced daily as the source and inspiration of present-day revisionism. Since some aspects of Yugoslav communism are practiced within the Bloc - peasant proprietorship in Poland, for example - one concludes that a refusal to be an undeviating disciple of the Kremlin, euphemistically known as proletarian internationalism, constitutes the essence of Tito's sin.

While schisms are damaging to an ideological movement that pretends to be based on immutable principles, non-Communists should not exaggerate the problems these deviations create for the Bloc, both internally and in its expansion abroad. They provide opportunities for campaigns of indoctrination and stir the party cadres to greater militancy. Orthodoxy, supported by all the instruments of power and propaganda, may be strengthened in the end.

There are some entries on the other side of the ledger which are credits for the non-Communist world. One is that since the Communist victory in China, no country has chosen to join the Bloc. Communist control of northern Viet-nam has received de facto recognition, but otherwise the boundary of the Free World has not been breached. Attempts at armed insurrection have all been defeated - in Greece, in Indonesia, in the Philippines, in Malaya, and in Burma.

Another credit item for the Free World is the decline of Communist strength in Western Europe. The parties in Italy and France are still large, but their ability to paralyze the machinery of the state has been reduced. It seems probable that the next parliamentary elections in France will see the Communist bloc of 150 deputies cut to a third of that number. Elsewhere in Western Europe the parties have little more than a nuisance value.

Additionally on the credit side we can place the fact of a better appreciation of the Communist danger. This awareness varies from area to area, and even from country to country. In Western Europe it has turned a considerable degree of tolerance into strong aversion. The Berlin blockade, Czechoslovakia, Korea, Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin, and Hungary have had a cumulative impact. Even in the Afro-Asian area which the Communists are wooing so ardently, voices of caution are being heard. This awareness can also be documented in

this hemisphere. In the recent elections in Brazil, Communist endorsement was a handicap rather than an aid to any candidate.

The credit side of the ledger does not add up to enough to give us any cause for complacency. In International Communism we face a most formidable foe. It now operates from a vast territorial base, controls almost a billion people, and wields great resources of power and influence. Its apparatus throughout the Free World works constantly to undermine, divide, and confuse its enemies. Part-time, half-hearted resistance will not be enough, for the kind of civilization we cherish is definitely at stake.