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## Commentary

# The Peace Movement & the Soviet Union

*Vladimir Bukovsky*

Peace will be preserved and strengthened if the people take the cause of peace into their own hands and defend it to the end.

JOSEPH STALIN, 1952

THE "struggle for peace" has always been a cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy. Indeed, the Soviet Union itself rose out of the ashes of World War I under the banner of "Peace to the People! Power to the Soviets!" Probably from the very first, Bolshevik ideologists were aware of how powerful a weapon for them the universal craving for peace would be—how gullible and irrational people could be whenever they were offered the slightest temptation to believe that peace was at hand.

Only a year before the Bolsheviks raised their banner, the most terrible prospect for any Russian would have been to see an enemy burning down his villages and defiling his churches. Yet once blinded by the slogan, "A just peace without annexations or tribute," he was to rush from the front lines, along with hundreds of thousands of his fellow soldiers, sweeping away the last remnants of the Russian national state. He did not want to know that his desertion had done no more than simply prolong the war for another year, not only condemning thousands more to death on the Western front, but ending in that very German occupation of the Ukraine and Russia he had so much dreaded just a year ago. For the moment the only thing that mattered was peace—right now, and at any price.

Hardly anyone taking part in the stampede back home in 1917 knew the first thing about the ideology of Communism—except possibly for a couple of simple slogans and this one incendiary word: Peace. In a country of 70 million there were

only 40,000 Communists. Anyone who had taken the trouble to read the Communists' "fine print" with just a little care could have discovered that what their soon-to-be masters meant by "peace" was not peace at all but rather the "transformation of imperialist war into civil war."

The Russian people were in any case so fed up with the war by then that they did not care. Anything seemed better, or at least not worse. After three years of civil war, however, in which some 20 million people were slaughtered or died of starvation, cold, and typhoid (i.e., *ten* times as many as were killed at the front during the whole of World War I), the war came to seem a trifle by comparison, a sort of frontier skirmish somewhere in the Byelorussian swamps.

And once again an irresistible craving for peace drove people to accept Soviet rule—as a lesser evil. Anything was now preferable to this monstrous slaughter, starvation, and typhoid. They would give anything for some kind of order.

The order imposed by the Communists was nothing more than a permanent state of civil war, both inside the country and around the world. Or as Lenin put it, "As an ultimate objective peace simply means Communist world control." Thus, while comrade Chicherin, at the Conference of Genoa in 1922, was appealing to the entire world for total and immediate disarmament, crowds of bewildered people in the Soviet Union were marching to the cheerful song:

We'll fan the worldwide flame,  
Churches and prisons we'll raze to  
the ground.  
The Red Army is strongest of all  
From Moscow to the British islands.

Indeed, the churches were the first to be put to the torch. As for the prisons, the Communists were in no hurry to carry out their bold promise. Quite the contrary, the number of prisons grew with each year to accommodate tens of millions of "class enemies" or "enemies of the people." And speaking of worldwide flame, one need only compare the map of the world of, say, 1921 with that of 1981 to see that the song's promise was not entirely empty.

Once they recognized the power of "peace" as a

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weapon, the Communists have never let go of it. In this respect, it must be admitted, Soviet politics have invariably been most "peaceful." We must at the same time bear in mind that according to Communist dogma, wars are the "inevitable consequence of the clash of imperialist interests under capitalism," and therefore they will continue to be inevitable as long as capitalism exists. The only way to save humanity from the evil of wars, then, is to "liberate" it from the "chains of capitalism." Accordingly, there is a very precise distinction to be made between "just wars" and "unjust wars." "Just wars" are those fought "in the interests of the proletariat." It is perfectly simple and perfectly clear: just wars are absolutely justifiable because they lead to the creation of a world in which there will be no wars, forevermore. Proletarians are all brothers, are they not? So, once the world is rid of capitalists, imperialists, and various other class enemies, why should those who are left fight one another?

By this same impeccable logic, the interests of the proletariat are best known to the advance-guard of the proletariat, that is, the Communist party, and should be defined by Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev, since they are in turn the advance-guard of the Communist party.

As soon as we have pinned down this formula and deciphered its terminology, the course of history becomes absolutely clear. For instance, Soviet occupation of the Baltic states and Bessarabia, or the war with Finland in 1939-40, were of course perfectly just, as was the partition of Poland, achieved in cooperation with Nazi Germany in 1939. On the other hand, the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union in 1941 was blatantly unjust. By the same token, any attack by the Arabs on Israel is just, at least insofar as it is successful. If Israeli resistance to attack is successful, however, then all peace-loving peoples must protest.

IT GOES without saying that world public opinion must accept the distinction I have outlined above and direct every effort in the struggle for peace toward establishing it. Fortunately, there are a great many "progressive" people in the world, people for whom any direction taken by Moscow is progressive because by definition it is taken in the service of socialism. Thus, before the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 was signed, the energies of all progressive people were mobilized against fascism, whether in Spain, Italy, or Germany. As soon as the pact was signed, the notion of what was progressive and what was not changed drastically.\*

On February 2, 1940, for example, the German Communist leader, Walter Ulbricht, later to become head of the East German state, was permitted by the Nazi government to publish an article in *Die Welt* in which he said: "Those who intrigue against the friendship of the German

and Soviet peoples are enemies of the German people and are branded as accomplices of British imperialism."

The British *Daily Worker* adopted a similar line and greeted the new alliance as a victory for peace, as did the American *Daily Worker*. On September 19, 1939, when the war was raging in Poland, it published a declaration of the National Committee of the American Communist party proclaiming the war declared by France and Britain on Nazi Germany to be an imperialist (that is, "unjust") one, which should be opposed by the workers. This appeal was immediately supported by fellow-travelers like Theodore Dreiser, and Communist trade unions set out to sabotage production in munitions factories, lest any aid reach Britain or France. Right up to the eve of the Nazi invasion of Russia, Communist propaganda did everything possible to dissuade the United States from helping the European democracies in their war against Nazi Germany. These pages in the history of the glorious "struggle for peace" by the progressive social forces are not much spoken of any more, particularly where the young might hear.

But nowhere was this "struggle for peace" as influential as in France, where the Communist party and its fellow-travelers were openly defeatist before, and remained so during—and some time after—the Nazi invasion of France. The French Communist party, which was quite considerable in strength, worked so energetically to undermine the French war effort as to suggest a fifth column. Within a month of France's declaration of war the party's leader, Maurice Thorez, fled to Moscow to direct the resistance to French preparations against Germany. In November 1940 Thorez and his associate Jacques Duclos exulted openly over the fall of France, Thorez declaring that "the struggle of the French people has the same aim as the struggle of German imperialism."

The Franco-German alliance alluded to by Thorez expressed itself in concrete terms. German propaganda leaflets dropped over the Maginot line pointed out that "Germany, after her victory over Poland and since her pact with Russia, disposes of inexhaustible resources in men and material," while all the Communist deputies petitioned President Herriot to make peace in response to Hitler's appeal. After Communist publications had been suspended by decree in France, the party continued to publish its propaganda on German presses. Its leaflets urged troops, dockers, and others engaged in essential war work to resist and to sabotage the country's effort. In March 1940, a party leaflet claimed that the Allied failure to launch an offen-

\* Much of the material that follows here on the early days of World War II is taken from the book by Nikolai Tolstoy, *Stalin's Secret War* (1981), where the appropriate references can be found.

sive was due to the effectiveness of the party's defeatist propaganda. And there can be no doubt that this effective spreading of defeatism, coupled with a serious campaign of sabotage in munitions factories, played a major role in the catastrophic French defeat of June 1940.

At the very time that General de Gaulle, in London, was issuing his appeal for resistance, the French Communist paper *l'Humanité* said: "General de Gaulle and other agents of British capital would like to compel Frenchmen to fight for the City. . . ."

Later Khrushchev was to recall that "Stalin once told me that Hitler had sent a request for a favor through secret channels. Hitler wanted Stalin, as the man with the most authority and prestige in the Communist world, to persuade the French Communists not to lead the resistance against the German occupation of France." Evidently Hitler's request was not denied.

Even in Yugoslavia, where the Communist movement had directed all its efforts to vilifying the British and French, Tito's first appeal for a struggle against the German invaders did not come until June 22, 1941. It was not the German conquest of Yugoslavia that aroused his ire, but the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Even in far-off Buenos Aires, a British diplomat had noticed that Nazi diplomats were "collaborating with local Communists in a very dangerous attempt to win over the masses with the cry of 'away with British capitalism and commercial exploitation.'"

As soon as Nazi Germany turned against its great Eastern ally, the "struggle for peace" was instantly terminated. Indeed, the sudden outburst of patriotism among the "progressive social forces" was remarkable. No strikes, no condemnation of Western imperialism—as if the latter had never existed. For the remainder of World War II the Allies were to enjoy a happy time of industrial peace and a relaxation of the class struggle. The war, of course, was now a "just" one.

ODDLY, the passion for peace was resurrected shortly after the war was over, while the Soviet Union was swallowing a dozen countries in Central Europe and threatening to engulf the rest of the continent. At that time, some "imperialist warmongers" were sounding the alarm over Soviet conduct and even suggesting the creation of a "very aggressive" NATO alliance. The "reactionary forces" in the world were starting a "cold war." Beyond this, the Soviet Union was troublesomely lagging behind the U.S. in the development of nuclear weapons. For some curious reason, however, the "imperialist military-industrial complex"—all those Dr. Strangeloves—failed to drop the atom bomb on Moscow while they still enjoyed a monopoly on it. This should undoubtedly be ascribed to the success of a great movement of peace-lovers. How could it be ex-

plained otherwise, short of the reactionary suggestion that NATO generals were not in the least aggressive?

In any case, members of the older generation can still remember the marches, the rallies, and the petitions of the 1950's (particularly the famous Stockholm Appeal and the meetings of the indefatigable World Peace Council). It is hardly a secret now that the whole campaign was organized, conducted, and financed from Moscow, through the so-called Peace Fund and the Soviet-dominated World Peace Council—where a safe majority was secured by such figures as Ilya Ehrenburg, A.N. Tikhonov, etc. This was the period when comrade Stalin presented his memorable recipe for peace that is the epigraph to this article. Stalin's formulation was enthusiastically taken up by millions, some of them Communists, some loyal fellow-travelers, a number of them muddleheaded intellectuals, or hypocrites seeking popularity, or clerics hungry for publicity—not to mention professional campaigners, incorrigible fools, youths eager to rebel against anything, and outright Soviet agents. Surprisingly, this odd mixture constitutes a fairly sizable population in any Western society, and in no time at all the new peace campaign had reached grandiose proportions. It became fashionable to join it and rather risky to decline.

The purpose of all this peace pandemonium was well calculated in the Kremlin. First, the threat of nuclear war (of which the Soviets periodically created a reminder by fomenting an international crisis) combined with the scope of the peace movement should both frighten the bourgeoisie and make it more tractable. Second, the recent Soviet subjugation of Central European countries should be accepted with more serenity by Western public opinion and quickly forgotten. Third, the movement should help to stir up anti-American sentiment among the Europeans, along with a mistrust of their own governments, thus moving the political spectrum to the Left. Fourth, it should make military expenditures and the placement of strategic nuclear weapons so unpopular, so politically embarrassing, that in the end the process of strengthening Western defenses would be considerably slowed, giving the Soviets crucial time to catch up. Fifth, since the odd mixture of fools and knaves described above is usually drawn from the most socially active element in the population, its activism should be given the right direction.

The results were to exceed all expectations. Soviet money had clearly been well spent. The perception of the Soviet Union as an ally of the West (rather than of Nazi Germany) was still fresh in peoples' minds, which undoubtedly contributed to the success of the "struggle for peace."

Subsequently, the death of Stalin, the shock created by the official disclosure of his crimes, the

Khrushchev "thaw" in international relations, and, above all, the fact that the Soviets had caught up with the West in nuclear weapons, were to make the peace movement temporarily redundant; it ceased to exist just as suddenly as it had once appeared. Meanwhile, the inefficiency of the Soviet economy once again brought it to the point of collapse. The Soviet Union badly needed Western goods, technology, and credits. Without these, there would have to be very substantial economic reform, dangerous to continued party control over the entire economic life of the Soviet Union. At the same time, it was from the strategic point of view important for the Soviets to legitimize their territorial holdings in Eastern Europe and to secure for themselves the freedom to move further. Something new was called for. Out of the depths of the Kremlin, the doctrine of détente was born.

**T**HOUGH the peace movement was put in cold storage, the issue of peace was nevertheless central to this new Kremlin policy as well. The West had grown so exhausted by the constant tension of the previous decades that the temptation to relax, when offered by the Kremlin, was simply irresistible. And after a decade of a ruthless "struggle for peace," no Western government could get away with rejecting a proposal to limit the arms race—however well some of them understood that it would be senseless to try to reach an agreement with the Soviets while the essentially aggressive nature of Communist power remained in force. Probably some such recognition explains why the Western governments insisted on linking participation in the Helsinki agreements to the observance of human-rights agreements inside the Communist bloc. Their idea was to force the internal relaxation of the Soviet regime and so make it more open and less aggressive. In exchange the West provided almost everything Brezhnev demanded in his "Peace Program" of the 24th Party Congress in 1971. "The inviolability of the postwar frontiers in Europe"—that is, the legitimation of the Soviet territorial annexations between 1939 and 1948—as well as a substantial increase in economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation were solemnly granted by the Western countries in Helsinki in 1975. Earlier a separate treaty had perpetuated the artificial division of Germany without even a reference to the Berlin Wall.

The Western democracies had displayed such readiness to accommodate their Soviet partners that their behavior was perceived as weakness. Probably the most disgusting features of détente could be seen in Germany where the "free flow of people and ideas" had very quickly degenerated into trading people like cattle, the right to visit one's relatives in the East becoming a kind of reward conditional on the "good behavior" of the West German government. By playing on this sensitive issue the Soviets were able to blackmail the whole country

and to "modify" the policies of its government. Unfortunately, Germany is a key factor in East-West relations because in order to avoid a major split in the Western alliance the other members have to adjust their positions in accordance with Germany's. So it was that Soviet influence came to be exerted through the back door, and the West was politically paralyzed.

In addition, far from making the Soviets more dependent—as the proponents of détente had assured us—increased trade, and particularly huge Western credits, have made the West more and more dependent on the Soviet Union. The dimensions of this disaster became clear only recently, when the discussion of economic sanctions against the Polish military rulers and their Soviet masters revealed the inability of the Western countries to reduce once-established economic relations with the Eastern bloc without harming themselves even more. In fact, by now the Soviets are in a position to threaten the West with economic sanctions. Undoubtedly, they will take advantage of it very soon.

In the meantime, far from relaxing internally, the Soviet regime had stepped up its repressive policies, totally ignoring the weak Western protests against Soviet violations of the human-rights agreements. The weakness of these protests had in turn served only as further incitement for the Soviets to proceed in their course of repression without restraint. Clearly, the ideological war waged by the Soviets through all those earlier years had only increased in intensity during the era of détente. Nor did they try to camouflage this warfare. On the contrary, Leonid Brezhnev stated openly in his speech to the 25th Party Congress, on February 24, 1977: ". . . it is clear as can be that détente and peaceful coexistence relate to interstate relations. Détente in no way rescinds, or can rescind, the laws of the class struggle."

Furthermore, as it transpired, instead of reducing their military expenditures and arms build-up, as the Western nations had during those years, the Soviet Union, taking advantage of Western relaxation, had significantly increased its arsenal. So much so that if in the 1960's it could be said that a certain parity between East and West had been achieved, by now the Soviets have reached a point of clear advantage over the West. We also now know that the benefits to the Soviet Union of trade with the West were invariably put to military use. For example, the Kama River truck factory built by Americans in the 1970's has recently begun manufacturing the military trucks that were observed in action during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

**B**Y THE end of the 1970's the West was becoming increasingly aware of these dangerous developments. The usefulness of détente, long challenged by some, was now being questioned by many. And then came the final

blow—on Christmas 1979. Just at the moment when most people in the West were preoccupied with such things as Christmas cards and presents, something like 100,000 Soviet soldiers moved in to occupy neighboring Afghanistan, an officially "non-aligned" country with a population of about 17 million. The world was shocked and the USSR was immediately placed in isolation. Even the Communist parties of many countries condemned the Soviet action as a piece of blatant aggression. The invasion of Afghanistan, followed by the arbitrary banishment to internal exile of Nobel laureate Andrei Sakharov, followed still later by the threatening of Poland (leading, finally, to the imposition of martial law), virtually terminated the era of détente.

This termination has cost the Soviets dear. In fact, they have lost almost everything they had gradually managed to gain while the West was enjoying its bout of unilateral relaxation. Ratification of the SALT II agreement was suspended indefinitely. The Americans were awakened from their prolonged lethargy to discover with horror how weak, ineffective, and unproductive their country had become. In this new psychological atmosphere, the victory of Ronald Reagan was inevitable, promising an end to American defense cutbacks, the deployment of a new, previously shelved, generation of weapons like the B-1 bomber, the cruise missile, the MX, and the neutron bomb. It seemed equally inevitable that the military budgets of all the other Western countries would be increased, while the trade, technology, and credit arrangements with the Soviets would be reduced, or at least be made more difficult to obtain.

Thus, if this trend were to continue, the Soviets would lose their position of military superiority—especially in view of the fact that their economy is so much less efficient than that of "rotten capitalism." Add to this the new wave of international hostility noticeable especially in the Muslim world (the United Nations General Assembly voted against the Soviets on Afghanistan, for the first time since the Korean war), a continuing crisis in Poland, a hopeless war in Afghanistan, and a growing unrest among the population at home caused by food shortages, and the picture grew so gloomy as to be just short of disaster. Clearly the Soviet rulers had to undertake something dramatic to avoid a total catastrophe.

I myself, to tell the truth, was not very much surprised when suddenly, within a year, a mighty peace movement came into being in Western Europe. Especially since, by some strange coincidence, this movement showed itself first of all precisely in those European countries where the old missiles were to be replaced by newer Pershings and cruise missiles. I make no claim to special prescience; it is just that after 34 years of life in my beloved Communist motherland, I have some sense of its government's bag of tricks,

pranks, and stunts. In fact, it was not a very difficult thing to predict, for the Soviet state is not a particularly intelligent creature. If you think of it rather as a huge, brainless, antediluvian reptile with a more or less fixed set of reflexes, you cannot go far wrong. "Well, here we are, back to the 1950's again," I thought to myself.

What was much more amusing to observe was the ease with which presumably mature and responsible people had by the thousands fallen into the Soviet booby-trap. It is as if history were repeating itself before our eyes, offering us a chance to see how the Russian state collapsed in 1917, or how France collapsed within one month in 1940. It is also quite amusing, if one has a taste for such amusement, to be reminded of how people are practically incapable of deriving any useful knowledge from even the recent lessons of history. Once again, the universal craving for peace right now, this very moment, and at any price, has rendered people utterly illogical and irrational, and left them simply unable to think calmly. Their current arguments, if one may call them that, are so childish, senseless, selfish, that an involuntary smile comes immediately to one's lips. Even at best what one hears is a parroting of the kind of old moldy Soviet slogans and clichés that even schoolchildren in the Soviet Union would laugh at.

**T**O BEGIN WITH, why is it that everyone has suddenly begun to be so apprehensive about nuclear war again? What has happened to make it more real than it was, say, two or three years ago? The entire history of East-West relations shows that the only way to force the Soviets to respect agreements is to deal from a position of strength. So are we to understand that because the Soviets might cease to be militarily superior to us, nuclear war is once again a reality? Should we, then, take this proposition to its logical conclusion and say that the only guarantee of peace is Soviet military superiority?

Meanwhile, countless TV programs have suddenly sprung up that unfold before us images of the great treasures of our civilization—paintings, sculptures, pyramids, antiquities, etc.—and at the end of each the narrator reminds us, his voice trembling with noble passion, how terrible it would be if all these treasures were to be destroyed along with the great civilization that produced them. And on other channels, we are treated to documentary after documentary about nuclear explosions and the consequences of radiation. After such relentless programming, naturally public-opinion polls show a sudden increase in the number of those who believe that nuclear war is imminent.

Then there is the catchy new idea that "Our deterrent does not deter anymore." Why? Has a nuclear war begun already? Have the Soviets at-

tacked any NATO country? Or is it simply because those who like to say the deterrent no longer deters have seen their full quota of televised nuclear explosions?

It is so easy to start a panic. The question is: who is served by this panic? The Soviet-controlled World Peace Council declared in 1980 (and the whole European peace movement repeats it as if under a hypnotic spell): "The people of the world are alarmed. Never before has there been so great a danger of a world nuclear holocaust. The nuclear arms build-up, the accumulation of deadly arsenals, has reached a critical point. Further escalation in the arms build-up could create a most dangerous situation, facing humanity with the threat of annihilation."

Never before. But was not the world in as much danger a year earlier? The leaders of the European peace movement themselves claim that the nuclear potential accumulated on both sides is sufficient for them to destroy one another ten times. Is there any technical reason why "twenty times" is more dangerous than, say, "five times"? Or is it that, like a nuclear charge itself, the accumulation must reach a "critical mass" in order to explode?

Somehow, in the midst of all this nuclear hysteria it seems to be totally forgotten that bombs themselves are quite harmless, unless somebody wishes to drop them. So why are we suddenly alarmed by the stockpile of hardware and not by the Soviet military move toward the Persian Gulf?

Again, quite suddenly, voices begin to cry out in a huge chorus, "Nuclear weapons are immoral!" Wait a minute. Did these weapons just become immoral? Are conventional weapons moral? Why should this idea come all at once into the minds of so many people? Take as another example the question of the new missiles to be deployed in Europe. Why is it more dangerous to replace the old missiles with the new ones than to leave the old ones where they are? Are not the old ones equipped with nuclear warheads as well? To be sure, the new missiles are more accurate. So what? We can thank God that they are on our side. They may make life more difficult for the Kremlin adventurers, but why should millions of people in the West perceive that as a tragedy and danger?

Deep in their hearts most of these terrified people have a very simple answer to all these "whys." They know that the only real source of danger is the Soviet Union and that anything which might make the Soviets angry is dangerous for that very reason. But fear is a paralyzing and deranging force. So deranging as to lead some people to advocate the abolition of the police because the criminals are becoming too aggressive.

Indeed, the most amazing aspect of the present antiwar hysteria—aside from the fact that it has arisen at a time so remarkably favorable for Moscow—is the direction of the campaign. Millions of

people in Great Britain, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, and Italy, supposedly of sound mind and with no evidence of the influence of LSD, march about claiming that the threat of war comes from . . . their own governments and the government of the U.S.! A psychoanalyst might characterize this behavior as the Freudian replacement of a real object of fear with an imaginary one. Except that even a psychoanalyst might conclude that pro-Soviet propaganda had something to do with the delusion in this particular case.

The facts are too obvious to discuss here. One may like or dislike President Reagan or Chancellor Schmidt, but unlike comrade Brezhnev, they were elected by the majority of their respective populations and are fully accountable in their actions to the parliaments and to the people. They simply cannot declare a war on their own. Besides, it is quite enough to look around to see the real source of aggression. Was it American or Soviet troops who occupied half of Germany and built a wall in Berlin? Is it not the Soviets who still occupy Hungary, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic states, not to mention Afghanistan, very much against the wishes of the people in these countries? Was it East or West German troops who took part in the occupation of Czechoslovakia and who are prepared to invade Poland?

Everything in the West is done quite openly—one might say, far too openly. But what do we know about the decisions made by 14 old fools in the Politburo whom nobody ever elected to make these decisions and whom nobody can call to account? No press is allowed to criticize them, no demonstrations to protest against their dictate. Anyone refusing to obey their secret orders would instantly disappear forever. There is in fact very little difference between the Soviet system and that of Nazi Germany. Is there anyone who supposes that he should have trusted Hitler more than the democracies?

**A**FTER the experience of speaking several times with members of the current European peace movement, however, I know only too well how futile is the recourse to rational argument. They announce unabashedly that there is no Soviet military superiority. It is all, they say, CIA propaganda; the only reliable source of information as far as they are concerned seems to be the KGB. They refer one to the findings of a certain Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, leaving one to guess at the kind of methods employed by this institute for assessing the Soviet arsenal. Since the Institute has no satellites at its disposal, its "researchers" are undoubtedly left in a painful dilemma: whether to obtain their information from the blue sky, or from the Sputniks. Nobody in the European peace movement, it seems, has ever wondered about the reliability of this obscure establishment.

But this is just a trifle. More seriously, our peace-lovers—repeating word for word an old *Pravda* cliché—maintain that the “crazy American generals” are so trigger-happy as to push the button just for the fun of it. I have never been able to understand why generals must invariably be crazy—American generals, of course, not the Soviet kind, who seem to have some innate immunity from craziness—and if they are crazy, why they did not push the damn button long ago. In any case, it is hard to imagine that the generals, who at least have some technical education, are less equipped to understand nuclear problems than the primary-school teachers who are so heavily represented in the peace movement.

Some of the “peace-makers” sincerely believe that as soon as the West disarms itself, the Soviets will follow suit, and with an almost literally incredible naïveté they urge us to “try” this suicidal experiment. Others, far more sophisticated, know perfectly well that their Soviet comrades need to gain time so as to enjoy a more advantageous posture in future negotiations with the Americans. What they urge is that the West start negotiations first and improve the Western position later. Still others are more candidly selfish and object only to the deployment of nuclear weapons near their own village, so to speak—as if being protected is more dangerous than not being protected. Or better still, as if any single village, city, or country could maintain neutrality during a nuclear war. “Let the Americans fight the Russians,” they say, implying that the entire problem of the modern world grows out of some stupid far-off quarrel between “Americans and Russians,” who are apparently in some kind of conspiracy to destroy the poor Europeans. Surely if comrade Brezhnev promised to respect the “nuclear-free zones” in case of war, people could heave a sigh of relief and go to sleep untroubled. If Brezhnev says so, there will be no nuclear-armed submarines off your shores. After all, has comrade Brezhnev ever broken his word? Of course not. He is an honest man. He is so honest he can even guarantee you in what direction the contaminated clouds will move and locate for you the radioactive fallout. “Why should the Russians attack us, if we are disarmed?” Why indeed? Ask the Afghan peasants, they would probably know the answer.

There is no sense in rehearsing all the various “peace arguments,” so contradictory and even incompatible that one wonders how those who make them manage to get along together in the same movement. Only one thing these various strands have in common: panic, and a readiness to capitulate to the Soviet threat even before such capitulation is demanded. Better red than dead. That is why current Soviet propaganda has so quickly become so remarkably successful.

Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a more openly pro-Soviet line than that of the European peace

movement. It is even more pro-Soviet than that of the local Communist parties, who after all at least have to camouflage themselves with a cover of independence from Moscow. Nothing is more obvious, for example, than that the present increase in international tension was brought about by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. There is hardly a country, a political party (including some Communist parties), or an international organization that did not condemn the Soviet aggression unequivocally. The only public movement in Western Europe that never condemned the invasion, paradoxically, is the one that calls itself the “peace movement.” No such condemnation has ever been pronounced at a peace-movement rally in Western Europe, or passed as a resolution, or published in one of the movement’s major publications, or circulated as a mass petition. Perhaps you will imagine that the peace groups condemned the invasion in their hearts? On the contrary, the evidence is far more convincing that they simply justify this international crime.

NOT long ago I myself was publicly charged by the leaders of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) with having distorted their position on Afghanistan. Therefore I find it particularly useful to quote from an official CND booklet, *Why We Need Action, Not Words*, by Betty England: “The intervention in Afghanistan may well have been caused partly by the Soviet Union’s fear of its growing encirclement. The fear cannot be called unreasonable after Sir Neil Cameron’s statement in Peking . . .” (p. 12). In other words, the poor Russians whom Sir Neil, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, so frightened with a speech critical of them, must have good reason for what they do. By this logic, we ought to be imposing strict censorship on anti-Soviet speeches lest we be faced with Soviet occupation of the entire world. But the implications are even more important. The idea buried in Miss England’s passage is that the only way to keep the peace is gradually to accept the Soviet system and Soviet demands.

Even more outspoken than the CND is the World Peace Council. Its booklet, *Program of Action 1981*, contains a direct instruction to support the present puppet government of Afghanistan (p. 25). This program was *unanimously* adopted in 1980 by a gathering in Sofia, Bulgaria of representatives of most of the peace groups (about this gathering, more later). After this it comes as no surprise that at the recent International Peace Conference in Denmark it was decided to convene the next meeting in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, within six months.

It is obvious that a Soviet invasion of Poland would bring us closer to world war, or, to be more precise, would make any real relaxation of international tension quite impossible for ten or fifteen



years. And once again, the only public movement that has never condemned the continuous Soviet threat to Poland (and is still uncertain about its reaction to the Soviet-dictated imposition of martial law) is the peace movement. The leaders of the biggest British peace group, CND, went even further, publicly praising themselves for not "over-reacting" to the events in Poland (B. Kent, letter to the London *Times*, December 9, 1981) only a few days before the imposition of martial law, and displaying their "impartiality" by equating the Polish crisis with that in East Timor. Perhaps the leaders of the movement seeking to promote peace in Europe should be reminded that in 1975 the 35 countries of Europe, together with Canada and the U.S., solemnly recognized an inseparable link between security in Europe and respect for human rights in the participating countries. Should we assume that the CND leadership refuses to accept the Helsinki agreement, or are we to conclude that it is indifferent to the question of European security?

At least about Poland not all in the movement can be accused of indifference. I have, for instance, never heard of a case in which a representative of the Chilean or Argentinean government was invited to expound his government's views before any international peace conference. But for some strange reason, an exception was recently made for a representative of the Polish junta, who was invited by the World Peace Council to address the International Peace Conference in Denmark. His vicious lies about Solidarity and personal slanders against Lech Walesa (see the *Guardian*, January 11, 1982) were greeted with hearty applause by the peace-lovers (BBC report).

IT is simple common sense to try to restrain both sides of any would-be conflict if one wishes to preserve peace. But the European peace movement is so remarkably unilateral that it seems barely conscious of "the other side." It cries shame on the Americans for as yet non-existent weapons like the neutron bomb, or the not-yet-deployed cruise and Pershing missiles, but speaks only in whispers, if that, of the hundreds of Soviet SS-20's already aimed at Europe.

Since, again, I have provoked an angry reaction from the CND leaders for pointing out this particular instance of extreme unilateralism (London *Times*, December 9, 1981), I looked through the major CND publications once more. The booklet by Betty England quoted above does not contain a single mention of the SS-20's, though it is virtually saturated with the names of American missiles. Nor does a widely distributed report on the CND annual conference of 1981 (the latest to my knowledge), nor the official CND leaflet, *Nuclear War and You*, dropped into my mailbox by some caring hand. Only recently I have learned that a decision to mention the SS-20 was finally

taken by CND after many heated debates and very much against the wishes of the CND leadership, many of whom are also members of the British Communist party.

Oddly enough, there are many in the European peace movement who have worked (some still do) with Amnesty International in support of prisoners of conscience in the Communist countries. Unfortunately, this by itself does not seem to prevent one from making dangerous political mistakes, nor, to judge from the results, does it guarantee any moderating influence on the movement's leadership. Be that as it may, the fact is that the European peace movement (including its large constituent organizations) has never said a word in support of the thousands of people in the USSR who are imprisoned for opposing aggressive Soviet policies, for refusing to serve in the army on errands of aggression, or to shoot civilians in Afghanistan. During all the time that hundreds of thousands of "peace-lovers" were noisily expressing their one-sided feelings on the streets of London, Bonn, Amsterdam, and Brussels, not one word was said about Sakharov, still in exile and on a hunger strike—Sakharov, who has done more than anyone in the world to halt nuclear testing. These peaceful souls would happily throw stones at General Haig, but they would welcome Marshal Brezhnev with servile smiles.

This is not to deny that there are plenty of well-intentioned, and genuinely concerned and frightened people in the movement's ranks. I am certain that the overwhelming majority of them are. Just as it did in the 1950's, the movement today probably consists of the same odd mixture of Communists, fellow-travelers, muddleheaded intellectuals, hypocrites seeking popularity, professional political speculators, frightened bourgeois, and youths eager to rebel just for the sake of rebelling. There are also the inevitable Catholic priests with a "mission" and other religious people who believe that God has chosen them to make peace on earth right now. But there is also not the slightest doubt that this motley crowd is manipulated by a handful of scoundrels instructed directly from Moscow.

In fact, just as this essay was going to press, John Vinocur reported in the *New York Times* (April 6, 1982) "the first public substantiation from inside the antinuclear movement . . . that the West German Communist party, at the direction of the Soviet Union, has attempted to coopt public sentiment against nuclear weapons." The environmentalist party known as the Greens "charged that the West German Communist party, which is aligned with Moscow, dominated and manipulated a meeting [in Bonn] Sunday [April 4] in which representatives of 37 groups, describing themselves as elements of the antimissile movement, planned a major demonstration against President Reagan when he visits Bonn . . . June 10." The Greens, who participated in the meeting, acknowledge

that they themselves have cooperated with the Communists "on certain local issues," but what happened in Bonn was "scandalous" even to them. "The Communists dominated the meeting completely. It took place under seemingly democratic rules, but that was a joke. We could barely get a word in." The meeting—at which were represented such groups as the German Student Federation, the Evangelical Student Committee, the Federation of German Youth Groups, and the German Peace Society—rejected resolutions condemning Soviet interference in Poland and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and the delegates refused to express support for Solidarity. "They adopted, however, by a large majority, a motion condemning United States actions in Central America, the Middle East, southern Africa, and other regions."

Earlier, as I was in the process of writing this essay, news came that one of the Danish leaders of the movement, Arne Petersen, was arrested along with his wife for channeling Soviet money into the funds of the peace movement. His master, the Second Secretary of the Soviet embassy in Copenhagen, was expelled from the country. Now and then we hear about subsidized trips taken by peace activists to the best Soviet resorts where they are wined and dined royally—and, of course, shown kindergartens, schools, and hospitals (no munitions factories).

The majority of the European peace movement is undoubtedly not aware of these facts. Probably they will ignore the charges of the Greens, just as they missed the reports of Mr. Petersen's activities, which involved placing paid advertisements (out of Soviet donations) for the Danish peace movement in the Danish papers, ads signed by a number of prominent Danish intellectuals (who for sure knew nothing about it). And even our angry CND leaders "know nothing of the subsidized trips to Soviet resorts" (*London Times*, December 9, 1981). Well, sometimes it is very comfortable—even for professional intellectuals—not to know things. . . .

**F**OR those, however, who do wish to know, let us track down the origin of the current revival of the "struggle for peace." Anyone who has read thus far will not be surprised to hear that the earliest traces of this revival are to be found in Soviet publications, quite clear for those who know how to read them:

The first bright colors of autumn have already touched the emerald green parks of Sofia. The golden leaves of maples and aspens are trembling on the breeze. And everywhere the tender-blue streamers bearing the insignia of the World Peace Council. Sofia is expecting an important event: the World Parliament of the Peoples for Peace will be working here from 23 to 27 of September. It is the biggest and the most repre-

sentative meeting of the world's peace forces convened in the last years by the World Peace Council. (*Izvestia*, September 23, 1980)

The same day *Pravda* referred to "the biggest gathering in history of the fighters for peace." Indeed, the most peaceful and independent country of the world, Bulgaria, played host during those September days to 2,260 peace-lovers from 137 countries, claiming to represent 330 political parties, 100 international and over 3,000 national non-governmental organizations. To be sure, this was no ordinary meeting of the international Communist movement. The political spectrum of those represented was exceptionally wide: 200 members of different national parliaments, 200 trade-union leaders, 129 leading Social Democrats (33 of them members of their respective national executive bodies), 150 writers and poets, 33 representatives of different liberation movements (including the Association in Defense of Civil Rights from Northern Ireland), women's organizations (like the National Assembly of British Women), youth organizations, the World Council of Churches and other religious organizations, 18 representatives of different UN specialized committees and commissions, representatives of the Organization of African Unity and of OPEC, ex-military people, some of them generals, and representatives of 83 Communist parties (*Pravda*, September 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, November 5, 1980; *Izvestia*, September 23, 24, 27, 28, 1980).

It had all started about a year earlier, as we are informed by a talkative Bulgarian, the chairman of the Organizational Bureau, responsible for the "practical preparation" for this show (*Pravda*, September 23, 1980). They had expected, you see, only 1,500 delegates, but 2,200 came. No wonder the chairman wished to talk about his success.

Yet a year earlier—in 1979—none of the conditions now cited to explain the current miraculous resurrection of the peace movement existed. There was no so-called "new strategy of the Pentagon," the famous presidential directive 59; there was no new escalation of the arms race; there was no neutron bomb. The Vienna summit meeting had just been successfully concluded with the signing of SALT II. September 1979 was a time of universal happiness, the sky was cloudless. Only one significant thing happened in September 1979: a sudden wave of mass arrests in the Soviet Union and, as we have learned now, a decision to reactivate the peace movement. Who could have predicted in September 1979 that within a year the cold war would be back—who else but those involved in "practical preparations" for the invasion of Afghanistan? Given the nature of the Soviet planned economy, with its fabulously inflexible, slow, and inefficient workings, the Soviets must prepare everything well in advance. Why should they have allocated such a large sum of money to hold a Bulgarian peace show in the middle of

happy times, if not in anticipation of grave political trouble ahead?

Furthermore, we learn from comrade Zhivkov, the Bulgarian Communist leader who opened the meeting with a long speech, about an appropriate decision taken by the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Bloc countries in May 1980 (*Pravda*, September 24, 1980), as well as an appropriate resolution of the Plenary Session of the Central Committee in June 1980 (*Pravda*, September 29, 1980). Comrade Zhivkov was simply revealing the way decisions and resolutions first travel through the Communist bureaucratic machinery on their way to rubberstamping by a "representative" body—in this case, the Sofia "Parliament" in September.

**I**NDEED, the whole show was depressingly familiar to anyone acquainted with the methods the Kremlin producers applied to the same scenario in the time of Stalin. Even the dramatic personae were the same. There was the same World Peace Council with its immortal President Ramesh Chandra; there was the same chief conductor, Boris Ponomarev, former official of the Comintern (now responsible in the Politburo for contacts with fraternal Communist parties as well as for intelligence). Even the slogan adopted for the occasion, "The people have the power to preserve peace—their basic right," was remarkably similar to the unforgettable words of comrade Stalin in 1952.

Only this time the personal message that comrade Ponomarev brought to those convened was from comrade Brezhnev, not comrade Stalin. The latter, of course, would never have tolerated even the mention of the term "rights"—basic or any other—in his slogans. Well, the times have changed after all. Still, those damned "human rights" had gotten out of hand. Hence, better to find something like "basic rights."

The first to speak, as I said, was comrade Zhivkov, and he spilled the beans about the Soviets' real concern (*Pravda*, September 24, 1980). The aggressive circles in America, he said, refuse to accept the present balance of forces in the world. They don't wish to submit to their historically predestined defeat. They have become so arrogant as to reject all of the recent Soviet peace proposals. They have decided to replace détente with a policy based on a "position of strength." They don't observe agreements on cooperation; they interrupt political and economic contacts; they interfere with cultural and scientific exchange; they dissolve sporting and tourist connections (in other words, the grain embargo, the Olympic boycott, the scientific boycott, etc., responses to the invasion of Afghanistan and the persecution of scientists in the USSR).

This theme was taken up by most of the speakers with only minor variations. The main speaker,

comrade Ponomarev, suggested a whole program of action intended to bring America's aggressive circles into compliance. He appealed for unity among all those concerned with preservation of peace, irrespective of their political views. "The time has come for action, not words," he said. (Wait a minute, have we not met this sentiment somewhere already? Surely not in the CND official booklet?)

The show proceeded smoothly, exhibiting the whole gallery of monsters, from the greatest peace-lover of our time, Yasir Arafat, to a "representative" of Afghanistan.

How did all these 2,260 representatives of Social Democrats, trade unions, youth, women, and religious organizations react? Did they rush out in disgust? Did they demand the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan in order to remove the main obstacle to détente? Did they express concern about the massive Soviet arms build-up and the deployment of SS-20's? By no means. This self-appointed World Parliament issued an Appeal in which the main ideas of comrade Ponomarev's speech were repeated. Thus, the "Parliament" is opposed "to the vast machine and arms build-up of the most aggressive forces of imperialism which seek to take the world toward a nuclear abyss; to the falsehoods and lies of the propaganda in favor of the arms build-up, which are disseminated through imperialist-controlled mass media."

Translated from party jargon, this constitutes a clear directive to work against the armament programs of the Western countries (first of all, of course, the U.S.—the "most aggressive forces of imperialism"), and to reject any "lies" of the mass media about the Soviet arms build-up.

Beyond this, the "parliamentarians" set "the new tasks and duties . . . for action of the peoples of all continents" and worked out the Charter of the Peoples for Peace which was adopted unanimously (!) together with the Peoples' Program for Peace for the 1980's. The year 1981 was chosen to be "the springboard of the 80's, a year of a decisive offensive of the peace forces to achieve a breakthrough in curbing the arms build-up."

Most of the program was carried out, the mass demonstrations of October 1981 in the European capitals having been planned within a framework of what is called in the Soviet program "UN Disarmament Week (October 24-31)." How on earth could the Soviets have known in 1980 about events that would take place at the end of 1981, unless they were running the whole show?

My pointing out this strange coincidence, which I did in an article in the *London Times* (December 4, 1981), was bound to provoke heated denials; and did so. The Soviets in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (December 23, 1981), as well as the CND leaders in the *London Times* (December 9, 1981), made much of the fact that UN Disarmament Week had originally been designated as an annual observance by the

UN General Assembly as early as June 1978. Now, the UN flag may seem to many to be a perfect cover. One must ask, however, why virtually nothing happened during that all-important week in 1978 or 1979—even the Sofia meeting was scheduled in September, not October, of 1980—until details for its observance were specified by the Soviet-inspired program? Moreover, if one looks through the *Final Document of the Assembly Session on Disarmament (May 23-July 1, 1978)*, issued by the UN, one can find hundreds of designated weeks, months, years, and decades, all totally ignored by our peace-lovers, whereas the suggestion singled out by the Soviets was the one, the *only* one, to gather thousands in the streets. For example, was anyone aware that the decade 1969 to 1979 was solemnly declared by the United Nations to be “The Decade of Disarmament”? If there were any huge rallies or vigorous campaigns during these ten years, they seem to have escaped notice.

**B**UT let us return to this remarkable program, unanimously adopted by the international community of peace-lovers. (It is published by the World Peace Council in Helsinki, as already noted, and is available in English under the title, *Program of Action 1981*.)

This program includes such items as the “elimination of all artificial barriers to world trade,” an amazingly frank recognition of the Soviet need for Western goods and technology and its desire to be granted the status of most favored nation. But what this has to do with the problem of peace and why all peace-loving people should fight for it tooth and nail is hardly made clear.

As could be expected, the program contains a clear definition of “just” and “unjust” wars: “The policy of destabilization of *progressive regimes* in developing countries actually constitutes an aggression, waged by psychological, economic, political, and other means, including armed intervention.” However, similar acts against “racist and fascist” regimes are quite justified because the mere existence of non-progressive regimes “is abhorrent to the conscience of humankind.” Accordingly, the sale of arms to these “abhorrent” countries should be banned, but nothing need restrain the peace-loving from selling arms to “progressive” regimes and to “liberation movements.”

And, of course, there are directives to the mass media, which “must serve the cause of peace and not the military-industrial complex by confusing public opinion with lies and disinformation.” (In other words, the media should not report on the Soviet arms build-up.) A similar directive is issued to those “who bear responsibility for educating a new generation.”

The program further specifies precisely which events and campaigns to undertake, and designates weeks for the collection of signatures on various

petitions, etc., all around the world. It constantly emphasizes the urgent need for “further intensification of actions against the deployment of the new U.S. weapons of mass annihilation in Western Europe” and plans for “strengthening and broadening of national movements into a worldwide network of peace organizations.”

It is not possible here to discuss all the details of this remarkable document. It simply introduces each and every aspect of Soviet foreign policy wrapped around with the phraseology of peace. Not surprisingly, therefore, it includes Afghanistan under the guise of a “week of solidarity, with special emphasis on support for a political settlement as proposed by the Afghan government.” For Ethiopia it proposes “a week of solidarity with the Ethiopian revolution” and “support for the struggle of the Ethiopian people against imperialist and reactionary conspiracies and plans in the Horn of Africa.” For Kampuchea there should be an “international campaign of solidarity with the government and people of Kampuchea led by the National United Front for National Salvation and an international campaign for recognition of the People’s Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea and the seating of its representatives in the UN; exposure of the conspiracies of the Peking hegemons who are working in collusion with the U.S. imperialists against Kampuchea.” For Israel: “Support for the peace forces in Israel in their struggle for the complete withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories and for the realization of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people.” Whereas for the Middle East in general: a “campaign of solidarity with the Arab peoples in their struggle to liquidate the political and military consequences of the Camp David and Washington accords; solidarity actions with Libya against the threats of aggression by the Egyptian regime and U.S. imperialism.” As for the U.S., even in so totally pro-Soviet a document as this the instruction to campaign for the “release of political prisoners in the United States of America” reads like a bad joke. Clearly, the love of peace dulls the sense of humor. The only countries where violations of human rights are recognized by the unanimous vote of 2,260 delegates from 137 countries are: Bolivia, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Israel, Paraguay, Uruguay, Indonesia, South Korea, Northern Ireland, and the U.S. Has the world not undergone a remarkable improvement?

After the successful adoption of this program, what followed was simple. Returning from Sofia, the enthusiastic delegates threw themselves into a hectic round of implementing the program, pressing for appropriate resolutions, actions, and commitments in each of their respective organizations (*Pravda*, November 5, 1980). An additional impetus was given to the campaign by an endorsement from the World Council of Churches at their

meeting in Dresden (East Germany) on August 28, 1981, thus committing a huge number of adherents of the various Christian denominations to following the Soviet line. And in no time hundreds of thousands in the West came honestly to believe that they were out to save world peace.

WELL, is there any further need to explain why the Soviet Union is so interested in the peace movement? There is a term in party jargon coined by Lenin himself: "a useful idiot." Now, in spite of all their blunders, senseless adventures, economic disasters, the Polish crisis and the stubborn resistance of the Afghan peasants, Reagan's rearmament plan and UN resolutions, the Soviet rulers have scored a spectacular victory: they have recruited millions of useful idiots to implement their bankrupt foreign policy. They are no longer isolated and there is still a big question as to whether the Americans will be allowed to place missiles in Europe.

True enough, the American economy is vastly more productive and efficient than the Soviet, but the Americans don't have a weapon like the "struggle for peace." True again, this peace movement will be expensive for the Soviet people (the meeting in Bulgaria alone must have cost them millions, to say nothing of subsidizing all peace activists on those jaunts to the best Soviet resorts; the cost of running this worldwide campaign must be simply astronomical). Still, it is cheaper than another round of the arms race, let alone the cost of maintaining a priceless military superiority. And the result will be long-lasting.

Mind you, we are into only the second year of a planned ten-year "struggle for peace." Within a few years, the whole earth will be trembling under the marching feet of the useful idiots, for their resources are inexhaustible.

I remember in the 50's, when the previous peace campaign was still in full swing, there was a popular joke which people in the Soviet Union whispered to each other: "A Jew came to his rabbi and asked: 'Rabbi, you are a very wise man. Tell me, is there going to be a war?' 'There will be no war,' replied the rabbi, 'but there will be such a struggle for peace that no stone will be left standing.'"

## II

ONE of the most serious mistakes of the Western peace movement and of its ideologists is the obdurate refusal to understand the nature of the Soviet regime, and the concomitant effort to lift the question of peace out of the context of the broader problem of East-West relations. After several decades of listening to what they believe to be "anti-Communist propaganda," they have simply got "fed-up with it." They ascribe everything they hear about the East to a "cold-war-type brainwashing," and make no attempt to

distinguish what is true from what is not. This attitude, which I can only describe as a combination of ignorance and arrogance, makes them an easy target for any pseudo-theory (or outright Soviet propaganda) that happens to be fashionable at any given moment. Besides, baffled by endless and contradictory arguments among the "specialists" about the nature of the Soviet system, the leaders of the peace movement believe they have found a "new approach" which makes the entire problem irrelevant.

A few months ago in England, I attended a public debate on the problem of unilateral disarmament. The leader of a big peace group opened his speech by saying that from his standpoint, it is irrelevant who is the aggressor and who the victim. He said: "It is like when two boys have a fight in the churchyard. It is impossible to find out who started the fight, nor is there any need to do so. What we should do is to stop them."

This metaphor reflects very well the prevailing attitude among peace-movement members. They believe they have gotten around a baffling problem, whereas they have in fact inadvertently adopted the concept of the "normal opponent." From the "churchyard" standpoint, the present conflict seems very ordinary: two bullies have become so embittered by their prolonged quarrel—in which anyway the essence of the disagreement has been lost or forgotten—that they are quite prepared to kill each other and everybody else around. They are temporarily insane, mad, but are basically normal human beings. Pride and fury will not permit them to come to their senses, unless we, the sane people around them, are prepared to intervene. Let us make them talk to one another, let us pin down their hands, let us distract them from their quarrel. We cannot, to be sure, pin down the hands of one of them. Then, in the best Christian tradition, let us make the other repent, in all good Christian humility. Let us disarm him to convince his adversary of his peaceful intentions. Let us turn the other cheek. Sooner or later the other will come to feel ashamed.

This view sums up exactly what I mean by a combination of ignorance and arrogance. Indeed, if we look upon the world from the "churchyard" standpoint, there probably is no need to find out who is the aggressor and who the victim. There is no need for police or armed forces. All we can see is a row of graves with the dead lying orderly in them and a couple of children quarreling with each other. Unfortunately, outside the church walls there is a bigger and far more dangerous world with gangsters, murderers, rapists, and other perverse characters.

Needless to say, this churchyard model simply does not merit serious consideration. Unfortunately, it is a widespread belief (and not only within the peace movement) that the Soviet government, like any other government, is preoccupied with

the well-being of its people, and will therefore be eager to reduce military expenditures. This notion comes so naturally to our peace-makers that they just do not notice they have taken on a view of the Soviet system which is both very old and unquestionably wrong. If they only took the trouble to study a little Soviet history, they would know immediately how misleading this seemingly natural view is. Not only are the Soviet rulers indifferent to the living condition of their populace, they *deliberately* keep it low; on the other hand, disarmament (irrespective of the problem of well-being) would lead very rapidly to the collapse of the Soviet empire.

Normally we try to understand an opponent by taking his place, getting into his shoes, so to speak. That is why most people try to explain Soviet behavior in terms of "normal human motives," that is, by motives familiar to them. And that is exactly why they constantly pile one mistake upon another. For it is extremely difficult for a "normal" human being to put himself inside the skin of a mentally ill one. It is almost as in nature itself: when we test natural phenomena under extreme conditions, we suddenly find some unpredictable anomaly that is baffling to us. Logic itself becomes abnormal in certain extreme cases. If we add up two numbers, say, or multiply or divide them, we invariably obtain a new number. But if we use zero or infinity our whole rule suddenly goes wrong.

**B**UT let us take an example relevant to the present discussion. Let us take the key question: why is the Soviet Union so aggressive, so eager to expand? We see how many schools of thought there are among those studying the problem (and we see, too, how all of them are wrong).

There are some people who believe that the present Soviet expansionism is just a continuation of the Russian pre-revolutionary colonial policy. In other words, it is a bad legacy. Indeed, this notion about Soviet expansionism was the dominant one for a very long time—and still is in some quarters. In line with it, there have been repeated attempts to offer the Soviets a division of the world into spheres of influence. We owe to it the Yalta agreement, the Potsdam agreement, and assorted other disasters. Each time the Soviets have accepted the division into spheres of influence, and each time they have violated it. Is this because they need more mineral resources, more territory, a wider market for their goods? No. Their own territory is undeveloped, their own mineral resources are in the earth, they do not have enough goods for their own internal market. There are no useful mineral deposits in Cuba or Afghanistan. There is no Russian national interest in Angola or Vietnam. In fact, these new "colonies" cost the Soviet people many millions of dollars a

day apiece. So, Soviet policy is no classical case of colonialism.

Then there is another theory, far more pernicious because much more widely accepted and because to reject it one needs a real knowledge of Soviet life. I mean the theory according to which Soviet aggressiveness is the result of the fear of hostile encirclement. The proponents of this theory argue that Russian history, particularly the history of repeated invasions of Russian territory within the last century, has made the Russian people almost paranoid about an external threat.

This theory sounds very scientific because many facts may be cited to back it up. Still, it is no more than a shrewd combination of obvious lies, wrong interpretations, and very perfunctory knowledge. It is mainly based on an overestimation of the importance of history for any given nation and on an oversimplification of the Soviet system.

To begin with, there is an obvious lie in this theory—that is, a deliberate confusion between the people and the government in the USSR. Those who know the Soviet system only moderately well may still need to be reminded that the people have no privilege of representation in the government—that is, have no free elections. Thus, the government does not reflect the feelings of the population. So if we are to believe that the population is frightened by the long history of invasions, the government has no reason to share these fears. The Soviet government, with its vast and omnipresent intelligence system, is extremely well-informed about every move and every smallest intention of the West (anyway not very difficult to achieve in view of the remarkable openness of Western societies). By 1978-79, when their arms build-up was at a high pitch, whom were they supposed to be so afraid of? Their great friend, the French President Giscard? Or their even better friend in West Germany, Willy Brandt? Britain, with its puny armed forces (and ongoing discussion on unilateral disarmament), or perhaps Nixon and Carter, who between them shelved all the major armament programs? Japan, which has no army at all?

Clearly the Soviet government had no reason to be frightened. In fact, the theory of Soviet paranoia does not imply a frightened government, but rather a frightened *nation*. In a "normal" country this might drive the government to become aggressive. But in the Soviet Union the people mean nothing and have no way of pressuring their government to do anything. They would not be allowed to voice any fears. So, who is so frightened in the Soviet Union? Besides, as far as the rulers are concerned, their own experience of war, World War II, could not frighten them for a very simple reason: they won the war. Can you show me any victorious general who is so afraid of war as to become paranoid? The psychology of Soviet rulers is in any case totally different.

One need only look at a map of the world to see how ridiculous this theory is. Can we honestly believe that the poor Communists in the Kremlin are so frightened that they must protect themselves by sending their troops to Cuba and Cuban troops to Angola? By sending military equipment and advisers to Ethiopia and Vietnam and then by sending Vietnamese troops to Kampuchea? Take another look at that map: it is not at all obvious that the USSR is encircled by hostile powers. Rather the other way around: it is the Western world that is encircled by the hostile hordes of the Communists. Well, if their paranoia can be satisfied only by surrendering the whole world to their control, what difference can it make to us whether they act out of fear or out of endemic aggressiveness?

Finally, and most importantly for an understanding of this pernicious theory, is the fact that it was invented by the Kremlin propaganda experts. It was very successfully exploited in the years of détente, when Western governments, acting under its influence, deliberately permitted the Soviets to achieve military superiority. They would probably deny it now, but I remember very well the discussions of that period. The argument of the ideologists of détente was that once the Soviets caught up, they would relax; this would in turn lead to the internal as well as external relaxation of the Communist regime, i.e., to *liberalization*. The results of this brilliant experiment we can see now.

The Soviet population, too, has been subjected, day after day for sixty-five years, to an intense propaganda campaign about this putative "hostile encirclement." The Communist rulers unscrupulously exploit the tragedy of the Soviet people in World War II for the purpose of justifying both their oppressive regime and their monstrous military spending. They try their best to instill into the people a pathological fear of the "capitalist world." Fortunately, the people are sane enough to laugh at the very idea. Thus, contrary to this theory, there is no paranoid population demanding to be protected in the Soviet Union, despite the best efforts of a perfectly sober and cruel government.

No, it is not the fear of invasion or a World War II hangover that has driven the Soviet rulers to wage an undeclared war against the whole world for half a century now. It is their commitment—repeated quite openly every five years at each Party Congress since the beginning of this century—to support the "forces of progress and socialism," to support "liberation movements," everywhere on the globe.

ARE we then to assume that the Soviet leadership consists of fanatics aiming at global control? Even such a model, crazy as it might sound, still imputes too much "normality"

to the Soviet leaders. Or, more precisely, it is too big a simplification. This theory, too—fortunately for us—does not fit a number of the facts. Paradoxically, none of the present Communist leaders believes any longer in Communist doctrine. Fortunately, because no real fanatic would ever tolerate the destruction of the object of his obsession. He would rather witness the destruction of the entire world.

The Soviet rulers are a totally cynical lot, much more preoccupied with their own privileges and pleasures than with Marxist ideas. They probably hate Communist dogma more than any Western capitalist. Moreover, the majority of the Soviet people are as cynical as their leaders. There are many more sincere Communists to be found in the West than in the USSR.

But this fact has also created false hopes among Western politicians and the public. The same false hopes encouraged by the theory of encirclement—that it will be possible to treat the Soviets as normal partners at last, that it will be possible to negotiate, to cooperate, and to relax. Both theories lead equally to the same mistaken policy.

So what is the truth about the damned Soviet system?

Certainly, there was a period when the Soviet leaders were Communist fanatics, ready to sacrifice the whole world to their faith. There was a period, too, when at least some part of the population was prepared to greet this new idea with considerable enthusiasm. The people of my country, I suppose, could be excused for their delusion, because Communism was indeed a new idea and one that might be thought by the inexperienced to appeal to the best qualities in human nature. Is it after all not a worthy purpose, to secure unalloyed happiness for all future generations, to liberate and unite the whole of mankind? Naturally, such a thing will not be easy, but it is worth a great deal of sacrifice to achieve. Just as naturally there will be many selfish people to oppose it and we should learn to be ruthless with them. Only millions of individual wills fused into a single invincible "we," united by the iron fist of a Leader, can achieve so difficult an end.

This period of ecstasy, however, was very short-lived. One by one, the various elements of the Soviet population cooled down, sobered up, and then could not believe in their own former enthusiasm. The besieged minority reacted to this desertion of the public by becoming even more ruthless and single-minded: "We will make them happy against their will; their children will be grateful to us." I will not describe the mass slaughter that resulted from this great determination. It has been described many times. A terrorized majority obeyed with sham enthusiasm, because it was a crime to look gloomy. But underneath there was a silent, passive resistance. The minority of "believers" over time became simply a

ruling clique which had lost its ideals in the constant fight for survival, in corruption, and in its abuses of power and its privileges. The ensuing political situation can best be described as a latent civil war in which a kind of balance has been maintained by political terror.

In this way the Soviet Union reached a condition in which absolute power was exercised by absolutely cynical people over absolutely cynical people, each side vociferously assuring the other that they were all still sincerely building an ideal future society. But the ideology exists now almost as in a work of science fiction: it has separated itself from its substratum and has petrified in the structure of the society. It has become an institution in which nobody (not even the top executive) is allowed verbally to deviate from the dead dogma. The will of millions is still being taken from them and welded into the iron fist of abstraction.

There is practically no free human being inside the entire country. The state—the only employer—will not allow anyone to be financially independent—as indeed no independence of any kind will be tolerated. Everybody must be carrying out a useful task, performing a needed function. Several nationwide networks of security and secret police spy first on each other and then together on everybody else. Such a system has created a new type of a man, who thinks one thing, publicly expresses another, and does a third.

The enormous inertia of this system is not surprising. There is no internal “class enemy” any more; there is no need to terrorize so many millions. Still, there are huge concentration camps, because they have become an integral part of the country’s economic, political, and spiritual life. Nobody believes now in the ultimate victory of Communism in the world, but the policy of external subversion and the promotion of “socialist forces” everywhere has become an integral part of the state machinery. The system rules the people.

**B**YOND inertia, there is something else, something even more decisive: the instinct of self-preservation of the ruling clique. Once you are riding a tiger, it is difficult to jump off. Any attempt at internal liberalization might prove fatal. If the central power were to weaken, the sheer amount of hatred accumulated within the population for these sixty-five years of the socialist experiment would be so dangerous, the results of any reform so unpredictable—and, above all, the power, the fabulous privileges, the very physical survival of the ruling clique would become so tenuous—that one would be mad to expect the Soviet leaders to play with liberal ideas. Only the imminent threat of total collapse might force them to introduce internal reforms.

The two sides of the Soviet regime—internal oppression and external aggression—are inseparably

interlocked, creating a sort of vicious circle. The more the regime becomes rotten inside, the more pains are taken by its leaders to present a formidable façade to the outside world. They need international tension as a thief needs the darkness of the night. In the political climate of latent civil war, given the enormous and senseless sacrifices of the last fifty years, the constant economic difficulties, and the lack of basic rights—not to mention, again, the extraordinary privileges enjoyed by the ruling clique—the only hope for stability lies in the need to cope with an external threat: “hostile encirclement” and the subversive activity of “world imperialism.” In this artificially created state of war, the worker’s demand for a better deal, or a captive nation’s demand for its independence, can then be treated as an act of subversion, “playing into the hands of the enemy.”

Nor is it enough to create a devil in order to maintain one’s religious zeal. This imaginary enemy must be defeated over and over again or there will be the risk that he will seduce you. American “imperialism” must be defeated at any cost, and the liberation of proletarians in the capitalist countries must be promoted by all means. The failure to support a “friendly government,” to establish Communist rule in a new country, will immediately be perceived as a weakening of Soviet power, and therefore an encouragement to the sullen and embittered population at home. Any failure of the Soviet international adventure may thus trigger a chain reaction leading to the ultimate collapse of the Soviet rulers. This is why they cannot allow a popular uprising in Hungary, a “Prague Spring” in Czechoslovakia, an anti-Communist “Holy War” in Afghanistan, or an independent alternative center of power in Poland. Immediate repercussions would be felt in all the other countries of the Socialist camp as well as in the Ukraine, the Baltic states, Central Asia, and other occupied territories. The scenario of aggression is depressingly uniform. First, the Soviets undermine a democratic state, helping the friendly “progressive forces” come to power. Next, they have to save their bankrupt “progressive” friends, when the resistance of the population threatens to overthrow them.

Are they frightened to the point of aggressiveness? Yes, but not by your piles of hardware, not by your clumsy attempts at defense. They are frightened by their own people, because they know the end is inevitable. That is why they must score victory after victory over the “hostile encirclement.” Behind every victory is a very simple message addressed to their own enslaved population: “Look, we are still very strong and nobody dares to challenge our might.”

If they are afraid of you, it is because they are afraid of your freedom and your prosperity. They cannot tolerate a democratic state close to their borders (and then, close to the borders of their



buffer-states), because a bad example of thriving democracy so close at hand might prove to be too provocative.

**K**NOWING all this, let us ask ourselves a question: what would happen if the West were to disarm unilaterally? Could the Soviets follow suit? Certainly not. It would mean the rapid disintegration of their empire and a general collapse of their power. Does this mean they will simply roll over the now defenseless Western countries? Again, the answer is: no. They don't need your territory, which would be difficult to hold anyway. Above all, where would they acquire goods, technology, credits, grain, etc., if they were to impose on you their inefficient economic system? They need you in the way China needs Hong Kong. *But from that very moment you will gradually begin to lose your freedom, being exposed to constant and unrestrained Soviet blackmail.*

You may like or dislike your trade unions, but would you like them to have to consider a possibility of foreign invasion every time they wanted to declare a strike—as Solidarity had to do in Poland for eighteen months? You may like or dislike your mass media, but would you like to see the self-censorship of your press in order to avoid an angry reaction by a powerful neighbor—as in Finland? You may like or dislike your system of representation, but at least you are free to elect those whom you choose without considering the desires of a foreign power. Nobody threatens to come into your country and impose a government of its choosing—as in Afghanistan. The nature of the Soviet system is such that it can never be satisfied until you are similar to them and are totally under their control.

So, we come to a very important conclusion: the issue now is not "peace versus war," but rather "freedom versus slavery." Peace and freedom appear to be inseparable, and the old formula "Better red than dead" is simply fatuous. Those who live by it will be both red *and* dead. Whether we like it or not, there will be no peace in our world, no relaxation of international tension, no fruitful cooperation between East and West, until the Soviet internal system changes drastically.

Has this simple and self-evident truth ever been understood by Western decision-makers? I doubt it. In a way, I can share some of the concern of the peace movement. Because for the West to react stereotypically by increasing military spending and stockpiling new hardware every time the Soviet instability-aggression complex manifests itself is simply to miss the target. At any rate, it is not enough. It is not going to change the Soviet system. It is not going to prevent Soviet expansion, especially in the Third World. Soviet ideological warfare is far shrewder than a big nuclear bludgeon. Would we, for instance, consider a nuclear bombardment if tomorrow there were to be a

revolt of various tribes in Pakistan, instigated by Moscow? Or a Communist takeover in Iran?

There are plenty of "natural" troubles in the world, brought on by local conditions. But the influence of Moscow immediately turns them into major strategic problems. It would be senseless to try to solve all such problems by military means all over the globe. Simple logic suggests that we must deal first of all with the *source* of the world's major trouble—i.e., the Soviet system. We must find an effective way to help the Soviet population in its struggle for change. After all, they are our biggest ally.

Unfortunately, this has so far never been appreciated by the West, which has instead been continuously strengthening the Soviet system by credits, trade, technology. Why should the Soviets bother to introduce any internal reforms if their inefficient economy is periodically saved by the West? The West is still rich enough to help them out, and Siberia is also rich enough in turn to sell natural gas, gold, diamonds.

**W**E MAY shake with indignation whenever we hear about the Soviet invasion of yet another country. We hate these little obedient soldiers, ever ready to do whatever they are told. Are they robots? But what do we propose that they should do? Do we honestly expect them to rebel and face a firing squad, while the entire world continues to provide their executioners with goods, credits, and modern technology? Don't we demand of them much more than we demand of ourselves? Somewhere, somehow, this vicious circle must be broken, if we are to survive as human beings. Why not start where it is easier?

There are 90,000 of these "robots" trapped in Afghanistan at this very moment. They cannot rebel because they will be shot down. Even so, there are occasional rebellions (and executions). They cannot desert, because they will either be killed in the process or, if they are lucky and manage to reach Pakistan, the Pakistani authorities will return them to the Soviet command (that is, again, to the firing squad). Does any government try to help them? No. Instead, several European governments have decided to buy Soviet natural gas, perhaps the very same gas that is being pumped out of Afghanistan by the Soviet occupation authorities as compensation for "liberating" Afghanistan.

There is a lot of noise about Poland right now. A lot of noise, and a lot of smoke screens. But does any government sacrifice anything? After issuing thunderous condemnations, the European governments decided not to apply economic sanctions against the Eastern bloc, because sanctions would "harm us, probably, more than them." Why should you establish the kind of relations that only make you more vulnerable than the enemy? Why do you continue to sign new agreements of the

same type (natural gas, for example)? The American banks recently decided to cover the huge Polish deficit because the "bankruptcy of Poland would undermine the world financial system." What would happen, I wonder, if tomorrow the Soviet-bloc countries were to refuse to pay their debts and to suspend all trade?

This is what the struggle for peace and freedom boils down to: the people in the East should sacrifice their lives, but you should not sacrifice your profits. Small wonder that the Polish army does not rebel.

In fact, the imposition of economic sanctions on the Polish military junta and on their Soviet masters is not just a possible step; it is the actual *obligation* of the Western countries under the terms of the Helsinki agreement. A direct link among security, economic cooperation, and the observance of human rights is the very essence of this agreement. If that is forgotten now, of what point is all the noise lately heard from Madrid?

To tell the truth, I do not believe that any of it has been forgotten. Neither do I believe that the Western banks, industrialists, and governments are so "stupid" as to tie themselves to the Eastern chariot wheels by mistake. It is their deliberate policy, overtly articulated in the time of *détente*, and covertly now. Moreover, it is their philosophy. They love stability, these bankers and businessmen. And they are much against any resistance movement in the Communist countries, very much against any prospect of liberation for the enslaved nations of the East. They are the greatest peace-lovers of all, far more powerful than all those

crowds on the streets of the European capitals. Thanks to them, we descend slowly into the Age of Darkness.

### III

THIS article is not addressed to the bankers, or to the governments. I do not expect any help from them. In spite of all the harsh words used in it, I wish it to be read by sincere people who are seriously concerned with the problems of peace and freedom. They will probably dislike many of the things I have said here. I hope, however, that they will understand its main point: that peace has never been preserved by a hysterical desire to survive at any price. Nor has it ever been promoted by catchy phrases and cheap slogans. There are 400 million people in the East whose freedom was stolen from them and whose existence is miserable. It so happens that peace is impossible while they remain enslaved, and only with them (not with their executioners) should you work to secure real peace in our world.

Your recent mass demonstrations were disastrous, because in them you identified yourselves, willingly or unwillingly, with the rulers of the Eastern countries. To make broad alliances with any public (or governmental) forces just for the sake of power is a tremendous mistake. This mistake must be corrected if we are to live in peace and freedom. We should know who are our friends and who are our enemies. The fate of Solidarity should open our eyes.

# Commentary

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