

THE TIDE MUST TURN

AN ADDRESS BY

DR. CHARLES MALIK

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The communist tide has been rising for 43 years. Having regard to the prepared antecedent situation which occasioned its rise we must say that this phenomenon has been tracing itself on the horizon of history for at least two centuries. The spiritual climate without which Communism could not arise, and if it arose it could not prosper, includes three elements: secularism, materialism, and collectivism. The complete secularization of human affairs, since the breakdown of the Middle Ages, the radical divorce of history from anything above and beyond history, the relativization of all values, the exultant affirmation of the death of God and of the absolute self-sufficiency of man, the bewitching lure of science and progress and all that is visible and sensible and sensuous, the pride of culture and civilization and human achievement - - - all these things, without which there can be no Communism and certainly no Communist movement, can be clearly traced to the Age of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. Man somehow lost his bearings with respect to God, with respect, namely, to an actual, existing, righteous judge who created man and everything visible and invisible, who intervened and continues to intervene in the course of events, and who holds all that happens in history in the palm of his hands. Such a spiritual soil served as the ideal preparation for the development of atheistic and totalitarian Communism.

Materialism belonged to the same preparatory soil. What do we mean by materialism? We do not just mean belief in the existence of matter, namely, of something accessible to our senses; in this sense everybody, including the most outspoken idealists such as Bishop Berkeley, is a materialist. Nor do we just mean that man cannot exist without food and drink and air and a general material support; again in this sense everybody, including the most radical ascetics such as the hermits of the desert, is a materialist. Materialism rather means the denial that there is a lower and a higher in life and that the higher is completely independent of the lower and can never be reduced to it. When the whole is looked upon as

only the sum total of its parts - - - that is materialism. When the highest in man, his mind, his spirit, the fact that he can be touched and transformed by something that is holy and divine, when all this wonderful side of man is reduced without any remainder to his bodily functionings - - - that is materialism. When ideas, mind, spirit, truth, are denied an absolutely original potency - - - that is materialism. When nothing that is fixed and firm and given and complete and perfect and full of being is allowed, when everything is dissolved in the fluency and flux of elements and things - - - that is materialism. When man is interpreted as made up only of insatiable and uncontrollable desire - - - that is materialism. When the whole of human life is viewed as inherently without rest and peace and repose and grace and fullness of satisfaction - - - that is materialism. Now as these things constitute the very warp and woof of modern civilization, is it any wonder that materialistic Communism, with its emphasis on human desire, with its derivation of all ideas and all norms and all valuations from the sheer economic struggle, with its interpretation of history as the product only of conflicting class interests, interests that can never be reconciled except through violence and the destruction of one class by another, with its inciting of all that is primitive and elemental and unformed to rise against all that is more perfect, more developed, more sure of itself, with its doctrine that in the end there is nothing, nothing, nothing, save atoms in motion, is it any wonder, I say, that materialistic Communism has found in this spiritual climate of modern civilization a perfect soil for its development?

Collectivism is the third element propitious for the growth of Communism. In certain countries in the East and under modern industrial conditions in the west man is assimilated to his social or racial or religious or national or economic group. He loses thereby his distinctive human personality. He is not looked upon, nor does he look upon himself, as an end: he is treated, as he treats himself, as a mere means. He thinks as his group thinks; he acts as his group acts; he cannot assert any genuine, personal freedom. This is the mass man who exists not for his own sake but for the sake of something else. When the integrity of the human person is thus violated, whether through inhuman exploitation of labour by capital under industrial conditions, or because of certain cultural traditions which recognize and respect only the group and not the individual human person, woe betide him who departs one iota from the group pattern. When such conditions prevail then Communism can quickly take root and develop. But collectivism is one of the hallmarks of modern civilization. Secularism and materialism both conspire to the destruction of the human person. If there is no God, if there is imprinted on man nothing eternal, nothing divine, why should he be respected in himself? His value then is only the value of a number, a unit in a big mass. And if man is just the physical elements of which he is composed, and if he is only his natural desires, where is his freedom, where is his mind, where is his distinction over the

animals? His value then is only the animal value of the herd. Without a spiritual preparation whereby the sacredness of the individual human soul is unrecognized or blurred or denied Communism cannot strike root and thrive.

If then we are to understand why the Communist tide has risen and how it may be rolled back, we must humbly and penitently meditate on the profound spiritual maladies of secularism, materialism and collectivism with which western civilization has been afflicted for centuries, and without which Communism could not possibly flourish. It is unworthy to sit back and pathetically blame Karl Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev and the Russians in general for the scourge of Communism. This scourge would not have smitten mankind if western civilization were strong and healthy from within. The problem of rolling it back is therefore the double problem of rolling it back from the peoples stricken by it or whom it is now threatening and of rolling it back inside the western soul itself. And without treating first the devastating secularism, materialism and collectivism in western culture, the west cannot push back Communism where it is now entrenched.

Let us, however, first be clear about what has happened and what we are now confronted with. Almost a third of the human race have in one generation fallen under the iron grip of Communist rule. The remaining two-thirds are Communistically infiltrated and softened up in diverse ways and varying degrees. Not one people has voluntarily chosen this rule. It is always foisted upon them by intrigue and revolution. The ruling Communist Party is everywhere a very small minority, often not more than 2%, of the people under its subjection. It maintains its control by force, aided by the most ingenious manipulation of scientific methods of propaganda, regimentation and terrorization. The Communist state is everywhere a police state.

All means of production are in the hands of the state and the state itself is in the hands of the 2% ruling Communist clique. Every citizen is an employee of the state and depends for his political, social, cultural and spiritual formation, information and orientation, upon food conceived, concocted and administered by the state alone.

There is no freedom whatever to criticize and change the existing political regime. In many instances freedom is not missed because the people had never tasted it.

There have been impressive material advances and the standard of living of the people has considerably risen; also many abuses and many crude forms of exploitation have been removed. In such cases it would appear that the giving up of freedom or the not permitting it to come in and the handing over of everything or, or the taking over of everything by, the government was a price worth paying for this enormous economic uplift. But it is really impossible to tell what would have happened if the old systems were not superseded wholesale by Communism but were modernized and liberally and democratically oriented.

For instance, it is arguable whether the old Tsarist regime would not have produced the same or better material results if only it had modernized and liberalized itself. Since history cannot be reversed nor can the same people traverse two histories at the same time, it is not possible to prove that what has happened was the best thing nor that if it did not happen conditions would have been better or worse.

Even if this material progress could not have been achieved without Communism, the question remains: what is the total price that has been paid for it? Over and above the material abundance and economic justice that Communism aims at, and that it may in a sense be uniquely capable of accomplishing, what does Communism mean, what does it tend to, both for its own people and for the rest of the world?

Communism means principally eight things.

- (1) The control of education and of the universities by the state, and the resultant regimentation of the mind in one mould - - - the Marxist-Leninist type of thinking.
- (2) Radical atheism, namely, the militant denial of any God or Christ or Holy Spirit and the affirmation only of matter and force and motion and desire and appetite.
- (3) Dialectical materialism, namely, that economic conditions and the class struggle determine everything, including politics, science, philosophy, morality and religion, and that the working classes are now destined to seize the reins of power by revolution.
- (4) Radical collectivism, namely, that the human person is wholly the creature of society and he is responsible only to its fluctuating moods and mores.
- (5) Radical totalitarianism, namely, that the only good government is the absolute dictatorship of the proletariat through its vanguard, the Communist Party.
- (6) If these things - - - thought control, atheism, materialism, collectivism and totalitarianism - - - were confined to one people or country with no attempt to propagate and impose them upon others, one would say this is only one of the many strange systems that have appeared in the world, and the peoples concerned are free to pursue that perverse way of life, provided they do not interfere in the freedom of others. But actually Communism inspires and instils a radical missionary fervor, with an imperialist vision for the domination of the whole world, namely, for the overthrow and Communization of all systems, governments, cultures, outlooks, philosophies and religions.
- (7) If this vision and fervor were gently and placidly held, if the method of its propagation were one of love and service and persuasion and longsuffering, again we would not mind it; one would confidently and expectantly wait for the kindling of

the spark of truth from the peaceful rubbing of one point of view against another. But Communism propagates itself through force and revolution; through infiltration, intrigue and subversion; through the confusing of issues and the weakening and softening of the moral fibre; through the exploitation of real and imaginary grievances; through character assassination and the use of every conceivable means, including front organizations, that will undermine and destroy the non-Communism world. It follows that other points of view following the traditional norms of warfare and self-protection simply have no chance before this ruthless onslaught which recognizes in the end only the potency and decision of force, and which attacks at every level, but especially the political, intellectual, moral and spiritual levels.

(8) If the missionary fervor and the imperialist vision were entrenched in a weak country, again one would say, what can they do, even if they use the most devilish methods of subversion and intrigue. But international Communism appears to command a military-nuclear-economic-political might second to none; indeed there are some who fear that the balance of world power has already decisively tipped in their favor. If this is the case, then what is left undecided is only the time and modality of the liquidation and burial of the rest of us.

This is then what we concretely face today: a mighty empire, with incalculable military forces at its disposal, with a total outlook on life based on materialism, atheism, collectivism, totalitarianism and the rigid control of the human mind, with a missionary zeal and a world-wide imperialist vision unprecedented in history, and disposed to employ every conceivable means in the pursuit of its unalterable and of world domination, a domination which it believes it has every right to and which many fear it has already potentially attained.

Stupendous then is the task of rolling back this enormous challenge. It calls for a quality of nerve and mind and spirit altogether rare. Let us then boldly enter into the dimensions of this task.

The first and most important requirement is belief that the rollback is both necessary and possible. If a person asks me what he must do to help in this crisis, I answer: my friend, first believe, believe, believe in the possibility of the rollback. I say this because what astounds me most in the temper of the West these days is the virtual absence of this element of faith. People seem prepared, either from fatigue or from softness or from moral and intellectual decadence, to settle for the indefinite perpetuation of the status quo. There are elements in England, including some philosophers and some clergy, who have given up the struggle and would unilaterally disarm before the Communist onslaught. People in this country who uncritically parrot the Communist slogan of peaceful coexistence do not at bottom believe

in the possibility of the rollback. But let me assure you with all the moral conviction at my command that if the West comfortably gets itself into the mood of believing that it can live and let live with Communism, the West is already finished. The first condition for the survival of the West is to generate an unshakable belief that the rollback of Communism from the minds and bodies of men is at once a necessity and a possibility.

This is the first and most important element of belief. But there is a second element: it is the belief that the lifting of the curse of Communism from the brows of men can take place without war. One's faith is miserably deficient if he believes that the rollback can be achieved only by war, whether general or local, whether nuclear or conventional. One should of course never weaken in one's defenses; on the contrary, one should develop them to the utmost, both to deter Communism from starting a war and to beat it decisively should war break out. But the acid test for the reality of one's faith in the possibility of the rollback of Communism is whether one predicates his calculations for this rollback on conditions of peace. Only he who can win in peace is really entitled to win in war should war be thrust upon him. The infinite possibilities, short of war, of causing the Communist realm to disintegrate from within, through political, diplomatic, economic, intellectual, moral, spiritual and other measures, have not been sufficiently compassed, much less effectively mobilized. The children of light are unworthy of the light they enjoy if they do not believe that they can be, precisely under conditions of peace, infinitely more resourceful than the children of darkness.

Every attempt must be made to distinguish and separate the peoples from their Communist governments. It is not the people who are the enemy of freedom and man: it is the Communist Party with its dialectical materialism. The people are victims of this Party and everywhere they crave for and are entitled to the freedom of man as much as the rest of us; and those who really believe in and work for the rollback must identify themselves with this craving of the people. The most important condition for the strategy of liberation is to work out genuine alternatives for the subjugated peoples, to hold them out for them in all responsibility, and to stand by them when they act. Not to believe in the possibility of such genuine alternatives is to believe that Communism, with all the concrete meaning we have seen it involves, is here to stay; to believe that the rollback is either impossible or undesirable; to sit back and accept the sham of peaceful coexistence; in short, to betray the cause of freedom by believing and acting on the belief that not all men are fit to be free. Now to know real freedom is to know that it belongs to man as man. It follows that to be smugly satisfied with your own freedom and not to be moved if your brother is in chains (and in this contracted universe we are all now brothers and neighbors of one another) is not to have known real freedom; is in effect to be partially a slave yourself, to have allowed the bondage of Communism to infect your own soul. The really free then must will and work for the freedom of all.

Much has been made lately of the so-called ideological difference between Russia and China. Khrushchev, it is said, believes in peaceful coexistence; China believes in war. On this whole question I wish to make six brief observations. (1) It is obvious that whatever differences might exist between Communist China and the Soviet Union should be wisely exploited to the full. (2) If and when these two colossi should fall out with each other, the principal cause would hardly be ideology, but their conflicting political, economic, strategic and demographic interests. (3) I do expect them to fall out with each other before the end of this century, regardless of ideology. (4) The immediate principal danger for the free world comes from the Soviet Union, the remote danger from China. (5) Despite Marx and Lenin, Russia is much more Western in life and outlook than China, and therefore, the final conflict is likely to be between the alien Chinese world and the Western world, including Russia. (6) Even if there are some shades of difference as to tactics today between Communist China and the Soviet Union, their ultimate purpose is the same, to wit, the radical overthrow of all the systems and institutions of the free world. If Russia and China are both sworn to the absolute destruction of the free world, it is no ground for comfort to be presented with the choice between being destroyed by the Chinese dragon breathing fire, and being destroyed by the Russian bear embracing us in “peaceful coexistence.”

The scandal of freedom is the apparent disunity of the free world. The Western coalition is presently stricken with great strains. France is preoccupied with Algeria and does not quite see eye to eye, even on fundamental issues, with her Anglo-Saxon allies. It is evident that the new American administration shall have to examine the possibility of significant readjustments in America's relations with Great Britain. The history of the Middle East, for instance, is unintelligible except if the hidden, and sometimes not so very hidden, costly, and in my opinion, quite senseless rivalry between the Western powers is fully taken into account. Whatever the agreement at the top, the Ambassadors of the powers undermine one another in the field, and the agents and lobbies of the great Western corporations, in their cutthroat competition with one another, work havoc in the local scene. How can the West roll back the Communist surge with this unseemly disarray in the ranks? The West is doomed and Communism and anti-Westernism will perpetually register gains in Asia and Africa unless, appreciating that it is its total civilization that is today questioned and combated, the West puts aside the silly and selfish and reestablishes its own inner unity of purpose, both in policy and in action. In meeting the Communist onslaught, America cannot possibly go it alone; without harmonizing her policy and her procedure with those of Europe, Europe has it in her power to vitiate every lofty American intention; the West therefore will either pull together or it will certainly fall apart.

The rise of neutralism in Asia and Africa raises profound issues not only in the political sphere but in the sphere of the spiritual relations between those cultures and the civilizations and culture of the West. Neutralism has spread partly because of the native attitude of “plague on both your houses,” partly because of Western disunity, partly because of the growth of the Soviet relative influence and prestige. Insofar as the neutralist attitude is genuine, the West can afford to be patient with it until it matures into the knowledge of the realities of the world, including the reality of Communism. But neutralism could be false; in that case it becomes a sort of Communist front. There are three simple criteria to distinguish genuine from pretended neutralism: whether the press of the neutral attacks one side in the cold war or both sides; the voting record of the neutral in the United Nations; and the political, economic and cultural orientation of the neutral at home. The neutrality of a government is obviously false if its press sees only evil in the West and no evil in the Communist realm; if it is always siding against Western causes in the United Nations; and if it is actually organizing the life of its people Communistically or semi-Communistically. There can be no rollback of the Communist tide except if the West reaches such a stature of moral and material strength and independence as to dare to expose the falsity of false neutralism wherever it exists.

You cannot roll back an enemy if you are all the time on the defensive, if the struggle is always carried out in your home or back yard. Where is the field of the struggle today? It is outside the Iron Curtain: in Asia, in Africa, in Latin America, in the hearts and souls of free men everywhere. The field of the struggle must now be reversed. Ways and means must be found to carry over the struggle to the other side of the Iron Curtain. The passage of influence through the Iron Curtain should be a two-way passage. The minds of the communists in their own homes must be troubled. Just as the Communists keep on concocting plans for reducing as much of the free world as possible and annexing it to their realm, so the realm of freedom must develop ideas for penetrating and detaching as much of the Communist world as possible. With imagination, daring and sustained vigour, the Middle East can be purged of Communism in six months; so can Latin America; but plans backed by conviction should also be perfected for the liberation of Eastern Europe as well. To resign oneself supinely to the status quo as sacrosanct and final is to lack faith in the conquering power of the values of freedom and to say Communism in effect: we cannot take you, so please come over and take us. For in this contest it is impossible to stand still.

The power of established precedent is tremendous in history. So far not a single instance of push-back of Communism has been produced. Is it any wonder then that many in the free world have begun to doubt their own potency; have begun in fact to look for Communism as something altogether irresistible and irreversible? The liberation of a single little country, an

Albania or a North Vietnam for example, could so shock the Communist domain as to cause it to crumble from within. At least then people will have before them one concrete, historical instance of a reversal of the tide. History made inspires and directs history in the making.

The just causes of complaint inside the free world must be attended to and removed. I know very well that even if the free world were perfect the Communist onslaught would persist. But a more perfect free world can better resist, defeat and reverse the onslaught. Racial injustice and inequality must go. Religious bigotry must be overcome. Social and economic justice must be sought and promoted. Peoples and nations should not exploit one another, nor should one people rule another against its will. The vestiges of colonialism should be liquidated. The blessings of liberty should shine forth as a bright star in the early morn.

Do you really want to roll back Communism? Then you must be prepared to sacrifice much more than you have done. It is not by magic, nor by propaganda, nor by pious resolutions, nor by merely giving away your money, nor by comfortably sitting back and expecting that somebody else will do it for you, that you will succeed in rolling back the tide of Communism. It is by sacrificing of your possessions, of your pleasures, of your comforts, of your easy living, of your time, of your energy, of your thought, and even perhaps of your life. Never was it more true than it is today that he who wishes to save his own life must be prepared to lose it. In the face of atheism, let the West humbly affirm God, the God who has spoken. In the face of materialism, let the West which has known the grace of Jesus Christ confidently affirm the original potency and independence of the mind and spirit. In the face of collectivism, let the West boldly cry with David: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." (Ps. 8:4-5). In the soul of the West, infected, alas, as it is from within with atheism, materialism and collectivism, let only the living God act and the active mind live and the individual human person reveal himself in all his infinite wonder and glory, and I assure you Communism will recede and melt away like the morning mist before the rising sun.

America has just elected her new leadership. She looks forward now to a new phase in her existence. The world too yearns for the dawn of a new day. What is then my prayer? My prayer is that the new leadership of America shall respond to the deep yearnings of the world; that it shall rise to the incredible opportunities of the moment; that it shall understand the radical character of the struggle in which we are all engaged; that it shall determine to defend and extend the realm of freedom; that it shall shrink before no sacrifice in the pursuit of this sacred end; that it shall exude genuine and unmistakable faith in the human and spiritual values that have made America great; and that with due humility, befitting alike all great moments and all great men, it shall carry forward the burden of history unto heights glorious and new, trusting reason, loving man and fearing God alone.