

WAR AND PEACE

AN ADDRESS BY

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The following is a statement made before the Political Committee of the General Assembly on November 23, 1949.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION

War and Peace is the title of one of Russia's greatest works of literature. Many people think that this is the greatest novel that has ever been written. It is therefore fitting and proper that the United Nations discuss the ultimate problems of war and peace in connection with a proposal by Mr. Vyshinsky. The Russian mind seems to have brooded long and deeply over this issue. Tolstoy's brooding produced a masterpiece for all humanity. We cannot be grateful enough to the Soviet Union and to her distinguished Foreign Minister for having precipitated this great debate. Whether or not one disagrees with Mr. Vyshinsky's analysis, and no matter how radical or deep this disagreement might be, the Soviet insistence that everything hangs on the ultimate question of war and peace is absolutely sound. This is not the paralysis of suspicion: this is the sober honesty of truth. For unless peace is assured, everything else that we are doing—Korea, Greece, Palestine, former Italian Colonies, international economic coöperation, human rights, the United Nations itself—will go up in smoke. No debate is more important than this one; and unless we determine fearlessly to bring out the whole and absolute truth, we are not worthy of the present challenge. The moment has come when nothing may be concealed, when everything must be said.

Mr. Vyshinsky's proposal condemns the preparations of a new war, laying the responsibility for these preparations at the doorsteps of the United States of America and the United Kingdom. It repeats the well-known Soviet thesis with respect to the prohibition of atomic weapons and seeks a five-power pact for the strengthening of peace. My country, Lebanon, will not be consulted about this pact, nor will it be asked to sign it if and when it is concluded. For Mr. Vyshinsky is certainly right that, with all the due respect which he always pays the small and middle nations, it is the Great Powers which bear the primary responsibility for war and peace. But, it will be observed, Mr. Vyshinsky did not approach the United States, the United Kingdom, China and France separately and directly in regard to this pact; he is asking the General Assembly to "express unanimously the wish" that the five Great Powers negotiate and conclude this instrument. Mr. Vyshinsky therefore is not urging his proposal for rhetorical or propaganda purposes; he will ask us at the end to vote for or against it. It is this eventual, exceedingly responsible act of voting, conferred upon us by our membership in the General Assembly, that justifies our full participation in the present debate.

War and peace are questions that radically concern everybody, regardless of whether he can manufacture an atomic bomb or muster forty divisions of infantry, and Mr. Vyshinsky has fully recognized this by refusing to take up this matter directly with the Great Powers and independently of the rest of us. Mr. Vyshinsky has every right to be offended and to charge that we voted mechanically and blindly if we did not take our voting so seriously as to expound fully the motives of our action.

What is it then that we find ourselves facing? We find ourselves face to face with a claim by the honorable representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that the United States of America and the United Kingdom are preparing for war, that the policy of what he calls “the ruling classes” of these two countries is to unleash a new war, that Communist Russia, on the other hand, loves peace and seeks peace, and that the best proof of this Communist love of peace is the olive branch of the five-power pact which Mr. Vyshinsky is now offering the world. This is the general framework of reference within which Mr. Vyshinsky moves and wants us to move. This is the general character of the present peace offensive of Soviet Russia.

But surely there is a tragic joke in all this. We all know that Mr. Vyshinsky is so intelligent that he will never be taken in by his own joke. It remains that he must believe that he can put over his own joke on the rest of us. He must have indeed a very low opinion of the non-Communist world to suppose that this tragic joke of his can be easily and painlessly swallowed by us. However decadent and in need of basic reform the non-Communist world might be, Mr. Vyshinsky can be sure of this, that it has not yet reached that abysmal depth of decadence whereby it sees truth falsehood, and falsehood truth. For everybody knows the non-Communist world is purely on the defensive; and that Communism has been attacking it for a hundred years. The non-Communist world existed long before Communism, and I am willing to wager it will long survive it. It was Communism which in the first instance began the offensive, started the attack, made the initial act of aggression. It is Communism which has a basic, fully articulate philosophy of war and revolution. Let us then, in all soberness and responsibility, inquire into the century-old Communist doctrine of war and revolution.

II. THE COMMUNIST DOCTRINE OF WAR AND REVOLUTION

Peace presupposes mutual trust. Without the confidence, the sincere and convinced confidence, of one party in the peaceful nature of the ultimate motives and objectives of the other, there can be no sense of security, and therefore no peace.

Rightly or wrongly, the non-Communist world is convinced that Communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular do not really want peace; that every peace offensive on the part of the Soviet Union is but a strategic or tactical war-device determined by the

particular situation of international relations and by the particular stage of the development of Communism: in reality just a phase of an over-all war plan.

It is this that we must examine. We must determine whether this deep-seated conviction of the non-Communist world, of the common man as well as the leaders of Western democracies, is justified or not. The question is not: Is the Western world really thus convinced? The question is: Is the Western world justified in being thus convinced?

To answer this crucial question, we have to turn to the Soviet Union itself and not to the Western world—to the record and practice of the Communist State in the past, and primarily to the teachings of Communism about the past, the present and the future. Fortunately, the answer to this question is not far to seek. For there is an essential relationship between Communist philosophy and practice. The leaders of the Communist movement have also been its teachers and masters. Every decisive action undertaken by the Communist parties or the Communist States has been the direct result of a certain aspect of Communist philosophy; and the Communist teachers have invariably devoted considerable time and energy to the clarification of that aspect of the Communist ideology which sheds particular light upon, and determines the course of the action in question. Communism is an ideology formulated for, and unfolding itself in, and conditioning the course of a movement. It is to this ideology that we must turn to answer our question. What is then the Communist philosophy of revolution?

An examination of classical Marxism and its orthodox Soviet interpretation reveals four fundamental theses of Marxism with respect to revolution. These are: first, Marxism is essentially a revolutionary doctrine; secondly, the revolutionary change of the structure of society from the so-called bourgeois to the so-called proletarian pattern, which is the objective of the Communist movement, can be achieved only through the forcible overthrow of the existing regimes and the violent seizure of power; thirdly, even though the Communist revolution may succeed, and the dictatorship of the proletariat may be established securely in one country or a few countries, such success cannot be complete or secure unless it contributes effectively to the victory of the revolution in all countries; and, fourthly, even though the rise and the victory of the Communist revolution, in one country and eventually in all countries, is an inevitable result of the nature of capitalism and its final stage, imperialism, yet this inevitable result can and should be accelerated and actualized by human effort, namely by the action of Communist parties and States. Upon the truth of these four theses all the orthodox teachers of Communism agree.

The first thesis is that Communism is essentially a revolutionary doctrine and movement. For in accordance with its vision of reality, its conception of action is determined.

The Marxist vision of reality is dialectical through and through. Hence, the Communist movement arising out of this dialectical metaphysics is necessarily dynamic and militant.

Nothing perhaps conveys this revolutionary spirit, which is essentially characteristic of Marxism, better than the opening and the closing words of the *Manifesto*. “A spectre is haunting Europe--the spectre of Communism,” write Marx and Engels at the beginning of that celebrated document. They conclude it with the battle-cry:

“The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.
“Working men of all countries, unite!”

We have it on the authority of Lenin that the essential and the distinctive characteristic of the Marxist ideology is its revolutionary aspect. And we have it on the authority of Stalin that the peculiar merit of Lenin is precisely his understanding of Marxism as essentially revolutionary, and his rescuing of Marxist revolutionism from the pacifist interpretation, or rather misinterpretation, of Marxism, made by the “opportunist” leaders of the Second International. Certainly Marx himself was not wrong when he described his own teachings as “in essence critical and revolutionary.”¹

We come now to the second thesis. A teaching or movement may be revolutionary in one of two senses; either by merely advocating the total change of the ruling class of society and the radical transformation of existing civilization in all its patterns, structures and presuppositions; or by conceiving this radical transformation as possible only through the forcible seizure of power and the violent overthrow of the ruling classes and shattering of the established regimes. Apart from the question of political domination, the teachings of Jesus Christ were certainly revolutionary but only in the first sense. Communism is revolutionary in both senses. It has taken into its proud hands the course of events.

In 1871 Marx wrote to Kugelmann that “the precondition of any real people’s revolution” is “not, as in the past, to transfer the bureaucratic and military machinery from one hand to the other, but to *break it up*.”² Hence Lenin declares that “the replacement of the bourgeois by the proletarian state is impossible without a violent revolution.”³

1 J. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), p.27.

2 V. I. Lenin, *State and Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1932), p. 33. (Italics in the original)

3 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Several corollaries follow from this thesis. (1) The revolutionary Communist is antagonistic to reform. “To a revolutionary,” writes Stalin, “the main thing is revolutionary work and not reforms; to him reforms are by-products of the revolution. . . . The revolutionary will accept a reform in order to use it as an aid in combining legal work with illegal work, to intensify, under its cover, the illegal work for the revolutionary preparation of the masses for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.”⁴ (2) The revolutionary Communist is dissatisfied with parliamentary “opposition” and “legal measures” for the transformation of bourgeois society into proletarian society. “Does not the history of the revolutionary movement,” asks Stalin, “show that the parliamentary struggle is only a school for and an aid in organizing the extra-parliamentary struggle of the proletariat, that under capitalism the fundamental problems of the working-class movement are solved by force, by the direct struggle of the proletarian masses, their general strike, their insurrection?”⁵ (3) The proletarian revolution must not wait until the proletariat constitute a majority in a country, but should take advantage, as Stalin says, paraphrasing the words of Lenin, “of any favourable international and internal situation to pierce the front of capitalism and hasten the general issue.”⁶ (4) The proletariat must ally itself with any other revolutionary element in order to hasten the overthrow of the bourgeoisie: it must ally to itself the peasantry, the semi-proletarian elements of the population, and the revolutionary elements in colonies fighting for liberation from so-called imperialism.

The third thesis is that the Communist revolution,—which initially aims at being world-wide in its scope; and which, at its various stages, requires different and appropriate strategies; and which is at present in its third stage, after the victory of the proletariat in Russia,—the Communist revolution, I say, must, in the words of the *Manifesto*, “everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things” (p. 38); and, in the words of Lenin, must do “the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution *in all countries*”⁷, and, in the words of Stalin, “must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity but as an aid, as a means of hastening the victory of the proletariat in other countries.”⁸

The conception of strategy is very essential to Communist doctrine. It means, as Stalin defines it, “the determination of the direction of the main blow of the proletariat at a given stage of the revolution, the elaboration of a corresponding plan for the disposal of the revolutionary forces (the main and secondary reserves), the fight to carry out this plan

4 Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

5 Stalin, *op. cit.*, P. 24.

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

7 Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, p. 182. (Italics in the original)

8 Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

throughout the given stage of the revolution.”⁹ As the Communist revolution has already passed through two stages and is at present in its third stage, Communist strategy has changed accordingly, Stalin assures us.¹⁰ He defines the strategy of this third stage as follows:

“Objective: to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, using it as a base for the overthrow of imperialism in all countries. The revolution is spreading beyond the confines of one country; the period of world revolution has commenced.

“The main forces of the revolution: the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat in all countries.

“Main reserves: the semi-proletarian and small-peasant masses in the developed countries, the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries.”¹¹

The reserves of the revolution Stalin divides into two classes, direct and indirect. Of the first he cites “the proletariat of the neighbouring countries;” of the second, the “contradictions, conflicts and wars . . . among the bourgeois states hostile to the proletarian state, which can be utilized by the proletariat in its offensive or in manoeuvring in the event of a forced retreat.”¹²

It is the task of Communist leadership, which has in mind at every stage the ultimate victory of the revolution in all countries, “to make proper use,” at the present stage, “of all these reserves for the achievement of the main object of the revolution.”¹³

Among the “principal conditions which ensure strategic leadership,”¹⁴ Stalin emphasizes the following two:

9 Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

12 *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.

14 Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

“First: the concentration of the main forces of the revolution at the enemy’s most vulnerable spot at the decisive moment, when the revolution has already become ripe. . . .

“Second: the selection of the moment for the decisive blow, of the moment for starting the insurrection.”¹⁵

Hence, also, one of the main tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, “on the morrow” of victory, is “to arm the revolution, to organize the army of the revolution for the struggle against foreign enemies, for the struggle against imperialism.”¹⁶

The fourth fundamental thesis of the Communist theory of revolution is that the rise and victory of the proletarian revolution is not merely inevitable, being dialectically determined by the nature of capitalism and imperialism, but also can be accelerated by human effort, and must be participated in by the class-conscious workers, provoked by the Communist Parties, and awakened and supported by the established Communist regimes. For Marxism is not merely a “scientific” theory which predicts what will happen, but also a call for what should happen; and Communism is not merely a spectatorial prediction of the inevitable, but also an exhortation for effective and fruitful struggle to make the inevitable actual. “Marx said that the materialist theory could not confine itself to explaining the world, that it must also change it,” writes Stalin.¹⁷ The *Manifesto* emphasizes that Communists should “never cease, for a single instant, to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat.” (p. 38). Referring to “the teaching of Marx and Engels regarding the inevitability of a violent revolution,” Lenin says: “The necessity of systematically fostering among the masses this and just this point of view about violent revolution lies at the root of the *whole* of Marx’s and Engels’ teaching!”¹⁸ Stalin says; “The Party cannot be a real party if it limits itself to registering what the masses of the working class feel and think. The Party must stand at the head of the working class; it must see farther than the working class; it must lead the proletariat, and not follow in the tail of the spontaneous movement.”¹⁹ In short, the masters and leaders of Communism are unanimous in their view of Communism as a mission, a call for revolution to which man must respond in action, and not merely a “scientific” prediction of the inevitability of the revolution.

There is a naïve doctrine of war preached by Communism, namely that the cause of war is to be sought in the capitalist system itself, in the imperialistic rivalries between nation-

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 48

17 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

18 Lenin, *State and Revolution*, p. 20. (Italics in the original)

19 Stalin, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

states for the division of the world between them. But we must assert that Communism's own doctrines of revolution are no less, perhaps even more, disturbing than imperialist rivalries and wars. Those who perpetually point to, emphasize, and seek to acerbate the flames of civil strife, who elevate revolution into a creed, and seek to make it a science, cannot claim to be the exclusive lovers of peace. No one today preaches that nations ought to go to war with each other: the Communists do preach that revolution and civil war are inherent in all but Communist societies, and do seek to push the revolution to its bitter end.

The war of class against class is no less savage and fierce than the war of nation against nation: the strife of brother against brother, of neighbour against neighbour, is no less horrible than strife between states: peace and harmony, once they are disturbed within a community, are no easier, and are possibly more difficult to restore than a disturbed peace and harmony between nations.

While our presence here in this organization is the proof that we have abandoned the idea of settling disputes between ourselves by force and the resort to war, the Communists have not abandoned the idea of revolution, the idea of civil war and class struggle.

In view of this Communist doctrine of revolution, is it any wonder that the non-Communist world sincerely and clearly believes that Communism and the Communist State *mean* worldwide revolution, the wholesale overthrow of existing regimes in all countries? Is it any wonder that the non-Communist world must look after its own defenses? So long as the Communist ideology is the foundation and determinant of Soviet policy, is it not absolutely stupid and naïve to suppose that the Soviet Union can really have a genuine desire for the security and stability of the rest of the world? Is it not obvious, except to the blind or frightened, that the only "peace" allowable by Communism is the peace of a forcibly communized and totalitarianly regimented world? Faced with the olive branches which Soviet spokesmen offer, we can only conclude that they are cynical if temporary tactics imposed by the present situation of international relations and valid only so long as this situation continues to prevail. They carry no assurance whatsoever that Communism has given up its own form of aggression. For, corresponding to the Communist outlook on historical development and international relations, there is a Communist form of threat to the peace *sui generis*; and international peace, as well as the security, stability, and sovereignty of non-Communist states, may be threatened not merely by the open attack of a Communist state against their borders, but also by its provocation and support of Communist revolutions within their borders. And therefore the non-Communist world will be perfectly stupid, and indeed about to dissolve, if it does not look feverishly to its own defenses against possible Communist aggression, whether external or internal, and if it does not seek adequately to meet the challenge of the Soviet Union.

These are harsh conclusions, but so are the premises from which they are drawn. I assure you it has not been a pleasure to draw these conclusions, for my little country is on good terms with the Soviet Union and obviously desires nothing but peace with that great Republic. It has been a source of infinite anguish to me that I had to face these facts. For truth is above politics, and so long as logic is logic the proposition that Communism, by damning the non-Communist world, means war and revolution, is as true as the multiplication table. I shall rejoice as a child if Mr. Vyshinsky can refute me, not indeed by vituperation and rhetoric, but by cold and honest reasoning. For the whole issue of war and peace in our generation hinges on whether Communism is or is not militant and revolutionary.

How can war be prevented? What can the United Nations do to prevent war? Is a Third World War inevitable? All these questions are misleading and utterly superficial. They pose the wrong question. They blind themselves to the real situation. It isn't as though we had a real state of peace dangerously shivering on the brink of war, concerning which therefore the supreme question would be how to prevent ourselves from going over the precipice. It is rather that we have a real state of fundamental conflict and unrest, and have had it on our hands for decades, and the supreme question is therefore how to resolve it, how to bring about a settlement, how to end the present time of troubles. It isn't as though there was already agreement and concord, and the supreme question therefore was how to prevent disagreement and discord. It is rather that there is already the most radical basic disagreement, and the supreme question therefore is how to achieve real, fundamental understanding. For there can be no greater disagreement than when one wants to eliminate your existence altogether. The Communist doctrine of war and revolution postulates the inevitability of war and conflict; it ascribes war to the every essence of history and existence; it cannot conceive truth without dialectical opposition; and therefore, according to it, everything must sooner or later issue into conflict. Dialectical materialism is the primordial doctrine of eternal conflict. War is always there potentially. The original state is not rest and peace; the original state is struggle and change. Hence when rest and peace and understanding supervene, dialectical materialism at once suspects them: they are not natural! Dialectical materialism can rest its sight only on the vision of unrest and revolution. It cannot be happy except in the belief that we are already on our way to the abyss. This is what we are ultimately dealing with. I submit it is not an ordinary form of government, a common type of philosophy. It is a radical challenge which cannot be left unanswered. Therefore the question is not whether war can be prevented, for we are in a sense in the midst of it; the question is whether and how war can be ended. The question is not whether a Third World War is inevitable; the question is whether peace, with dialectical materialism's absolute negation of peace, is really possible.

III. COMMUNIST VERSUS WESTERN EXISTENCE

At this point a very important question suggests itself. What if the Communist revolution ushers in a new civilization superior to everything in the past? What if it does away with all injustice, all exploitation of man by man, all material and social grounds of misery and unhappiness? What if only in a Communist world, wherein material insecurity and injustice are banished forever, can man really be free to realize his highest potentialities? Wouldn't this lure of justice and security justify the violence of the revolution? Wouldn't the ideal of liberating the toilers in every land justify Communist intervention in the class struggle all over the world?

This is an important question. It raises the problem of ends and means which I shall not discuss now. I only want to say in passing that I belong to the school of thought which denies that a good end justifies a bad means. In the contemporary political world, Mr. Nehru, the great leader of the Indian people, has given vigorous expression to this point of view.

But apart from the problem of ends and means, and even supposing that the good end justifies the bad means, let us inquire into how good the Communist end is in itself. It may be such a wonderful civilization awaits us that we should all join in its realization, even if we should morally suffer in the process. My whole temperament happens to be as far removed from pacifism as possible, and, for what my fighting is worth, I would fight in a war or a revolution if I were convinced that they were for a supremely worthy cause. Surely war or revolution is not the worst thing possible: tyranny is far worse.

No one can fail to admire the magnificent achievements of the Soviet State. It did away with Tsarist autocracy. It has, in thirty years and despite two terrific wars, set one-sixth of the globe, hitherto exceedingly backward, on the sure path of industrialization. There is a genuine concern for the uplift of the masses. A Soviet representative is never more sincere than when he attacks all forms of social or economic discrimination. There is a passionate attempt at socialism, at sharing the goods of life among all members of society. The care the Soviet State lavishes on its children is certainly exemplary. We all recognize the fact that the Soviet socialist system strives to achieve real equality of opportunity for its citizens, from the time of their birth onwards, and that talent, whatever be the status of the individual or family in question, is recognized and encouraged to realize itself and to rise to the top of the social scale so as to bear its full fruit for the benefit of society as a whole. The peoples of the Soviet Union seem to be straining their utmost to realize a new harmony between their diverse national, racial and linguistic stocks. In a world bitterly divided by national, racial and

cultural antagonisms, the multinational, multi-racial, multi-cultural super-state is a novel mode of political organization holding forth great possibilities for the future. The world will always be indebted to the heroic achievements of the Red Army in the recent war under the superb leadership of Generalissimo Stalin. Where would the cause of freedom be today if Hitler's hordes were not decisively beaten back at Stalingrad, at Moscow, at Leningrad?

Undoubtedly these are great achievements. It is only blindness or ignorance or prejudice or sheer nihilism that fails to recognize them. The world is, all of us are, certainly the better for them. The Soviet positive achievements will endure whatever the future holds in store.

But—and this is the tragedy of the situation—these great things, I fear, have been achieved at a frightful human and spiritual cost. Need they have been achieved at such a high price? Couldn't they be realized, whether in Russia or in the rest of the world, without the loss of the older tested values? Is social justice and harmony impossible without a transvaluation of all values (“eine Umwertung aller Werte”)? Is Communist existence, with all the admitted positive achievements of the Soviet Union, but also with all the positive losses of value entailed in these achievements, worth our enlisting under the banner of the universal Communist revolution?

To be able to answer this question we must inquire into the Communist and Western outlooks at their authentic best.

There is a point-to-point antithesis between the outlook of Communism and the outlook of the highest traditions of the West with respect to the fundamental categories of existence.

The outlook of Communism on everything is determined by its fundamental materialist ontology. The nature of things, values and processes of history is accordingly simplified. In this oversimplification of the complex ultimate elements of existence lies the fundamental inadequacy of the Communist outlook in general.

Man, you and I in person, is conceived as a purely material being, whose spiritual and inward experiences and achievements are nothing more than modifications attendant upon and reducible to the movement of the matter which he is. The dignity of man of man—which the Classical tradition saw as consisting of man's rational and creative powers, and the Christian tradition as emanating from man's status as the Image of God destined for eternal life—is replaced, in the Communist philosophy, by the status of man as a unit in a multitude, a part of a greater whole, determined in his worth, like that whole itself, by his contribution to the production of material goods. So engrossed are the Communists in the materialistic phenomena of capital and labor and sheer economic goods that man is conceived, to use the famous phrase of Stalin, as at best “the most precious capital.”²⁰

20 A. Y. Vyshinsky (Editor), *The Law of the Soviet State* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), p. 629.

Religion, which the West has invariably conceived as the response of man to the Divine Presence, Communism conceives as a product of the economic structure of society, conditioned and determined in its rise as well as in its value by this structure. The deepest stirrings of the human soul in the presence of Divine Glory and in response to Divine Love—which have characterized saintliness and produced the best in philosophy and art in the West—are thus envisioned by Communism as nothing more than superstitions propagated by exploiters for the doping of the exploited, and are to be combated systematically, albeit tactfully. Religion is “the opium of the people.”

The representative thinkers of the West regarded ethics as rooted essentially in the nature of man and in the absolute order of values, both of which are grounded in the transcendent order of the Divine. Communism rejects the very conception of absolute standards of ethics or unconditional moral judgments or obligations. “We say that our morality is wholly subordinated to the class-struggle of the proletariat.”²¹ Mr. Vyshinsky writes:

“Communist morality, of which Lenin spoke in 1920, penetrates into ever broadening strata of our society. The actions, the entire conduct, of the honorable Soviet citizen to social and personal life is dictated by the interests of our socialist revolution, the interests of the people, and by the task of the triumphant consummation of communism. For this reason implacable hatred for enemies of the revolution, struggling against foes of the people, against foes of the people, against Trotsky-Bukharin spies and diversionists who acted for the bourgeoisie in striving to overthrow the existing socialist order in the USSR and to reestablish capitalism, is one of the most important principles of communist morality.”²²

According to the genuine traditions of the West, the human person has a complex relation to society, which is such that, on the one hand and in one sense, the individual is a part of society, and, on the other hand and in another sense, the human person is a whole which cannot be reduced to the quantitative dimension of a mere part, and is of a certain ultimacy which cannot be suspended or relegated in favour of the interests of society; for man is a being to whom the order of the Divine and the Absolute is accessible, and in whose encounter with, and response to, this order, lies his worth and axiological ultimacy. It is on the grounds of this dual-status of the human person that his rights and obligations can be harmonized, and the rights of the person and those of society can be conceived as concordant and not discordant. To Communism, man’s worth is conditional, not absolute; derivative, not ultimate. Man, every man, exists for society; society exists for the production of material goods. Man is a part of a greater whole, which, in turn, is instrumental to an impersonal and material end.

21 Lenin, *On Religion* (New York: International Publishers, 1933.) pp. 47-48.

22 Vyshinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 645.

The deepest traditions of the West conceived of man as the subject of basic and inalienable and universal rights, rights which are based upon his very nature and which are embodied in natural law. From Sophocles to the Stoics and Cicero, and from St. Paul and the Church Fathers to St. Thomas, to Suarez and to Grotius, and even to the philosophers of the eighteenth century and the thinkers of the American and French Revolutions, natural law has been looked upon as the immediate basis of human rights. Communism rejects the very idea of intrinsic and inalienable human rights. Rights are not acknowledged and recognized—literally, re-cognized—and discovered by the Collective in the very nature of man, but are rather conferred upon the person by the Collective, granted to the individual by society. They are conditionally given, and may be withdrawn, Rights that are absolute and unconditional, rights that are natural and inalienable, rights that inhere in the very nature and dignity of man as person, are rejected by Communism in theory, and trampled by Communist states in practice.

Freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, freedom of artistic creativity, freedom of association—and all the fundamental freedoms of man which pertain to the very dignity of personality—are tolerated to the extent, and only to the extent, to which they conform to the strict requirements of the interests of Communism as interpreted by Communist leadership. Mr. Vyshinsky writes:

“Having given the toilers freedom of speech, assemblies, street parades, press, and so on, the Soviet government explicitly excluded the nonlabor classes from enjoyment of this freedom. . . . Having assured genuine freedom of press to the toilers, the Soviet government did not extend this freedom to the nonlaboring strata.”²³

“In our state, naturally, there is and can be no place for freedom of speech, press, and so on for the foes of socialism. . . . Freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of meetings, of street parades, and of demonstrations are the property of all the citizens in the USSR, fully guaranteed by the State upon the single condition that they be utilized in accord with the interest of the toilers and to the end of strengthening the socialistic social order.”²⁴

The tragic fate of intellectuals, scientists, poets and musicians under Communist rule—whether of those who heroically remain loyal to their best lights at the risk of liquidation, or those who disgracefully retrace their steps and make public retractions—is not surprising. The Communist state—or, at least, the dictatorship of the proletariat—like any other form of totalitarianism, necessarily suffocates spontaneity, inner dynamism, freedom and diversity. The spirit of man, which can be itself and its best self only in freedom and love and genuine communion, is choked and annihilated by totalitarianism. The loftiest heroism summoned in

23 Vyshinsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 614-615.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 617.

the human heart by an ideology of materialism is at best formal and one-sided, pathetically narrow in scope and tragically impoverished in content. The noblest achievements of the human spirit are initially unauthenticated by indoctrination, censorship and spiritual enslavement. Man is not respected by being declared “the most precious capital”; for man is only when he is viewed as a destiny-bearing and a destiny-burdened being, and when his relation to himself and to others ad to God springs freely and responsibly from the inner depths of his soul.

The totalitarian control by the state of every source of independence and freedom is absolutely contrary to nature and man. That the state, the mere organ of government and order, is the source of every law, every truth, every norm of conduct, every social and economic relationship; that no science, no music, no economic activity, no philosophy, no art, no theology, is to be permitted except if it is state-licensed and state-controlled: all this is so false, so arrogant, so autocratic and tyrannical that no man who has drunk deep from the living waters of the Western Platonic-Christian tradition can possibly accept it. The State does not come in the first place; it comes in the tenth or fifteenth place. The University is higher than the State; the tradition of free inquiry is higher than the State; the Church is higher than the State; the family is higher than the State; natural law is higher than the State; the intimate circle of love and friendship is higher than the State; God is higher than the State; within limits, free economic activity is higher than the State. Far from the State determining the proper nature and limits of autonomy of these other things, they set proper limits to the activity of the State, so that if the State trespasses these limits, it ceases to be the State: it becomes a tyrant. By the word “higher” I mean that the University, the Church, the family, etc., contain sources of truth and being that are not only utterly independent of the State and belong to a separate realm altogether, but that this truth and being is qualitatively superior to any truth and being belonging to the State as such, so that a ruler, or king, or dictator, passing a scientist, or mother, or priest, or saint, or lover, or philosopher, should take off his hat and bow to him or her in all respect; and should in addition sit at his or her feet and learn truths which his State could never teach him. The destruction of all this intermediate plenum of freedom is the most grievous sin committed by totalitarianism, of whatever stripe.

Because man is a rational being, the evil of his own doing always has its origin in an error of his mind. I shall now list the eight basic errors committed by the metaphysics of Communism, and contrast them in each case with the truth of the Western positive tradition.

1. That ultimate reality is through and through matter. The truth is that besides matter and utterly irreducible to it, there is an independent and superior reality, namely mind and spirit.

2. The proper attribute of reality is change and strife. The truth is that there is a changeless and stable order of existence on which the mind can really rest.
3. There is no objective and eternal truth. The truth is that such a truth exists, and that only by humbly seeking and finding it can we achieve genuine understanding and real peace.
4. Only the immanent and temporal exist. The truth is that there is a whole dimension of transcendent norms fully accessible to the mind and heart.
5. There is no God. The truth is that there is a God Who is the loving Father of all of us, including those who deny Him, and Who is the Creator of heaven and earth and the Lord of history.
6. That, so far as the nature of things is concerned, only the tradition of Democritus, Lucretius, Feuerbach and Marx is right. The truth is that this materialist tradition is thoroughly absorbed by the more concrete positive tradition from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel and Whitehead.
7. Man is perfectible by his own self-sufficient efforts. The truth is that man has a certain inherent perversity of which he can only be cured by transcendent aid.
8. The human person is for the sake of society and the state. The truth is that society and the state are for the sake of the human person.

This is the sort of metaphysics which inspires Communism, and this is the kind of world which it seeks to realize here on earth. For all its genuine passion for social and economic justice, and for all its enduring positive achievements, the Communist world and ideal is nevertheless a materialistic, atheistic, dialectical, relativistic, purely immanent (i.e., this-worldly) and manmade, totalitarian world and ideal. I must conclude from all this that it is not true that Communist existence justifies the Communist revolution, even if the end justified the means.

IV. THE RUSSIAN SOUL

We can thank God Communism does not exhaust the Russian spirit. This spirit is much deeper than the militant Communism which today disturbs the world. It is true that Communism is the established religion of the Soviet Government today, but the hope of peace resides in the unextinguished fire of truth and love which certainly smolders in the Russian heart. It is impossible to understand and meet the Soviet challenge without a

minimum of acquaintance with the greatest Russian literature of the nineteenth century. This literature, in all its beauty and pathos and freedom, reflects the mysterious depths of the Russian soul far more authentically than the monotonously true-to-the-party-line dialectical disquisitions of the Soviet representatives. I honestly believe that the Department of Public Information of the United Nations can do no better service for the cause of peace than to prepare a two-volume compendium of nineteenth-century Russian literature which, by a formal vote of the General Assembly, should be made required reading for every delegate who comes to the United Nations. If only we penetrated the mind and spirit not only of Krylof, as Mr. McNeil admonished us to do the other day, but also of Pushkin, Gogol, Turgenyev, Chekov, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Solovier, Gorki, we would be in a far better position to cope with the present world situation. I should wish nothing more sincerely for my honorable colleagues around this table than to steep themselves in this wonderful world of the spirit. Most of us know a great deal about the spiritual and intellectual background of the West, and therefore do not need such a schooling, so far as the presuppositions of Western thought and action are concerned. But many of us know about Russia only what we read in the newspapers and hear from the mouths of the Soviet version of herself. In fact one reason why I sometimes wholeheartedly laugh at specific points in the expositions of a Vyshinsky, or a Manuilsky, or a Pavlov, or an Arutiunian is precisely because I see the imagery used, or the humor resorted to, or the parable or anecdote related, or the deep humanity revealed, or the sheer boundless exuberance, or the childlike inconsistency, or the utter, joyous self-abandon of spirit, certain authentic features of the free Russian soul bursting forth through the drabness of Marxist dialectic, like a volcano erupting the dead crust of the earth.

I propose, very briefly, to outline a phenomenology of the Russian soul as I glimpse it in Russian literature.

Russian literature reveals the tragic sufferings of the Russian soul. There are revealed utterly new dimensions of suffering and self-estrangement.

It has been the peculiar calling of the Russian soul, it seems, to struggle and suffer. Pain, distress, suffering for the salvation of the world: all this has been its special stigmata. As Berdyaf, a master interpreter of things Russian, has put it: "They are in the throes of religious anguish, they seek salvation—that is the characteristic of Russian creative writers, they seek salvation, thirst to make expiation, they suffer for the world."

There is the most curious passage, often in one and the same person, from the extreme of asceticism to the extreme of sensuality. Russian literature is permeated with the sense of contradiction, contrast, extremes, antithesis, antinomy.

There is no trace of halfheartedness and mediocrity: things must be wholehearted, robust, full, elemental, carried to their logical conclusion, or else they are not Russian. The Russian soul everlastingly itches to make a clean slate of things, to take the very process of creation itself into its own hands, to pass beyond every measure and every limit, walking perilously on the brink of the precipice.

There is the profound universalism of Pushkin which was so wonderfully depicted by Dostoyevsky in his famous speech of 1880: in absolute receptivity, a complete identification with every state of man, everywhere.

There is thus the deepest craving for human brotherhood for the most radical elimination of all difference and all distinction.

Dostoyevsky said: "Among all nations the Russian soul, the genius of the Russian peoples, perhaps, most apt to embrace the idea of the universal fellowship of man, of brotherly love."

Maturing into self-consciousness amidst terrific social dislocation and estrangement, the Russian soul developed a revolutionary vision of equality and social justice. Everywhere in Russian literature there is the quest for a better world, for the transformation of reality into the likeness of heaven.

Communism, in its atheistic, materialistic, Marxian strain, is foreign to the deepest and highest in Russian literature; but there is a genuine spiritual ground in the Russian soul which enabled atheistic Communism to foist itself on it, and that is the sense of communion, sharing, belonging; the sense of "sobornost" realized by the faithful in the Church. The sense of "the other," of "the presence," where this "present other" is a loving person, a "thou," is, to my knowledge, nowhere more vividly illustrated than in classical Russian literature.

There is, furthermore, a profound disdain for culture, a demand that culture justify itself before it be admitted. Russian nihilism is the negation of the primacy of culture.

The prodigious German power at abstraction is wholly non-Russian. Russian philosophy and literature is always a quest after a way of life, never after abstract ideas. That is why Dostoyevsky is, no matter what my Soviet friends think of him, perhaps the greatest Russian thinker.

A clearly discernible motif is the quest for wholeness, completeness, unity. There is the mystical burning for absorption and reconciliation, a self-projection onto an ultimate universal harmony. The Russian soul at its best is consumed by a mystical flame of the purest type.

Rebelling against things as they are, in mystical communion with things as they ought to be, the Russian soul has tended to be apocalyptic, eschatological, prophetic. *The Possessed* by Dostoyevsky is a remarkable prophetic delineation of the character of the Russian revolution.

The deepest characterization of the Russian soul is perhaps that it manifests a genuine religious consciousness. Therefore nothing is more really alien to its essence than materialism and an ideology informed by hatred.

The Russian soul is thus complex. Communism does not exhaust it. In a magically contracted world the Slavic genius cannot fail to make itself felt. Even if the Tsarist regime had not been overthrown, but had itself embarked on a policy of progressive industrialization, today, in the geopolitical balance of power, the world would still face a great Russian problem. It is absolutely absurd and stupid to entertain the hope that 250 million Slavs, with their great vitality and culture, with the infinite material resources at their command, and whether or not they are ruled by Communists, can simply be dismissed or ignored by the rest of the world. Whatever one's attitude towards Communism as a final and comprehensive world-view, certainly the one unpardonable sin in international relations today is to hate, or to wish ill, the Russian people as such. We shall always have to live with our Russian neighbour. Consequently, the hope of peace is that the Russian soul may assert the more universal spiritual side of itself.

The forces of peace and understanding have two allies in Russia: our common humanity, and the best that there is in the Russian spirit. There is hope because Mr. Vyshinsky is not only a Communist, he is also a human being and a Russian. When our common humanity and the deep Russian spirituality get the better of the Russian rulers, there will be real prospects for peace. But so long as Communism has the upper hand, with its doctrine of war and revolution, all peace is an absolute mirage.

V. CRITIQUE OF THE WEST

It is fairly easy to work out a critique of Communism. The doctrine is only a hundred years old, and its effective entrenchment in the great Eurasian heartland is barely thirty years old. Besides, its basic literature is fairly compact: you have the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, which are fully accessible to any student.

It is far more difficult to elaborate a fundamental critique of the West. You do not have here a handful of masters as in the Communist world; you do not have a well-marked-out body of official literature. Governmental policy and action is not informed by rigid theory as in the Communist world. There is endless variety and difference, considerable looseness of connection, and a great deal of fumbling and muddling-through and empiricism.

Yet a general critique is necessary, because war and peace are not only a function of Communism: they depend also on the state of health and illness in Western culture.

There are many phases of Western life which are repulsively materialistic. The spirit of business and gain, the maddening variety of things exciting your concupiscence, the utter selfishness of uncoördinated activity, all this is not something to attract and inspire. To the superficial observer who is unable to penetrate to the core of love and truth which is still at the heart of the West, there is little to choose between the soulless materialism of the West and the militant materialism of the East.

There is a general weakening of moral fibre. One gains the impression that the great fund of moral strength which has been handed down from the tears and labours of the ages is not being creatively replenished. There is thus unregeneration, a terrifying wastage of substance.

Quality is in eclipse. Quantity and size dominate. Not the better and truer, but the larger and physically stronger: these call forth moral approbation.

I must say in all humility that the leadership of the West in general does not seem to be adequate to the unprecedented challenges of the age. There is a tragic dearth of men, men who are so genuinely in touch with the truth and with the hearts of their fellow men as to have only to open their mouths to be loved and believed and followed. The world desperately cries for masters; for it is only the voice of conviction and truth that is going to save us. There is a corresponding bankruptcy of fundamental ideas. There is thus in this realm an unequal struggle for the hearts of men between Communism and the West. Communism displays a set of generic ideas—I believe for the most part false—in which it passionately believes, for which Communists are willing—I believe misguidedly—to die. There is not comparable ideological passion in the West. The talk about democracy, freedom, representative government, is woefully inadequate: it deals for the most part with pure form, sheer external machinery. It does not satisfy man's deepest cravings for friendship and understanding and truth and love.

Politically the West will not serve the cause of peace by allying itself with dark regimes just because it is more expedient not to disturb them. Such regimes are running sores on the body politic of humanity. The West must be honest enough to rebuke and challenge them. It must firmly lead them into the broad ways of responsible change. Their peoples are poised to see whether the West acts from principle or from expediency. And the subversive whispers of world revolution become more and more potent the more these peoples despair of their rulers and the West.

Nor does it do merely to reject Communism. A positive alternative must be suggested. The only effective answer to Communism is a genuine spiritualized materialism which seeks to remove every trace of social injustice without loss of the higher values which constitute

the very soul of the West. Communism cannot be met by a mere *nay*; it requires a mighty *yea* which will do full justice to man's material needs but will at the same time place them in their subordinate position in the scale of values.

The complaint is often made that our debates in the United Nations degenerate into "propaganda." But propaganda can be overcome only by lifting the quality of debate to a higher plane. If profound ideological themes were introduced, then all attempts at propaganda would appear silly and crude. If there is propaganda, it is only because there is on the other hand ideological impotence. The tragedy of the world today is that the traditions which embody the deepest truth are not bothering clearly, sufficiently, responsibly, boldly to articulate themselves.

Nor is it sufficient in this cruel century to be happy and self-sufficient. You must step forth and lead, and not only in material things. It is not enough to realize good institutions and to leave it to others to copy them. For man isn't only an ape: he does not only mimic the good example of others. Man thirsts after ideas. If the habits and institutions of the West are not adapted for the production of a ringing message, full of content and truth, satisfying the mind, appealing to the heart, firing the will, a message on which one can stake his whole life, then in the present world, in which there is, perhaps as never before, a universal hunger for truth and justice and rest, the West cannot lead. Leadership must pass on to others, no matter how perverted and false these others might be. For the Logos prefers and can finally utilize a false prophet far better than no prophet at all.

If your only export in these realms is the silent example of flourishing political institutions and happy human relations, you cannot lead. If your only export is a distant reputation for wealth and prosperity and order, you cannot lead. Nor can you really lead if you send forth to others only expert advice and technical assistance. To be able to lead and save yourself and others, you must above everything else address their mind and soul. Your tradition, rooted in the glorious Graco-Roman-Hebrew-Christian-Western-European-humane outlook, supplies you with all the necessary presuppositions for leadership. All you have to do is to be the deepest you already are. The challenge of this epoch is not Communism, but is whether Western society, conceived in the joyous liberties of the Greek city-states and nurtured on Christian charity, can still recover from the worship of false and alien gods and return to its authentic sources. The challenge of the moment is whether modern man, distracted and overwhelmed by himself and by the world, can still regain the original integrity of his soul.

Whatever be the weakness and decadence of the West, it still has one saving glory: the University is free, the Church is free. It is a great thing to preserve unbroken the tradition of free inquiry started by Plato and Aristotle, and the tradition of love started by God.

Truth can still be sought and God can still be loved and proclaimed in joy and freedom. And this fact alone is going to save us. It will not be by pacts, or by atomic bombs, or by economic arrangements, or by the United Nations, that peace will be established, but by the freedom of the Church and the University each to be itself. Communism does not know what it has done when it subjected the Church and the University to its own dictates.

VI. CONCLUSION

Mr. Vyshinsky's resolution calls for the conclusion of a Five-Power Pact as the best method of ending the present tension. But would such a Pact really do anything to remove the mutual distrust and fear which now seize both worlds? It has been amply demonstrated in this debate that there are plenty of pacts already, including the greatest of them all, the Charter of the United Nations. What is needed therefore is not new pacts, but fundamental modification of position, a real change of heart.

One thing must be clear to Mr. Vyshinsky, and that is that the non-Communist world is by now fully awake to its dangers. If Communism believes that the clash is inevitable, it must realize that the non-Communist world is not going to be caught napping.

In my opinion it is an illusion to suppose that the sheer employment of masterly tactics, such as warmongering propaganda or the offering of peace pacts, is going to frighten anybody, or dull him into a sense of false security. In my opinion, furthermore, Communism will deceive only itself if it thinks that the Western world is so decadent that Communism can choose at will its own hour of striking.

But if the clash is coming, as Communist dogma has been teaching for thirty years, postponement will serve only to allow both sides time in which the better to prepare. This is the frightful meaning of the present arms race. Postponement has significance only if it is utilized to induce those fundamental changes in position which may avert the clash.

What forms might such changes take?

We must hope and pray that the leaders of the Soviet Union will reconsider and alter their present determination to shut off their country, their people, their minds, from the rest of the world. It is an ultimate injustice to the world to deny it free access to the great immeasurable riches of the Russian mind and of the Russian scene. The world yearns to know Russia, and the Russian people, with their sense of a universal mission, yearns to embrace the world. Let this embracement be one of love and brotherhood, and not of revolution and bloodshed. Let the Soviet leaders open their minds and their country to the

traveller, the student, the pilgrim, and let them allow their citizens to come out from behind their fastness, to study in our schools, to share in our world.

Every point of contact which still exists between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world must be preserved and enlarged, on whatever level. New points of contact must be sought. All of us here find it hopeful that we are still able to talk freely across this table with our Soviet friends, that we are still together, if not in agreement. Mr. Vyshinsky has done the cause of peace a real service in opening this debate, in enabling us to open our hearts to him in freedom, in sitting with us humbly and listening to and perhaps bearing with our folly. But this is not enough: there must be a genuine communion of minds, genuine modification of position, genuine cooperation in the fields of science, art, scholarship.

We must hope and pray that the Soviet Government will allow the Russian people to assert again their hidden spirituality, will give full play to the capacity of the Russian people, so often proven in the past, to create great works of religious art, to perform great acts of faith, to show great manifestations of saintliness.

We must hope and pray, too, that the Communists will everywhere abandon their doctrines of revolution and class-struggle, without losing any of their longing and passion for a better world; that they will express this abandonment *ex cathedra*, by fundamental modification of doctrine; that they will no longer expect, await, and thus contribute to bring about revolutionary changes in other countries. The non-Communist world must feel at ease with the Communists, and this it can never do so long as it knows that the Communists wait only for the day of its damnation.

We must hope and pray that there will develop in the Western world a mighty spiritual movement which will rediscover and reaffirm its glorious hidden values, and fulfill mankind's longing for a more just order of things, a more beautiful world, a New Heaven and a New Earth. Modern man sees before him the possibility of universal plenty for the first time in history, and grasps at any doctrine which seems to promise him the fulfilment of his dream. To ask of Communism to change its nature, without satisfying the need to which it is a response, is to offer the world not bread, but a stone.

Communism is a doctrine of despair. Its only and complete answer therefore lies in the existence of hope. If the Western world can show a way to eradicate the shame and scandal of poverty, of exploitation, of oppression, of greed, without resort to social revolution and class-struggle and dictatorship: if it can place these material values in their proper subordinate place within the context of a mighty spiritual movement which will be revolutionary without being subversive, and which will draw its substance from the infinite riches of the Western

positive tradition, then the necessity for Communism will vanish, and the spectre which now walks the earth will be laid forever.

VII. POSTSCRIPT*

PART ONE

The pact proposed by the Soviet Union would indeed be an excellent thing if the basic atmosphere of confidence were present. It is certainly, in my opinion, putting the cart before the horse to suppose that such a pact would itself contribute to the creation of this required atmosphere. Only a fundamental change in Communist doctrine, whereby the rest of the world would no longer be absolutely damned in principle, can, in my opinion, bring about the type of confidence which would give substance and meaning to such pacts. So long as it is a most inalienable part of Communist doctrine—as it can be amply demonstrated that it is—that any dealings with the non-Communist world are more of the nature of tactics or manoeuvres which can be justified only as temporary expedients in the total Communist grand design, patient only for the moment, of the collapse of that world—so long as that is the case, I submit, special pacts lose all their meaning. Rather, if they were entered into, they might mean either that the non-Communist world is so decadent that it does not perceive the trap into which it is being led or that it is so cunning that it makes the Communist world believe that it does not perceive that trap while, in reality, it is preparing a trap of its own. As for the first alternative, I am sure that that is not the case; as for the second, it is manifestly unworthy of the United Nations. But, in any case, both alternatives unmistakably mean that the necessary confidence is simply lacking, and therefore pacts are unavailing.

On the other hand, the draft resolution proposed by the First Committee possesses at least this virtue: it reaffirms faith in the United Nations and underlines those fundamental concrete modes of international cooperation whose cumulative effect would be precisely to help in creating the necessary atmosphere of confidence. Since the United Nations is unthinkable without the active participation of the Soviet Union, it is, I submit, a good thing that in this resolution we are saying, in effect, that we solemnly believe in and seek the cooperation of the Soviet Union; that we sincerely believe in our constantly meeting with the Soviet Union and in opening our hearts to its distinguished representatives in all candour

* Part One of this Postscript was delivered in a plenary session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on November 30, 1949, in the morning, and is found in A/PV. 259, of the records of the Assembly, pp. siff. The occasion was the final consideration by the Assembly of the report of the First Committee on the Soviet proposal. Part Two of this Postscript was actually prepared as the conclusion of this statement in plenary, but at the last minute Dr. Malik decided not to read it. Consequently, it does not appear in the records of the General Assembly. It is here reproduced for the first time.

and in all frankness, in the hope that we may one day induce in them the belief that, after all, the rest of the world is not so damnable, even from their own point of view, as they thought it was. The reaffirmation of the fruitfulness—nay, the absolute necessity—of our continued association in the United Nations is a good thing at the present moment.

I cannot refrain from entering into a slight ideological excursion, because I believe ideology in this case is of the essence. Communism is an offshoot of Western European culture. Without the intellectual apparatus of German idealism and the social and economic phenomena of English industrialism, Communism would have been impossible. But it has singled out, from the infinitely rich existence of the West, only the material economic aspect, setting it up as the source of all origination and all value, abstracting thus the modes of production and exchange, and inordinately concentrating on them, even to the extent of deifying them. Communism is manifestly a rebellion against the Western authentic order of values. It is, in effect, an inversion of this order.

It follows that the authentic West can understand Communism, can appreciate its positive values and can pass objective judgments on its shortcomings. Communism, on the other hand, can neither understand nor appreciate nor authoritatively judge the West. If it could, it would have modified its position and peace would have become possible, for Communism is hopelessly imprisoned within the walls of its own relativism and materialism. It interprets everything in terms of the premises and the categories of the Marxist philosophy. When it encounters a thing, it does not see the proper nature of that thing in itself; it at once dissolves it, without any remainder, in the presuppositions and outlook of Marxism. It cannot listen to things speaking to it innocently by themselves. It is apparently in a hurry to get somewhere. Absolutizing its own relativistic outlook and axiology, Communism neatly explains every view in terms of its social and economic origin and function, and assesses every value by the measure of its serviceability to a class or to the cause of the classless society.

The West, thanks to its belief in the objectivity of truth and values, or at least to the presence in it of free and vigorous institutions which embody this belief, is capable of understanding the premises and the views of Communism in themselves, of appreciating positive Communist achievements in their own right, of judging both these positive achievements as well as the privations and rejections of Communism from the standpoint of its—i.e., the West's—affirmative belief in the objective and the absolute.

The interesting paradox of the confrontation of Communism and the non-Communist world of the present day, a glimpse of which was revealed in the debate in the First Committee, is that it is precisely the ideology of materialistic relativism which has absolutized itself into an exclusive dogmatism intolerant of any other view, disdainful of any

other value, suspicious of any other motive, dismissing the rest of the world as unworthy of anything save bitter hatred or, at best, cynical sarcasm. Symptomatic of this unwillingness, nay, this apparent constitutional incapacity of Communism to understand the West in terms of the West's own nature, in terms, indeed, of the West's better self, is the thoroughly Marxist identification of the West as such with Capitalism, or reduction of the West, in the glorious plenitude of its values and diversity of its traditions, to the sheer image of the economic structure which Communism more or less equivocally and misleadingly terms "Capitalism." Communism must realize that it is not standing face to face with Capitalism. If it is to understand its own historic position in its true light, Communism must thoroughly understand the fact that it is standing face to face with, and rebelling against the West—the Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Christian, humane traditions of the West—and not only the unhappy West of secularism, liberalism, capitalism and imperialism.

Communism must initially admit the possibility of genuine encounter and diversity, of mutual understanding despite disagreement, of communion in spite of otherness, of love in spite of radical difference. Otherwise there would be no prospect of genuine confrontation, understanding, confidence and peace. I submit it is Communism itself which is the obstacle to understanding, confidence and peace. Dogmatically entrenched in its own relativistic and materialistic presuppositions, it rejects the very notion of objective truth; and thus it precludes the very possibility of genuine confrontation, of communication, of agreement. If there is no objective truth, a truth about Communism and about the West, a truth independent of, and transcendent to, Communism and the West, a truth which judges of what Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin believed as well as of what Plato, Aquinas and Kant believed, then there is no room for genuine debate but merely for sophistry and propaganda, no room for agreement but merely for condemnation, no room for a United Nations but merely for a group of representatives who assemble for the specific purpose of denouncing one another while their Governments speed up their armaments programmes in preparation for the next war.

I do not wish to go back to the debate of the First Committee, but I may perhaps be permitted to point out one very revealing fact about that debate. Two spokesmen of the Communist States reacted in a very significant way to two different portions of my statement before the First Committee. One representative said, in a happy moment of self-revelation, that he was surprised at the section of my statement concerned with the critique of the West. He even said, and I fully believe him, that he could not believe his own eyes when he read it. Another representative intimated that he could not believe that I was honest in my appreciation of the positive achievements of the Soviet Union. This is, indeed, very interesting: for it demonstrates that Communism cannot conceive of either an honest criticism of oneself or an honest appreciation of the positive worth of one's opponents.

These are corollaries of the rejection of objective truth. If we reject a truth which is above one's self and one's cause and one's position, above one's interests, above one's nationality and class and tradition, as well as above the opponent's cause and positions and interests and traditions—if we reject such a truth and if we deny its accessibility to the human mind and heart—then how can we still claim to believe in the possibility of convincing one another, of coming to terms with one another, of facing and meeting one another? Or are we determined by the mere fact that we hold different views to remain eternally incapable of meeting one another except externally and superficially, in mutual condemnation, distrust and hostility?

Let Communism but admit the possibility of truth in the non-Communist world, let Communism but grant the possibility of error in its own teachings, let Communism but recognize that truth really exists, exists independently of Communism and non-Communism, and may be sought and found by Communists and non-Communists, and may be discussed between Communists and non-Communists: let Communism but admit this, and then the absurdity of discussion and the impossibility of agreement between Communists and non-Communists will at once vanish. Peace will then, but only then, be possible. Otherwise, the only peace that remains for the world is unauthentic and insecure peace, a peace which is virtually a state of potential warfare.

PART TWO

The two worlds, then, face each other across a terrible chasm. The Communist world, believing in the rottenness of the non-Communist world, in the inevitability of its downfall, in the danger to itself from any too protracted a delay in that downfall, must needs, by the compulsion of its own doctrine, do everything in its power to promote and hasten that catastrophic event. It is therefore necessarily goaded to intervene. The method it advocates is violent revolution; the promise it holds out is material security, social justice and the abolition of discrimination and exploitation. This, then, is the great challenge facing us from the other side of the chasm. The history of the present generation will consist mainly in the response we shall make to this challenge.

If the Western world adopts Communist methods, it will betray its dearest traditions. It will then rebel against itself. Communism will have won. For nothing pleases Communism more than to see the West forsake its holy tradition of love and persuasion. If, on the other hand, the West holds out the Communist promise alone, again it will betray itself. For the West lives under, and has been blessed by the sway of the teaching that it is not by bread and security alone that man liveth. The greatest expression of this dialectic between security and

freedom, and of the genuine Western position in this regard, was made precisely by a Russian; namely, by Dostoyevsky in the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*. The only adequate response to the Communist challenge is the rediscovery and the reaffirmation by the West of the highest spiritual values by which it has lived and prospered and moved the ages.

It ought to be very bluntly stated that a world that is relatively imperfect from the economic and material point of view, but that retains at its heart the core of love and truth and freedom which has for three thousand years characterized Western civilization at its best, is vastly to be preferred to any world, no matter how absolutely perfect materially and economically, which rejects this creative core of love and truth and freedom. The perfect soul can always correct the imperfect body, but where there is no soul, even the most perfect body is soon but dust and ashes.

The challenge then is two-fold. Are the benefits promised by Communism unattainable except by Communist means, namely by subversion, violence and revolution? Whatever the means, are Communist values and benefits unattainable except at the cost of the more traditional values which make up in reality the soul of the West?

And this two-fold challenge imposes on the Western world the following task: how to attain all the positive and good ends which Communism boasts of *without* resorting to Communist means, and without destroying the higher tested values of Western civilization at its best, namely freedom, responsibility of the individual, the primacy of the personal and spiritual and intellectual, the trust in reason and the belief in God.

In order to be able to meet this formidable challenge in its own way, the non-Communist world must first of all, and as a purely negative condition, look after its own defenses. The non-Communist world cannot afford to assume that where militant Communism could strike and could get away with it, it would not strike.

Accepting the challenge, keeping possible Communist intervention at bay, utilizing to the full its own infinite positive resources, sharing its life and goods in larger justice and freedom, the Western world ought to develop a strong and healthy civilization. All the Communist gains will be there, without the Communist losses. In the fullness of time the Communist world will find itself at a tremendous disadvantage. It will behold across the chasm, even if dimly, an image of real beauty and strength. And it might then deign to meet and discuss and come to terms. Then perhaps the Russian soul, with her deep spirituality and her genuine urge at universalism, will reaffirm itself, and the offshoot, which is Communism, will come back to its origin, chastened and penitent.