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## Is There a Mellowing of Communism?

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IS THERE A MELLOWING OF COMMUNISM?

I. Present Period of "Relaxation"

1. Since Cuba

Since Cuba there was a new period of relaxation, reminiscent of the false hopes engendered by the "spirit of Geneva" and "Camp David". Khrushchev's tactical retreat, and conciliatory attitude after being caught red-handed, were viewed by some as proof of Communist moderation and desire for genuine peace. While this soft-headed thinking is not surprising among "ban the bomb" and other left-wing groups, it is disquieting to observe the extent of relaxation - by some Americans as well as our NATO Allies - which followed the confrontation of last October.

2. "Orgy of Self Congratulations"

General Thomas B. White (Newsweek, January 14, 1963) speaking of the situation since Cuba said:

"We have been engaged in a great national orgy of self congratulations. . . . As an aftermath of Cuba, we may become more off guard than ever, tranquilized by our own nostrums and the propaganda . . . constantly fed us by the Soviet Union."

### 3. Current Optimism - Time Magazine

In a recent burst of optimism, the May 3rd edition of Time Magazine had a lead article which included the following gems:

There has been "a profound change" in the Cold War.

"The vision of thermonuclear war . . . has slowly receded."

"Recent years have seen a drastic deterioration of Communism's image; it no longer seems anywhere near as powerful, cunning and successful as it did in the late 50's."

"The Cold War scales no longer appear to be teetering in such terrible balance."

"The West is growing stronger" . . .  
"while Communism's image (is) eroding."

"Khrushchev's 1956 threat to 'bury us' . . . sounds emptier today than when Khrushchev uttered it."



The foregoing are taken somewhat out of context, but nevertheless give the tone of the article.

4. Harriman's Optimism

The Administration has had an unduly optimistic posture since Cuba. The most recent example was Mr. Harriman's emphasis, in a televised program on May 5th, on what he called Communists "setbacks". He spoke specifically of:

"the setback [of] Kremlin policies. . . . in Africa, the Middle East, China and elsewhere."\*

\*Richmond Times Dispatch, May 6, 1963.

## II. Misconceptions Which Bring About Relaxation

### 1. Deliberate Soviet Strategy

There have always been periods of excessive optimism, usually followed by periods of pessimism. We respond, like puppets, to Communist tactics of "heating up" and then "tamping down" the Cold War. This is a part of basic Communist strategy.

### 2. Specific Misconceptions

- (a) "Liberalization"
- (b) "Break" in Communist Ranks
- (c) Communism is "mellowing"

### 3. Discussion of Misconceptions

### III. Khrushchev's Alleged "Liberalism"

1. Some improvements since Stalin
  - (a) Less police terror
  - (b) Limited travel permitted
  - (c) Improvements in judicial system
  
2. "Liberalism" is more apparent than real
  - (a) Religion
    - (i) Jews still persecuted
    - (ii) Professor Berman's views\*

Although he thought there was a renaissance of interest in religion, the official party view is still described by him as follows:

"The Soviet state not only professes atheism, but requires it to be taught systematically in the schools and preached in the press. Members of the Communist Party are forbidden by party rules to attend church services, as are members of the Young Communist League and the Pioneers. All religious organizations are under severe disabilities."

\*Richmond Times Dispatch, March 3, 1963.



(b) Judicial system and police terror

While there has been some improvement, William L. Ryan, Associated Press expert on Russia, recently wrote (March 1963) as follows:

"A form of Stalinism appears to be returning."

The Komsomol (Young Communist League) has set up "spotlight" squads to "swoop down on farms, enterprises and offices in search of (economic) transgressors."

"Control groups" are being set up outside of the judiciary system, to crack down on nonconforming action of all kinds including what the Russians call "parasites".

"Punctuating these events are new announcements of firing squad punishment for speculators and other economic criminals."

(c) Arts and literature

Following the crackdown a few years ago on the great Soviet author, Boris Pasternak, there was a good deal of propaganda emanating from U.S.S.R. to the effect that greater freedom was being allowed artists and writers.

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This period of freedom seems to have ended last March 8, when Khrushchev in a bitter speech attacked several leaders of Soviet literature for failing to conform to the party line.

One of these was the poet, Yevtushenko, who was denounced by name. Mr. Yevtushenko was scheduled to visit the United States this spring, but the Soviet government has announced that he was "ill" and could not make the trip.

In commenting on this so-called "illness" the New York Times (April 15, 1963), said:

"No sensible person will think about bacteria, viruses or the like in connection with the 'illness' . . . . The ailment is purely political. Its nature has been evident in the vilification Soviet publications have been showering on Mr. Yevtushenko. . . . The truth is that the most famous Russian poet alive today is, for all practical purposes, a prisoner in his own country, accused of treason and denied the opportunity to make a full statement of his case.

\* \* \* \*

"For Khrushchev and his fellow bureaucrats, art and artists remain merely propaganda tools to be manipulated as the Kremlin wishes, and to be punished if they resist."



See also Khrushchev's statement to an Italian editor, in which he said in substance that "art and literature" must conform to party ideology. New York Times, April 22, 1963.

IV. Quarrel between Moscow and Peiping

1. Kennedy's comment

Argument over how best to "bury" America.

2. Khrushchev's warning

As recently as April 21, 1963, Khrushchev gave a blunt warning to those who derive comfort from this family squabble. Calling this "an internal affair of Communist parties", he said:

"If the imperialists (meaning, the western powers) dare to undermine the peace and security of the socialist countries, they will knock against the unified power of the peoples of the Soviet Union and of the Republic of China. . . .\*

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\*Interview of Khrushchev with an Italian editor, as reported in the Washington Post, Monday, April 22, 1963.

V. Has Communism Mellowed, and is the Cold War Receding

1. Summary to this point

We have now discussed two of the misconceptions which cause unjustified optimism about Communism, namely, (i) the "liberalization" internally under Khrushchev, and (ii) the disagreement between Moscow and Peiping.

Let us now examine the broader misconception that Communism is in a process of "mellowing" and that the Cold War is being gradually liquidated.

2. The actual record

While Khrushchev has talked of "peace" and "peaceful coexistence", what in fact has been the record of recent years? Consider the following:

1. The resumption by the Soviet Union of nuclear testing, despite its solemn word to the contrary.

2. The intransigence of the Soviet position on inspection, which has frustrated all efforts toward disarmament.

3. The undeclared war in South Vietnam, where 12,000 American troops are already committed.



4. The necessity for some 50,000 United States soldiers in South Korea, 10 years after the so-called armistice.

5. The erection of the Berlin Wall and the continuing program of strengthening the Iron Curtain.\*

6. The certainty that the Berlin problem will again assume crisis proportions.

7. Soviet perfidy in moving its missiles secretly into Cuba, and (despite its October promises to President Kennedy) the subsequent consolidation there of a major Soviet base.

8. The Communist betrayal in Laos - an event widely predicted by those familiar with the fate of coalition governments.\*\*

These are but a few of the more spectacular examples of the realities which underlie the false facade of Communist "peace" and "peaceful coexistence".

\*For a remarkable book on the Iron Curtain and what we should do about it, see Overstreats, The Iron Curtain, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1963.

\*\*Commenting on the Loshan crises, the New York Times (April 20, 1963) said: "The world is being treated to the spectacle of Communists brutally violating international agreements and seeking ideological and territorial expansion by force of arms." There is little reason to believe that Mr. Harriman's recent trip to Moscow has changed this situation.

### 3. Khrushchev's recent warning

In his interview with an Italian newspaper editor (New York Times, April 22, 1963) Khrushchev must have disenchanted some of those who imagine they see a lessening of the Cold War. In denying any such possibility, he said:

"We Communists never have accepted, and never will accept, the idea of peaceful coexistence of ideology. On this ground there can be no compromise."

It will be remembered that Communist ideology expressly sanctions "wars of liberation" as well as the Full Communist arsenal of propaganda, sabotage, subversion and revolution.



## VI. Conclusion

I commenced our discussion this evening with some of the "rosy" quotations from Time Magazine and Mr. Harriman. It will be recalled that Time sees a "profound change" in the course of the Cold War, and Mr. Harriman boasts of Communist "setbacks".

There is an interesting article by Bertram Wolfe (in the 1962 October issue of Foreign Affairs) in which he points out, with documentation, that western leaders have misappreciated and underestimated the Communist movement for many years. He said:

"For four and one-half decades, we have waited for the Soviet Union to mellow. . . . A review of the judgments of statesmen and analysts over these 45 years makes melancholy reading."

In my view, the "judgments" currently being expressed as to the amelioration of Communism and the slackening of the Cold War, do indeed make "melancholy reading". These views suggest that the lessons of history make little impression on some people.



I am also reminded of Mr. Wolfe's further comment that in the struggle constantly being waged by the Communists,

"the most dangerous periods are those of comparative relaxation."

If, as Time states, "a drastic deterioration of Communism's image" has taken place in the world, the people in Italy (for example) have not heard about it. The recent election there shows the Communist party stronger than ever, with one of every four Italians a member. Nor, for example, is there the slightest reason to believe there has been "a drastic deterioration of Communism's image" in South America, where every report indicates precisely the contrary.

And what about Time's view that "the Cold War scales no longer appear to be in such terrible balance," or that the crises of the Cold War "no longer seem so momentous"? One wonders whether our troops in South Vietnam and South Korea would share this view.

But there is neither time this evening, nor necessity before this audience, to multiply examples.

It seems to me that it is high time for Americans and the Free World to put aside the type of wishful thinking which has kept us in deep trouble for the last twenty years. We must be mature enough to realize that there has been, and indeed will be, no change in the basic objectives of the Communist movement and no weakening of Communist power and determination. They intend to inherit the Earth, and to liquidate their enemies - by whatever methods seem most expedient at the time. The Cold War is therefore certain to continue - perhaps for decades.

#### What the Sons of Colonial Wars Can Do

A patriotic society, such as the Sons of Colonial Wars, naturally has a keen interest in this problem which affects the very safety and future of our country. I know that each of you is asking, as you sit here tonight: "What Can I Do About All of This?". It is difficult to give a dramatic answer, and no answer is entirely satisfying to citizens of high intelligence



and deep patriotism - such as this audience. It is obviously necessary for each citizen to be well informed, and to express his views whenever and wherever appropriate. This means among our friends, as well as to those who represent us at various levels of government.

This brings me to the need for education in our schools and colleges on this subject. The desirability of such courses is now generally recognized. But there is still an urgent need for adequate training of teachers. A number of colleges and universities are providing summer institutes for this training. There is a need for scholarships to send our teachers to these institutes. I commend to our Board of Governors the idea of granting one or more annual scholarships for this purpose. This, though small, is one specific thing we could do.

And now a final word, it must be appreciated that educating the people of the Free World is necessarily an ambitious and long range program. Education at all levels is a slow process. Indeed, the lead time of programs initiated in the schools today must be measured



in terms of a decade or more. But our only hope of winning the Cold War is long term. Nuclear war is a real and ominous possibility. Most Americans had rather be "dead than red", but one must believe that these are not the only alternatives. There is a third course which America can and must pursue, namely, ultimate victory in the contest between Communist tyranny and our system of freedom under law.

Education has a vital role in assuring victory. In a democracy, the people as well as the leaders must possess the requisite knowledge and understanding. This means, of course, not merely knowledge of the Communist movement nor, indeed, merely knowledge of our own system of freedom under law. This great, overriding need of our perilous time is for that breadth of knowledge and wisdom which is obtainable only by free men with free institutions. This is a goal appropriate for our society. Indeed, it is a goal to which all Americans can aspire.

Lewis F. Powell, Jr.