



A Contribution to the Discussion of the Free Society
Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions

U.S. Foreign Policy and the Soviet Union

FRED WARNER NEAL

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FRED WARNER NEAL

Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions
Santa Barbara, California

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

With a background of experience as a journalist, diplomat, and educator, Fred Warner Neal has been interested in the problems of American-Soviet relations for many years. He has earned a reputation as an expert on Eastern Europe, particularly for his knowledge of the development of Titoism in Yugoslavia.

Mr. Neal was a Washington and foreign correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal* from 1939 to 1943. While on leave from the *Journal* as a Nieman Fellow at Harvard, he began the graduate work in Slavic studies and international relations that led to the doctorate he later received from the University of Michigan. From 1943 to 1945 he served with the U.S. Naval Air Corps, mostly in Russia and Siberia. From 1946 to 1948 he was a consultant on Russian affairs and chief of foreign economic research on Eastern Europe in the U.S. State Department. He presided over this country's first "cultural relations" with the U.S.S.R.—a visit to the United States in 1946 by Russian writers Ilya Ehrenburg, Konstantin Simonov, and General Mikhail Glaktionov, military editor of *Pravda*—and organized the Voice of America broadcasts to the Soviet Union.

Although he is known as a scholar objectively interested in understanding the development of Communist countries, Mr. Neal has been attacked by officials and publications in five Communist nations — Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Russia. His book *Titoism in Action*, is recognized, however, as an authoritative work on both sides of the Iron Curtain. He has contributed articles to foreign and American periodicals and has just completed a book on Eastern Europe for the Twentieth Century Fund.

Now professor of international relations and government at the Claremont Graduate School, Mr. Neal has also served on the faculties of the University of Colorado, University of Michigan, and University of California. He was a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Paris in 1950 and in 1961 was awarded another Fulbright Fellowship for a series of lectures in France.

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Introduction

The purposes of foreign policy—any foreign policy—are to protect and preserve a nation and its institutions and to further its goals. Today, in the case of the United States, this means guaranteeing our survival in a thermonuclear age and at the same time guarding us and our ideals against inroads by communism.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that U.S. policy has been dangerously inadequate on both counts ever since World War II. With the praiseworthy objective of promoting American security, U.S. policy has been devoted primarily to ways and means of “containing” the Soviet Union as well as Communist influence generally. And what has happened? During the past fifteen years the Soviet Union has steadily grown not only in economic and military power but also in world influence, while the area dominated by communism has expanded. At the same time, American policy has become wholly enmeshed in a nuclear arms race which, far from promoting our security, has within it the seeds of war and thus of destruction of our whole civilization.

Never before in the history of mankind has so much been at stake in the relations between two nations as is at stake today in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Never before, and — unless we are both wise and fortunate — perhaps never again.

For the present sorry state of the world, Soviet policy must bear a large share of the blame. The U.S.S.R. has often been disruptive, obstructionist, and uncooperative to the point of paranoia. But it is not enough to condemn Soviet policy. It must be coped with. And a solicitous concern for the very objectives we seek to further makes it necessary to state that the responsibility for today's

dangerous international situation must also be shared in no little degree by American policy. To the extent that our own policy is faulty, to the extent it has misread Soviet capabilities and intentions, to the extent it has failed to take advantage of possibilities for promoting both American security and peace, our duty as Americans is to seek to correct it.

Since the end of the war, there has been no serious, thoroughgoing reevaluation of the basis of American foreign policy. The plea of this paper is that the very life of our nation—to say nothing of many other nations—depends on such a reevaluation, on a dispassionate restudy and rethinking in terms of the realities of the nuclear age. Particularly, this involves a fresh look at the Soviet Union. There has evolved an American image of the Soviet Union that is not only distorted but hardened beyond reason. Noting this, Professor Berman of the Harvard Law School points out that there are accurate, objective analyses of the U.S.S.R. but that “American readers . . . all too often simply reject, subconsciously, those images which conflict with their preconceptions.”¹ At official as well as unofficial levels, American attitudes toward the Communist Colossus have become befogged in a miasma of fear and emotion. It is imperative that they be clarified; not, indeed, with any thought of approval of the Soviet system or of communism generally, but because our continued misunderstanding of the Russians in fact serves the cause of communism rather than of freedom and at the same time fosters policies on both sides that increase the risk of nuclear war and mutual destruction.

Our general policy toward the Soviet Union has been based on two major and unquestioned assumptions: first, the assumption of the constant and inevitable danger of Soviet military aggression; and, second, the assumption of the inevitability of American military superiority. In addition, there has been a third widely held assumption: that the Soviet system, that communism generally, could not succeed because it was evil. The first assumption led to the conclusion that negotiating with the Soviet Union on the basis

1. Harold J. Berman, “The Devil and Soviet Russia,” *The American Scholar*, Vol. XXVII (Spring, 1958), p. 148.

of mutual compromise—which is the only basis for real negotiations—was useless or dangerous. The latter two assumptions led to the conclusion that negotiating was unnecessary and, in addition, possibly morally wrong.

The *Sputniki* and Soviet ICBMs and rockets brought home to us that we had misread Soviet capabilities. There is reason now for serious consideration of the possibility that we have also misread Soviet intentions as far as military aggression is concerned.

The case for reconsideration appears considerably strengthened by the fact that the Western and particularly the American record in judging the Soviet Union hardly warrants a refusal to reexamine our assumptions. We have been wrong on just about every major development in the U.S.S.R. since the Bolshevik revolution. We didn't anticipate the revolution; when it occurred, we didn't think it would succeed; when it was successful, we thought socialism was going to be abandoned; when it wasn't, we thought we wouldn't have to recognize the new Soviet state; when we did, we acted first as if it was like the Western democracies and then as if it was like the Nazis; when the Germans invaded, we thought the Russians could last only six weeks; when they survived the war, we thought they couldn't recover quickly from it; when they recovered quickly, we thought they didn't have the know-how to build missiles, and so on. This record would seem to suggest, at least just a little bit, that perhaps we should not be too positive in other assumptions we have made.

To suggest that the Soviet Union may not be necessarily militarily aggressive is not at all to suggest that the Russians are or are likely to be either lovable or cooperative international partners. Pushed by fear, ignorance, and ideology, which often add up to false views of the world, the Russians are frequently not only churlish but also in intentional conflict with much of what we stand for at home and abroad. Their insistence on this conflict, partly in the hope of fostering communism throughout the world, is a type of aggression, but in and of itself it is not necessarily *military* aggression.

What are the sources of Soviet conduct, and how have we misread them? To answer this it is necessary to understand two things

about the U.S.S.R. First, it is a dual entity: a nation-state, with hopes and fears much like other nation-states, and at the same time it is the center of a world revolutionary movement. These two aspects of the Soviet Union have sometimes been in conflict, and when they have been, invariably Soviet national interest has triumphed over Soviet revolutionary interests. Second, Soviet Communists are impelled by—and limited by—ideological considerations to an extent that often eludes the more pragmatic West. No greater mistake could be made than to assume that the Communists do not believe deeply and sincerely in their basic ideology. Communist tactics are flexible, but the persistent adherence to what might be termed operational theory is unquestionable.

Soviet Ideology

There has been inadequate dispassionate study in the United States of Soviet Marxist theory. Despite much talk about it, there exists a wide misunderstanding about what it actually says. What the Bolsheviks under Lenin did was to take Marxism and adapt it to Russia and the world as they saw it. With certain modifications, this still forms the basis of their belief.²

2. Of books on Soviet Marxist theory there is no end. For original Soviet sources, see V. I. Lenin, *Marx, Engels, Marxism, and Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947, 1950-52; J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1947; see also R. N. Carew Hunt, *The Theory and Practice of Communism*, Macmillan, New York, 1939, esp. pp. 70-83, 150-193; Alvin Z. Rubinstein (ed.), *The Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union*, Random House, New York, 1960, esp. pp. 2-24, 34-46, 312-326; Herbert Marcuse, *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1958, Part I; Frederick L. Schuman, *Russia Since 1917*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1957, pp. 124-130; Mose L. Harvey, "The Basic Tactical and Strategic Concepts of Soviet Expansionism," in C. Grove Haines (ed.), *The Threat of Soviet Imperialism*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1955; Julian Toster, *Political Power in the U.S.S.R. 1917-1947*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1948, pp. 3-7, pp. 28-34; Robert V. Daniels (ed.), *A Documentary History of Communism from Lenin to Mao*, and Alfred G. Meyer, *Communism*, Random House, New York, 1960.

The theory teaches that capitalism will fall of its own internal contradictions and that communism will ultimately pervade the whole world. The victory is seen coming country by country, through the revolutionary efforts of the respective Communist parties, possibly aided and abetted by the U.S.S.R. But the doctrine holds that revolution as such is not exportable, that it must be generated initially from within when what Lenin called the "objective conditions" for revolution are present.

Nowhere in the whole body of Soviet Marxist theory is there the implication that the Soviet Union, for ideological or any other reasons, should itself initiate a war. This does not mean, of course, that there are ideological barriers to the Soviet Union's *ever* initiating a war, that it will not, under any conditions, utilize military force to promote its security, or that the Communists have especial devotion to peace as an ideal. Indeed, in former days, they talked of utilizing a war—started by somebody else—for furthering their goals. What is being said here is only that there is no ideological compulsion to military aggression. Soviet doctrine foresees communism coming to the world through other means than military conquest.

Even this vision of a Communist world, however, does not embrace the goal of domination of the world by the Soviet Union as such. In Soviet theory, world communism has never been equated with a world under the rule of the U.S.S.R. In practice, extension of communism is likely to mean extension of Soviet influence, at least initially, and in some cases—as is true of the Eastern European satellites—Soviet domination. But at the same time the cases of Yugoslavia and China indicate that communism by itself does not necessarily mean Soviet domination.

It is true that at one point Lenin saw armed conflict between communism and capitalism as inevitable and that he talked of using Soviet arms in the struggle. But it is necessary to recall that Lenin expressed these views during the Bolshevik revolution, at a time when the capitalist powers were actually invading Russia and when he naïvely believed that the fall of capitalism generally was right around the corner. Indeed, at that time the Bolsheviks by and large considered the revolution in Russia as important

mainly because they saw it as the beginning of revolution everywhere. On the other hand, the Comintern—the international organization of the various Communist parties once described by Lenin as a “general staff for world revolution”—was formed during the capitalist invasion and initially served primarily as a device to strike at the enemies of the Soviet state by “fifth column” activities behind the lines. The Comintern was a failure in terms of promoting world revolution and quickly degenerated into an arm of Soviet foreign policy.

Warlike quotations from Lenin and others, uttered during the revolutionary period, are still frequently cited—usually out of historical context—in an attempt to show the militarily aggressive nature of the Soviet Union,³ but after the end of the civil war in Russia no such remarks have been made by any responsible Soviet leader.

Not only that, but a series of false quotations attributed to Lenin and his cohorts have wide circulation in the United States, and even books based on them have been written. Many well-meaning citizens use them in all sincerity. Governor Rockefeller, for example, in an address to the New York Republican Club during the 1960 presidential campaign, drew on this body of apocrypha to quote Lenin as saying: “Our immutable aim is, after all, world conquest.” Another often-cited spurious quotation has Dimitry Manuilsky, one-time head of the Comintern, saying that the Communists will lull the capitalist countries with talk of peace and “as soon as their guard is down we shall smash them with our clenched fist.”⁴

By 1921, Lenin had come to see that capitalist stability was a long-run phenomenon, and that it was necessary not only to get on with the building of the Soviet state but also to “coexist” with capitalism. In the meantime, however, the Soviet view of the world came to be based on the concept of the inevitability of capitalist

3. For example, see Merle Fainsod, *How Russia Is Ruled*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1953, p. 285.

4. See Abraham Brumberg, “Apropos of Quotation Mongering,” *The New Republic*, August 29, 1960, pp. 15-16. Mr. Brumberg is executive editor of the State Department’s bi-monthly *Problems of Communism*.

hostility. This concept has remained the pivot of Soviet foreign policy. It is what makes the Russians probably even more suspicious and fearful of us than we are of them. It does no good whatsoever to say or even to "prove" that such Soviet suspicions of us are wrong. They exist. They are imbedded deeply not only in Soviet ideology but also in the Russian past. This is the view they hold. It is ingrained in them. Moreover, they can cite instance after instance which, they feel, confirm their fears. One cannot hope to understand Soviet conduct in any meaningful fashion without consideration of these fears.

Basis of Soviet Fears

First there was the invasion of Russia and Siberia by the United States and other capitalist nations at the time of the Bolshevik revolution. The Russians have never forgotten it. This was followed first by Soviet exclusion from the Versailles Peace Conference, and then by the *cordon sanitaire*, with which Clemenceau hoped to protect the West "from the germs of Bolshevism in the East." The *cordon sanitaire* meant non-recognition of the new Soviet state and establishment on its borders of nations with an anti-Soviet orientation.⁵

Excluded initially from the League of Nations, the Soviet Union perforce opposed the League's scheme of collective security and followed a policy of bilateral negotiations where it could. When the U.S.S.R. signed the Treaty of Rapallo with Germany, Western Europe's answer was the Treaty of Locarno, bringing Germany

5. For a discussion of these matters, see George F. Kennan, *Russia Leaves the War* and *The Decision to Intervene*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N. J., 1956, 1958; William A. Williams, *American-Russian Relations, 1781-1947*, Rinehart and Company, New York, 1952; and Hugh Seton-Watson, *Eastern Europe Between the Wars*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1945, pp. 362-365. See also comments by John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of Peace*, Harcourt, Brace and House, New York, 1920, pp. 288-291.

into the League and, it was hoped, into the West. Apprehensive of rising Nazi power, the Soviet Union joined the League in 1934 (at the urging of France, which was also experiencing uneasiness over the Germans) and accepted a policy of collective security. Almost at this very moment, however, the French and the British were abandoning collective security for bilateral appeasement—of the Italians, of the Japanese, and of the Germans. The Munich conference, which excluded the U.S.S.R. despite its treaty relations with both France and Czechoslovakia, gave the Nazis the green light to move eastward into Czechoslovakia. Rightly or wrongly, the Russians regarded it as an attempt to trap them. When, sidestepping the trap, they signed a treaty with the Nazis, they were denounced by the very people who had made an agreement with the Nazis at Munich. Meanwhile, the Russians were engaged in Far Eastern Siberia against Japanese aggression under circumstances that they felt indicated Western connivance.⁶

Certain it was that subsequent Soviet actions against Poland, against the Baltic States, and against the Finns were ruthless, but it is just as certain that, in the whole context of European plot and counter-plot of the times, these actions were explainable by motives other than simply a desire to commit military aggression. It should also be clear, therefore, that no matter how unpalatable communism may be, it is a misreading of the Soviet Union to equate it with Nazi Germany. In addition to the deep ideological—and other—differences between communism and Nazism, communism can and does exist as a force independent of the Soviet Union, while Nazism existed only for aggrandizement of the German state. Moreover, the Nazi system was based—both theoretically and practically—on *unlimited* military aggression and expansion of the *Reich*. While the Soviet Union certainly enlarged its territory as a result of the pact with Hitler, the essentially defensive nature of its policy stands out. Although Hitler proposed

6. See Frederick L. Schuman, *Soviet Politics at Home and Abroad*, Knopf, New York, 1946, Ch. VIII; Max Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia*, Vols. I, II, Oxford, New York, 1947; Harriet Moore, *Soviet Far Eastern Policy, 1931-1945*, Princeton, 1945; and Williams, *op. cit.*, Chs. VII and VIII.

grandiose plans for carving up the world, the U.S.S.R.'s response demonstrated that its interests were limited by security considerations and, in addition, were primarily centered in Eastern Europe.⁷

Even considering capitalist hostility toward the Soviet Union, however, the Western reaction to the Soviet invasion of Finland—a country, it should be recalled, that had close ties with Nazi Germany and a strong anti-Soviet orientation—was astonishing. Already at war with Germany, despite little fighting, the French and British came within an ace of declaring war on the Soviet Union. The League of Nations, which had suffered less explicable aggressions by Italy, Japan, and Germany, then expelled the U.S.S.R. It was the only member of the League ever to be so treated. One does not have to accept all Soviet interpretations of this or other developments to understand how the Russians could see in them proof that their fears were well based.⁸

The Cold War

Against this background arose the almost wholly fortuitous coalition of the Anglo-American allies and the Soviet Union. At a time when they were fighting for their lives, the Russians were so suspicious that they often inhibited well-meant Western efforts at assistance. That American aid and collaboration continued, and in increasing volume, made a deep impression on Stalin and his Kremlin cohorts. Of course Soviet goals did not change, but there is some evidence that our wholehearted collaboration made inroads on their ideological conviction about the inevitability of

7. See George F. Kennan, *Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1941*, Van Nostrand, Princeton, N. J., 1960, pp. 102-114, and Schuman, *op. cit.*, pp. 370-407. See also Raymond James Sontag and James Stuart Beddie (eds.), *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941*, Didier, New York, 1948, pp. 217-259. For discussion of the Winter War against Finland, see Anatole G. Mazour, *Finland Between East and West*, Van Nostrand, 1956, esp. pp. 84-129.

8. Cf. Schuman, *op. cit.*, p. 388-389.

capitalist hostility.⁹ But not enough. Hardly had the hot war ended when the cold war began. One factor was the optimistic American view of the Soviet Union. Fighting a war in the name of democracy, we suffered an unwarranted assumption that because we had an enemy in common with the U.S.S.R. we also had similar ideas about how the post-war world should be reorganized. In our eyes, of course, the cold war was caused by Soviet actions, of which a good many seemed calculated to offend and frighten the West. In the near-paranoia eyes of the Kremlin, however, the cold war was caused by capitalist hostility. Again, it is by no means necessary to accept this—or any other—Soviet view. What is necessary is to understand that it exists. Let us look for a moment at the immediate post-war period as it seems to have appeared to the Russians.

At each of the war-time conferences, the Russians were importuned to enter the war against Japan, which they agreed to do three months after the war against the Nazis was over. They kept their agreement. Two days beforehand, however, the United States, with no prior consultation, dropped on Japan the atom bomb, the secret of which it had kept from its Soviet allies. The British physicist, P. M. S. Blackett, makes a strong case “that the dropping of the atomic bomb was not so much the last military act of the Second World War, as the first major operation of the cold diplomatic war with Russia. . . .”¹⁰ One does not have to agree with

9. A significant indication was the book by Prof. Evgeni Varga, Stalin's economic adviser. Written in 1945, *before* the onset of the cold war, the book takes the position that the United States did not behave like a typically capitalist country during the war, both because of its “coalition government” representing all classes and because of its policy toward the Soviet Union. When the book actually appeared in 1947, it was vigorously and officially denounced, but Varga did not recant. *Izmeneniia v Ekonomike Kapitalizma v Itoge Vtoroi Mirovoi Voiny (Changes in the Economy of Capitalism in the Period of the Second World War)*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1946. This volume received only slighting attention in the West and its implications for the theory of capitalist hostility have been almost completely ignored. More tangible evidence was that the Russians were more cooperative after the war changed in their favor and Western friendship and aid was less vital to them.

10. P.M.S. Blackett, *Fear, War and the Bomb*, Whittlesey House, New York, 1948, esp. Ch. 10.

Professor Blackett, however, to consider that if the situation had been reversed and if the Russians had developed and dropped an atom bomb without telling us, there would have been serious repercussions in the United States. Moreover, the United States then proposed to keep its monopoly of the atom bomb until such time as Moscow agreed to give up trying to make one and meanwhile submitted to international inspection. While the Baruch Plan may have appeared to Americans as a magnanimous offer to give up its atom bomb monopoly, the Russians considered it a scheme to enforce a "freeze" on their inferiority in atomic power.¹¹

To the Soviet Union, Western fears of Soviet military aggression right after the end of the war must have appeared ridiculous as well as insincere. Although the U.S.S.R. came out of the war with its armies extended into Eastern and Central Europe as well as Far Eastern Asia, it was weak. The destruction wrought by the conflict in both human and material terms was indescribable. The Soviet people, without adequate food, shelter, or clothing, were exhausted physically and psychologically. While it is true that the Soviet army was large numerically, much of it was still unmechanized and intently preoccupied in Germany and Eastern Europe. Its air force was inadequate. Except for a few submarines, it had virtually no navy.

As against this situation, the United States ended the war with its war-making potential not only undamaged but greater than ever before. It is often implied that the American demobilization right after the war substantially lessened our comparative military strength. Nothing could be further from the truth. The American air force controlled the skies. The American navy controlled the seas. American bases, together with those of our British ally, were firmly ensconced around much of the great periphery of the Soviet Union. And the United States, and it alone, possessed the atom bomb.

The Russians felt an understandable pride in their successes in the war and were determined to play a role in the world com-

11. *Ibid.*, Chs. 11-13, and V. M. Molotov, *Problems of Foreign Policy*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1948, esp. pp. 257-316.

mensurate with the price they had paid for victory. This meant a foreign policy that was, from the Kremlin's point of view, essentially defensive, although with a chip-on-shoulder attitude scarcely designed to win friends. On the other hand, it was not clear to the Kremlin just how much friendship was being offered. There had been the atom bomb. Further, during the war-time negotiations hopes had been held out for American assistance for Soviet reconstruction. But once the European war ended, American lend-lease aid stopped. A Soviet request for a large loan somehow "got lost" in the labyrinths of the State Department. Wartime promises regarding matters vital to Moscow—like revision of the Montreux Convention governing the Dardanelles—somehow proved illusory. Had the Soviet Union reacted differently from the way it did, it is possible, of course, that some or even all of these matters would have worked themselves out. But it should be emphasized that the Russians are not a Western European people, and that their reactions—from Ivan the Terrible to Stalin the Terrible and after—have often been considered offensive by many reared in the more gentle and sophisticated culture of the West. Moreover, Soviet policy now for the first time embraced within its defense perimeter territory outside Soviet borders, *i.e.*, Eastern Europe.

Eastern Europe

During the whole period between the wars, the Soviet Union, because of its own preoccupation and weakness, action by the Versailles Powers, and other factors, was virtually excluded from the arena of international politics. If one assumes that all large states have certain "core interests"—areas outside but usually adjacent to their borders which they view as vital to their security—this exclusion was unnatural. The West may have come to accept their *cordon sanitaire* as natural, but the Russians did not. Particularly was this true of Eastern Europe, an area of traditional

Russian concern. To say that this was viewed with disfavor by the Kremlin is to put it lightly, and by the time of Munich, at least, a change in conditions in Eastern Europe became an important goal of Soviet foreign policy. What happened, of course, was that, as a result of pushing back the Nazi armies during the war, Soviet troops occupied most of Eastern Europe and then installed their Communist-dominated regimes subservient to Moscow. Henceforth maintenance of hegemony of some sort became the cardinal point in Soviet foreign policy. Since Eastern Europe was now a Soviet core interest, it was not a subject for negotiation any more than, say, the Panama Canal Zone or the Monroe Doctrine would be considered as subjects for negotiation by the United States.

Yet it was precisely this Soviet domination of Eastern Europe which the West challenged, as early as the fall of 1945, and it was the political conflict over Eastern Europe that constituted the opening gambit of what we came to call the cold war.

The politics of Eastern Europe are complex and far removed from Western tradition. Historically, Eastern Europe is not an area where Western-type political democracy was practiced or understood, except for Czechoslovakia. That Soviet domination was harsh and often cruel and contrary to our moral standards is beyond question. But if the West considered Soviet actions in Eastern Europe as a violation of wartime promises, it must be pointed out that the Russians considered the Western challenge to their position also as a violation of wartime promises. We do not have to accept this position to understand it. A reasonable case can be made, however, for saying that the Russians gave as much as they got at Yalta and that the agreement concluded there in 1945 was so ambiguous and contradictory as to make its fulfillment by both sides virtually impossible.¹² In any event, the

12. Domestic political propaganda in connection with the Yalta agreement has befogged public understanding of the complex situation in Eastern Europe as of the war's end. For a good brief description of the facts, see Robert Lee Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Time*, Harvard, 1956, pp. 248-267. See also John Snell (ed.), *The Meaning of Yalta*, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, La., 1956; Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Eastern European Revolution*, Praeger, New York, 1950, p. 165-166; and Schuman, *op. cit.*, pp. 503-529.

Russians were in Eastern Europe primarily not through any acquiescence on our part but as a result of their military position, and they were determined to remain there. Nothing could have been done to prevent it, short of another war then and there. It is as inaccurate to say that we "gave" Eastern Europe to the Soviet Union as it is to say that the Soviets "destroyed" democracy there. We could not give what we did not have, and the Soviets could not destroy what did not exist.

When Americans talk today about "Soviet aggression," they are likely to have in mind Soviet actions in Eastern Europe. In one sense these actions did constitute a *type* of aggression. But one does not have to approve of what the Russians did to see that it was not *physical, military* aggression, in the sense of one state simply initiating a war against another for the purpose of territorial aggrandizement. This point has been overshadowed by our emotional opposition to the Soviet Union. A case in point is Czechoslovakia.

Time and time again, the Communist *coup d'état* of February, 1948, in Czechoslovakia has been cited as evidence of Soviet military aggression. Yet the facts are that there were no Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia at the time of the Communist take-over. The *coup d'état* was managed by the Czech Communists themselves, who constituted the largest political party and parliamentary group as a result of the free election of 1946. There is no doubt that the U.S.S.R. spurred them on and gave them advice. It is true that local political arrangements begun by the Red Army during its comparatively brief occupation of Slovakia and part of the Czech provinces toward the end of the war helped lay the groundwork for the Communists' success. There were, of course, Soviet troops on the Eastern borders of Czechoslovakia, as there were American troops on the Western borders. But perhaps more important than any of these factors in the success of communism in Czechoslovakia was the traumatic experience of Munich. To many non-Communist Czechs — who may since have changed their minds — affinity with the Soviet Union was simply preferable to affinity with the West. The bitter fruit of pre-war anti-Soviet policies was being reaped. That a nation with

the fine democratic past and democratic possibilities of Czechoslovakia fell to communism is deplorable. But whatever it showed, it did not show evidence of Soviet military aggression.¹³

Stalin's Foreign Policy

The fact is that Stalin's foreign policy was in his view not only defensive but also non-expansive, except for the security zone of Eastern Europe. This policy was, of course, primarily tactical. Having adopted Lenin's view of long-run capitalist stability, Stalin believed firmly that revolutions had little chance for success anywhere unless, as in Eastern Europe, they were installed under Soviet aegis.¹⁴ As a result, Stalin not only did not further Communist activities in many areas but actually opposed them. The reason was not that Stalin was "nice" or "moral," but that he considered them unlikely to succeed and harmful to Soviet interest as he saw it at the time. This is widely misunderstood in the West. For instance, the main assumption of the Truman Doctrine was that the Soviet Union was aiding and abetting if not actually directing a Communist revolution in Greece so as to extend its domination to that country. The facts seem to be that Stalin not only did not aid the Greek Communists but had indicated his

13. See *inter alia* Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-190; H. Gordon Skilling, "The Break-Up of the Czechoslovak Coalition, 1947-8," *The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (August, 1960), pp. 396-412; "The Prague Overturn in 1948," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 1960, pp. 88-114; and Josef Korbel, *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia, 1938-1948*, Princeton, 1959.

14. Czechoslovakia was, to some extent, an exception. Stalin's moral support of the *coup d'état* there appears to be explainable by the strategic location of the country in the Soviet security zone, the already powerful position of the Czech Communists, and fears that Marshall Plan enticements might bring a Western orientation. The Czech Communists, of course, themselves wanted to come to power, regardless of how Moscow felt, and it was they alone who brought it off.

opposition to their revolution. Similarly, the evidence is that he advised Mao Tse-tung against proceeding with the revolution in China and refrained from assisting the Chinese Communists until, as a result of their own efforts, they were successful. And although he tried to dominate Communist Yugoslavia by other means, when the break with Tito came in 1948 Stalin's response was not military intervention but, together with economic sanctions, the ideological punishment of expulsion from the Cominform.¹⁵

Even the three instances where Soviet policy utilized force in one way or another during this early post-war period illustrated the cautious nature of Stalin's policy. These instances involved areas—Iran, Berlin, and Korea—where Soviet and American armed forces confronted each other at the end of the war and where the lines of demarcation were sources of political conflict. In Iran, although the Russians tried to create political conditions in their wartime occupation zone favorable to them, they did withdraw, even if reluctantly, with the job unaccomplished. The Berlin blockade was a maneuver in the cold war game being played by both sides in Germany. However unwarrantedly, Moscow saw it as a parry to our thrust. Stalin was outmaneuvered, but his very backing down illustrated his caution.

The origins of the Korean war are complicated and unclear. The invasion of South Korea by the North Koreans could hardly have taken place without Soviet approval if not Soviet initiative. But to say that this invasion was an act of military aggression does not lessen its defensive overtones. The strategic importance of Korea to the U.S.S.R. is obvious and historic. In Soviet eyes, the Americans had improperly tried to utilize the United Nations to unify Korea on their terms. From Seoul, Syngman Rhee had several times reiterated his intention of achieving Korean unity by force if need be, and it was by no means clear to Moscow, espe-

15. Our best information on these points comes from the Yugoslavs. See especially Vladimir Dedijer, *Tito*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1953, pp. 321-322 ff. See also Fred Warner Neal, "Moral Responsibility for World Leadership," *Western Political Quarterly*, December, 1956, and *Titoism in Action; the Reforms in Yugoslavia*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1958, esp. Chs. I, II, XI; and Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 211 ff.

cially after John Foster Dulles's visit to South Korea just before the outbreak of hostilities, that the United States would not aid and abet this objective. That the Russians, to say nothing of the North Korean Communists—interested as both of them were in preventing this at all costs—felt two could play at the game of forced unity is not altogether surprising. If the Korean war indicated other than a purely defensive policy, it also illustrated again Stalin's willingness to let communism suffer defeat—or at least fall short of victory—rather than involve the Soviet Union itself in war.¹⁶

Although it came after Stalin, mention should be made here of the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 to put down a revolution. This was, certainly, physical military aggression. It was a brutal action, reprehensible in the eyes of most of the non-Communist world. Yet even this action must be distinguished from the type of military aggression that the West apparently fears and that it accuses the U.S.S.R. of being ever ready to commit. The fear in the West is of aggression to *expand* the area of Soviet power. The Soviet aggression in Hungary, on the other hand, was aggression to maintain a position previously achieved and in an area that the Kremlin considers its most important core of interest. To make this distinction in no way condones the Soviet repression in Hungary, but it is a necessary distinction to make if one wishes accurately to assess Soviet intention on the basis of past performance.

None of this is intended to justify Soviet actions. Any "defense" of the Soviet Union is incidental to the main purpose of assessing Soviet policy accurately so as to be able to cope with it better. To characterize Stalin's foreign policy as defensive is by no means to say that it was conciliatory or that it sought to promote good relations with the West. Indeed, often the contrary was true. The defensive character of Soviet policy in this period implied no lessening of Soviet hostility toward capitalism or weakening of Soviet desires for the spread of communism. What is being said here is simply that Soviet policy has not demonstrated a propensity for

16. Cf. Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-53.

military aggression and that the evidence usually cited to justify the contention that the Soviet Union is militarily aggressive is without foundation.

The Failure of American Policy

The real failure of American policy was that it was based on the assumption that there was a constant and overriding danger of Soviet military aggression when in fact there was not. As long as we maintained unquestioned military superiority over the Russians, this assumption did not have to be tested. It could always be said that the Soviet Union refrained from aggression because of our superior military strength. (In fact, this was said at the same time that the U.S.S.R. was accused of not having refrained from aggression.) Thus seemingly secure, we relied more and more on a military posture, exclusive of much else. This would have been bad enough had the United States in fact been able to maintain its military superiority. For one thing, precious years were lost in formulating adequate policies to deal with the realities of the social revolution which gripped—and still grips—much of the post-war world. Unfortunately, while our policies were oriented to defense against a danger that was not there, Soviet power burgeoned at home and Communist influence—like the Monitor in its battle with the Merrimac—sailed on largely uninhibited by our guns.

When, suddenly, our misreading of Soviet capabilities became apparent and we realized that we no longer had military superiority over the Russians, the tragic results of these policies loomed large. We found ourselves in a nuclear arms race that could not be won, while the problem of nuclear weapons control had become incredibly more difficult. At the same time, the political issues that went unresolved while we concentrated on the danger of Soviet military aggression were now thornier than ever and constituted growing irritations capable of triggering a nuclear holocaust.

On some Americans this made an impression. The altered situation was one of the factors, for instance, causing George F. Kennan to abandon the policy of containment he had earlier championed and, indeed, helped to formulate. His Reith lectures over the BBC in the spring of 1958 were devastatingly critical of U.S. policy and especially of our views of the Soviet Union.¹⁷ But American thinking generally and American policy did not change.

The matter of Germany is a good illustration of the problem. Because we were afraid of Soviet military aggression we had promoted German rearmament and integration with the West. There never were—and still have not been—any real negotiations with the Soviet Union on German reunification. It may well be that the Russians never, under any conditions, would have agreed to a plan for unification which we could have accepted. But they made it very clear that the one plan for unification they would not accept was one that permitted a reunified and rearmed Germany to become a part of NATO. Since we constantly insisted that any reunification be of just that kind, we in effect never tested the Soviet willingness to agree to any other kind. In the words of George Kennan, “Until we stop pushing the Kremlin against a closed door, we shall never learn whether it would be prepared to go through an open door.”¹⁸

Meanwhile, our whole European policy has become oriented to West Germany, which is now our most powerful partner. The Bonn government has been pursuing a policy of its own, and it is by no means clear that this policy does not seek to impede rather than promote a meaningful European settlement. Bonn’s attitudes toward East Germany, toward Berlin, and toward the Oder-Neisse Line are cases in point. But the United States has lost the power of initiative so far as Germany is concerned. Even if we did not agree with West Germany on these issues, we could not take an independent stand as long as we feel we “need” West Germany.

17. The lectures were published under the title *Russia, the Atom and the West*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1958. Compare with Kennan’s initial statement of the containment policy, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. XXV (1947), pp. 566-582.

18. *Russia, the Atom and the West*, p. 41.

And that feeling is based on the assumption that a strong NATO is necessary to protect Western Europe against Soviet military aggression. Incidentally, in stressing the urgency of making NATO strong, the 1961 communiqués read much like those of 1951.¹⁹ If NATO strength is really needed to prevent a Soviet attack on Western Europe and such strength has not yet been attained after ten years of effort, one might well ask what the Russians are waiting for.

There is no question that the major issue at stake in our relations with the Russians involves the nuclear arms race. But that is not the only one. In some ways almost as important is the issue of expanding communism and Soviet influence, primarily in the underdeveloped areas. That this is not primarily a military issue makes it, in the long run, little less significant. The underdeveloped parts of the world constitute the bulk of the world's area and population, and it is not too difficult to imagine a future world in which they will wield great power. To some extent this is already apparent in the United Nations.

The collapse of Western European colonial power as a result of the war set off revolutionary currents throughout these underdeveloped areas. The United States was inclined to place the blame on the Soviet Union, especially where neutralist and socialist-oriented regimes resulted. We failed to understand that while communism as a revolutionary force and the Soviet Union as a state may be closely related, they are not the same thing. Our firm assumption of the aggressive and expansive nature of Soviet policy blinded us to the reality that even where the Communists participated, these revolutionary movements were for the most part indigenously originated and motivated mainly by the desire for national independence and internal change. The result was that the United States needlessly dissipated large quantities of its "reservoir of good will," ultimately to the advantage of the Communists, and that still we are more often in a position of appearing to oppose rather than to support the new nations. The

19. So do statements of the respective Secretaries of State involved. About all that is needed is to change the name "Acheson" to "Rusk."

result was also that the United States got itself in a position of backing questionable regimes—questionable not so much because they are sometimes “bad,” by our own standards, as because they tend to lack necessary support from their own peoples. In the case of colonial regimes, it was, again, our assumptions about Soviet military aggression that stood in the way of realistic action. We often felt we could not afford to support anti-colonial movements because this would alienate our allies, whose collaboration we considered necessary to help defend Western Europe against Soviet attack.

Ironically, up until the last days of Stalin, the Soviet Union— isolationist as well as defensive—paid little attention to the underdeveloped areas. The U.S.S.R. all but ignored anti-colonial movements and reacted to “neutrality” with almost as much suspicion and hostility as the United States. This, as we now know well, is no longer the case.

Soviet Policy Takes the Offensive

What happened was that in 1952 Soviet foreign policy, still under Stalin, underwent a great change. It shifted from the defensive to the offensive. At the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Stalin proclaimed an end to the long period of capitalist stability, to the “ebb tide of revolution,” and announced that a “flow tide” had set in. As a result, he called for an abandonment of the essentially defensive policy that had been followed ever since 1921, and particularly since 1945, and the beginning of a foreign policy offensive—an aggressive policy, if you please, although not militarily aggressive.²⁰

The evidence of the changed situation in the world, according to Stalin, was not only the economic and military recovery of the

20. For Stalin's views, see account of 19th Congress in Leo Gruliov (ed.), *Current Soviet Policies*, Praeger, New York, 1953.

Soviet Union, or even the consolidation of communism in Eastern Europe and China, but also revolutionary developments in most of the rest of the world, particularly in the underdeveloped areas.

Nationalism, said Stalin, was now the dominant factor in the world, and this was being ignored by the capitalist states, especially by the United States with its multi-national and supra-national anti-Communist devices. It was, therefore, up to the Communists to exploit this by picking "up the banner of nationalism where it had been dropped by the bourgeoisie." To do this, he said, would both promote Soviet security (by breaking up NATO and other American-led military alliances) and hasten the collapse of capitalism in general. Stalin advised the Communists to return to the concept of the popular front, soft-pedal extremist ideas, collaborate with the Socialists, and fight against colonialism and for revolution. In the general process, Stalin promised, the Soviet Union would help weaken capitalism by economic competition and help win over the underdeveloped areas by economic aid.

Although Stalin conceived his new offensive in non-military terms, he predicted war—not, he said, between capitalism and communism but among the capitalist countries. In making this prediction, Stalin returned to the Marxist theory of war, that war was an "inevitable" concomitant of capitalism.

This Marxist theory of war was always the weak link in another Soviet theory, the theory of peaceful coexistence as conceived by Lenin and maintained by Stalin. Coexistence, in Soviet theory, always had a distinctly illusive and impermanent character. Not only was it conceived as temporary because of the anticipated inevitable fall of capitalism, but it was futile to talk of long-run peace because of the inevitability of war. Given, at the same time, the theory of the inevitability of capitalist hostility, this meant that there was not only the constant danger but indeed the likelihood that capitalist war would also involve the Soviet Union. Under such conditions one might coexist temporarily with the capitalist nations, and even make agreements with them, but neither coexistence nor agreements were likely to be of long-term

duration, and genuinely friendly relations on a basis of trust were, in any case, out of the question. Stalin in 1952 called for "peace tactics" both because he considered this to be popular and thus an aid to the new foreign policy offensive and because he thought such tactics "might prevent a particular war." But it was clear he considered "peace tactics" just that and incapable of preventing war over any long-run period.

Stalin died before there could be much implementation of the new foreign policy offensive. Yet the line he laid down at the 19th Party Congress in 1952 began to be carried out almost at once by his successors. In the meantime, however, there came an extremely important development—perhaps the most important development in mankind's history: the hydrogen bomb. Stalin, because he was either whistling in the dark or ignorant, discounted the importance of the atom bomb even after the Soviet Union acquired it. But soon after his death the Soviet Union—no less than the United States—developed the hydrogen bomb. Not surprisingly, the appearance of this instrument of Armageddon produced some serious rethinking in the Kremlin about the implications of the new policy in relation to the theory of coexistence.

The year 1955 was filled with Soviet expressions of concern about the H-bomb. There was something of a public debate in the U.S.S.R. about whether it was capable of destroying "all civilization," "only capitalism," or "both capitalism and socialism."²¹ The most recent as well as the most explicit statement came in October, 1960, from a Soviet General Staff expert, General Nikolai A. Talensky. In the event of thermonuclear war, General Talensky wrote, "not a single country would escape the ensuing crushing, devastating blows. . . . The world population would be reduced by one half. . . . Moreover, the most active, capable, and civilized portion would be wiped out. One should also remember that the material and technological basis for life would be destroyed." An aggressor could not hope to survive, even in the event of a surprise attack, General Talensky declared. And he concluded that it was "impos-

21. See, for instance, *Pravda*, Jan. 10, March 5, April 11, June 1, and Oct. 9, 1955.

sible now to use weapons for the solution of political tasks as has been the case in the course of thousands of years.”²²

The fact was that the Soviet Communists realized that they were now faced for the first time with something that was unlikely to respond to the dialectic, something that threatened them and all Communist development no matter what they did. They were also in an ideological dilemma. They had clung to the Marxist theory that war was inevitable as long as capitalism existed. Capitalism did exist. Therefore there would be war. But war with H-bombs would, or at least might, destroy everything, themselves included. The theory was thus one of inevitable doom. Not only was it an ideological *cul-de-sac*, but it was hardly a fitting theory for the exponents of the Brave New Proletarian World.

A New Theory of Coexistence

The result of these Soviet considerations was a new theoretical position, proclaimed by Khrushchev at the 20th Party Congress in 1956, which had enormous significance for Soviet policy and, in particular, for American-Soviet relations. What Khrushchev did was to reverse both Stalin and Marx and declare that capitalism no longer meant the inevitability of war. The main reason he gave was that even though capitalism meant the continuing danger of war the “peace-loving, Socialist forces” in the world were now so strong that they had a chance to prevent it. But he was also, it is known, motivated by the dangers of the H-bomb to the Soviet Union. Regardless of his reasons, what mattered was the new ideological position: war was no longer inevitable.²³

22. N. Talensky, “On the Character of Modern Warfare,” *International Affairs*, October, 1960.

23. For Khrushchev’s statement of the new theory, see Leo Grulow (ed.), *Current Soviet Policies II*, Praeger, New York, 1957, esp. pp. 29-63.

This meant above all two things:

First, peaceful coexistence no longer had to be only temporary. The theoretical inhibitions that prevented the Soviet Union from thinking of long-term peaceful relations with capitalist powers had been removed.

Second, it meant a new interpretation of the concept of capitalist hostility. The capitalist powers might continue to think of coexistence as only temporary—that is, as a prelude to a military conflict which they themselves would initiate. But it was no longer out of the question—as it was formerly—for the Soviet Union to pursue policies calculated to make the capitalists change their concept of coexistence as the Soviet leaders had changed theirs. Indeed, since the Soviet's new foreign policy offensive was to be carried forward and might increase international tensions, it was, in fact, imperative for the U.S.S.R. to work out arrangements to make sure that military conflict could be avoided.

The importance of this new Soviet theory cannot be exaggerated. The strength of the Soviet commitment to it was underscored at the 21st Party Congress in 1959, when Khrushchev announced a still further ideological break-through: the approach to communism. Traditional Marxist theory sees the achievement of communism in three stages following seizure of power—first, the “dictatorship of the proletariat”; second, “socialism,” with political equality under the proletarian state and citizens rewarded in accordance with their work; and, finally, “communism” itself, with the state “withering away,” economic plenty, and citizens rewarded according not to their work but to their needs. Stalin had proclaimed the socialist stage in the Soviet Union in 1936. The Communist stage—a sort of “pie in the sky by-and-by”—was always in the unforeseeable future. Furthermore, visions of communism had always seen it only on a world-wide basis.

In 1959, however, Khrushchev declared that the U.S.S.R.—alone—was on the verge of entering the Communist stage: a sort of “communism in one country.” Communist economic plenty, he indicated, would be no consumer's cornucopia in the American fashion but simply satisfaction of essential consumer needs by

Soviet standards.²⁴ To prove that he really meant it, Khrushchev literally inundated the Soviet Union with propaganda commitments to overtake U.S. production in certain key items.

Such promises of limited economic plenty in the U.S.S.R.—whether American production is actually equalled by 1970 or not—is within the realm of possibility, but only on one condition. The condition is that substantially fewer resources than at present be devoted to military purposes.²⁵ But given the present state of the world, with hostile capitalist countries and H-bombs seen lurking behind every launching pad, a major curtailment of resources devoted to defense cannot be risked unless there is at least some measure of disarmament. Deterrence is no less important from the Soviet point of view than from ours. Disarmament clearly is not possible without agreement with capitalist countries. And meaningful agreements with capitalist countries are not possible unless Soviet policy is couched in terms of indefinite peaceful coexistence. In the Soviet view capitalism will, of course, fall anyway sooner or later, and in the meantime the U.S.S.R. can work in a non-military way to hasten its demise.

Thus there emerged a new concept of coexistence. What was, in one sense, only a temporary tactic for Lenin and Stalin has become for Khrushchev a basic, strategic doctrine, necessary in the interest of the Soviet Union both as a state and as the center of a world revolutionary movement.

All this does not necessarily mean that *all* Soviet proposals for disarmament are meaningful and not propaganda. The Kremlin is still playing the game initiated by Stalin of trying to break down American military alliances and win support of the uncommitted countries. But it does indicate that all Soviet proposals for disarmament are not necessarily propaganda and that there is little doubt

24. See *Pravda*, Jan. 28, 1959. Translation of Khrushchev's declaration is given in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XI, nos. 2 and 3.

25. For estimates of possible increases in Soviet consumer goods resulting from disarmament, see P. Mstislavsky, *New Times*, No. 1 (January, 1960), pp. 10-12. See also Oleg Hoeffding, "Substance and Shadow in the Soviet Seven Year Plan," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. XXXVII, no. 3 (April, 1959), pp. 399-400.

about the earnestness and sincerity of the Soviet desire to limit and control arms production and to eliminate thermonuclear weapons and the deadly dangers for everybody that their existence creates.

The Limits of Soviet Compromise

Although this attitude presumably signifies a wider area of possible compromise on the part of the U.S.S.R., there are still at least three irreducible minima in Soviet policy where to the Soviets compromise is out of the question, and it is important for Americans to understand them.

First, the new Soviet position means no abandonment of Soviet efforts to further communism by non-military means, especially in the underdeveloped areas. As long as the Soviet Union remains the center of the Communist movement, there is no possibility that it will abandon its posture of ideological opposition to capitalism or fail to work for communism.

Walter Lippmann has understood Khrushchev to say that the new version of coexistence means that while the Soviet Union may work to bring about communism in underdeveloped areas, the West can do nothing about it.²⁶ In one way this is correct. Western acceptance of the Soviet view of coexistence would mean no military intervention in the event of revolution. But similarly it means no Soviet military intervention. And, meanwhile, there is nothing in the concept to indicate that the West cannot work against the development of communism by other means. Furthermore, there is at least implied the possibility of Soviet abstention in certain areas of Western core interest, provided, of course, that the West abstains from interference in areas of Soviet core interest. Particularly, of course, the new Soviet position does not mean no intervention in cases where the United States has already intervened.

26. Walter Lippmann, *The Communist World and Ours*, Little, Brown, Boston, 1959, pp. 12-13.

This was roughly the situation in Laos where in 1960 the neutralist government of Prince Souvanna Phouma was overthrown by forces actively assisted by the United States.²⁷ Soviet assistance to Communist and other forces opposed to the successor government was thus a response to American initiative. Of course, as in the case of Laos, where the government we helped overthrow was not a Communist government, "communism" in any narrow sense is by no means always the issue. In Laos the Communists were actively involved in the opposition to the pro-Western government and presumably even dominated it. As far as is known, however, Soviet aid was not accompanied by Soviet personnel, and it is by no means certain that the Russians were able to dictate to the rebel forces regarding details of a cease fire, etc. Relations between Soviet policy and Chinese policy in Laos may have been a factor, but they are not clear. It is, in fact, entirely possible that Soviet intervention in Laos was a restraining rather than an aggravating influence.

Secondly, the Soviet Union will under no conditions make any agreements or take any steps deleterious to its hegemony in Eastern Europe or cease to object violently to any indication of interference in this area. On perhaps no other single point is the U.S.S.R. as sensitive. As long as the Soviet Union remains a nation-state, it will see Eastern Europe as a core interest, and core interests are, by definition, non-negotiable. The earnestness of Moscow's intentions here was indicated by Soviet willingness to jeopardize much of the propagandist value of its new foreign policy approach by putting down the Hungarian revolution with force. Despite the importance placed on appearing as peaceful and wooing the Social Democratic parties, the Yugoslavs, and the other neutral nations, there was little hesitation in choosing between these objectives and crushing potentially hostile forces in a key Eastern European nation.

Finally, the Soviet Union will not give up or jeopardize its dictatorship at home and permit the degree of freedom enjoyed in

27. The *New York Times* chronicled the American military build-up in Laos, but this was largely forgotten in the 1961 crisis. See issue of the *Times* for Jan. 9, 1961, p. 13, for a good report on U.S. intervention.

many places in the West. This point has particular relevance in connection with nuclear weapon agreements. The U.S.S.R. tends to look askance at proposals for complete and unfettered inspection by foreigners. There are two main reasons for this. First, the Kremlin certainly fears that unlimited inspection might endanger its closed system and expose examples of both backwardness and political repression which it prefers to keep hidden. Second, inspection runs hard against their ingrained feeling of hostility toward capitalism which, despite possible new interpretations, continues to color Moscow's policies. Regardless of what the West does, the first impediment is not likely to be removed for some time. On the other hand, the Russians have indicated that a Western commitment to total disarmament would overcome the second impediment, and that in that case the first one would not be a barrier either.²⁸ The point is that the Soviet Union thinks it has valid reasons for a reluctance to accept unlimited inspection. It is important to note that these reasons have nothing to do with any intention to violate an official testing or disarmament agreement.²⁹ This does not mean that any given Soviet position on inspection—for instance, the *troika* or unanimous agreement idea—might not be changed. But it does suggest that there is no necessary contradiction between the U.S.S.R.'s professed desire for disarmament agreements and its reticence about inspection.

Regardless of what we may think about these Soviet irreducibles, almost certainly they *are* irreducibles and will remain so for the foreseeable future. It is difficult to see how anything the West can do could alter them. Is not the West faced, therefore, with the choice between accepting these conditions and rejecting entirely the new Soviet view of coexistence?

28. See Khrushchev statement in *New York Times*, Sept. 27, 1960, p. 1, and disarmament proposal to Geneva conference by Semyon Tsarapkin, the Soviet delegate, *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1961, p. 1.

29. John Scott, assistant to the publisher of *Time*, a man of long experience and considerable expertise in Soviet affairs, is among those holding the same opinion. See his editorial in the Ridgefield, Conn., *Press*, March 17, 1960.

The U.S. Response to Coexistence

We now come to the situation in the spring of 1960. There is little doubt that Khrushchev saw in the post-Dulles American foreign policy and in his relations with President Eisenhower indications that the United States was ready to accept his revised coexistence concept at its face value. Such encouragement was all the more important to him as there was opposition to the revision from the Chinese Communists and, apparently, from some of his colleagues in the Kremlin. The Chinese, in particular, charged on the very eve of the U-2 incident last spring that there was “no change at all in substance in U.S. imperialist policy, the policy carried out by the U.S. government and by President Eisenhower personally.”³⁰

At this point came the U-2 affair. It could only be interpreted by Khrushchev to mean that his whole new policy was being rejected out of hand by the United States and in a way seemingly almost calculated to give ammunition to his critics.

It still seems incredible that—whether as a result of misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance—the May U-2 flight was permitted on the eve of a Summit meeting at which, presumably, we were going to discuss possible settlements with the Soviet Union. But regardless of the unfortunate timing, the ever-suspicious Russians were bound to read in it aggressive rather than defensive intent. The chief American explanation for the U-2 flights is that they were “necessary” to give us information for guarding against surprise attack. It is true that all kinds of intelligence can be useful in formulation of policy. Given the Soviet view of American policy, however, it is easy to see how information of the kind apparently sought by the U-2 would be considered primarily the sort needed not to prevent but to initiate a surprise attack. This so-called “strike first” offensive policy must be based on accurate knowledge of missile installations in the target country so as to

30. The official organ of the Chinese Communist Party is quoted by Harrison Salisbury in “Haunting Enigma of Red China,” *New York Times Magazine*, June 12, 1960, p. 74.

be sure to prevent, or at least to minimize, subsequent retaliation. On the other hand, the proclaimed American preventive policy of deterrence, or “strike second,” has been based less on pin-pointing military targets than on the ability to deliver “massive retaliation” in the form of a nuclear broadside that would devastate the entire area of the nation that had attacked us first.

It does no good to tell the Russians that American policy does not contemplate any surprise attack on them. The important point is not that it is so but that they understand it. Their doubts about the sincerity of our fears of a surprise attack on us must have been enhanced, furthermore, by publication, almost at the very time the U-2 was shot down, of a U.S. Army analysis of Soviet military policy which found that the U.S.S.R. not only *does not have* but is *not undertaking to build* the force needed to carry out a surprise attack on the United States.³¹

Furthermore, all this took place in the context of a situation that Moscow had already interpreted as a hardening of U.S. policy. The Pentagon, the Atomic Energy Commission, and such high administration personages as Under Secretary of State Dillon had made it clear they were opposed to any compromises. Whether or not President Eisenhower had indicated to Khrushchev a willingness to discuss our position in Berlin, as the Summit meeting neared we appeared to be sharply restricting the areas on which we would negotiate, not only in regard to Berlin but also in regard to disarmament. It must be remembered, further, that there had also been a U-2 flight clear across the Soviet Union on April 9, 1960. (It is true that U-2 flights go back several years, but it is by no means clear that prior to the Spring of 1960 they were not simply probing flights in the border areas rather than deep into Soviet territory.) In addition, the day after the U-2 was shot down, the U.S. House of Representatives adopted without opposition a resolution urging – as Congress had urged before – diplomatic action against the Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe and calling for “liberation” even of parts of the U.S.S.R.³²

31. *New York Times*, May 5, 1960, p. 1.

32. *New York Times*, May 3, 1960, p. 1.

However, even more important than the U-2 flight itself was the official American attitude toward it. One can only speculate as to whether Khrushchev had earlier intended to attend the Summit meeting in a conciliatory spirit. It is possible that, given what seemed to be a "firmer" American stance, he did not really want the meeting. But the indication that the flights would continue and the virtual assertion of the Secretary of State, backed by the President, that we had a right and a duty to continue them were guaranteed to produce a violent explosion.³³ Khrushchev's violence in Paris was, of course, typically Russian, which is to say without much finesse; although it should be remembered that he did give Mr. Eisenhower an opportunity to disavow personal responsibility for the U-2 flights,³⁴ an opportunity the President did not accept. In any event, the American position as initially set forth was clearly indefensible by any standards.

The tragedy is, of course, that the American government really did not mean it, at least in the crude and extreme form in which the policy was enunciated right after the U-2 was shot down. This was indicated by the President's announcement that the U-2 flights had been discontinued. But by then it was too late. Moreover, it is not clear how much, basically, the American attitude toward the affair did change. Despite discontinuance of the flights, our reaction amounted more or less to one of indignation that the Russians were indignant. There still does not seem to be appreciation of the distinction between the ordinary spying in which all nations indulge—that is, espionage, such as that for which the Soviet agent, Colonel Abel, was convicted some time ago—and the sending of an airplane deep into the heart of a foreign country in an age of nuclear weapons and fears of surprise attack on both sides.

On top of the U-2 came the RB-47. There is no reason to doubt the American explanation that the RB-47, a bomber, was actually outside Soviet territorial waters. But one might well question what an American bomber was doing even fifty miles away from

33. *New York Times*, May 10, May 12, 1960, p. 1.

34. *New York Times*, May 8, 1960, p. 1.

Soviet jurisdiction, and especially at that time. If we wanted to impress the Russians with our peaceful intentions, was this the way to do it, so soon after the U-2? Would the American reaction have been much different had a Soviet bomber appeared fifty miles off the Keys than it would have if it were over Florida itself?

If all this did not mean that military and other forces that oppose settlements with the Soviet Union were in control of administration policy, it at least indicated the tragic inability of President Eisenhower to control his administration. If there were any doubts about this, they should have been dispelled by the reckless ordering of a world-wide alert of U.S. military forces on the very eve of the Summit conference.

The Soviet Reaction to U-2 and RB-47

The whole development produced a strong Soviet reaction and some reorientation and stiffening of Soviet policy. It was all very well to say, as did Mr. Lodge, the chief foreign policy spokesman for the administration during the 1960 Presidential campaign, that the Russians were simply using the U-2 and related incidents as an excuse for their new attitude. But the fact is that the U-2 and other incidents did occur and that there was ample reason for Moscow to regard them as sufficiently serious for a shift of policy. The change was immediately evident when Khrushchev appeared at the United Nations General Assembly in the fall of 1960. The best explanation for Khrushchev's unorthodox conduct there is that he was simply asserting the Soviet place in the sun, and announcing—almost as a dare—a stronger stand on colonialism. His violent attack on UN-Western policy in Africa ended possibilities of compromise on the Congo. His demand for a *troika* East-West-Neutralist UN executive bespoke a harder attitude in

regard to UN affairs, and this carried over later when the same institutional arrangement was insisted on for test ban inspection. On the other hand, Soviet disarmament negotiators continued to show moderation in their proposals, and Khrushchev was restrained in reiterating his demands for a German peace treaty.

What is more important, however, is that neither then nor later does there seem to have been any change in the new concept of coexistence. There is no doubt that Chinese pressure for revision increased, but the Kremlin maintained its position. If anything, Soviet polemics about the possibility of averting war and the necessity of disarmament became more emphatic.³⁵ When the leaders of eighty-one Communist Parties met in Moscow in November, 1960, the statement they adopted had harsh words about imperialist aggressiveness, a vigorous denunciation of U.S. policy, and a strong reaffirmation of the struggle between communism and capitalism. But the statement emphatically endorsed Khrushchev's position on war and coexistence and declared: "The problem of war and peace is the most burning problem of our time."³⁶ The draft Program of the Soviet Communist Party prepared for the 22nd Congress in October, 1961, was couched in the same terms.

The possibility for agreement thus remained, but it seemed increasingly clear that if the impasse resulting from the 1960 events were to be broken there had to be American initiative in terms of proposals not obviously unacceptable to minimum Soviet requirements. To say this is by no means to suggest that the United States should "give in" to the Russians on all or even on most issues. The point is that it is only realism to see that there are *some* areas where they are extremely unlikely to be moved just as there are *some* areas where we are extremely unlikely to be moved. The Soviet irreducible minima mentioned above are irreducible not only because of the nature of the U.S.S.R. and its

35. See as examples discussions published during the summer of 1960, *Trud*, July 7, August 30; *Kommunist*, No. 10 (July), esp. p. 35; *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, Aug. 17; *Pravda*, Aug. 12, Aug. 26, Sept. 15; and *Izvestia*, Aug. 14, Aug. 18.

36. Text of the statement published in *New York Times*, Dec. 7, 1960, pp. 14-17.

policies but also because they are areas where the West cannot force the Russians. Were these areas vital to our security, there would be, of course, no point in negotiating at all. But it is by no means clear that this is the case.

Areas of Negotiation

What are possible areas of negotiation with the Russians? First and foremost there are those concerning thermonuclear weapons, both in regard to a test ban agreement and in regard to disarmament. Negotiations on these matters, which have seemed interminable and have often been acrimonious, survived the U-2 atmosphere. Both sides have at times compromised, at times stiffened positions. In neither of the cases has the Soviet Union taken intransigent positions or indicated an unwillingness to negotiate seriously.³⁷ If the United States has doubts that the U.S.S.R. really desires agreements, the same doubts exist in the U.S.S.R. about the United States.

The fate of the test ban negotiations is illustrative. In April, 1959, the Russians made a major concession when they withdrew their earlier demand for limited on-site inspections subject to a veto and proposed that a quota be set for the number of such inspections but that such inspections themselves be unrestricted and veto-free. While the number of inspections remained in dispute, leading American scientists privy to the negotiations felt there were no real barriers to agreement. At that time, however, the United States drew back, raising the question of difficulties in detecting underground inspections and asking that the ban not

37. For discussions of these negotiations, see Joseph Noguee, "The Diplomacy of Disarmament," *International Conciliation*, No. 526 (Jan. 1960), and "Disarmament and Foreign Policy," *Hearings*, Disarmament Subcommittee of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, January-March, 1959, especially testimony of Dr. Hans Bethe (February 2) and James J. Wadsworth (March 25). See also Anthony Nutting, *Disarmament, An Outline of Negotiations*, London, 1959.

apply to certain types of underground and atmospheric tests. Although there was no evidence to support them, American officials began to voice suspicions that the Soviet Union was carrying on secret underground tests, and the Atomic Energy Commission called for resumption of tests by the United States.³⁸ The new administration in Washington then seemed ready to compromise on the number of inspections. At this point, in the spring of 1961, it was the Soviet turn to pull back. Ambassador Tsarapkin now demanded a three-man secretariat comprised of representatives of the U.S. and Soviet blocs and the neutralists—the *troika* idea—and unanimity before inspection could be undertaken. This proposal was clearly unacceptable to the West.

Any doubts that Moscow had lost interest in a test ban were dispelled by Khrushchev's announcement that nuclear testing was to be resumed in the atmosphere above Siberia. There is much evidence that Washington was ready to begin tests on its own—underground—and one commentator indicated that if the Russians had held off as much as a week or two, the Americans would have been the first to break the unofficial agreement against testing. This may have been a factor in the Soviet decision. In any event, soon after the Russians began exploding nuclear devices in the atmosphere, the Americans followed suit underground.

The Soviet resumption of testing was a dangerous act, whether it was an irrational one or not. It subjected large areas of the earth to more fallout. It apparently blasted any hopes of a test ban agreement. And it increased international tensions. Doubtless it reflected the general stiffening of Soviet policy—possibly in connection with the Berlin crisis—and it may have involved pressure from the Chinese. But there were also military factors. Since the U.S.S.R. had conducted many fewer tests than the United States, presumably it was behind in weapon development. That the decision was taken — despite international political consequences— to try to catch up indicates its relation to the disarmament negotiations. Aside from the fallout question, the real significance of

38. *New York Times*, July 31, 1961, p. 1.

a test ban agreement would be as a step toward an agreement on control or elimination of thermonuclear weapons. The Soviet attitude on testing seems to indicate a belief that the United States is not prepared to make an agreement on disarmament.

The disarmament negotiations have revealed deeper and more serious difficulties than were apparent in the test ban talks. Here, despite frequent official and press comment, the major problem is more basic than inspection. As far as inspection goes, the Soviet Union has proposed detailed plans for virtually unrestricted, veto-free inspection. But they have tied it to an agreement that accepts the idea of complete or "total" disarmament, and on this point the Americans have repeatedly demurred. We have insisted on working out an inspection system before proceeding to discuss disarmament. There has not been agreement on the inspection mechanism either, but Khrushchev has repeatedly declared that if the West will accept the principle of total disarmament he, in turn, will accept "any kind of inspection."³⁹ While there may be valid reasons for holding back on total, across-the-board disarmament at this time, we have not agreed either to the *idea* of "total" thermonuclear disarmament in advance of details on an inspection system. On the other hand, the Soviet position has never rejected partial disarmament. If the West would not accept total disarmament, Khrushchev has declared, "the Soviet government is ready to come to agreement with other states on appropriate partial steps of disarmament and strengthening of security."⁴⁰

Perhaps Khrushchev does not really mean his sweeping pledge about accepting "any kind of inspection," but, of course, we shall never know if we do not take him up on it. That we have not, despite the advantages it might offer in terms of propaganda

39. See *New York Times*, Sept. 27, 1960, p. 1; *Pravda*, Jan. 18 and May 10, 1961. For statement of this position to the Geneva disarmament conference by Soviet Delegate Tsarapkin, see *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1961, p. 1.

40. *Pravda*, cited in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. X, no. 49 (January 14, 1959).

value if nothing else, casts doubts on how seriously the United States really desires an agreement. These doubts cannot be completely dispelled with ease because, given overall American policy, our position is ambiguous. We want agreements in principle but only if they can be had "without risk." Quite honestly fearing Soviet aggression, the major American policy-makers disagree with President Eisenhower's chief negotiator, James J. Wadsworth, who expressed his belief that "the Russian government has every intention of living up to any agreement they may make from the standpoint of nuclear tests or the larger area of disarmament."⁴¹ These officials also deny George Kennan's point that "the best security we can have against violation will not be the inspection provisions themselves . . . but the absence of incentive to violation."⁴² The logic of their position, given the fact that a really "foolproof" inspection system is technically impossible, is that *any* disarmament agreement would jeopardize our security. Instead of disarmament, the American preference is for "arms control." This would, hopefully, minimize the risk of war and at the same time constitute an "enlargement of the scope of our military strategy."⁴³ Such a concept is unacceptable to Moscow and to many others who feel that anything short of complete elimination of at least all thermonuclear weapons would not deal with the main problem.

(This reluctance to accept disarmament as a goal may also reflect fear that without arms the United States cannot halt development of communism arising internally in backward countries. Such fear is both unnecessary and unbecoming to citizens of a country with the ideas and capabilities of the United States. The resulting rejection of disarmament as a goal is also irrational, because armament in itself cannot halt development of communism. This is true not only of thermonuclear weapons but also of "conventional" armament. Development of communism can be

41. Mr. Wadsworth's opinion was quoted in the *New York Times*, Jan. 18, 1961, p. 6.

42. See *Hearings*, Disarmament Subcommittee of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 86th Congress, 1st session, Part 2, Feb. 4, 1959, pp. 205-207.

43. Thomas C. Schelling and Morton H. Halperin, *Strategy and Arms Control*, Twentieth Century Fund, New York, 1961, p. 1.

halted only by providing a better alternative. The apparent American emphasis on "guerrilla" warfare is only another indication of our failure to grasp the reality of the social revolutionary impetus that grips the underdeveloped areas.)

Nothing said here should be construed as advocating that the United States give up its military strength while the Russians keep theirs. But one does not have to advocate unilateral disarmament, or anything like it, to see that there are any number of steps we could take without jeopardizing our security. Among them, for example, is a plan for cautious phased or graduated unilateral curtailment of our military posture, with very small steps taken in the beginning, with invitations to the Russians to follow suit, and with the understanding that the procedure can be halted at any point. Imagination and more imagination, in both word and deed, is what is needed to break the deadlock. Nothing can be done, however, until it is realized we are not in a chess game but in a deadly maze from which we must break out or perish.

Furthermore, agreement on nuclear weapons is inextricably tied up with political settlements, and political settlements are unlikely without an easing of tension. Here American policy, again based on the assumption of Soviet military aggression, has shown no indication of moves toward settlement of issues making for conflict. It is apparent not only that we are unwilling to discuss disengagement in any form but also that we are proceeding with a policy of arming our NATO allies with nuclear weapons. It is not at all clear that this policy does not apply also to Western Germany. There is good reason to fear that the results of such a policy, regardless of its aims, could make any real agreement on either disengagement or disarmament practically impossible. Furthermore, apparently, there seems to be no thinking about the future of our bases which more or less encircle the Soviet Union. There are, after all, only two ways to settle international conflicts—force and mutual compromise. While the United States does not want to use force, it is not always clear that it wants to consider mutual compromise.

There is, indeed, grave reason to believe that the American position on these matters is unrealistic, inflexible, and unimaginative.

tive. Basically, our position throughout continues to be conditioned by our assumption of the constant danger of Soviet military aggression. Sometimes this is modified by defining Soviet policy as being committed to use "all possible means" for the expansion of communism and extension of its power.⁴⁴ As indicated above, this thinking is based on distorted evidence or no evidence at all and ignores the strong reasons for considering that the Soviet theory of coexistence is predicated not on making war but on avoiding it.

Furthermore, the concept of agreements totally without risk has no validity. As George Kennan put it, ". . . cultivation of the ideal military posture will always be in conflict with any serious effort to ease international political tensions." And a policy "not prepared to make sacrifices and to accept risks in the military field should not lay claim to any serious desire to see world problems settled by any means short of war."⁴⁵ The risks, in any case, are comparative, and the implication of American policy is that we are in greater danger from Soviet aggression than from a continuation of the thermonuclear arms race. Unfortunately, the evidence is to the contrary.

The Impasse of Berlin

Berlin is a good example of the difficulties that arise both from past American policies and from our refusal to think in terms of possible compromise on points of dispute between us and the Russians. We are perfectly right in refusing to be "pushed out" of Berlin. Having made commitments—loudly and often—to the West Berliners, our concern to "save them from communism" is under-

44. As an example, see the generally moderate study prepared by a Columbia-Harvard research group for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *United States Foreign Policy: U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe*, 86th Congress, 2nd session, No. 11 (February 14, 1960).

45. George F. Kennan, "Disengagement Revisited," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. XXXVIII, no. 3 (April, 1959), p. 199.

standable. But it is no policy at all simply to reiterate that we will “stand firm,” and it is only sophistry to assert that since the United States is demanding no change in the status of Berlin the issue arises only because of Soviet aggression and trouble-making. The situation in Berlin is abnormal and impermanent.⁴⁶ It is nonsense to talk about the Berlin situation as a part of a *status quo* that must be maintained. One does not have to agree with Soviet proposals to see that the Russian concern over the presence of foreign troops stationed far inside one of their satellite states which the West refuses to recognize is entirely natural. Furthermore, our position in Berlin is highly untenable militarily, diplomatically, and legally. Under these conditions the long-continued failure of the West even to discuss possible compromises on the Berlin issue was irresponsible.

To see the Berlin question in some perspective, it is necessary to consider several factors in connection with the whole question of Germany. First, the *raison d'être* for our presence in Berlin has changed not only once but twice. Originally, Berlin, although more than a hundred miles inside the Soviet zone, was set apart on the grounds that it would be again the capital of a unified Germany. Then disputes over quadripartite administration led to a more formal and legal division of Germany. Certainly responsibility for this dispute must be shared by both the United States and the Soviet Union. If there was ever any agreement that was mutually violated, it was the Potsdam agreement on Germany. We felt we were reacting to Soviet policy, but it was, after all, the United States that took the initiative in formalizing the split when we presided over the combination of the Western zones and then established them as a West German state. The Soviet Union, in establishing an East German state, was merely following suit.

Subsequent American policy has emphasized what Secretary of State Rusk, in the summer of 1961, called the “many contradictions and historical fallacies in the present position of the Soviet

46. Both the U.S. and West German governments obviously so regard it, the latter despite its insistence that no negotiated compromise is possible. See positions quoted by Walter Lippmann, “What’s Not Said about Berlin,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 2, 1961, section C, p. 5.

leaders,"⁴⁷ but has ignored the contradictions and historical fallacies in our own position. The Western assumption that we had a right to create "our" German state but that the Soviet Union did not have a right to create "theirs" is so untenable that we do not even assert it in this manner, let alone try to justify it. Furthermore, this division of Germany completely altered if it did not destroy the practical as well as the legal basis for Berlin's separate status and for Western presence there.

Under the conditions of two German states, maintenance of the Western position in Berlin became a maneuver in a diplomatic gambit ostensibly aimed at negotiating reunification. At the very least, ensuing American policies were just as responsible as Soviet policies for the fact that there never were real negotiations on reunification. One can agree even with the American decisions to rearm West Germany and to insist that a reunified Germany be included in NATO and still see the logic of the Soviet refusal to agree. East Germany, although tightly under the Soviet thumb from the beginning, was not a full Soviet satellite—in the sense of the Eastern European countries—until sometime after the mid-1950's. Before that time, whether in anticipation of an acceptable reunification or not, the Russians had not insisted on a complete socialization of East Germany in terms of thoroughgoing nationalization, collectivization, etc. By 1958, however, it seemed clear that any likelihood of reunification had disappeared. East Germany had become as fully integrated into the Soviet Bloc as West Germany had become integrated into the Western Bloc. We do not know whether the Russians were ever really interested in reunification, but it is extremely doubtful if American policy was, especially after the creation of NATO. In addition, there was another factor: West Germany itself. Rearmed and economically powerful, the West Germans made it clear in 1958 that they would not permit reunification on the only condition that reunification was then possible—military disengagement in Central Europe, compromises between East and West German systems, and definite exclusion from both blocs.

47. See text of Secretary Rusk's statement, *New York Times*, June 23, 1961, p. 2.

With reunification no longer possible, the rationale of our presence in Berlin clearly could no longer be that it was a maneuver concerned with reunification. It was at this point that the Russians began to press their proposals for a change in the Berlin situation. This Soviet decision must also be considered in connection with other factors. The Western powers refused to recognize the East German republic as well as the Oder-Neisse frontier with Poland. The West German republic, its rearmament growing apace with its economic development, likewise refuses to accept the Oder-Neisse line and has been ostentatiously asserting a claim to West Berlin.

While it is doubtless true that the comparative well-being of West Berlin constitutes an embarrassment to the Communists, this alone does not explain the Soviet eagerness for a change. And in addition to everything else, there is the stake of the East German Communist leaders themselves. Despite their undoubted subservience to Moscow, now that they have a full-fledged state to run they have a personal stake in the matter of Berlin in the same way that leaders of other Communist countries have a personal stake in developments within their own boundaries.

Given this situation, the Berlin impasse is a source of instability—and therefore of danger—for the whole of Central Europe. There is, therefore, nothing unnatural about the Russians' view that such instability is a danger to their whole position generally. Khrushchev has not made pre-emptory demands. For at least three years he has continually advised the Western powers of the interest the Soviet Union attaches to such a change and has agreed to negotiate on counter-proposals.

The *status quo* in Berlin is by no means vital to our interests. That it cannot be preserved in any event was illustrated by the comparative ease with which it was altered when the Russians and the East Germans more or less walled off East Berlin. Unless we are prepared to risk war in a vain attempt to preserve something which does not exist and where no vital U.S. interest is involved, some compromise is essential. Several possibilities suggest themselves. Demilitarization with the present division is one. Joint East-West German condominium is another. United Nations

supervision is a third, and there are others. Even Senator Mansfield's unlikely suggestion of a "free city" guaranteed by both the Soviet Union and the United States is at least a proposal. Nor has the question of whether a new Berlin set-up would involve both East and West Berlin or only West Berlin been ruled out as something for negotiation.

Given the unlikelihood of reunification, the hard, cold realities of international politics point to Berlin's ultimately becoming the capital of the country in which it is located—East Germany—but we are not being asked to consider that. Compromises are open to us. To consider them is not appeasement. "To search for an alternative by which war could be averted, without sacrificing the honor or the treaty obligations of the United States," wrote Arthur Krock, apropos of Berlin, "is the high duty of statesmanship."⁴⁸ In one sense, what Khrushchev has been doing is pointing out that the U.S.S.R. considers its interests jeopardized by the present arrangement and inviting us to join in a search for an alternative. It may be that we cannot find one. But the question of Berlin is in many ways like that of German reunification earlier. We shall never know whether the Russians would accept some compromise acceptable to us until we agree to discuss one.

U.S. Bases and Eastern Europe

In considering possibilities for settling the sorest points at issue between the United States and the Soviet Union, the general international political climate must be considered. This climate is significantly affected by two highly important factors: the constantly recurring matter of Eastern Europe and the question of American bases around the Soviet Union.

48. Arthur Krock, "Mansfield Wrongly Called an Appeaser," *Los Angeles Times*, June 27, 1961, part 3, p. 5.

Although American policy no longer is couched in wild and irresponsible terms like "liberation," it continues to emphasize the desirability of interfering in Eastern Europe one way or another, apparently oblivious of the impact this sort of challenge has on the Kremlin. This American attitude of non-acceptance of these Communist regimes has virtually no effect on the course of affairs in Eastern Europe. If there is any way at all that the Soviet hegemony can be weakened, it is through a lessening of international tension. There is no doubt, for instance, that American policy toward Germany and the Oder-Neisse Line is an important factor motivating many Poles and Czechs toward accepting strong Soviet influence.

It is entirely understandable that many if not most Americans view the satellite regimes with disapproval. It is less understandable that so many Americans have been led to believe that constant official expressions of opposition, which in no way eases the plight of the Eastern European people and if anything makes life harder for them, serve any good purpose. Can there be justification for a course which accomplishes nothing but the opposite of its intention and, at the same time, interferes with efforts to lessen the dangers of a nuclear holocaust? Yet this is exactly the impact of American policy toward Eastern Europe. This policy may be largely hortatory, but it is still one of the most significant factors creating dissension between the Soviet Union and the United States. It must be reevaluated, not in terms of cheap and dishonest pandering for political support from Polish-American and similar groups but in terms of the realities of the situation and the interest of the United States.⁴⁹

The impact of American bases around the Soviet Union is seldom discussed in the United States. Convinced of our own devotion to

49. American antics about Eastern Europe are sometimes not only provocative but also ridiculous. The "Captive Nations Resolution" that passed Congress in 1959 refers not only to the Eastern European countries and to certain ethnic-national divisions of the U.S.S.R. itself but also to two "nations" that never existed in any form—"Cossackia" and "Idel-Ural." See articles in New York anti-Soviet Russian newspaper, *Novoye Russkoye Slovo*, by Gregory Tschebotarioff, June 8 and 17, 1960, and editorial in *The Nation*, April 23, 1960.

peace, we have been unable, apparently, to see how provocative these bases are in Moscow's eyes, even when they have been utilized for such activities as U-2 flights. Even if one assumes that the bases once served some purpose, it is necessary to ask whether they still do today in view of the capabilities of Soviet nuclear weaponry and rocketry. To what extent does their existence interfere with agreements that might reduce the dangers of the very war against which the bases are supposed to guard? Can the bases be maintained forever? And if not forever, how is eventual withdrawal envisaged, and when? Is it possible that a powerful nation like the Soviet Union, no longer second in military strength, will indefinitely permit itself to be encircled in this way? Is it realistic to assume that Soviet reactions to an American military posture in, say, Iran are any different from what ours would be to a Soviet base in Cuba?

Our idea, of course, has been to "contain" the Soviet Union. The bases were established in a period when the U.S.S.R. was in a markedly inferior position militarily. Today, is not the Soviet Union likely to be encouraged to try some "containing" of its own? Is there any reason why two cannot play at the game? The tides of international politics are never certain. Who knows who may end up "containing" whom? All these are questions to which American policy must address itself if it is to seek realistically to avoid war and serve the interest of the United States.

But what *is* the interest of the United States? Most of this discussion has implied some compromise in present American positions. The implication is, obviously, that the United States is too inflexible in some areas and over-committed in others. There is, of course, no thought of "giving in" to the Russians on any issue involving vital American security interests, American core interests. The point is, rather, whether American core interests should not be more carefully defined. Can the United States, any more than any other nation, have interests of *equal* significance to its security all over the globe? To suggest that certain interests are primary to us and that certain interests of less import to us are primary to other nations, and to negotiate compromises regarding these latter areas, in no sense constitutes "appeasement" (a word

that has been so misused as to connote almost any compromise with Moscow). It is only common sense to see that an assertion of *global* core interests, regardless of the high ideals that may motivate it, can only bring conflict because of inevitable collision with core interests of other nations. At best, it will encourage globalization of other nations' interests. The United States has military bases in many areas immediately bordering the Soviet Union. Our position has been that these are necessary for our security. But do not such attempts to achieve "total security" inevitably mean the "total insecurity" of other countries? Does the United States really have a greater security stake in areas immediately bordering the Soviet Union than does the Soviet Union itself?

It is true that for the United States to withdraw its military bases from some of these areas might result in exposing them over the long run to Soviet influence and even Soviet domination, although there is no basis for assuming that withdrawal of American forces in various areas near the Soviet Union would mean that the Russians would necessarily "move in" physically. On the other hand, our reliance on a military posture in many countries tends to interfere with the very domestic political and economic reforms—and our acceptance of them—that constitute the basic prerequisite for preventing Communist success. (The defense of such a policy is often raised in moral terms, in terms of our "duty" to defend democratic values from Communist encroachment. Alas, the democratic values in some nations with which we are thus allied exist only in the eyes of American self-interest. However, the real objection to our support of many regimes is not that they are undemocratic but that they are untenable.)

It is often asked, "Suppose we do restrict our global interests? Suppose, for example, we do give up some bases and stop heckling the Russians about Eastern Europe? What do we get in return?" We have become so used to the idea that we have a right to global interests, while the Russians don't, that this is, for many Americans, a natural question. It is important to realize that we cannot expect the Soviet Union to "give up" anything simply because we cease maintaining a position that threatens Soviet vital interests. In order to imagine how the Russians feel about this, we must think how

we would feel if the Soviet Union had military bases in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, Ontario, and the West Indies, while we had no bases at all around the Soviet Union. Would this produce an atmosphere conducive to trust and to consideration of mutual compromises? Or, assume that we did not have military bases around the Soviet Union—which we do—and assume that the Soviet Union did have a military base in Cuba—which it does not. What would we give up as a *quid pro quo* for the Russians withdrawing their base from Cuba? Even under the existing base situation, the comparatively moderate interest the U.S.S.R. has expressed in the Castro regime has caused indignation and concern in the United States.

The suggestion that we might consider abandoning some bases is made, of course, in the interest of the United States, not the Soviet Union. But in achieving a more rational American foreign policy, better able to serve our own interest, we would also contribute to an international situation in which meaningful agreements would be more rather than less likely, because then the possibility for *mutual* compromises would present itself. It is *not* proposed, for example, that the United States unilaterally withdraw its forces from Central or Western Europe. But mutual disengagement, in a situation where American bases no longer ringed Soviet borders, would be a true subject for negotiation. Making it clear that we would recognize Soviet interests in areas around the Soviet periphery, also, would be an earnest for seeking assurances from the U.S.S.R. of hands off Cuba and all Latin America.⁵⁰

Of course, we cannot be *certain* that adequate compromises would be forthcoming from the Russians, although there is no reason to assume they would not be, since there is no reason to assume they are not serious about their fear of nuclear war and their desire to minimize the danger of it. But because the United States, by concentrating its efforts, would be in a stronger rather than a weaker position, we would be the gainer in any event.

50. Cuba is in some ways a sort of Latin American Yugoslavia. Once a new reorientation was established, we assisted the Yugoslavs and the Soviet Union assisted the Cubans, although the Russians have not yet set up a military mission in Cuba as we did in Yugoslavia.

American Psychology of Non-Acceptance

With our own ideological commitment against communism, such reconsideration of our policy seems unpalatable to many. And yet the realities of international politics are full of unpalatable choices. We accept them, for instance, in our recognition of the necessity of doing business with Franco Spain and in recognizing French interest in Algeria, but we do not accept them in connection with the Soviet Union, where our own security, to say nothing of the security of the whole world, is infinitely more involved. Why? One reason, it is submitted, is that the United States has never really come psychologically to acceptance of the Soviet Union as a force with which we must deal on a basis of permanence and equality. Thus, for example, we were unable to accept the real lesson of the *Sputniki*, which was not that America was weak, but that the Soviet Union was strong. This psychology of non-acceptance grew out of fear, ignorance, and emotion. It is fraught with the most deadly danger. (Almost monotonously, we seem to be repeating the same pattern in regard to China. Of course the trouble is not just the U.S.S.R. or just China; it is also communism as such.)

Only a psychological situation in which we did not really accept the reality of the U.S.S.R. can explain our inability to realize that we cannot undertake or threaten action Moscow considers provocative without there being a Soviet reaction. For example, Khrushchev has frequently warned that countries where the United States was establishing atomic rocket launching sites would be destroyed if war were begun against the Soviet Union. He has also warned countries from which American planes took off to fly over Soviet territory that they were participating in provocative action. The U.S. State Department has listed some of these under

the title of "Soviet Threats of Destruction Against the Free World."⁵¹

It is the psychology of non-acceptance that also inhibits our ability to compromise and leads to the idea that we can "win" the cold war. What does it mean, "win" the cold war? That the Soviet Union will fade away? That communism will disappear? These are not realistic possibilities. On the contrary, it is altogether likely that the area committed to communism of some sort will expand here and there. This is neither unnatural nor fatal. The West certainly does not have to "lose" the cold war, and if we base our policies on realism we will not lose it. But we can no more "win" it than can the Soviet Union. This does not mean that the cold war can be finally resolved by agreement, if by cold war is meant competition between the two systems. This competition will go on indefinitely, pushed by the Communists and also by us, and we must be constantly alert to the great challenge it presents. But the danger in remarks about "winning" the cold war is precisely that they imply the possibility of a cessation of the competition on the part of the Communists and, therefore, tend to reject any compromise. Consider, for example, the statement of General Nathan F. Twining, made just before he retired as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the fall of 1960. Asserting our ability to destroy both the Soviet Union and China if we are attacked, General Twining said, according to the Associated Press, that the cold war will go on until there is a clear winner and a clear loser. And he added: "The struggle is too big, too vast, too deadly for compromise."⁵²

51. *Soviet Affairs Notes*, No. 242 (June 10, 1960), pp. 1-14. The closest the Russians have come to "initiating threats" was Khrushchev's statement that "figuratively speaking" the U.S.S.R. could support the Castro regime with rocket fire if the United States intervened. *New York Times*, July 10, 1960. Soon after, however, he backed away from any implication of contemplated action. *Pravda*, June 23, 1961.

52. *Los Angeles Times*, Sept. 29, 1960, p. 1.

Courses Other Than Compromise

Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson has termed the idea that there is no alternative to negotiations “silly.” Since, he insists, the Russians will negotiate “only on their own terms, then there is no alternative to surrender.” The alternative he suggests is “action,” which he holds, “is often the best form of negotiation.” Mr. Acheson holds forth in this vein in a magazine article,⁵³ but he offers no more real proposals for negotiation—or action—than were forthcoming while he was Secretary of State.

There are courses other than negotiating compromises with the Soviet Union, however. The trouble is they are all unacceptable. In other days, war itself would have been the alternative, since we might, at least, have won it. But today, when war can only be lost by both sides, and civilization—ours for sure and likely others, too—destroyed in the bargain, it is no longer an acceptable alternative, even though it is the one we may get if we are not careful. (The polemics about what constitutes “survival”—such as those in which Herman Kahn, for instance, engages⁵⁴—hardly rise to the dignity of discussion. Even given Mr. Kahn’s neo-logic, and given his neo-morality, it is entirely beside the point whether a thermonuclear war would cost 30 million or 100 million American lives or whether the survivors could in fact survive. The implication that the American political and economic system could survive such a war is a denigration of common sense and a grisly perversion of reason.)

Another possible course might be, theoretically, for one side or the other to achieve such demonstrable military superiority that the inferior side would give in. Today one still hears talk in high places that the United States must be “first.” The fact is, however, that there is no longer any assurance whatsoever that the United

53. “Of Men I Have Known: The Russians,” *Saturday Evening Post*, March 25, 1961, p. 31, pp. 69-71.

54. See Mr. Kahn’s book, *On Thermonuclear War*, Princeton, 1961, for examples.

States can have demonstrable superiority over the Russians for any period of time. There is no reason to believe that we cannot hold our own, but there is no reason to believe that the Russians cannot hold their own, too. It is sometimes argued that we must negotiate with the Soviet Union but only after we acquire still more military strength. Ignoring the fact that those who make this suggestion are often the same people who earlier felt we did not have to negotiate because we did have greater military strength, we should ask ourselves this: What would be our reaction if this were the Soviet position? Would we, or would we not, be more willing to negotiate with Moscow if the U.S.S.R. had still greater military strength? Negotiations aside, even demonstrable superiority is no real safeguard, for the capacity to destroy a nation once is really the equivalent of the capacity to destroy it fifty times.

This leaves a third possible course: a permanent balance of strength resulting in a perpetual impasse. Even if puny, finite man dared talk in terms of permanent and perpetual, this, too, is unacceptable. Not only would there be a constant struggle for the impossible superiority—with what dangers from fallout one can only speculate in horror—but, human frailty being what it is, the eventual occurrence of “incidents” and “accidents” would be certain. And when membership in the “nuclear club” grows—as it is already growing—even the apparent logic of mutual deterrence vanishes. The real danger of a thermonuclear holocaust does not involve intentions of governments or statesmen or soldiers as much as it involves accident. Given the continued existence of thermonuclear arms, and given simply that man and his creations, both mechanical and institutional, remain now, as they always have been, incapable of perfection, sooner or later, with a deadly mathematical certainty, the explosion will occur.

That is to say, the “balance and impasse” alternative not only involves a risk of thermonuclear war too enormous to take, since war is a completely unacceptable alternative in itself, but it is bound to lead to war.⁵⁵

55. On this point, see Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age*, Princeton, 1959, esp. pp. 351-352.

Yet, barring a calculated war and barring clear superiority on either side, it is this “balance and impasse” alternative that we are asking for by not considering compromises with the Soviet Union. It is, indeed, what we have now. It is the great and overriding task of American statesmanship to get us—and all mankind—out of it. There is still time for decision, but who knows how long it will be available?

It would appear that a logical American policy, therefore, should be based on these concepts:

- 1) Survival depends, if not on disarmament, at least on armament control agreements.
- 2) Armament control agreements depend on reduction of international tensions.
- 3) Reduction of international tensions depends on agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union.
- 4) Agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union depend on mutual compromises.

There is no reason to believe that, given a realistic readjustment of our policy toward the Soviet Union, agreements cannot be reached. In any event, there is no alternative to trying.

None of this is to imply that the thermonuclear war is the only danger we face; it is merely the most overriding one. As indicated above, the continuing encroachment of communism also poses a serious danger, although it is different and not as immediate. But the central idea of this essay is that the way to cope with the one is also the way to cope with the other. For until we reexamine our assumption about Soviet military aggression, we can think neither in terms of armament agreements and reduction of tensions nor in terms of dealing meaningfully with the problem of the underdeveloped areas, which is where the main danger of Communist inroads lies. What is needed first of all, consequently, is a new approach to American-Soviet relations.

Leadership, Public Opinion, and the *Zeitgeist*

It must be recognized that a new approach to American-Soviet relations is limited by domestic political realities. The American people have been misled to a point where public opinion constitutes a real barrier to the kind of compromises that are so vitally necessary. We are not stupid, but we are prisoners of our *Zeitgeist*, of the atmosphere of the times in which our society is immersed. There has been inadequate study of the social forces at work in the mass societies of the modern world, but it is clear that emotion and illogic and illusion are capable of creating an iron mould not easily broken through. This is true not only of America. To mention only one other instance, in recent times, we might do well to consider the case of the French in connection with Indochina. The French—seeing that their war could not be won, seeing that it was costing them far more than it would be worth even if they could win it—were still unable first to negotiate and then to withdraw until the disaster of Dien Bien Phu overtook them. This is cited in no criticism of France or of the French but only as an illustration of the rigidity that binds modern mass societies and makes it difficult for them to reexamine positions once taken and act on the logic of the reexamination.

In our case the stakes are infinitely higher than Dien Bien Phu or Indochina. Yet we are bound as rigidly by our *Zeitgeist* into a mould that thus far we have been unable to break. What is involved primarily in our situation is a misunderstanding of the nature of the threat of the Soviet Union and communism. This idea about the danger of Soviet military aggression is deep in public opinion and official opinion. It is fed by public statements, newspaper and magazine articles and editorials, radio and television broadcasts, and even novels, the theatre, and comic strips. It is in the very air we breathe. It has thus far prevented a real reconsideration of the basis of our foreign policy.

We would be less than frank in thinking that economic factors

do not also play an important part in this rigidity. It is easy for a college professor, for example, to advocate disarmament. But it is not at all easy for one whose day-to-day livelihood comes from making armaments, even if he sees, in the abstract, the advisability of it. Before there can be a meaningful breakthrough toward even arms control, there must be a federal agency with the authority and the means to guarantee that no worker, no businessman, and even no investor suffer as a result of armament agreements.

To make even a beginning requires executive leadership of the highest order, for foreign policy depends on executive leadership, and the inflexibility that executive leadership has wrought—whether by exercise or by default—can only be corrected by executive leadership. This will take time. But even more than time, it will require wisdom and courage. For if public opinion cannot be moved without leadership, leadership often sees itself bound by public opinion. And, of course, a leader without followers is no leader at all. Yet, given the will, wise and courageous leadership could do a number of things almost at once without risking a head-on collision with public rigidity.

Such leadership could, for instance, begin honestly to acquaint the American people with the great danger they face in the present nuclear impasse.

Such leadership could undertake cautiously to convince the American people that the Soviet Union is not *necessarily* militarily aggressive; that compromises are both possible and necessary; that while the cold war does not have to be “lost” neither can it be “won.”

Such leadership could accept openly and honestly the goal of complete thermonuclear disarmament and devote all efforts to creating an international climate that would make agreement on it more, rather than less, likely.

Such leadership could explain to the American people that the real danger from communism lies in an unrealistic approach to social revolution in underdeveloped countries and that it cannot be combated by military force, but only by a new attitude toward revolutionary regimes.

Such leadership could begin to show the American people the

futility and disadvantage of constant challenge to the Soviet Union on Eastern Europe.

Such leadership could insist on caution in public statements and insure that they be neither misleading, inflammatory, nor provocative.⁵⁶

Such leadership could initiate at private, official levels detailed confidential proposals for compromises on Berlin, disengagement of military forces, and curtailment of American bases abroad so as to stimulate official thinking along these lines and have plans ready for possible use.

Such leadership could initiate plans for easing the economic problems that curtailment of arms production might bring to many individuals and firms and thus diminish the built-in psychological barrier to disarmament that exists in the United States.

Such leadership could begin to persuade the American people that a disarmament agreement would not be really meaningful unless it included *all* major powers, including Communist China.

It goes without saying that all such steps would be of little avail unless at the same time we see to it that our own system works at home—economically, politically, and socially. For if we can both survive and also insure that the great American ideals of peace and freedom and equality and well-being shine once more like a beacon through all the world, then indeed will communism have to look to its laurels.

October 1961

56. There is indication that President Kennedy has attempted this, at least in regard to military personnel.

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