

There is in all this a chain of vicious consequences, and these vicious consequences are exploited by Soviet-inspired communist parties for purposes which have unfortunately become all too familiar. Distress, starvation, even despair are stirred by the communists into political disorder and ideological strife. Every kind of inciting appeal is made, and the highest as well as the lowest motives are fully exploited for the purpose of retarding recovery and preventing progress. Starvation thus becomes a weapon of political warfare and misery, a political platform.

It is not enough, however, to blame the troubles of Europe--or of the rest of the world--on the destruction of war and on the subversive activity of communism. The free governments are themselves at fault if they are hesitant to take the necessary social and political measures, or to show the energy, determination and solidarity required to make democracy into an efficient instrument for recovery and a dynamic political gospel. The ranks of democratic peoples must not be divided. Their energies must not be dissipated in domestic political conflict. The attractions of political manoeuvring become dangerous if they override the virtues of self-discipline and self-sacrifice in the face of national danger. Democratic leaders in all countries must realize that democracy does not mean merely the preservation of the status quo. Too often, the lead in energy, determination and zeal has been given by peoples who live and work in undemocratic regimes. To save democracy in Europe--or indeed anywhere else--we must demonstrate by deeds and not merely by words that democracy is a more dynamic and humanitarian creed than communism. No regime in Europe or anywhere else has the right to assistance merely because it proclaims itself the only barrier against communism. It must do much more than that. It must show that it can act promptly and resolutely to disperse by productive measures the accumulated forces of social discontent which communism so cunningly exploits wherever they exist. It is well for us to remember these things as we view, with justified anxiety, the dark surge from behind the iron curtain.

Taking full advantage of economic misery, of political instability, and in certain cases, of the weak and divided political leadership of its opponents, communism in Europe has extended its authority under Soviet control and direction, over Roumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, Albania, and now Czechoslovakia. Freedom, as we know it, but as most of these peoples have never known it, is now a more remote hope in those countries than it has ever been.

In the whole of southeastern Europe and the Balkans, only Greece and Turkey remain free from communist domination. In Greece, subversive revolutionary forces at home, aided by help from neighbouring communist states, have been held in check. At the moment, Greece is a key point in the struggle against aggressive Soviet-inspired communism, and is recognized as such by the British and United States governments. Turkey is another important sector of this front, and assistance is being given to her also in an effort to put her in a position to defend herself from threats and attacks from outside.

The tragedy of the countries of eastern Europe which have become victims of the dictatorship of the communist minority is that they have lost the great chance that victory gave them to establish free governments based on the popular will. They have sunk back into a different, but deeper, despotism than they have ever known before. They will soon learn that, if they do not know it already.

Czechoslovakia, however, is one country which had earned and deserved a better fate. The sordid details of the process by which the Czechoslovak people were despoiled in a few days of their hard won liberty and exemplary parliament democracy are too well known, too vivid in all our minds, to need recapitulation.

The pattern was already familiar enough. The communists, although a minority, were strong enough to obtain in a national government the ministries which give them control of the police, propaganda and the