

*Supply—External Affairs*

a train of events which, under normal conditions, should be welcome to the bulk of their population with whom the dynamism of revolution has probably run down. That process may become increasingly difficult to reverse at home if it is permitted to gain momentum there, but it is certainly not likely to lead, as we sometimes hopefully think, to parliamentary democracy or to any kind of democracy as we understand it because that is impossible in a communist state and Russia under its new leaders remains determinedly communist.

Also it is too soon to say, I think, that irresistible forces of freedom have been set in motion and that this means a great triumph for the western world. Indeed, these relaxations and their results, both at home and among their satellite communities, may frighten the new rulers who may try to reverse the trend, and out of this effort a new Stalin, Khrushchev or somebody else may arise as the old Stalin arose out of the ruins of the new economic policy in the twenties. This accession of one man to power is consistent both with the Slav tradition of autocratic rule and the communist doctrine of what they call democratic centralism.

So we would be wise, I think, to welcome and exploit any changes that seem for the better in both domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet union without exaggerating their extent or being bedazzled or deceived by them. At the same time, we must not be too tightly bound by the analysis which we made of Soviet policy under the Stalin regime, nor must we leave the initiative in the present period always to the new Soviet leaders, and they are very adept, indeed, in taking advantage of the initiative.

But one thing we can be sure of, that any changes of this character, and there certainly have been some, are not the result of weakness or lack of confidence of the new rulers in the future of the Soviet system. They are certainly as fanatical on that score as ever Stalin or his contemporaries were. Let us not be deceived by the illusion—I think we are in the process of tearing it away—that the Soviets are a backward people, 150 million feudal, downtrodden peasants in an oxcart civilization because, as we know, nothing could be further from the truth. We are beginning to appreciate that fact as more of us visit the Soviet union. It is true that in that country individuals have not the luxuries which we consider to be necessities nor often even the necessities which we take as a matter of course. But the regime there has converted the poverty of the people into the power of the state. On individual deprivation they have built great national strength

and great national confidence and pride. Two United States commentators are not always too encouraging in their prognosis of what is going to happen. The Alsop brothers have warned us that we had better drop the favourite western parlour game of searching for imaginary Soviet weakness. In an article which one of them wrote a few weeks ago he had this to say:

. . . it is one of history's little jokes that this demonstration of the Soviet society's superior efficiency, on its terms,—

That is the terms of centralized, autocratic, communist power and control.

—should come at a moment when the western societies are also demonstrating their superior efficiency on their terms, in the form of Britain's all-embracing welfare society and America's gorged plenty. But history does not suggest, alas, that great power contests can be won by free false teeth or even by platoons of air-conditioned Cadillacs.

Certainly, Mr. Chairman, this strength and power of the Soviet under its new leaders has not been affected, as I see it, by the de-Stalinization of the regime. In fact, while Stalin has been repudiated, the essentials of Stalinism remain. We know what they are: one party-despotic government; control of every expression of free thought and free action by that government; induced fear and hostility to every form of non-communist rule, especially through education; subordination of the individual to the ruling communist group; unqualified belief in the ultimate overthrow of free democracy by communism; and refusal of any form of political freedom to subject or satellite peoples who are incorporated into the Russian political system for power political purposes, except on the basis of complete acceptance of the rule of the communist junta in Moscow itself.

It may be of developing significance—I hope it is—that there have been signs of change in this latter situation in the satellite border states. But there is no sign of change in respect of the absorption of subject peoples like the Ukrainians and the Balts inside the communist centralized empire. While they and other subject peoples remain under the heel of Moscow, we certainly have the right to reject any protestations by the leaders in Moscow of their belief in self-government or the rights of peoples. Indeed, this Russian system is a new colonialism which is far more terrible, far more reactionary and far more widespread than was any form of colonial rule in history. Moreover, it is practised by men who have managed to get too many other men to accept them as champions of national freedom against the old colonialism which is now fast disappearing. Their claims