

military imperialism, then Russia's problem in Eastern Europe would most easily be solved by a military occupation that might reach right up to the Atlantic. It is said that when Hungary revolted there were military leaders in Russia who wanted to do just that.

If then, we were ready courageously to face the facts—and for us who believe in our political systems this is the only sane prescription—we shall have to admit that we are today in an extremely perilous position.

Any day Russia can force the West to a vital decision by coming out openly on the side of Egypt and Syria; by inciting the Arabs generally to aggression against Israel and promising her help by demanding guarantees against supposed anti-Russian hostility in her neighbour, Turkey. In such circumstances, the West could only choose between ineffective retaliatory diplomacy, which would be interpreted by the Arabs as pro-Israel, and counter-measures which would be near-military or actually military. A local war, like that in Korea, would inevitably break out, and it is hard to see how the West would win in a terrain which Russia could so easily occupy by so-called volunteers, while at sea Russia possesses her Black Sea bases from which, under air cover, she could force the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

This would inevitably and immediately lead to the supreme question: would the West admit defeat rather than begin full-scale nuclear warfare, or would she find herself forced to take on the tremendous moral onus of first using the H-bomb, knowing that Britain and our allies in Europe would at once face grievous destruction and the industrial centres of the United States and Canada would be most gravely damaged?

I am convinced we can take it for granted that if Moscow were absolutely certain that the H-bomb would be used by the West in certain clearly described and foreseen conditions, Russia would never risk the catastrophe which she herself would suffer in at least equal measure with the West. But it is also to be feared that, as things are, Russia may well believe that, when it came to the test, America, Britain, France and West Germany would recoil from initiating the universal cataclysm. And precisely there lies the great danger of a third world war in the not distant future.

That is why it seems to me so dangerous that public opinion in the West prefers to play the ostrich over the possibility of a third world war. In doing so it is playing into the hands of the Soviet authorities. Rightly or wrongly, they deduce from this attitude that the degeneracy of the West gives a green light for intensifying safely their

natural and continuous policy of diplomatic aggression, at points where the West is most vulnerable. Not less important is the fact that the present temper of public opinion in the West tempts us to believe that we can still afford the luxury of divided councils and unnecessary competition.

Surely there is no honest citizen on our side who seriously thinks that the United States and the other Western powers either desire a third world war or would do anything which could reasonably be said to further or risk the onset of such a moral disaster. On the contrary, it is patent to any honest observer that the will to avoid another war governs Western policy and, in one sense, even gravely weakens it when dealing with an opponent who holds that the end will always justify any evil means. This is not to say that America and other nations have not made political mistakes, nor is it to deny that legitimate self-interest has played its part in policy decisions. But the over-all moral position is clear. Aggression does not enter into Western plans. There is, in fact, a rather desperate effort to yield as much as is consistent with self-defence and with a justified lack of confidence in an opponent whose record is one of trickery, bad faith and aggressive manoeuvre. Even at the present time there is in the United States the Truman school of thought, which favours containment, and George Keenan's disengagement idea in dealing with Soviet Russia.

In the light of all these considerations, though our conscience tells us that we have left many things undone, spiritually, morally and internationally, it also reminds us that, far from willing aggression, we often bend over backward to avoid giving any suggestion of it.

The choice, therefore, lies between consent to suicide and a facing up to the truth, with preparations to take such steps, however terrible, as seem absolutely necessary to implement our right to survive and to defend the moral order. May we not reasonably expect that if we thus obey our consciences and honour our responsibilities, God, in whom we believe, will either ordain that the final disaster shall be avoided, or, if His will be otherwise, give us the courage to face up to the worst and move us to offer the Almighty our most fervent prayers for the strength to face that situation?

It is thinking of this kind, it seems to me, which the West requires today—thinking which boldly faces the truth, which acts courageously in the light of that truth, and which strengthens the resolution to sustain, whatever may come. We also need thinking which will lead to greater unity and understanding among us all. Must we not admit,