

pressure of a time element from the Berlin situation. It is now possible for the parties concerned in this dispute to approach a new stage of negotiation free from the shadow of an ultimatum. While no substantive advance towards a settlement of the Berlin issue was made, the Soviet Government evidently considered that it would be in its interest to remove a sore spot in its relations with the Western nations.

"In his appearance before the United Nations, Mr. Khrushchov brought forward sweeping proposals on disarmament. Time alone will serve to test the real significance of that much advertised presentation, which left many questions unanswered. It may, however, be of some importance that in subsequent public statements Mr. Khrushchov has sought to counteract the impression that the Soviet Government would not agree to a realistic system of control and inspection in the implementation of disarmament measures. Progress on disarmament cannot be anything but slow but we should not disregard the fact that the U.S.S.R. has agreed to participate in a committee of ten nations, including Canada, which will begin after the new year to examine the whole range of disarmament problems. More recently the Soviet Government has agreed to co-operate in technical studies of United States data on the problem of detecting underground nuclear tests.

SOVIET MOTIVES

"What is one to think of these developments in the field of disarmament? Perhaps the Soviet Government wants only to avoid being revealed as the stumbling block in negotiations. But again, the Soviet leaders now have the opportunity to demonstrate in concrete terms their desire for progress towards a world disarmament system.

"Another example of the new atmosphere is to be found in Premier Khrushchov's speech of October 31 reporting to the Supreme Soviet on foreign affairs. Compared with previous Soviet statements on foreign policy, it was remarkable for its moderation. Four times Mr. Khrushchov acknowledged the need for mutual concessions if any progress was to be made in solving international problems. Once he went so far as to state that the Western nations had themselves already made concessions to U.S.S.R. This speech contained only commendation of President Eisenhower, Prime Minister Macmillan and President de Gaulle for their peaceful intentions. Even on Algeria, a favourite subject of Soviet vilification of France, Premier Khrushchov commented on the difficulties of the French position and spoke favourably of President de Gaulle's proposals for self-determination.

"Again, it must be recalled that Premier Khrushchov has not weakened any position of Soviet power by making these statements. Past experience with the Soviet Union will warn us

that we should not assume uncritically that these sentiments are proof of a change of heart among the Soviet leaders.

INFLUENCE OF KHRUSHCHOV SPEECHES

"It is an open question in a totalitarian society such as the Soviet Union how much importance should be attached to public statements. Some people claim that such statements mean nothing because the Soviet leaders do not have to take account of public opinion. I believe that this is too superficial a view. Although public opinion in the Soviet Union does not have the powerful force it has in Canada and other Western countries, it cannot be denied that Premier Khrushchov is circumscribed by what he says in public.

"When he publicly urged India and Communist China to settle their frontier differences, could the Communist leaders of China consider that they were being fully backed by the U.S.S.R.? And what have been the Chinese reaction when, in Peking, Mr. Khrushchov seemed to imply the possibility of compromise with the United States as a long-term solution? One thing seems clear--that these views reveal that the Soviet Union has vested interests which do not always coincide with those of Communist China.

"One could speculate indefinitely on Soviet motives for desiring a relaxation of tension. It seems clear that one of Mr. Khrushchov's main concerns is to modernize Soviet society and to raise the standard of living of the Soviet people. To this end he no doubt requires the assurance of a long period of peace, with some relief from the burden of armaments production and with time to broaden and consolidate the Soviet economy.

BASIS OF NEW ATTITUDE

"Mr. Khrushchov is a realist. He knows that modern war is self-defeating and cannot be employed in the traditional way to back up the aims of foreign policy. The thought of nuclear war is no less appalling to Mr. Khrushchov than it is to the West. Perhaps too, he has discovered in his talks with President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan a reflection of the longing for peace which imbues the Western nations. In other words, it may have come home to Mr. Khrushchov as a result of his talks with Western leaders, that, despite long years of Soviet propaganda to the contrary, the launching of a war is not the intention of the West.

"The fresh look which Mr. Khrushchov has given to Soviet foreign policy arises primarily from a deep-seated Soviet fear of nuclear war and its consequences. It might be influenced by possible Soviet concern about the long-range implications of the policies of Communist China. It accords better with the image of benevolence and reasonableness which the Soviet Union hopes to project in the underdeveloped world. Of more direct concern

(Continued on p. 6)