

past ten years or so several of our Canadian universities have developed departments which provide for the specialized study of the humanities of Eastern Europe; but I am very conscious of how much we have yet to do in ensuring that every university graduate acquires at least some inkling of human experience and human thought in Eastern Europe during the last millennium, - to say nothing of the ancient civilizations of Asia and the Far East.

I believe that our intellectual concentration on the Roman West to the exclusion of the Byzantine East lies close to the heart of the present global - indeed, should I now say cosmic? - misunderstanding between the peoples, and so between the governments of East and West. We draw a disparaging contrast between our Western democratic tradition and an Eastern authoritarian tradition; and we forget that we have not been articulate about "democracy" for very long. We forget that all human political experience has not been Western, and Lawrence Durrell has reminded us that to understand modern Greece and Cyprus, we must make reference to the political and social customs of Byzantium. The same is true for an understanding of the U.S.S.R. Academic enquiry into the dynamic and far from simple processes which activate the Soviet body politic has really yet to begin in the West and, in these circumstances, our Western mind tends to fall back on untested assumptions and to interpret a highly complex phenomenon in crude and oversimplified terms.

What has been sadly lacking in the West, it seems to me, has been a realistic appraisal of Soviet intentions. Such an appraisal must be made in the light of our knowledge not only of Marxist theory but also of Soviet experience and Soviet action. It must also take into account the basic truth that however different the operations of the Soviet political and social system are from those to which we are accustomed, they nevertheless obey many of the same laws that regulate other human societies.

Our collective political experience in the West has taught us something of the practicalities of foreign policy; especially of how these practicalities affect the more distant aspirations of government. Our collective political experience is nothing more than the common sense of practical politics, and we in NATO and the West enjoy the bulk of the human heritage of articulate thought about this collective experience. It is this heritage that teaches us, among other things, that the intentions of governments are a function of needs, capacities and external factors, most of which lie outside their control; that most