

The resolution of the delegation of the Soviet Union regarding measures to be taken against propaganda for a new war contains various ideas, some of which are of a highly contentious character both in form and in substance. These ideas have been crowded into the small space of a single resolution. In this resolution we are being asked to do two things. First, to declare that a certain type of propaganda amounts to a violation of the obligations we have assumed under the Charter. Second, we are asked to agree that each Government here represented should undertake to make the carrying on of such propaganda a criminal offence by legal definition.

In paragraph 1 of its resolution, the Soviet delegation ask us to condemn "the criminal propaganda for a new war . . . containing open appeals for aggression against the peace-loving democratic countries". To this appeal, I am sure, there will not be a dissenting voice. But if the Soviet delegation are genuinely anxious to get a ringing, unanimous verdict against "war-mongering", why do they single out three countries for special and dishonourable mention? Are they seriously suggesting that there are no misguided individuals in other countries, including their own, who, influenced by fear or hate, have counselled or may counsel violent policies against another State?

Furthermore, this paragraph of the Soviet resolution defines and interprets incitement to war in a way which makes one suspect that its authors are more interested in its propaganda value against certain countries and certain views than they are in stopping "war-mongering". This suspicion is strengthened by the nature and tone of statements made at this Assembly by the Soviet and certain other delegations.

This endeavour to particularize, to name certain countries and specify certain "circles" was further developed by Mr. Vishinsky in his statement on September 18 when he nominated certain individuals to the category of "war-mongers". Mr. Vishinsky, it will be noted, was careful at the same time to dissociate the responsibility of Governments from such reprehensible activity.

A wealth of press comment, much of it of a shabby and unimpressive character, was offered to us to establish the culpability of certain individuals and to sketch the outline of the geometrical design which Mr. Vishinsky refers to as a reactionary "circle". But all that we were given was a judgment made by the Soviet delegation, as to what circles in what countries are to be termed reactionary, and what kind of propaganda is criminal. A cynic might feel that when certain people talk about a "reactionary circle" they mean any group which, putting the individual above the state, and freedom before despotism, rejects totalitarian tyranny in all its forms; that when they talk of "criminal propaganda" they mean any expression of opinion hostile to their own foreign policies.

But if we are to accept this subjective approach, is it not open to other delegations to draw circles of equal validity around individuals or groups in the Soviet Union or in any other country, and condemn their expressions of opinion as equally reprehensible, insofar as such opinions are hostile, aggressive and not calculated to develop "those friendly relations" which, the second paragraph of the Soviet resolution reminds us, we are all obliged by the Charter to develop in our international relationships under the Charter?