

If, as we trust, these efforts *do* succeed, the immediate danger of a Third World War would, for the moment, be removed. That would not, however, mean that we could rule out of calculation the possibility of such a war breaking out later. The materials for a fire would still be there; and there would still be madmen about, with matches.

The Soviet Union already possesses the capability to wage a major war at any time. Its policies, moreover, show that it is willing to take the risk of provoking one, even though it may not deliberately desire one. At the present time, the Soviet Union possesses a great preponderance of power on land. On the sea it would be able seriously to interrupt allied lines of communication by the use of its submarine fleet, and by other means. The greatest military weaknesses of the Soviet Union are in the air and in its relative deficiency in atomic bombs. The Soviet Union would probably wish to reach a higher degree of preparedness, especially for air and atomic warfare and to augment its economic potential, before becoming engaged in hostilities. The possibility that this cautious and delaying attitude is the basis of Soviet foreign policy must be weighed against the temptation to take advantage of the passing opportunity offered by relative Western weakness; against the apparent willingness of the U.S.S.R. to take chances which may lead to war; and against the belligerent and inflammatory tactics of the Cominform.

These tactics, leading to aggressive war in Korea, as well as the expansionist nature of Soviet foreign policy generally, provide an incentive, and a necessity, for western re-armament and closer co-operation. The effect of this re-armament will become increasingly important after 1951. If, therefore, the leaders of international communism have convinced themselves that war with the West must come at some time, they may consider that their best opportunity will be in the months ahead. Because of this—and because of recent events in North Korea—the danger of a major war in the immediate future has, I think, increased. Such a war could result either through deliberate armed aggressive action on the part of the Soviet Union or its satellites, or through a willingness on their part to take increased risks in spite of the knowledge that a major war might result.

The question whether the risk of a major war will diminish after, say the end of 1951, depends, of course, in large part on whether the Western world has been able to increase its defences and ensure the necessary unity of action; whether we can strengthen—as we are trying to do—the United Nations as an agency for preserving peace, for settling disputes and in the last analysis for organizing collective force against an aggressor. The free democracies are now taking steps to these ends at Lake Success and within the North Atlantic Organization. The crisis of the last few weeks in Korea has shown, with even greater clarity than before, the necessity for doing this and for doing it quickly and effectively.

The democratic world is—tragically but inescapably—compelled to devote an increasing proportion of its resources to the task of rearmament. This rearmament is essential and must be given priority for the time being over other objectives, but by itself, it will not be enough. We must also preserve and increase our economic and social strength. We must also take the steps necessary to rally to our side the peoples of Asia. We must give political and moral leadership of a kind which will attract and hold the support of the wavering powers, especially in Asia. Otherwise the Soviet Union may be able to extend by non-military means, by the pull of its sham but alluring offers of bread with freedom, its domination over large parts of the under-privileged, under-developed world with its masses of millions.

The forces of communist aggression in Asia have in the past successfully allied themselves with the forces of national liberation and social reform. The task of the Western democratic powers is to assist the democratic governments in those areas to break that unnatural alliance. For this purpose, it is essential that the Western