

*Supply—External Affairs*

the most gullible, for a democrat. Therefore the cult of the dead dictator must be, to all seeming, eradicated root and branch and his former followers and sycophants must essay the hazardous expedient of recanting their errors without fatally jeopardizing their posts of power and their hold upon the confidence of the Russian people and of communist cells abroad.

To this exacting task they have applied all their usual diabolical cunning, but it has necessarily led to a considerable—and no doubt reluctant—relaxation of restrictions at home, as well as to sweeping alterations in the face they present to the outer world. There are many signs that the Russian people are being accorded a somewhat wider, if still pitifully slight, freedom of travel, of discussion, even perhaps of criticism. The power of the secret police is less in evidence. Visits of foreigners, not only those in official positions, such as our Minister of Fisheries, but even of tourists, to Russia are becoming commonplace, as are those of groups, carefully selected, of course, of Russian citizens abroad.

All this, mark you, implies no effective undermining of that castle of absolute autocracy wherein Khrushchev, the implacable, still sits enthroned, though latterly with as little ostentation as possible. But in maintaining even such a semblance of democratic ways it seems to me the government of the U.S.S.R. lays itself open to various pressures from the west which it can withstand only at the price of revealing the falsity of its pretenses.

The present trend—which of course may be reversed at any time and is at best unstable, as Khrushchev's occasionally verbal outburst against the west indicates—is for the Kremlin to profess a love of freedom and peace, an eagerness for friendly relations, trade and co-operation with all the outer world. These things are utterly inconsistent with the maintenance of the iron curtain in all its impenetrability. Surely then with adroitness and ingenuity western diplomacy may succeed in wringing from the Soviet's rulers, while they continue to wear their present mask of democracy, concessions in the raising of that curtain in many ways.

I suggest that the United Nations offers a most useful forum for such efforts. The shift in strategy of the U.S.S.R. leaves, shall we say, a chink in its political and diplomatic armour which, skilfully exploited, may lead to many chinks in the iron curtain, each of which may in turn prove embarrassing to the Kremlin. Perhaps I should interpolate here and say that I am not referring to Russia's relations with red China.

I submit that it should be a major aim of our diplomacy to take advantage of the opening given by the change in Soviet strategy to press in every way possible for the further and speedier lifting of the iron curtain, for the underlying purpose of affording to the Russian people a wider knowledge of the west. The task will not be an easy one; many overtures to that end will meet with refusal. But even refusals may provide useful ammunition for demonstrating the fundamental falsity of the Kremlin's democratic pose, and for this reason we may hope for compliance with at least a modicum of any proposals made. If in the end our efforts enable the Russian people to acquire a wider knowledge and understanding of the west, of its aims, its liberties, its peaceful purposes, the material standards of its workers, I believe the benefits will be incalculable on both sides, leading ultimately, as I have suggested, to the abandonment or at least the curtailment of the projected Soviet economic offensive against the west in favour of a program of internal development, to the primary advantage of the Russian people themselves.

I submit that a most vigorous and unceasing prosecution of policies designed to bring about such a wider knowledge and understanding of the west among the common folk of the U.S.S.R. is at this time well worth thought, effort and money. I am glad to present my views here in the presence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, for I know of none better qualified than he to plan and implement such a program.

At six o'clock the committee took recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The committee resumed at eight o'clock.

**Mr. Zaplitny:** I realize that the committee is anxious to make all possible progress in view of the lateness of the session, and I happen to be in the happy position of being able to accommodate the committee in that respect, because a great deal of what I had intended to say has been more ably said by my colleague from Winnipeg North and also by other members who have taken part in the debate. However, there are one or two matters of a general nature that I wish to raise, and I think this is the appropriate place to do so.

First I should like to say how pleased I was to hear of the great support from all sides of the house at this time for the principle of self-determination for all the nations of the world. It is of particular significance to