

alert, to turn our attention elsewhere. If we believe that we can live and let live, surely (the argument would run) we can abandon some of the precautions against danger and ease some of the burdens of defence. Weary of the effort which seven years of cold war have involved, we can now afford to be distracted, for "peaceful co-existence" has arrived!

But if saying "yes" to this loaded question about peaceful co-existence is apt to be risky and confusing, saying "no" is worse. It is a wrong and defeatist, a despairing answer, for it assumes to inevitability of war. Furthermore, if Western governments return a short "no" to Moscow's declared belief in the possibility of peaceful co-existence, they would be attacked as intransigent warmongers by friendly neutrals and the well-intentioned uncommitted. To those who judge these issues only by words, and who hear words usually in the careless condensed and confident form of headlines, this blunt "no" would appear as the rejection of what might have been a proffered truce. At the very least it would blur the question of the responsibility for continuing international tensions. Those who say "no" to the possibility of peaceful co-existence, are thus apt to lend colour to the despondent, fatalist belief that war is inevitable - a belief that is not only false but profoundly dangerous, since, if widely accepted on either side, it could lead to ill-considered actions which might certainly make war inevitable.

We would be wrong then to under-estimate the power and the danger of this loaded question about peaceful co-existence. The measure of that danger is the fact that it has become the key-note of all recent communist propaganda. Communist dictators are good at using semantics as weapons. The debasement of good words by "double-talk" is one of the main characteristics of totalitarian tactics and propaganda. But "double-talk" can be just about as dangerous as "double-think". Indeed, the two go together.

Though the question about co-existence, then, is so phrased, so contrived, that a short "yes" or "no" answer is confusing, it is, I think, worth trying to clear up the confusion, and to examine the real issue which it raises. It is an issue central to many of the problems of our time, as we face the menace of the international communist conspiracy.

A first point to notice about this question of co-existence is that we have, in fact, been co-existing with communism for the past thirty-five years.

But another and more significant point is that a good many countries, such as the Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the democratic regimes in Poland and Czechoslovakia, which co-existed with the U.S.S.R. for some years, have now ceased as free nations to exist at all. Co-existence is no problem for them. It has become the co-existence of Jonah and the whale that swallowed him. You will recall, however, that Jonah was eventually liberated by spontaneous convulsion, but without, I understand, any interference from outside!