

steady appeal through the law to the world's sense of justice — all these mean that the Marxist state has accepted formal restrictions on the courses of action which would otherwise be open to it in the pursuit of its external ambitions; that it has steadily augmented the relevance of the law as a criterion of its own conduct; and that it does not regard a change in the political structure of the non-communist world as imminent. This multiplication of moral obstacles in the Marxist path may not be inconsistent with the classical Marxist ethic, but it is extremely impractical, if the Soviet Union wishes to extend either the revolution or Soviet power.

VI

A survey of Soviet policy which tries to penetrate beneath the doxology of communism, beneath an anti-Western posture, beneath the language of vituperation and belligerence, and which focuses on Soviet conduct rather than on Soviet rhetoric, points up the degree to which considerations of immediate national self-interest have motivated Soviet policy, the degree to which the national interest has been conceived in the extraordinarily narrow terms of power and security, and the degree to which Soviet policy has owed more to the practice of Machiavelli and Bismark than to the vision of Marx. Such a survey recalls the words of Molotov in 1939: "Is it really difficult to understand that the Soviet leadership is pursuing, and will continue to pursue, its own independent policy, based on the interests of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and only their interests?" Such a survey points up the extent to which Moscow has begun to take a more practical approach to the national interest, the extent to which Kennan's prophecy in 1947 of the "gradual mellowing of Soviet power" has been fulfilled, the truth of his dictum that "no mystical, Messianic movement — and particularly not that of the Kremlin — can face frustration indefinitely without adjusting itself one way or another to the logic of the state of affairs."

A systematic inquiry into the circumstances surrounding Soviet decisions shows that these decisions are less the manifestation of a Marxist *élan* than a response to non-Marxist problems, and that it is almost exclusively problems of security which have elicited a Soviet response. The task of responding to power politics with power politics has monopolized the vast bulk of Soviet energy, and has seemed to Moscow to be so urgent that it has sacrificed a generation and a half to puritanism, coercion and terror, that it has isolated its people from the collective wisdom of their national past and from the moderating influences of the external world. It is downward into the mud of the urgent, the contingent and the unique that Soviet attention has been directed, rather than upward toward an august and distant vision. Action which has seemed to the external world to reflect the most aggressive, expansionist, Marxist initiative, has instead been aimed at negative, limited and immediate goals; Moscow has been too desperate, too preoccupied, to translate vague, maximal thinking into concrete long-term plans, or even to make shrewd use of every opportunity. Such a survey points up the fact that the West has been dealing with an appallingly crude approach to politics, rather than sophisticated malevolence.

Under-developed countries are backward politically as well as economically, and, unlike modern India, the Russia of 1917 compounded her own difficulties by wilfully destroying, exiling and renouncing the slender stock of political wisdom which she had painfully accumulated. It is true that Russia has modernized much of her economy in thirty years and it is true that the pace of political evolution seems, of late, to be surprisingly fast; but this is due to such reserves of liberal thought as were banked in the XIX century. Every historian knows that time cannot be telescoped, and the fact remains that Soviet Russia has only begun to mature politically. In the West, the Renaissance preceded the Industrial Revolution; in Russia it must now follow this. Fanaticism, which is emotional, naive, and