

the staunch patriotism of the majority of the population - a patriotism based not only on a native love of land and race but on the ever-increasing opportunities for initiative and personal advancement offered by a perpetually expanding economy. But no less true or significant is the ruthless totalitarian control of every aspect of life and thoughts. I was recently asked how many Soviet citizens would emigrate, if they could get out and if settlement possibilities elsewhere were available. The question had never occurred to me, but the answer, it was suggested, must be well over ten millions and possibly much more - an estimate based on political prisoners alone, with average families of two each. Virtually all heavy construction work is carried out by the NKVD and its political prisoners. Totalitarianism and "social surgery" produces casualties.

In the Lenin-Trotsky period of Soviet history, propaganda was a cardinal instrument of foreign policy - a policy of attempting to stimulate revolution.

External propaganda plays a very different role in Stalin's policy. The area of Communist control is extended by material force, in adjacent territories - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia (for the moment at least), Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia (in the last two the force was not the Red Army but the local populations), Northern Iran. Permanent consolidation of communist control in North China is probably on the agenda. External propaganda is used 1) as a smoke-screen to cover the operations of real politik, and 2) as an inducement to the recruiting of further party-members, who then become inter alia effective instruments of pressure, intelligence, etc., in foreign countries.

This is neither sinister nor alarming, once we recognize the facts. Many of the activities of communist parties are obviously progressive in the best sense of the word, and thus beneficial to human progress. The social reforms carried out in regions which they dominate are usually desirable. The remedy for the dangers of a too great extension in Communist Party membership and influence lie not in hostility to the Soviet Union, still less in hostility to social reforms. The remedy is what the Bible called a "removal of the beam from our own eyes" - a better ordering of our own five-sixths of the world.

Unless the objectives and methods of Soviet propaganda are recognized, however, it can be dangerous.

A more immediate danger is probably a more-than-compensatory swing back in democratic public opinion against the Soviet Union - the results of post-war disillusion and cynicism. A number of British and American correspondents recently in Moscow intend to write very angry books. If prospects of unemployment become acute in western democracies after the war, with concomitant widespread fears of "radical" social reforms, this wing could lead to a very grave crisis in international relations.

The best safeguard both against this and against undue Soviet propaganda is a judicious revelation of fuller facts - including especially many of the facts until now shrouded in diplomatic secrecy, and a suitable emphasis on the real meaning of democratic concepts.