

Supply—External Affairs

was said by the hon. member for Parkdale with regard to the Ukraine, and I fully agree with all that he said. None the less, I do not think, looking over the whole extent of the U.S.S.R., it can be said that there is any unrest in that country today seriously threatening its existing system of government. It may well be that many of the Russian proletariat, having in mind the poverty of the past, count themselves among the favoured of the earth. Yet such an attitude must be based largely, I suggest, upon the ignorance of the Russian people with regard to the material achievements of the west. They do not know how far they still lag behind their western counterparts in material well-being. They do not realize that a concentration of the immense potential capacities of their country upon domestic problems, upon internal improvement and development, and upon their own advancement, could speed to them, the people, within their lifetime, benefits of which they have yet hardly dreamed. Conversely, they do not realize that the diversion of much of those capacities toward conflict, economic or otherwise, with the west must largely postpone such benefits for decades, even if it does not involve all mankind in irretrievable ruin.

If one could bring home those considerations to the Russian people and dispel the fear so skilfully fostered in them that the west harbours hostile designs against them—and certainly that fear must be dispelled if the shadow of war is to be permanently banished from the earth—I believe that the wish for peace and for the abandonment of all forms of external aggression in favour of the internal development of their own country for their own good would become so compelling a force, even upon the iron totalitarianism of the Kremlin, that their masters would hardly dare do otherwise than lead them in the direction they wish to take. After all, the great majority of the Russian people is not numbered in the fanatic communist party; and though they may be, as I say, reasonably content with their form of government, having known none better, they do share the common longing of common folk for peace and plenty. Deep, too, within them must lie the unquenchable human instinct for freedom.

That it would be highly desirable to bring about a closer understanding between the Russian people and those of the west is certainly no novel idea. Hitherto, however, by means of the iron curtain, the men of the Kremlin have succeeded admirably—perhaps “notably” is a better word—in insulating the Russian masses from knowledge of the west, and exposing them only to such evil propaganda as they would have them hear.

[Mr. Lusby.]

It seems to me, however, that the present shift in communist strategy from military pressure to economic warfare gives rise to two conclusions, or rather gives rise to a conclusion and presents an opportunity.

First, in view of what I have said, it emphasizes and renders more urgent, as a means of defeating that strategy, the desirability and importance, which has long been given background recognition, of the spreading throughout Russia of a better knowledge and understanding of the west, both of our pacific intentions and of the material progress and well-being of our peoples. Our achievements in the latter respect, though neither complete nor perfect, would come, I suggest, as a revelation to the Russian masses, as would the degree of freedom possessed by the individual under our present system of government.

Second, the new Moscow strategy, as I see it, unavoidably offers to the west an opening for the propagation of such knowledge and understanding. In this regard, we can do comparatively little by way of direct action against Soviet restrictions. I question that radio broadcasts and the like, though they no doubt have their place, impinge greatly upon the consciousness of the Russian populace. But the current Kremlin policy of economic warfare, now concentrated on the wooing of the uncommitted nations by promises, implemented or not, of material aid, later to take the form of a campaign to capture the export markets of the west, involves first of all the securing of the political confidence of those countries with which closer business and other ties are sought. The lamb does not play, or trade, with the obvious wolf. Therefore the wolf must assume sheep's clothing which, in this case, is the trappings of liberty and democracy.

There has been much speculation as to the reasons underlying the uprooting of Stalinism in the U.S.S.R., with all its easily foreseeable risks of shaking the confidence of the Russian people in the present regime. To my mind, at least one cogent reason is not far to seek. The shift of the campaign against the west from the military to the political and economic fields required that the U.S.S.R. pose as a true democracy before those states it seeks to beguile into closer commercial and political association.

Will you call it six o'clock, Mr. Chairman?

The Chairman: Has the hon. member leave to complete his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Go ahead.

Mr. Lusby: Now, certainly no avowed apostle of Stalin could be mistaken, even by