

THE AMERICAN SCENE TODAY

22 August 1955

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INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES

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Mr. Leo Cherne, Executive Director of the Research Institute of America, was born on 8 September 1912 in New York City. He is a graduate of New York University and the New York Law School, has served on the faculty of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, lectured at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces since 1939, and was a faculty member of the New School for Social Research from 1945 to 1952. He was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Parsons College, June 1951. Mr Cherne participated in drafting the Army and Navy industrial mobilization plans for the last war, and worked closely with virtually every military and defense agency during that period. At the joint request of General Douglas MacArthur and the War Department, he went to Tokyo in April 1946 to prepare a program for the revision of the Japanese tax and fiscal structure. He is also well known to national radio and television audiences. He has covered every national political convention, starting in 1940, and frequently serves on panels. As Chairman of the International Rescue Committee, Mr. Cherne made several trips to Berlin in 1953 at the invitation of the late Mayor Ernst Reuter to review the problems of the escapees coming across the Iron Curtain. With other members of the Board of Directors of IRC, he is presently completing plans for several major projects to aid those who seek freedom from Soviet tyranny. His writings include: "Adjusting Your Business to War, " 1939; "M-Day and what it Means to You, " 1940; "Your Business Goes to War, " 1943; and "The Rest of Your Life, " 1945. His articles have appeared in Saturday Evening Post, Colliers, Look, The Saturday Review, and The Atlantic Monthly.

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GENERAL HOLLIS: I think we are always prone to think of this period in our history as one that is characterized chiefly by technological development, new gadgets, so fast that we can't keep pace with them. But it seems to me that, when the historians go to write about this era, there will be a phenomenon that will far overshadow that in their books, and I refer to the change in the American philosophy whereby a people as insular in a way as we were 15 years ago have suddenly in a decade and a half submitted themselves to the voluntary discipline that goes with becoming the foremost national power in the world.

Our speaker today is a distinguished student of this phenomenon. He is associated with the Research Institute of America. You have seen his biography so he requires no detailed introduction from me, but the College is very proud this morning to give you as the first speaker of the Industrial College Mr. Leo Cherne.

MR. CHERNE: Thank you, General Hollis.

Gentlemen: This is a very real privilege for me. I have had the opportunity to participate in the courses on Industrial Mobilization during the last 16 years. This, however, is the first time I have been honored by an invitation to participate on the opening day of a new course, and I am deeply gratified.

I have been increasingly preoccupied in recent months with the area which I will discuss with you. It deals in great part with the phenomenon General Hollis mentioned. It deals with the central problem of a democratic society, the problem of national leadership confronting uncertain emergencies, but a national leadership nevertheless which requires some degree of certainty, support, understanding, conviction, and, most essential of all, that unique concept in organized society, the phrase General Hollis used, voluntary discipline, the voluntary submission to the consequences of voluntarily understood fact.

Our problems arise, as often as not, less from inadequate leadership than from an inadequate understanding of the requirements urged upon the business community by leadership, and occasionally an

inadequate understanding by leadership itself of the degree of knowledge, willingness, voluntary discipline which might well be available within the community.

I know no more appropriate thought to open this examination of our position, our problem, our concern in the years ahead than the quotation which was used in presenting the final problem to the Industrial College at the end of the school year last May. This quotation is from Corinthians: "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to do battle?"

I am afraid that the heart of our problem is that we are dealing with an uncertain sound. We are concerned with an imprecise and poorly understood entity. We are uncertain of our view about it. We are uncertain about the demand which we would make of our total community. We are uncertain of our direction because we are uncertain of the enemy's direction.

So much of our recent preoccupation has been focused on full nuclear war, world-wide in scope, that in the community at large there has been virtually no concern with the other possibilities--limited war or full war with limited use of nuclear weapons; also perhaps the most demanding of all possibilities, the continuation of the desperate struggle involving only periodic, peripheral, limited engagements, as in Korea and Viet Nam. It is in such a circumstance that we find our energy most difficult to apply, the circumstance in which the concepts of containment or especially the concepts involved in massive retaliation are of so limited relevance.

We find ourselves now in a situation that has many interpretations. My own interpretation is that we are at the climax of an interval in which the Soviet Government has found itself carrying an excessive burden, an excessive economic burden, an excessive agricultural burden. The Soviet Union and the system of satellite states has been by no means placed in crisis by this excess, but it has been under significant strain. It has confronted significant political, social, and economic difficulties. It has given evidence of increasing inability to continue in the same direction without letup. It has sought time. It has been eager to achieve a relaxation. It has secured all of these without the payment of any significant price.

It is easy to misread the Soviet announcement of a reduction of 600,000 men in the armed services. In my judgment, the announcement

is susceptible to only one interpretation--they intend to reduce the size of their armed forces because of a combination of two circumstances. They are not motivated by concern at the prospect of increased military jeopardy. Rather, they need the reduction because of manpower and economic considerations.

The Economist of July 23 has this paragraph which I think deserves very careful attention:

"The free nations have no interest in granting the Communist powers a breathing space and enabling them to gather strength again for fresh adventures in military or political pressure which might well be the outcome of a temporary reduction of armaments under inadequate guarantees."

The free nations have no such intention but they have unwittingly granted precisely that requirement. If we maintain the embargo on strategic goods plus the denial of credit and place restrictions on East-West trade, our advantages will have been cumulative. This is likely the Western nations' major bargaining instrument to bring about genuine Soviet concessions.

It is all the more regrettable, therefore, that Canada has already agreed to a substantial delivery of wheat to Poland, of which 85 percent, 15 million dollars worth, will be paid for by a loan (guaranteed by the Canadian government) from a Canadian bank to the Polish satellite government. We may well be only months away from similar ventures involving an effort on the part of the United States to be both "free" and find a market for some of our own agricultural surpluses.

Here we are dealing with the most critical shortage in the Soviet economy. The concept of strategic military goods is one which increasingly has little relevancy to the world in which we live. It is most probable that the real strategic commodity in the Soviet system of today is food. And it is equally probable that the Western World in the time to come will have assisted the Soviet in meeting that deficiency.

As we approached the meeting at the Summit, there were a number of admonitions, admonitions to the American people and, I think in a sense, also admonitions by leaders to themselves to walk cautiously, to give nothing without adequate return, not to relax until adequate comparable action by the Soviet was assured.

Have we given nothing? In my judgment, no. We have, I believe, given almost everything and have thus far received nothing. We have ended the cold war with only one, but important exception--we have not reduced armaments; we have not disbanded NATO; we have not altered the course which relies upon the Strategic Air Command. But there may well be a fundamental historic question as to whether or not in a democratic society we have not already taken actions, psychologically and politically, which may yet assure a devitalization of even those pillars of strength.

It is very difficult to describe the nature of the period we are in. There has been an obvious increase in the preoccupation with the problem of peace. We have gone through approximately a year and a half of exploration of a term called "coexistence." The effort at coexistence culminated in Geneva. The importance is obvious. Whatever it is we are in and whatever its nature, it must of necessity affect our national climate, our capacity to mobilize voluntary discipline, our ability to generate voluntary support of leadership, our national capacity to engage in a continued effort upon which security is based.

Where we stand may perhaps be most clearly seen if we look at where we have been. Let us, therefore, look at the various stages of our relationship with the Soviet Union since the end of World War II. The events at the end of that war can be divided into reasonably sharp and identifiable periods.

We first went through a period which extended from the latter portion of the war to September 1946. This period was brought to an end by an historic address by Secretary of State James F. Byrnes. Throughout that period we were persuaded that, as a matter of national policy, the Soviet Union was an ally of the United States. To be sure the ally was crude, rough, suspicious, and unpredictable. But not until December 1946 was there any real or fundamental official questioning of the fact that we were dealing with a great unwashed ally.

The change, when it came, was not dramatic. It preceded a series of tragic events such as the blockade of Berlin. The change reflected the less obvious difficulties in Iran, in Central Europe, in the councils of the United Nations. The change, however, was nonetheless real, involving an altered official view of our relationship with the Soviet Union and of the nature of the Soviet's drives and purposes.

The second interval, the one in which this change occurred, extended roughly from the beginning of 1947 to the outbreak of the Korean war in June 1950. It was during this second period that we increasingly recognized that we were facing a dangerous antagonist. The Soviet we saw was neither an ally nor an enemy, but rather was clearly an antagonist. In place of our previous conviction that he was merely unwashed and unpredictable, we began to learn that he was predictably dangerous.

With the beginning of the Korean war, our understanding of the Soviet Union entered what appeared to be the final phase. It is no exaggeration to observe that with the beginning of the Korean war our nation overwhelmingly recognized that the Soviet was neither ally nor antagonist but was indeed an enemy. There were times when it seemed certain the Soviet would remain an enemy to death.

Certain aspects of our belief were subject to fluctuations--the question of whether or not final conflict was inevitable and the question of ultimate alteration of the aggressive character of the Kremlin. But at no point was there any question that we were then facing an enemy.

This conviction prevailed until the death of Stalin. It began to wither after the first few months of the new Malenkov government. As evidence increased that the new and shaky hierarchy was experiencing some difficulty in wielding effective governmental control over its own territory, we began to be less concerned with the danger to our territory, especially from the Soviet Union. And as the Soviet Union became increasingly engrossed with its own problems, the focus of our antagonism began to shift more and more to Communist China.

The concept of coexistence with the Soviet Union was absorbed by substantial groups of our people and some elements of our national leadership before the first actual use of the word "coexistence." The first use of the phrase which caught international attention came from the Kremlin almost immediately following the disastrous Geneva pact which divided Viet Nam. Now there is a louder chorus that agrees that we are in a period of "competitive coexistence."

The best definition of "competitive coexistence" I have seen is one by Cy Sulzberger. In an article in the New York Times he defined it as "A dynamic condition in which ideological and economic and political systems seek to dominate each other by means short of war."

We found ourselves exploring the possibilities of coexistence in still a new phase, when we continued on the one hand to recognize that we were dealing with a relentless enemy, but on the other hoped for the possibility that we might somehow make friends with him. In the Kremlin, in the White House, in London, and in Paris the world leaders seemed to conclude, with reason, that our civilization could not live much longer under the shadow of the mushroom cloud. The only alternative appeared to be for the West to get along with the Soviet Union.

Since the advent of thermonuclear weapons, it seems clear that there is no longer any alternative to peace if there is to be a happy and well world. So the United States and the European free nations began to cultivate the idea of achieving coexistence and began studying methods to do so.

The distance we traveled in this interval can, I think, best be understood just by looking at one aspect of Western change. I had the privilege of being at Bermuda in December 1953 when the leaders of France, Great Britain, and the United States met and when the key conflict between Churchill and Eisenhower flowed from Churchill's insistence that the Western nations meet at the Summit with the new Soviet leaders. President Eisenhower questioned the "new look", as you will recall, in the Soviet Union and rigidly resisted the concept that anything other than confusion to the morale and purpose of the West could emerge from such a meeting. That was less than 24 months ago; the change has been profound, because we have just climbed to the summit and are now descending, and in our descent, as the clouds at the summit are left behind, certain things about the terrain become increasingly visible.

There was a great deal of talk of coexistence and by and large the American people accepted it as a result of the Geneva conference. But what kind of coexistence? Where will it take the West? What will be the risk and consequences? But the less explicit and undoubtedly the most persistent nagging question remains: How reliable and permanent will coexistence be?

There are several kinds of coexistence. Some are as unacceptable as the consequences following an atomic war. But this, I think, is an understanding which is not yet generally shared by the American community, and therein lies part of the problem.

Among the kinds of coexistence, one, I think, can accurately be described as Soviet domination--a peace in which the Communist

scheme of things would dominate the world. This is obviously completely repulsive to us and no American leader in his right mind would accept it knowingly. I am not equally persuaded that we would refuse to accept a course of behavior which could unknowingly lead to the same result.

The second approach to coexistence is based upon the status quo. This approach would accept, without approval, the fact of Soviet domination of a substantial portion of the world. It involves containment of the Soviet in that area without any really affirmative effort to diminish it. This approach to coexistence involves an unstable world and, of course, provides no assurance of a durable peace. Officially accepted, it is this approach to coexistence that the United States Information Agency is in a sense now pursuing in its contact with the balance of the world.

"On the United States side there has been a reciprocal change of tone and change of approach. The Voice of America has not ameliorated its attack on communism. However, it follows closely the Administration interpretation of the Geneva conference, which holds that the four-power meeting established the genuineness of the desire of the Soviet to keep and maintain the peace.

"The Voice of America is exercising caution not to damage the 'spirit of Geneva' by any ill-tempered rebuff to the new evidences of moderation and objectivity on the part of the Soviet propaganda media." *

There is a third approach to coexistence, something in the neighborhood of co-habitation, a permanent living with Communism. Here more is involved than merely acceptance of a fact. There is also the question of moral acceptance of Soviet behavior. This is as fundamentally unpalatable to the West as the acceptance of democratic institutions would be to the Reds.

Finally, there is the cold war coexistence or competitive coexistence which involves neither stalemate nor accepted world division. It implies the continuous contest, the jockeying for position, the ebb and flow of influences and a fluid world which we and the Soviet Union continue to struggle over by means short of full war. But, if my judgment is correct, neither the American people nor the American leadership consciously or clearly confront this period today because

* Quotation from article in New York Times of August 14, 1955.

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this period cannot be in the widest sense described as peace, and it is peace we are pursuing, and to a substantial extent and in many inconsistent ways it is peace which we have bought.

Now, so long as the words "coexistence" or "peace" continue to intrude on public consciousness and affect national judgment, the effect on our security will be significant. The effect will flow less from the type of coexistence we are in than from an imprecise and emotional interpretation by the American community.

The very emphasis on coexistence or peace, the very existence of a conference at Geneva, the very presence of a group of American farmers in the Soviet Union and a group of Soviet farmers in the United States has already given birth to a strong feeling there has indeed been a fundamental change in the relationship between the Soviet Union and the Free World. It is this reaction which may well have the most disastrous consequence and which is the central point of these extended comments to you.

Let us examine the conviction that there has indeed been a change within the Soviet Union, because the fundamental premise behind this preoccupation with coexistence is that there has been a change in the Soviet Union.

First, there undoubtedly has been a letup of repression within the Soviet Union, not an end to it, but a letup, because the secret police have been subdued, not eliminated. More consumer goods are available--slightly more in the Soviet Union, considerably more in the satellite states. I have had occasion to visit the Soviet sector of Berlin each year during the last four years. I have seen the dramatic change which has occurred in East Berlin, a change visible in the shop windows, visible on the faces of the residents, a change visible in the atmosphere, and, unhappily, visible in the lessened contrast between East Berlin and West Berlin. This change was inaugurated, not so much by altered Soviet policy as by the revolt of June 17, 1953, one of the most shattering events which has thus far occurred in the entire orbit of Soviet control. This date, as a matter of fact, may well have been the signal for the beginning of the letup of repression, and the beginning of the emphatic Soviet search for time and for coexistence.

Secondly, it is obvious that within the Kremlin there is for the moment government by committee. Government by committee is less strong, less affirmative, less dynamic and less certain than government

headed by an unchallenged leader. But at the same time I think it must also be assumed that committee membership will be changed, members will die, perhaps even by purge. Such government by committee is not stable, nor does it provide the basis for any alteration of our permanent posture.

There has been, in addition, a new politeness in Soviet diplomatic conduct. And this, I think, must be underlined because, oddly enough, the very core of the Western preoccupation with the fact of Soviet change stems from this. Here, incidentally, is where I think we have been most foolish. I have the feeling that the United States has responded more to the new politeness of the Soviet representatives than we have to any fundamental or significant change.

We are traditionally good sports. If for an interval of time somebody has called us names and then desists, we automatically respond with gratitude, without any critical examination as to whether or not the new behavior may be far more dangerous than the previous vulgarity. Our gratitude, is perhaps best illustrated in our first reaction to the announcement that the first of the flyers would be released by Red China. We looked upon it as an action motivated by great humanity. Indeed the sources of power within the Soviet Union would have to believe, on the basis of our reaction, that there is perhaps greater profit in stealing men or property and then returning them than there is in not stealing in the first place, because it is the return which produces the gratitude, and it is very hard to be grateful when someone hasn't taken anything.

Evidence of the real change which has occurred--and there is some real change--is to be found in an area with which I am particularly familiar, the reduced number of escapees from the Soviet Union and from the Soviet satellite states. Unhappily, what at one time was an amount of 4,000 a day escaping from the Soviet Union and the satellite states is now more nearly 300 a month. And it is very clear that closer patrolling along the border is not the major reason for this. The major reason is a diminished incentive to escape.

Let me also add that there is another reason for the reduction and that is the Western behavior toward those who have escaped has not provided an unqualified inducement to others who have learned thoroughly what the future holds for those who have escaped. Unhappily, many refugees faced the risk of leaving their families to escape to the West only to find themselves facing a dead end of Western indifference or hostility.

The Soviet Union, too, has learned. It has learned how modest relaxation of controls on their part and a repeated emphasis of Western indifference will alter this flow of escapees and even reverse it. And so, by a series of peripheral alterations of behavior, it has produced a profound world-wide alteration of conduct.

Peripheral, the Soviet visit to Tito. Fundamental? On the contrary. Only the fact of Stalin prevented that visit earlier. It didn't take many months to learn how stupid had been Stalin's behavior toward Tito to have brought about this most serious defection. Here, indeed, was the logical and, if anything, delayed effort to modify the repercussions of Soviet stupidity.

Second, Nehru's visit to the Soviet Union. Alteration of behavior on the part of the Soviet? No. Most skillful traditional behavior, and perhaps an increasing indication of an increasing attraction to the USSR on the part of India's national leader.

The exchange of farmers and other visitors. Alteration of traditional behavior? How short memory is. In the thirties the Soviet Union was deluged by teams of Americans who went to the Soviet Union to impart the best of their knowledge and return to the United States to vow that they had seen the future and it worked.

The Iron Curtain did not fall until the end of World War II. It has not been lifted now. It has not even been cracked. An illustration: William Randolph Hearst, Jr., was permitted to visit the Soviet Union. I don't know how the Soviet Union could by any other process have gotten a better press. For 20 solid years the Hearst papers had been the unrelenting enemy of Communism, venting its spleen against it on every issue. Young Hearst returned from his visit and, while he doesn't use the same platitudes, he, too, nevertheless returned with his repeated statements, "They do, indeed, want peace." He found that out in three days, through a translator.

The change that has occurred has been a change in skill, not in direction. It has been the most extraordinary application of additional skill, directed to traditional objectives, in the shortest period of time I have ever encountered. I am persuaded that this change has made the Soviet Union and the satellite states a more dangerous bloc of enemies, strategically, or at least tactically, in terms of potential injury to the West. I would far prefer a continuation of previous Soviet stupidity and bungling on the international scene and of repression in its most complete form at home.

Now these, then, are the major indications that the Soviet Union has changed and are cited to support the belief that a policy of coexistence in our relationship to the Soviet can indeed be durable. There can be no question that there has been a change in certain aspects of Soviet behavior, no matter how temporary or peripheral to the main stream of Soviet intention. An understanding, however, of the nature and durability of coexistence may be easily attained by examining the things which have not changed.

There has been no acceptance of free elections anywhere. Incidentally, this has been required by every agreement entered into with the Soviet Union from 1942 through 1954. My guess is that we now have in the neighborhood of 11 separate treaties with the Soviet Union that require free elections in every part of the world. We continue to sign them and so do they, and we probably will continue to sign them.

There has been no evidence of any greater willingness to accept or encourage German unity on any other than Soviet terms, and the Soviet terms are terms which, in one way or another, would assure to the Soviet Union total permanent neutralization of Germany and political control of the German state. Anybody would, of course, be mystified if the Soviet Union would not accept unity on this basis. They have moved more rapidly toward the attainment of these objectives in the past 90 days than the sum total of Soviet effort within the preceding three years.

Adenauer's visit in September will be a dangerous one. Adenauer's death would be disastrous. There is no support within the free German state for Adenauer's policy of Europeanization. The policy rests upon the tenacity and extraordinary stubbornness, strength, courage, and vigor of a very old man, and a very unique one.

There has not been the slightest repression of the activities of the Comintern or the functioning of the Communist Party in any country anywhere in the world, despite the fact that the Communist Party in certain countries represents a definite loss to the Soviet Union, not a gain. They are a hazard, an irritant, far more important than the marginal utility of Communist Party influence in certain areas. Thus, for example, in England the British Communist Party's damaging effect to the Soviet because of its irritation to the Englishmen is acceptable to the Kremlin solely for the subversion, espionage, and sabotage value of that small band in the event of a future war.

There has not, in other words, been a single fundamental concession from the Soviet Union during the entire time when our conviction of change has induced us to welcome the possibility of coexistence.

I think it is obvious that the Soviet Union is not seeking war in the visible future. I think it has been equally obvious since 1945 that the Soviet Union has not been seeking war. The worst disaster that the Soviet Union has suffered since 1945 came about in Korea as a result of the stupidity of an old and stubborn man, Stalin, who forgot the lessons he himself taught the revolutionary movement. The Soviet Union has undoubtedly had the most to lose and the most to gain by piecemeal aggression and subversion. I think it is safe, as I said before, to assume a very real Kremlin fear of atomic or nuclear war.

We have more reason to be afraid than the Soviet Union because we are in certain respects infinitely less prepared and far more vulnerable. The fact is that as time goes by--and there isn't much more time that need go by--the ratio of favorable elements in terms of vulnerability versus capability will have switched to the advantage of the Soviet Union. If, as these facts suggest, preoccupation with coexistence is not based upon real or reliable facts, nor upon a substantial or permanent change, then I think we must double our watchfulness of the consequences of an emphasis on coexistence or peace.

Let me emphasize that whether coexistence is reliable or not, justified or not, durable or not, there are nevertheless certain consequences flowing from our belief in it. These are aspects with which you are particularly concerned, especially in any emergency short of full nuclear war world-wide in scope.

First, whatever the statement and however high the level from which the statement may come, whatever even our present intention, any continuing preoccupation with coexistence--under any name, competitive, peaceful, democratic, or any other kind of coexistence--must eventually result in lessened American expenditure on armament.

We have recently devoted some attention to the possibility that there has been far too great reliance upon the one aspect of preparation involved in massive retaliation and undoubtedly inadequate reliance upon other aspects of armament and strength more useful in other than full worldwide thermonuclear war. If the deficiency is to be made up, it

must not be by a reshuffling or a redivision of the slice of the pie. It must be by an enlargement of the size of the total pie. The emphasis on coexistence or any form of "peace" must of necessity make this objective a much more difficult one to attain.

We approach the elections of 1956. The party in office will enter the election lists on the campaign of "peace and prosperity." The word "peace" will not have been used in the United States as many separate times as it will be used from next July to November. If, as is probable, Adlai Stevenson is the candidate of the Democratic Party, you can be sure that for every Republican assertion of the extraordinary reliability of the peace that has been achieved, there will be a Stevenson assertion that the search for peace has been inadequate. There will literally be neither a political party nor a segment of a political party which in 1956 can take a public position or will take a public position that peace has been jeopardized by the myopia and sentimentality of our recent relaxations.

Senator Knowland is quiet today; Senator McCarthy is enjoying the fate he richly earned. One of the misfortunes of that interval is that responsible antagonism and relentless opposition to the Communist Party fell into hands which were less concerned with that necessary achievement than with their own political advantage.

The Soviet Union is going to look awfully good to the American people in the pre-election months of 1956. In the process, what possibility is there that the Government will sustain anything resembling today's unpopular high taxation? And even this taxation has been reduced. You can maintain high taxation only in the presence of a popular assumption that danger is imminent. You cannot do so indefinitely otherwise. I believe we are most vulnerable in the area where our own inadequacy is increased by our self-delusion about coexistence.

If there is an extended period of time in which our people are persuaded that peaceful rapprochement with the Soviet is possible, it will be almost impossible to achieve the required industrial dispersal and even a minimally adequate civilian defense. Dispersal and civil defense are not military measures. If they are to be genuine and not merely morale or propaganda phrases, they must involve substantial and uneconomic expenditure.

Dispersal means vast dislocations. Preparation of this character bucks the tide of normal community resistance. All of our everyday

instincts militate against additional expenditure and dislocation, and this resistance would be indeed decisive if there is any disbelief that additional danger confronts us. Every normal obstacle in any democratic society would be multiplied if we pursued even a real prospect of durable peace. It would be little short of tragic, therefore, to sacrifice the kind of protection against atomic warfare we require at a minimum, in exchange for a fictitious and glib acceptance of an empty phrase "peaceful coexistence." How much of a possibility, even in today's climate, is there that a program of minimal adequate dispersal and significantly intensified civilian defense would be accepted by the American people or the necessary budget appropriated by the Congress?

Less closely tied to this is the problem in a democratic society, not equally true in a totalitarian state, of maintaining awareness of danger. Without that awareness, without fear, without the constant presence of external threat, it would require voluntary discipline and willingness to sacrifice, coupled with the understanding that the discipline and sacrifice may prove in the end to be unnecessary, in a degree greater than our society has thus far been able to achieve.

There will be greatly enlarged difficulty in maintaining foreign alliances and foreign support. I don't know why I say "There will be." Realistically, I think we have to say there already has been. In defense against the Soviet Union we already have paid a severe price because of neutralism which has grown up throughout Europe and a diminished fear of the Soviet Union which has grown up throughout the Continent. I think we are at the beginning of a vast series of dislocations and difficulties with our allies.

If my sources of information are accurate, while the British people have relaxed and even as their government has reduced military expenditures, there is now concern within the British Government that the United States delegation at Geneva bought a great deal more than it sold. And in this exchange, a balance of trade unfavorable to us is tragic because upon it security depends.

Now, what is it we may do? Even if Soviet dynamics or strategy indicated the advisability of an interval of years of minimal tension, even if strategically they were to conclude that minimal international tension would permit the greatest prospects for time toward ultimate victory, there remains the question whether even that is a feasible environment in a police state.

It is clear, for example, that the Soviets greatly desire an American depression. It has been equally clear that American armament has contributed to some portion of our high economic activity. And it is most clear of all that Soviet conduct has been responsible for American rearmament and consequently for an American boom. It is at least possible to speculate that it is not because the Soviets wanted this but because they couldn't help it.

It is improbable that the Kremlin can long retain its internal power if the appearance of international threat and pressure is removed. The Soviet Union cannot live without repression and repression cannot be sustained and justified unless there is an appearance of danger.

The changeable nature of our strongest attitudes is so little recognized that I think it important that we recall that in 1945 we were locked in deadly warfare with two nations, two peoples uniformly and deeply hated by citizens of the United States. As a matter of fact, an attitude prevailed among us, especially in reference to the Japanese, an unfair, unjust attitude but a really deep-seated one, a fundamental inability to live at peace with these people, and only to a slightly lesser extent with Germany.

How long did it take for these attitudes to change, for us to begin to build a possibility of coexistence with them? Three years? At most five. By January 1950 we were well on the road to complete coexistence with both Japan and Germany.

The point I am making is this: Don't for a moment accept the present attitude toward the Soviet Union as an assurance that this attitude, no matter how deep-seated, is any protection against the danger of coexistence.

What can we do? I would like an hour to define the possibilities and obviously I have to sum them up in just the remaining moment or two of conclusion.

We can and must redefine coexistence in our efforts to secure a durable peace so that it does not confuse the American community. There must not be any public confusion of coexistence with peace. Coexistence must not be made to have either the appearance or the semblance of peace because it has no element of peace in it and no lessening of the danger of war. We must on every level emphasize the continuing danger.

We must seek within the United Nations and elsewhere permanent controls against war such as are involved in the Baruch atomic energy plan and may perhaps be involved in the President's plan of area inspection and exchange of blueprints. But we cannot rely on promises or on treaties. We must have the protection of an apparatus of inspection and control, and it cannot be merely a propaganda plan, nor can it be only partially effective. This is the one area where there is no substitute for total effectiveness.

Next, we must prepare for war. Nothing has occurred which has diminished the future possibility even as we seek to avoid it. And we must prepare for the possibility of any kind of war. We must make a continuous effort to compel fundamental Soviet concessions in Viet Nam, in Korea, in Germany, lest we find ourselves settling for politeness and cocktail parties. Delightful as they are, they are no solution to the international difficulties.

We must, in my judgment, reassert the policy of containment. We must, at a minimum, resist any further Communist expansion by whatever process, and we must be ready to risk war when provoked by real danger. This means, as President Eisenhower has asserted, patience, but it doesn't mean carte blanche, which patience can sometimes come to resemble.

We must intensify, not relax, military and scientific preparation--the actions designed to compel dispersal--to compel not to persuade. There never has been an adequate dispersal achieved by voluntary corporate action.

We must fight the battle of the backward areas of the world with huge resources and very considerable courage and imagination.

We must wait and watch for change in the Soviet Union line because the Soviets cannot remain the Soviets and enjoy permanently true peace. In other words, we have to find the line for ourselves midway between being trigger-happy and being slap-happy.

The very problem is in many ways a semantic one. It has been multiplied by the very existence of the one word "coexistence." By the very depth of our humane search for peace--we are indeed the world's most peaceful people--we fall victim of our own hopes and desires too quickly and too easily.

The psychological consequence of semantics can shape national posture and action. Wars have been started and some of the most bitter wars have been fought for semantic reasons. Almost every religious war was a semantic one.

I realize that I have not given too sanguine a prospect of coexistence or the Summit's search for peace. First of all, I recognize I am not the only speaker this morning, that the gentleman who preceded me had far more knowledge, contact, and wisdom at his disposal. I did not hear the Secretary's presentation. I have the respect for this institution which enables me to rely upon your judgment to weigh the knowledge and wisdom which has been presented and just sift out, with a generous dose of salt, those of my prejudices which appear to be consistent or valid. Of course, I am a prejudiced observer.

I don't trust the Soviet Union. That is one prejudice. I loathe the Communist system. That is another. I do not believe it can permit peace for its own citizens; I know it cannot really open the doors of its empire.

I have other prejudices as well. I have in this instance the prejudice against the easy willingness of democratic people to snap at the bait called peace. I know how deeply we desire it. I know how unacceptable to us war has always been and how impossible the A and H bombs appear to have made it. I also know that doesn't mean it will not occur. There is no law against mass self-destruction. There is no real assurance that mankind will not commit suicide. There is no promise that this civilization must survive. There is evidence in history that virtue is inevitably rewarded.

There is, in my judgment, no alternative to strength, to the preparation that you are participating in, to the process which begins for you this morning, to a year of invaluable purpose to the nation, to the energy, the contribution, the imagination which will be the result of the months of your study and the subsequent years of application of that knowledge.

It is for that reason especially that it has been a privilege, a greater one than I have before enjoyed, to share these thoughts, these prejudices, this search for security with you. My deep hope is that my words will have made some small contribution in orienting you to the work in the months ahead. My deepest wishes for the maximum in energy, imagination, and satisfaction to you in the months that follow.

Thank you.

COLONEL BARRETT: Mr. Cherne is ready for questions.

QUESTION: For about five months or so when they first started talking about a conference it was felt we would get our fingers burned. As far as I could read from the newspapers, the conference was almost a flop until President Eisenhower permitted a photograph with each other's arms about them. Who persuaded the United States that this was the peaceful thing to do? The press? Who persuaded us that it was a good idea and we were not going to get hurt by it?

MR. CHERNE: I think everyone involved convinced himself. The Washington diplomatic participants persuaded themselves that there was purpose in what they were doing. In addition, there were certain very real and successful techniques on the part of the Soviet participants which had a very understandable impact on all those, including the President, who had contact with them.

This was a far less sinister group of men than those we have been accustomed to contact. They look human. They talk human. They get drunk. They eat good food. They are cheerful. It is very difficult to confront them for any period of time and still emerge with a feeling of danger at their hands which is as great as it was before you saw them. This cuts two ways. Their fear of us would of necessity be far less than it was before. The only question is, is that of value to us?

The modification of their fear toward us and our fear of them is a Soviet advantage on both levels. The one point, the one you correctly identified, in which we accomplished a very significant victory, was in the President's proposal, a masterpiece of psychological warfare, of peace propaganda, of capturing the imagination of the world.

But here, too, in long-range terms the effect may be an undesirable one for us for reasons which have not been examined adequately, not that the Soviet would accept the plan. The danger is of another sort. Part of the reason which has induced collaborative effort on the part of the Western Nations in defense against possible Soviet threat has been some degree of uncertainty of the consistency of American desire for peace. This was evidence that America really does want peace and most spectacular in stating its desire for it.

As a result, you now have an unhappy combination of facts, diminished fear of the Soviet Union, which has been a consistent fact within Europe during these last two years, and now, in addition to that, diminished fear of the United States as well, that is diminished fear that the United States would take any action under any circumstances which might produce war. As a result of it, you have a total combination designed to produce a letup, designed to produce ease in democratic forces, those of Western Europe and our own. That combination, if there is any continuing danger at the hands of the Soviet Union, is a most unhappy one.

The president, the diplomats, the participants, all contributed in deluding each other. Most important of all, there is our national desire for peace, on the part of all of us from the President to the citizen of Peoria, that most contributed to it.

To see this, all you have to see is the spontaneous response of the citizens of Iowa at the visit of the Soviet farm delegation. You realize that the American people have no capacity to harbor hostility for any period of time and will more than jump at the possibility of accepting friendship and extending the hand of peace. How to build the country's acceptance of voluntary discipline for the unpopular, unpleasant, and costly measures upon which security is based is the dilemma which is at the very heart of one phase of this year's production.

QUESTION: Would you care to comment in regard to the first part of your statement concerning inevitable relaxation. What is our avenue to keep the interest of the people going in 1956 to the point of civilian defense?

MR. CHERNE: I think two possible avenues. I think it is probable that within the next 30 to 90 days the President will become worried at the degree to which we have nationally accepted the "olive branch." They offered and we accepted a unilateral gesture, nevertheless a profound one. Within these 90 days, I think we are going to hear a great deal from the Foreign Office of Great Britain in the form of warnings. Strangely enough, they were the ones who first insisted on the meeting at the Summit and now they are the most worried about whether or not we climbed too high in air too rarefied.

The combination of these may produce what is most needed, and, without repudiating the desire for peace, nevertheless make us reassess

some of the fundamental facts of the cold war and the necessity of continuing American energy and voluntary discipline to maintain our place in it. In the absence of Presidential leadership on this level, I doubt that it can be accomplished.

Another possibility is Soviet blundering. The history of Soviet action since 1945 has been, happily for the West, a series of periodic blunders. A number of the steps central to Western defense have come about less as a result of our intelligence than as a result of Soviet stupidity.

The Marshall Plan became fact because the Soviet blundered it into fact. It contemplated the offer of comparable goods to the Soviet satellite states and the Soviet rejected the offer. Prior to that, there was as much chance of Congress enacting the Marshall Plan as of the Soviets capitulating voluntarily tomorrow.

Similarly, the defection of Yugoslavia from the central Soviet was a Soviet blunder; also the Berlin blockade. The rearmament of the West as a result of the Korean war was another Kremlin blunder. In these next few months we may find, in the midst of brilliant international strategy, a Soviet blunder of great magnitude.

Another very interesting thing is that we were at the point where we were beginning to hate South Korea more than we did North Korea, and only ten days ago an American plane was shot down by the Communists, and all of a sudden the Syngman Rhee riots in South Korea dropped from the headlines, a Soviet blunder.

Unhappily, the greatest expert blunder of them all is now gone, our greatest ally in our own defense, Josef Stalin, and this one fact reduces somewhat the possibility for assistance from that direction.

QUESTION: I don't want to underestimate the flexibility of Congressional opinion, but over the past 15 years has there not been quite a trend of our being more politically mature, less naive to these things? I was wondering if the country isn't looking at coexistence with a bit more "tongue in cheek" than was the case a few years ago, with more staying power, more of the voluntary discipline you speak of?

MR. CHERNE: Undoubtedly the years, especially since 1945, have seen the most profound change in American political maturity

than I think in our entire history. Undoubtedly these ten years have seen the most revolutionary alteration of the world position of the United States.

We have seen in an interval after war when escapism and retreat from problems would be most expected, the most consistent and extraordinary acceptance of the American people of voluntary discipline, of international actions, national aid, and military strength. Political maturity is evident; staying power is another question.

I have no sense that the current playing with a new toy, coexistence, is sophisticated, careful, or temporary. I have the feeling that as a nation we are all relieved. I think it is accidental that Senator McCarthy today literally has no audience at the very point where almost for the first time he is saying some correct things with some responsibility.

I think we are not in a mood at this moment to listen to danger because we have a profound respect and acceptance for a great military figure who is accepted universally by the American people as a great President, and the people are saying to themselves, "Ike is satisfied; I am satisfied." And in that kind of an environment, staying power, or sophistication, or tongue in cheek may exist but I think it is marginal. I think it doesn't effectively moderate the change in climate such as would make a sharp increase in civil defense a political impossibility.

QUESTION: With respect to Nehru's visit to Russia, is it possible that he is leaning so much toward Communism that he may possibly lead India into Russian regime?

MR. CHERNE: My own judgment is no. My judgment is that Nehru is not leaning toward Communism. Nehru has a deep-seated antipathy to the Soviet Union rivaled only by a deeper antipathy to capitalism and the West.

He is in a sharp and historic conflict with Red China for the leadership of Asia. Nehru, in the handling of Communists and Communism within India, is remorseless. Due process and temperate action is not the procedure of the Indian government in dealing with its own Communists.

Nehru knows that his only immediate enemy is Communism in Asia. He believes the struggle can be won only by out-promising and out-campaigning the Communists, and by rivaling them in beating the West.

Nehru is on a tight rope. He is playing a shrewd, skillful, difficult, and dangerous game. It is probable that he is the only Indian leader alive today who could walk that tight rope. Nehru, is in a sense the most difficult and in some ways the most sinister leader of a vital nation necessary to us. I wish I had faith in him, in his purposes. I wish he had a capacity to respect and understand the West. I wish that his hatred of us were no greater than his suspicion of the Soviet Union.

Nehru is a Marxist. Nehru is in love with power. Nehru is on the very crest of a great revolution. The odds favor China, not India. Nehru is playing that struggle as a demagogue who harvests all the centuries long hatred of Western imperialism. That game helps the Soviet. If Nehru died tomorrow, I think we would be in rougher shape in India than we are in today, but I would by no means describe the shape we are in today as a desirable one in that area of the world. Especially undesirable is the role played by Khrishna-Menon in India's foreign affairs. If Nehru is indeed only a pro-Soviet Neutralist, Khrishna-Menon is restrained by no neutralism. His passions are Soviet-bound and have been for a very long time.

COLONEL BARRETT: Mr. Cherne, on behalf of the Commandant, the faculty, and the student body, I wish to thank you for a most inspiring and dynamic talk. Your trumpet gave out a clear and easily understood sound.

(15 Dec 1955--250)K/dcp