

Sufficient Protection? New U.S. Atomic-Weapons Policy Questioned

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Will the new atomic-weapons policy of the United States bring about sufficient protection from Communist aggression round the world?

An inquiry into this question was presented by Saville R. Davis, American news editor of The Christian Science Monitor, before a meeting of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts yesterday.

Mr. Davis said it was questionable whether Washington's recent decision to rely on atomic weapons would be effective in meeting localized wars incited by the Kremlin, such as in Korea and Indochina.

Mr. Davis' subject was "Military Factors and Their Effect on Policy." He shared the platform with Prof. William L. Langer, director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard, who spoke on the "East-West Conflict in Retrospect and Prospect."

They appeared before the televised concluding session of the 32d School of International Relations conducted by the league. The two-day conference was held at Sanders Theater in cooperation with Radcliffe College.

Professor Langer, an authority on Russia and former assistant

director of the Central Intelligence Agency, said there is a possibility that the structure and character of the Soviet Union may gradually change under internal and external pressures.

Some of these pressures were listed as: (1) the continuing power struggle within the Kremlin walls; (2) dissatisfaction among Soviet consumers over the low standard of living; (3) growing friction between the U.S.S.R. and its satellites, evidenced in riots and unrest; and (4) the military strength of the United States.

He questioned whether Moscow could for a long time maintain the hermetic isolation of the Iron Curtain. While the free world regards communism as a menace, he said, "the Communists certainly must regard freedom as an enormous threat to them."

Conflicting System

But, he warned, there is no reason for too much optimism and that "even those things which appear favorable on the surface may be purposeful procrastinations by the Russians." He added:

"We had better not rejoice too soon. . . . We may be getting ourselves into a worse condition than before. It is a great danger

to underrate the Soviet's capabilities."

He said the free world may have to prepare itself for living with a constant condition of international crises, and must be willing to spend time, money, and effort for its own defense.

Ultimately, Professor Langer added, one of the two conflicting systems will have to vanish. "One of them will prevail," he said. "I am sure it will be the one that justifies itself most to humanity at large."

Mr. Davis raised the question whether atomic retaliation is the answer to localized Communist warfare, particularly in view of official Washington's estimates that 13 million Americans could be killed in a first exchange of atomic weapons.

"Would we accept a challenge—say in Iraq—if we knew it meant 13,000,000 Americans killed and several score cities leveled in order to do what 10 divisions could do? And if we didn't, would our bluff have been called?" He added:

"I wonder whether Washington has thought through the dangers of relying on atomic force. This means that every threat of localized war will be generalized into the threat of all-out atomic war."

"Now we will let the Communists strike and capture a country, and then wait for a

time and place of our own to retaliate."

Mr. Davis said Washington's decision that the Kremlin does not intend war in the predictable future provides "a poised, nonpanic basis" of military thinking as long as there is assurance that the Soviet will not make headway by local expansion in the meantime.

He also indicated that the change in Washington's policy may have been motivated at first by economic considerations rather than those of military strategy.

'Words Not Enough'

However, Mr. Davis said, the evolution of new military policy and alliances are not enough. He continued:

"Today the Marshall Plan has expired and technical assistance, Point Four, has been allowed to languish. We have nothing in their place.

"We use propaganda, but words are not enough, especially as we only imperfectly live up to them in our lives, and the Communists are always trying to exploit that fact. So far as actions are concerned, we are left with little but naked military alliances and force to govern our relations with the outside world.

"We have not evolved a moral and economic and social pro-

gram to give motive and direction to the revolutionary changes in policy and military strategy.

"I cannot believe that this gap in our foreign policy will be allowed to last. But while it does, we are mistaking the real nature of power. . . . Physical force is not enough. It is an instrument, not a policy.

"The military problem at base is a problem of selfmastery and the most important battleground is not strategic but in one's own thinking—in setting directions in using force for a precisely controlled purpose, and not letting it get out of hand.

"We could for example, create something much larger and at the same time less costly program than the Marshall Plan in the field of aid to underdeveloped areas. A program that could reach out positively to the peoples of the East, working not by ourselves but as part of the world community under the United Nations—helping these people onto their feet and into their place in the sun.

"If this seem bold, then bold programs are the minimum for survival in times like these. And all the physical force the atom can release is not enough to substitute for an idea like this: a program to fulfill the democratic process and hold up a light to the world.

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