

Psychological Warfare and American
World Leadership

In his San Francisco speech last fall, President Eisenhower declared that "we must continue to help free people stay free, prevent further conquest by the Communists that would increase their strength and weaken us, and give to those already enslaved hope that will enable them to continue resisting the oppressor until his hold can be gradually weakened and loosened from within."

He defined psychological warfare as "the struggle for the minds and hearts of men," stated that "in 'cold war' we use all means short of war to lead men to believe in the values that will preserve peace and freedom" and designated the means to be employed for spreading the truth as "psychological."

How are we thus to win "the minds and hearts of men"? What is it in the lives and thoughts of the peoples of the world to which we can address the psychological attack the President thinks so necessary? Can we rely for persuading them upon the statement of our traditional principles of liberty and democracy and the rights of the individual? Or are these people thinking in different terms of other even more primary and immediate interests which Soviet propaganda so far has much more realistically and successfully appealed to?

The concerns of the peoples of Asia and Africa and the Middle East, and to a large extent of Europe and Latin America as well, have been and are with freedom from war, release from colonial control, reduction of the power of the landlord, more food, better clothing and shelter, and a more adequate satisfaction of other material ^{and spiritual} wants. It is these things which now mean something to the world mass. It is to the satisfaction of these desires that our policy and the propaganda which interprets it must be directed. Unless we recognize this fact, our efforts at persuasion will fail, and Soviet promises, false as we know them to be, may succeed.

The result, it must be confessed, is a dilemma which we so far have not resolved. We and our principal allies are the "have" countries and in our recent history seem to have been principally motivated by the desire to maintain the status quo. Within our own country there are interests which will bitterly oppose espousal of a policy toward the "have not" regions of the earth which can be calculated to

bring them to our side.

The basic question confronting us, as we seek to implement the psychological warfare the President has so wisely called on us to wage, is whether or not we have retained as a nation enough of the revolutionary spirit of our earlier days, enough courage to meet the requirements of a new time, and enough willingness to forego present advantages for ultimate ends, to strive for the things the rest of the world so sorely wants.

We need to formulate and to present to the peoples everywhere a dynamic call to action which will give real meaning to our world leadership.

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