

640

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For Favour of Publication

Addressing the Lion's Club of Juhu on "Some World Trends" at the Ambassador Hotel this evening, Mr. M.R. Masani, General Secretary of the Swatantra Party, listed as amongst the most significant of these the painfully slow emergence of a world order placing limits on national sovereignty, the emergence of a European Community, the end of old-type colonialism in Asia and Africa and the struggle against new-style colonialism in East Europe and Tibet, the growth of internal contradictions within the Moscow-Peking Axis, and the turning away of youth in all Continents from the barren dogmas of Marxist collectivism.

Dealing with the two trouble spots of Berlin and Laos, Mr. Masani said that it was because Khrushchev realised the weakness of his hold over Europe that he was trying to use West Berlin as a lever or hostage in order to legitimise the Soviet conquest of East Germany.

The speaker referred to the not unjustified fears expressed by General de Gaulle and Dr. Adenauer of a "sell out" over East Germany. "How can they be blamed in the light of the tragic situation in Laos where the U.S. Government is putting every form of pressure on the Laos Government to enter into coalition with the communists in which the sensitive Ministries of Home and Defence would pass into pro-communist hands?" he asked. It was such attitudes that lent colour to Mr. Sebastian Haffner's quip that U.S. foreign policy was "friendly to neutrals, neutral to enemies, hostile to friends". Mr. Masani said that a lesser evil than handing Laos over to the Communists would be to accept a partition of the country and to hold firmly a line that divided free South Laos from Communist occupied North Laos. If Laos went under, the whole of South and South East Asia including India would be in danger. It was because of this that for the first time in 600 years of its history, Thailand (The land of the free) had invited foreign troops to land on its soil for its own defence.

Chinese aggression, whether in South East Asia or in the Himalayas, was partly the result of the mess in which communism and collectivisation had landed China. The manner in which thousands of Chinese men and women were attempting to flee the country across the border into Hong Kong showed what the people really felt about the communist dictatorship. The Great Leap Forward had turned first into the great Leap Backwards and now the Great Leap Outward.

Discussing the strain in the relationship between Russia and China, the speaker observed that the factors holding the Moscow-Peking Axis together were much stronger than those which made for a clash, and anyone who thought of utilising Russia against China was asking for a cruel disappointment. In this connection, Mr. Krishna Menon's effort to bring about a deal for the purchase of Soviet MIGs was a Machiavellian move calculated to drive a wedge between India and the Democracies and to drag the country into the Soviet orbit. Considering what such a move may cost the country in terms of the massive foreign aid that it was at present receiving, the speaker dismissed as ridiculous the excuse about a saving in foreign exchange alleged to be the provocation for the deal. The item for which this country was paying the highest price was Mr. Krishna Menon himself.

Discussing world trends in economic affairs, the speaker said that the younger generation everywhere was turning away from the dogmas of Marxist collectivism. The Liberal revival in Britain was largely a manifestation of the revolt of youth against the two older parties with their set patterns and dogmas. In the U.S.A., a Conservative revival was sweeping the university campuses under the leadership of organisations such as the "Young Americans for Freedom", whose hero was Senator Barry Goldwater. Even in Soviet Russia and the captive countries, the younger generation of economists was trying to edge away, within the limitation of the dictatorship, from collectivism to the "Laws of the Market". According to Dr. Keilhau of Oslo University in Norway, "this anti-socialist epoch is still in its infancy. It belongs mainly to the years after 1945. Its philosophy is in formation, its main campaigns will be fought in the years to come."

Turning to the topic of disarmament and the banning of nuclear tests, the speaker described how, over the last ten years, the negotiations had got bogged on the crucial issue of international inspection and control. The Soviet demand that others should lay down their weapons without any guarantee that the Soviet dictatorship was doing the same showed that Khrushchev wanted neither the banning of nuclear tests nor disarmament. At home the Soviet dictatorship still publicised Lenin's dictum that disarmament could only come after the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie.

Indeed, the real problem was not one of disarmament but of arms control. "History teaches," said Mr. Masani, "that men only lay down their weapons when some stronger authority emerges to guarantee their security." Thus the village republics, city states and barons had disarmed only when the King and Nation State came forward to undertake the role of guaranteeing security. Similarly the sovereign States of today could only be expected to lay down their arms when assured of protection by a World authority and a World police force. The bringing of such an authority into existence was the immediate task. "In the absence of such safeguards," said Mr. Masani, "to talk of complete disarmament and banning nuclear bombs is peace-mongering which is as dangerous and pernicious as war-mongering."

"In answer to the question whether one should prefer to be 'red or dead'," Mr. Masani's answer was Neither. Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest contemporary prophet of peace, had often said that he preferred a man to fight violently rather than to run away. It was not life as such and under any conditions that was of value but what the Greek philosopher Aristotle had described as "the good life."

Not for publication

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