

CONFIDENTIAL

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THE WEAKNESS OF WESTERN SOCIETY

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1. Our Group has worked together throughout the years to discuss the one subject which is the concern of all who strive towards a community of the free world - the strengths and the weaknesses of those whom we hope to lead to this goal, the nations of the West and their associations in Europe, the British Commonwealth, North America and the Atlantic Community.
2. We have discussed mainly problems of defence and economics, of alliances and of other mechanisms for joint policy and action in the West. We have also sought to clear our minds about the Communist forces which oppose us to remove prejudices within the Western family of nations and to study anti-colonialism with a view to producing a new approach towards the uncommitted peoples of the world.
3. Once only have we touched upon the problem which is behind all this and which will ultimately be the decisive one: The moral values, Ambassador Quaroni proposed to make political use of the moral ideals of the West in the fight against communism and in our efforts to win over the uncommitted peoples.

We felt this to be a very complex subject to act upon in our Group for a number of reasons. They are expressed in the answers to Ambassador Quaroni's letter to His Royal Highness and in the record of our discussion in Paris last July.

The Steering Committee agrees to discuss the moral problem again in the London meeting of January 11th. For this the papers referred to should again be considered.

4. This paper suggests the following approach:
  - a. It is the moral values of peoples or nations or of their associations to which we must look in deciding the ultimate outcome of the East/West conflict. Whatever we can do in the fields of defence, alliances, economics, social and scientific progress is dependent upon the moral values of those called upon to defend, to seek alliances, to develop the economies, the society and the sciences.
  - b. These moral values must be defined by the criteria of the competition between the two social systems in the world. They are not defined by prevailing religious or non-religious beliefs as it might seem at first to a convinced Christian or a convinced atheist. The competition is between social systems not between abstract creeds. The moral problem is therefore one of "social morale".

- c. This "Social morale" exists only where there are ties over and above the different levels of the society. If there are no such ties to bridge different social levels or classes so as to form a single society no generally accepted "social morale" can develop.

The Western concept of the tie is the free society of men. The Eastern concept of the tie is communist collectivism, the Party. Since the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU at any rate we must acknowledge that even the conspiratorial leadership of the USSR cannot do without a "social morale" which is in its way generally accepted.

"Social morale" must therefore be considered as the pre-condition of all state authority, of all political, economic, social and spiritual leadership of West or East in this deadly competition of the two social systems.

4. We must then I think realize that Europe, especially Continental Europe, is not a moral force comparable to the vital and integrated societies of the U.S.A. type (which includes Canada, Australia etc.). We believe in the inherent strength of this type of society.

We may also state that Eastern Europe is not a moral force comparable to the vital society of the USSR type. We must acknowledge for the present that the USSR constitutes a vital society and we must not expect it to deteriorate soon because we consider it to be based on force.

- 5 Our immediate concern are the societies of Western Europe. I think mainly of Germany, Austria, France and Italy. There we seem to have lost the old social ties and we have failed to develop new ones. I may make overstatements here but I am making them purposely to bring out the issues as sharply as possible.

It is true that Europe is rapidly moving into a new form of industrialization which will undoubtedly effect a change of social structures; but Europe's concepts of society and state are still largely of the past.

This explains the extreme materialism prevailing in the economic boom and the serious absence of civic responsibility in all classes including the leading classes.

The so-called social elite is still drawn from the upperclass. Exceptions are few. Industrial relations are largely based on paternalism. Encouraging exceptions are there but they are not enough. Social mobility is altogether insufficient. The educational system still differentiates not in law but in fact between the traditional social classes.

Accordingly there is no generally accepted leadership and the leaders cannot rely on a generally accepted social morale. They lack the authority and the legitimation which can be taken only from a society which has succeeded in integrating its members and producing responsibility at all social levels.

Apart from domestic considerations:

How can the Western powers co-operate successfully if they do not all constitute integrated and free societies which are open to the world. The need for world-wide interdependence is felt by all. It can stimulate vital societies only. Disintegrated societies are not stimulated but rather rendered conservative if not paralysed by such interdependence. The result is a revival of outdated nationalism and protectionism.

7. We must accept the thesis I think that the attraction and the strength of the society in the USSR is based upon education and chance of leadership not only in law but also in fact for everybody. The USSR does not only provide a mass education which exceeds by far what we have even in the USA in the fields of the natural and technical sciences, it includes mass education as well in social relations (Gesellschaftspolitik). While the character of this latter is pre-determined by ideological considerations is it not - perhaps involuntarily - the cause of the revisionism in Russia? Is it entirely out of the question that this revisionism may ultimately even change the conspiratorial character of soviet leadership?

The other day I came across a somewhat self-satisfied paper criticising the communist society. The paper was introduced by a quotation from Gladstone :

"What is wrong morally can never be right politically"

We all realize, of course, that social systems which are morally wrong, i.e. systems which we reject on moral ground may have and do have indeed a long and sometimes very successful political life. This should not keep us from finding out whether our own morality is here really competitive. The communist criticism of the morals of our societies is quite logically directed against the weakness of the social morale of the West. This criticism hits the weakest link in the chain of the Western world. And the whole strength of the West will accordingly be determined by the value of this link.

8. These facts are not, as some like to argue, just subjects for philosophers, historians, sociologists or political scientists. Those professions may help us to find and to evaluate the pertinent facts.

The result, however, should be received as a political problem of the first order and of decisive immediate practical importance. If this is so the question arises: Who is concerned about a solution?

There are many but scattered efforts for a solution everywhere in Europe.

The solutions proposed are directed to modernizing the educational system, industrial relations, social mobility and to stimulating civic responsibilities.

9. There is no international effort to bring the issue out and to show solutions. But the issue and its solution are definitely matters of international concern in the West. The task is primarily the responsibility of those who at present lead opinion in our societies. It is a problem for governments or such only at a later stage.

The question for us is whether our Group is willing and able to work in this direction. Our present standing already gives us a responsibility in issues which we ourselves hold to be decisive. There is no international group to compare with ours, with our advantage of knowing personalities in various countries of the West who may be qualified to help and with our chance of enlisting their co-operation.