

THE QUESTION OF PEACE

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A fundamental consideration of what it is we want in our foreign relations today—and what chance we have of getting it

A DISTINGUISHED FORMER Chief Justice of the United States had a habit of arranging his arguments in such a way as to make his conclusions seem inevitable. He had a favorite phrase with which he would dust off a claim. "To state the question," he would say, "is to answer it." A caustic critic on one occasion observed that this was true only because the good Chief Justice had assumed his answer by the very way in which he had stated the question.

It is also possible to state a question in such a way as to make it unanswerable. This can be a harmless parlor game: for instance, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" In practical affairs, it can be devastating. In a free society, men must be able to compose or adjust their differences on some workable basis. Their capacity to do so turns largely on how they see the questions which divide them. The issues can come up in such terms that discussion about them can have no useful outcome. For instance, what can we do with a question like this: "In the current crisis, which must give way, national security or the bill of rights?" Or how about this one—"Which is the quick, clean way out of the current mess—to pulverize the Soviet Union with atomic weapons; or to sit down with Stalin, lay the questions between us right on the line, and settle them firmly and finally?" These illustrations condense actual experience and give it a touch of caricature. But I believe you will recognize them. They reflect some of our vivid experience during the past few years.

Issues in such a form are unmanageable. They can

only lead to fruitless controversy. I shall try later to show why this is so. To the extent that this happens among a free people, they lose political effectiveness. The issues must come up in terms which make them manageable.

This is in no sense a matter of glossing over questions, or looking at facts through rose-colored glasses. The facts must be seen as they are, and we must pray for the gift to see them that way. It is a matter of seeing issues and facts in their proper setting. This means seeing them in due relation to what we are and what we have been. It means seeing them in relation to the things we want and the things we live by.

It is in this sense that I should like to explore with you today some of the questions of foreign policy which concern us. As a point of departure, I shall try to examine what it is we want in our foreign relations. You may well feel that I have chosen to begin at a point which is certain to finish me. In these bewildering and clamorous days, one wonders whether the heart of our difficulties is perhaps that we don't know what we want, or that we want so many conflicting things that we have jammed ourselves into a frustrated standstill. Perhaps, however, there is a way to get at the question which won't mire us down.

Possibly the clue lies in bringing the question down from what we want as a people to what we want as individual men and women. We feel uneasy and insecure. We wonder whether we are not caught in the wash of a blind and uncontrolled rush of events. We'd

like to recapture a sense of at least some participation in the control of our own personal destinies. This may be just another way of saying that we want a reasonable measure of security. With that security, we want to be free to live our lives as we see fit. We want to do our jobs and make a living and raise a family; we want to sing songs or play baseball or write poetry; in short, we want to be free to realize to the full our potentialities as human beings. Whatever the confusion of the times, these are the central and stable purposes of most Americans.

Peace with justice and freedom

We naturally want the foreign policy of our government to reflect these purposes. The consistent objective of American policy since V-J day has been peace with justice and freedom. It would be hard to imagine a more accurate expression in governmental terms of what we want as individuals.

So far, so good. But just what do we mean by peace with justice and freedom? Shall we take it to mean universal and permanent peace? As an ideal, this would be fitting. Yet, if we make this our political goal, most men will feel in their bones that it is beyond the grasp of this generation. They will therefore be unable to pursue it with conviction. We must define a goal which will command not only our highest aspirations but our sustained practical energies. I believe this can be done. Within the past century and a half, this world has known one or two periods of some thirty years which have been free of major international tension. Suppose we add ten years, and make our own goal peace for forty years. Since this is the year 1952, we might stretch it to forty-eight years—peace with freedom and justice for the remainder of this century. Forty eight years in which modern man could redress his moral balance, and recapture his humanity, and turn his incalculable resources of science and organization to constructive purposes.

What threatens this objective? Primarily, the policies and practices of the Soviet Union, and the reactions to which they give rise elsewhere in the world. This danger is compounded by confusion and impatience within the United States. There is also the immense ferment of Asia; economic dislocation in Europe; poverty, ignorance and restiveness in underdeveloped areas; and the lack, throughout the world, of a vision of the future toward which decent men can aspire and in which sensible and practical men can believe. I am aware that this begins to sound like a catalogue of all the ills and frailties to which flesh is heir. You may feel that I need only add "original sin" to make it complete. Indeed, in the long perspective of history and geology, except for relatively brief periods in relatively limited corners of the earth, mankind as a species has hardly been more than a few jumps ahead of starvation and mutual destruction. Today is no exception. Its special feature is perhaps our greater awareness of incipient misfortune

due to the range of modern communications. Even without such communications, Job perceived that man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble.

Properly understood, this is true, and valid. It can be misunderstood, and taken as a counsel of despair. Rightly understood, it establishes perspective, and becomes a counsel of humility and patience. It reminds us that we must limit our objectives, and keep them in focus.

Let's try to sharpen the focus. At what point would we celebrate VCW Day—Victory in the Cold War Day? At what point would we say: This is it, this is what we have been seeking. Are we sure we would recognize it if we saw it?

We can try to bring our objectives into focus in other ways. Winston Churchill has advised us that we cannot reason with the Soviet Union, but that it may be possible to bargain with it. Bargain for what? Particular bargains might be limited and specific, but they would involve choices which should be guided by longer purposes. What purposes?

Many experienced voices remind us that we must rebuild our relative strength, in order that we may take the initiative and lead from strength. Lead toward what?

It would be easy to give these questions a sarcastic twist, in the spirit of a debater trying to score a point. This might be clever, but would get us nowhere. It seems to me we must approach them simply and directly in a real attempt to decide what we want.

There is, of course, an element of oversimplification in these questions. Taken literally, they might suggest an expectation of precise and final solutions. We know that things seldom really happen that way. But in their essential meaning, questions of this sort must be faced. We should have a reasonably concrete and flexible idea of what we want, if we are to have a reasonable chance of getting it. In the world as it is, this means a reasonably concrete and flexible idea of what we want of the Soviet Union.

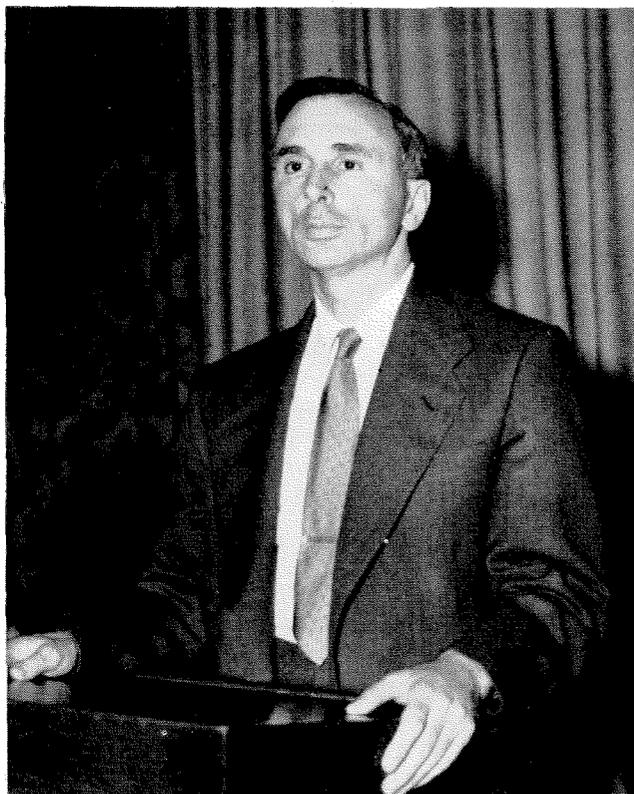
What we want of the Soviet Union

With your forbearance, I will rush in where angels fear to tread, and try to suggest what this might be. We can test what we want by a grim process of thought.

Suppose that we should have a full-scale war with the Soviet Union. Suppose that, after the full cost in blood and chaos, the Kremlin should surrender unconditionally. Russia, let us say, would lie under our heel, waiting for us to do what we would. What would we do? There is no need to guess in a vacuum. Let's look at what we did when free to impose our will on a defeated Germany and a defeated Japan in 1945, and a defeated Germany in 1918. We pushed the Germans and the Japanese back within their own boundaries. We disarmed their forces. We brought about a change in their political regimes—in Germany, a change based upon the extirpation of the Nazi hierarchy; in Japan, a change with a factor of continuity in the person and status of the Emperor. We

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gradually opened both countries to the entry of people and ideas and information and trade from abroad. Incidentally, we also undertook to help feed and rehabilitate them. It is reasonable to assume that our treatment of a defeated Russia would not be very different.

We have permitted ourselves a cold and brutal exercise of the imagination. I feel it to be justified, for it helps us to see what really matters to us. The programs we have imposed on defeated enemies after bitter wars have recurrent themes. These throw light on what we want of nations which seriously threaten our security and freedom.

By this light, I believe we can broadly sketch what we want of the Soviet Union. There are differences, of course. We are talking about life, not geometrical patterns. For instance we would obviously be glad to forego the burden of helping to feed and rehabilitate Russia. There are also differences in degree, which at least in part grow out of our will to reach our objectives without a full-scale war. But the main elements can be seen.

We want the withdrawal of Soviet military forces within the proper borders of the Soviet Union.

We want the reduction of the Soviet and satellite forces to a size and composition which the common sense of honest and realistic men would accept as genuinely defensive. Countless hairs have been split in an effort to distinguish defensive weapons from offensive. Nothing could be farther from my purpose than to involve this inquiry in such an effort. When I speak of a genuinely defensive condition of the Red forces, I mean a condition which the common sense of honest and realistic and well-informed men will accept as in fact

consistent with real freedom from tension and the real concentration of human effort throughout the world on constructive purposes.

We would also want reasonable assurance that these forces, once reduced and limited, would stay that way. This might require an arrangement for international inspection and verification. Over the long pull, such an assurance could perhaps be effected more simply and naturally through greatly increased access of people, ideas, information and trade from the outside world to the Russian people, and a corresponding flow of information about the Russian people to the outside world. This, it seems to me, would be necessary in any event to establish a general sense of security. Without it, the free peoples would tend to feel themselves subject to any abrupt and unforeseeable change in dictatorial whims, and so remain uneasy and restive.

The spread of Communism

We would also want to end the spread of Communism. The spread of Communism is a compound whose principal ingredients must be brought separately to light and examined. In part, it means Communist penetration—that is, the systematic use of the Communist party by the Kremlin as an instrument of organized espionage and subversion. This raises a problem of discovery, disclosure and mature and responsible countermeasures by appropriate authority and appropriate procedures. In a broader and vaguer sense, when we speak of the spread of Communism we often mean the spread of ideas and sympathies related more or less loosely to Communist doctrine. This raises a problem of competition in the

free and open market of ideas. I need hardly add that these problems overlap, and this greatly increases their complications.

There are of course many other things we may want, if we take the word "want" in a completely literal sense. But we must consider what we want in terms of the things we live by, and in terms of possible and probable action in the world as it is. This raises the question of how we may reach our ends, and the relationship of means to ends.

I don't know how to achieve these ends. I do have some ideas about how they cannot be achieved. I also have some ideas about the conditions which must be satisfied if we are to have a realistic prospect of achieving them.

Is war the way out?

There is a ghost that sometimes walks at this sort of inquiry, and whispers in our ears, "Is there any way out but war?" As sane and honest men, we instinctively reject the whisper, but it sometimes leaves a dim echo of doubt. It seems to me that the remedy is to keep our eye on the ball—to keep in mind what we are after, and not let ourselves be distracted. Since our objective is peace with freedom and justice, war is obviously not a means of achieving it. Since our objective is peace with freedom and justice, we would accept war rather than surrender to aggression. Aggressors must understand that the free peoples will pay even the price of war rather than submit to tyranny. In making this clear, we must avoid the infantile folly of forgetting what we ourselves are after. We must not dance to the Kremlin's tune. If we should let the Kremlin's behavior throw us into an aimless frenzy, we would in fact be dancing to its tune. It's elementary tactics in all forms of competition to throw your opponent off his game by getting him riled. The Kremlin makes skillful and persistent use of such diversionary tactics. We must not be taken in by them.

We can also be thrown off our course by romantic escapism. This can take a surprising variety of forms, but they all have a common theme: the vain hope for a quick and easy solution. There have been some who have felt that the men of the Kremlin could be turned from their objectives by a show of trust and confidence in them, by friendly words and gestures of self-denial on our part, designed to reassure them. This delusion appears to have been pretty well laid to rest among us. But another delusion persists. Under its influence, some believe that the destiny of this republic could safely be rested on some special weapon; that the Kremlin and its creatures could be quickly and easily bludgeoned into meekness; that perhaps they could even be terrified into good behavior by rough loud talk. On the surface, these notions are very different. At bottom, they are similar, in the sense that they are both forms of day-dreaming escapism. The handwinger who would appeal to the Kremlin's better nature, and the quick-and-easy

bomb-dropper, are brothers under the skin. Neither will face the facts as they are. Neither has the stomach to stay the course.

In our thoughtful moments, most of us are painfully aware that there are no quick and easy solutions, but the fact tends to exasperate us. We incline to an impatient feeling that such a state of affairs is somehow abnormal. In fact, the situation is fundamentally normal, and it will help us to maintain balance and perspective if we hear this in mind. There never has been an easy road to freedom or justice or security or peace. We see this plainly enough in our lives as individuals. There are books on cheap bookshelves which purport to lay down the ten rules for a successful career or the twelve rules for a happy marriage, but we laugh them off. We know there are no easy formulae to enable us to circumvent the processes of life. Yet, by some freak tendency of the human mind, when we pass from the single individual or the married couple to the one hundred and fifty million souls who make up the American people, or the two and a half billion who people the earth, we have a perverse feeling that the problem should somehow be simpler and that there should be ready answers. We cannot afford to indulge these whims. The times are too serious. In our lives as citizens, as in our personal lives, we cannot expect prompt, exact and final solutions to the deepest of human problems, and it will only throw us off balance if we look for them. It is the right lines and quality of effort which we must seek, the sense of direction, the standards of performance, and the values to guide us.

Perhaps I may venture some suggestions about the lines of effort which are needed. These will relate to some of the conditions to a wise and strong course of action.

On two of these conditions I have already dwelt: the need to keep our eye on what we want; and the need to bear in mind that we have a long row to hoe. There are two others which seem to me to warrant special emphasis. We must understand the nature of the struggle in which we are engaged; and we must understand the true sources of our own strength.

The sources of Soviet imperialism

Some believe that Soviet imperialism grows out of an old-fashioned lust for dominion on the part of the Kremlin. Some believe it grows out of an ideological thrust to world revolution. Some think it reflects a craving for security by the Kremlin, combined with its conviction that it can have no security so long as any power exists which could challenge it. Whatever may be the elements of motive and in whatever mixture, the practical course of conduct which flows from it tends to be the same. In the seven years since VE Day, the Kremlin has seriously extended its sway. Some eight hundred million people now listen primarily to the voice of Moscow. This has been achieved without the direct engagement of any of the Soviet Union's own military

forces. It does not follow that she has not used them. She has put them to steady and terrible use, as an instrument of fear. The shadow of the Red army has lain like an incubus on Europe and Asia. This has been more than a by-product of military preparation. It has been a deliberate policy, specifically designed to smother hope, to stifle initiative, to sharpen tensions, and to break the will. There is therefore a double need to rebuild the armed strength of the free world. We must deter military aggression and be able to cope with it if it should come; and we must counteract the Kremlin's strategy for imposing its will through terror.

Rearmament is indispensable. But it is only part of what we need, just as the Red Army is only one of the tools of the Soviet Union. The very nature of the use which the Kremlin has made of the Red Army shows the pattern of its aggression. On the record, the Red Army during the past seven years has been employed primarily as a political and psychological weapon. It has been used in a mutually supporting relationship with other devices. Through these, the Kremlin has maintained an astute and steady pressure against the free peoples on all fronts—political, economic, psychological and moral, as well as military. The strategy of terror has been supported by a strategy of division. The Kremlin has worked unceasingly to sow suspicion and discord, and to harvest cleavages within and among the free peoples.

What we need

We have been anxious to achieve a wise relationship among the air, naval and ground army components of our strength. But in the current struggle, the effective use of our resources has a deeper and wider meaning. We need a wise relationship among the political, military, economic, psychological and moral components of our power. It would be as pointless to build up our armed forces and forget the political or economic sector, as it would be to build up the ground army and forget the air force, or to build up the air force and forget the services of supply.

If we would marshal our strength effectively, we must also remember from whence it comes. We clearly see the need for our armed forces. We rightly appreciate the importance of our free economy, and of our industry and technology. Yet, in the deepest sense, the republic was already mighty in 1789 and in 1812, when its armed forces and economic resources were trifling compared to those of Napoleon and the Russia of Alexander I. Whence came its strength? From the principles on which it was founded, and the values out of which they grew. We affirm the spiritual value of freedom and justice as articles of faith. It is good for us to do so. Let us also remember their intensely practical value.

The most precious natural resource of any people is not its soil or iron or oil or uranium, but the quality of its men and women. The authoritarian society is biologically wasteful and inefficient. It quarantines the

bulk of its human resources, and permits only a fraction of its men and women to make themselves fully felt. It is only a free society which can draw fully on this resource, for it is only a free society, in the measure that it realizes its principle of freedom, which gives full play to individual character and talent.

It is only through justice that the individual talents and energies of free men can be brought into harmonious unity. It is as true today as in Ben Franklin's time that we must hang together if we would not hang separately. In this far-flung struggle, the potential strength of America can only be fully realized through a deep and strong sense of community, within herself and with other free peoples. Each of us knows from his personal experience that nothing can disrupt an organization or team or family more surely than a sense of injustice, and that the key to unity among free men is fair play. The most enduring and powerful form of efficiency is the voluntary collaboration of free men, sustained by the sense of a common stake in which all participate on a just basis.

What we can't forget

These are matters which we dare not forget. In our anxious and impatient quest for security, it is possible at times to forget them, and to fall into the blind error of trampling on freedom of thought and the rights of men. We would do this at our peril. In the world as it is, we can maintain freedom and justice in America only if we keep the nation secure against her enemies. This is a fact which must be faced. It is no less true that our national security depends on the maintenance of freedom and justice, which are the ultimate sources of our strength. We would deny our history to assume that the American people lack the wisdom to harmonize these ends.

There is an ancient tale about the invasion of Ireland by the Danes in the Middle Ages. A group of Danish invaders camped alongside a swamp. They became ill, and died. We can surmise the illness was something akin to malaria or yellow-fever, but the Danes understood nothing of this. They felt themselves attacked from the air by an unseen enemy. They were valorous men, and drew their swords to fight back; and they died blindly cutting the air, and one another, with their swords. It was magnificent, but self-defeating and utterly futile.

In the bewilderment and stress of the times, this seems to me a story worth remembering. We must identify and understand the real sources of danger, and the true means to meet it. Perhaps we would also do well to remember that the human tongue, when recklessly used, is a dangerous instrument; and that it would be self-defeating and futile, and not magnificent, if we should wildly cut the air and one another with our tongues.

Let us strive to remember that the path to our objectives is also the path of fidelity to the deepest values of our tradition. Let us strive to remember that a free society is in essence a spiritual testament.