

NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL DEPUTIES

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of the Norwegian Labour Party.

1. I thank you for the invitation to take part in this discussion on problems and techniques used in the political struggle we are waging through non-governmental organizations to protect ourselves from being overrun by totalitarianism. My talk will be based upon personal experiences of these last 6 years. Discussion will prove if it is possible to draw conclusions from it, adaptable to other countries.

2. At the time of liberation, a number of factors favoured Communism, and Communism was a relatively powerful force in Norway. The heroes of the nation were the Red Army men. "They had done the fighting, the Americans and British, the waiting". The Red Army withdrew from Finnmark, which it had occupied. At the same time the Norwegian Communists posed as democrats, free from any ties to Moscow. They had two representatives in the coalition government. Social conditions were bad in Norway - to say the least.

In this period the Communist paper in Oslo - a daily - had the largest circulation of any labour paper in Scandinavia - close to 100,000. The Communist Party membership had passed 45,000. General elections in 1945 were considered by all as a set-back to the Communist Party. But it polled 12% of the total vote. Its influence in the industrial centres and the trade unions was much greater than the vote indicated.

3. Today, in Norway, the Communist Party has lost every representative in Parliament, every fully-paid officer in the industrial councils, and all but two fully-paid officers in the national unions. The circulation of the paper in Oslo is down to 15,000, and the party's membership has dropped to 8,662. The part now is being reorganized on the basis of small cells, sunk in the underground. That won't make things easier in case of an emergency. And naturally the hard core of almost 9,000 makes it necessary to stay on guard. Since the Communists are concentrated in a comparatively small number of localities, they certainly still make themselves felt.

4. First and above all, international events -- such as the coup in Czechoslovakia -- led to the decline of Communism in Norway. Without this assistance from the Politbureau in the Kremlin and comrad Stalin we never would have succeeded to the extent we did. But we too did a bit in the field of political warfare, mainly in the factories, mills and mines. Not until the Communists started their peace-campaigns did they do a serious job among the Norwegian intellectuals. The Communist concentrated their activities in the trade unions.

5. At the beginning we underestimated their strength, their ability to terrorize, to capture local unions and to misuse the powers of the shop stewards. The weariness within our ranks, the desire to live at peace when peace finally had come, were their best allies. The people said - "Why should we fight them, when you give them seats in the government?" This was the period in which our foreign minister made speeches about the building of bridges between the East and the West. It was a difficult time.

6. We started our counter-attack by building up our cells and fractions in the plants where the Communists were strong. The general line was this: "Fight them where they are strong. Ignore them where they are weak!" We trained our contact men. We called our people to special caucuses before every union meeting. We worked out the resolutions they should submit. We went from door to door and called on passive union members to induce them attend meetings. We appealed to their wives. We accepted Communist invitations for discussions in unions and localities where they were strong. We brought loudspeakers to be sure that they would not be able to silence us. In that period we learned one important lesson: the Communists show courage only when they have the upper hand. They are weak when faced with determination, forcefulness - and some brutality. They fear their own medicine.

7. This fight reached its climax during the winter of 1947-48 when the Communists tried to smash the Marshall-plan before it could start operating. From then on we dominated every single plant of national importance. The coup in Czechoslovakia caused them to lose more ground. But the opposition to the Atlantic Pact by pacifists, neutralists and fellow-travellers gave the Communists new courage. We fool ourselves if we don't see the strength of this opposition! Then the peace-campaigns gave them the chance to make their influence felt on a non-Communist platform. These peace-campaigns also gave them the chance to find out where our front was weakest. Through petitioning they literally could draw maps of our defence-lines and determine where we had our softest spots.

The attack upon South-Korea seemed to mean the end of their peace-campaigns. The Chinese offensive made people shiver. The people's fear of war was exploited to the limit by the Communists. But never forget, they are afraid too. We should never stop telling them that there will be no mercy given to a Fifth column in case of war. We shall treat them the same way that the Communists demanded we treat the quislings of the second world war. We are back to the point I stressed a minute ago: the Communists are not as brave as they pretend to be. Furthermore, their rank and file do not want to become traitors to their own countries.

8. The key to the effectiveness of Communists propaganda is simple indeed. It is centralized; it is simplified (the Stockholm appeal dealt with one item only: the atomic bomb); it is world-wide, and it is coordinated with the actions of a world power.

The Eastern block gives political warfare the highest priority. It is the weapon before actual war starts. All modern means of propaganda are used, and serious work is devoted to the training of the people who conduct propaganda.

As we all know the Communist political line is, at any given time, worked out in the Kremlin. World wide actions are prepared centrally. So are their Peace Congresses. National parties take up the line and make it known, through the press,

meetings and conferences. Details of operational techniques go to the cells and contacts by mimeographed sheets and circular letters. Instructions and slogans filter through from the Kremlin to the smallest cell, and everywhere the same political line is adopted and driven home. I dare say that 99% of us underestimate the effectiveness of their political warfare.

Personally, I am inclined to think that no Russian military drive will take place against the Atlantic community in the near future. But we all know that the political and economic war will go on, and that it will be intensified as our military strength increases. (There is a good chance that the war will be limited to psychological and political warfare).

9. How can we win this war in which we are engaged? Our task is much more complicated than theirs. Democracies cannot change their policies from one day to another. They depend on continuity and development and a slow build-up of strength. We work among people who have the right to oppose what we do, and we certainly do not want to create a split in our midst. We cannot rely upon oversimplified slogans. We can only operate with facts, facts and facts.

- (a) Facts on the actual economic and social situation in our own lands. We must explain and make understood what our policies are, what we have achieved, and where we have failed. Tax burdens and reduced standard of living resulting from the rearmament programme, make it imperative that these educational activities become the foundation of our defence. In this context we should stress the division of work and burdens connected with membership in the Atlantic Pact. The Atlantic Pact is more than an old-fashioned military alliance. It is up to the NATO Information Service to supply us with the basic material that can prove our case.
- (b) We also need facts on the international situation: on Soviet expansion since 1939, on the militarisation of the so-called popular democracies, on Russian exploitation of the S. satellites, etc., We need facts proving our present weakness, but potential strength. We need facts clearly stating our peace objectives. These facts should be provided by our common defence organisation, the NATO Information Service. That way, material would reach us most speedily and the same figures would be used in all lands.
- (c) We must smash the myth that Soviet-Russia is a Socialist community where the working man controls the political and economic life. As long as this myth lives in our midst, the enemy will have fortresses built in the minds of millions. Personally, I feel that there is one fact which should be exploited for all it is worth: the fact that slave labour exists in every Communist state. People do not quite believe that this is so. Over and over again one hears: "It cannot be true. It's propaganda". That is why the facts of this accusation must be repeated and repeated, and new, true, evidence circulated widely.

To explode the myth of Soviet-Russia as the Worker's Fatherland we also must publicize the facts on anti-labour laws in the East, the puppet role of their trade unions, the truth about their wages and prices.

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We should not pretend that our world is a paradise. But at least here the working man is given a chance to improve his standard of living. He has something to lose.

We should drive home, again and again, that the Soviet workers have nothing to lose but their chains, and a world to gain!

- (d) Especially, when we turn to the intellectuals, the need for accurate facts never can be overestimated. I have come to the conclusion that the best job done in Europe today when it comes to publicity on Soviet-Russia, is done by the Information Services Division of the HICOG through its publication "Ost Probleme". Every week "Ost Probleme" publishes another load of extracts from the press in Soviet-Russia and the satellite states. "Ost Probleme" lets people read and judge for themselves. And that is what people want to do.

International editions of this publication, or one similar to it, should be turned out as soon as possible, and we must beware of the temptation to make "propaganda". Let us stick to documentation and always give exact information on sources. The reality of Russia, brought into the homes of the intellectual elite, is the dynamite we need.

- (c) In Europe there is another tremendous myth which we must shatter. This is the myth that the United States is the land of monopoly capitalism and imperialism. This belief creates among the people a deep-seated suspicion of the strongest partner in our Atlantic Community. Millions are still thinking in terms of America in the 20's. The Communists know what they are doing when they focus their propaganda on the United States. We don't need to add that a few irresponsible American politicians make their job easier for them.

This feeling of suspicion of the United States is stronger in organised labour than in any other strata of society. I therefore ask you to consider this suggestion: Could the NATO Information Service give the European labour press the opportunity of having correspondents in North America? Today no labour press, with the exception of the British, can afford this. It would not be too costly an operation. For example one man in America would be able to service the entire Scandinavian labour press, a press with a daily circulation of one million.

10. The ECA Information Service has adopted a method which has proved very effective, at least in Norway. It always works through existing national organisations, organs and institutions. I believe the NATO Information Service should use the same technique. Its job should be to give the general political line. It should supply the press and the journals of all democratic organisations with the material needed. It should establish a picture-service from behind the Iron Curtain. It should give facts to speakers, films and filmstrips to youth groups. It should train group leaders. It should work out the pamphlets

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which national organisations later could publish and distribute. The NATO Information Service should not posture in front of the world. To do an effective job it must remain in the background.

11. But do not forget: Rule number 1 in all propaganda is that it should be centralized. At the right moment it should be pushed through with overwhelming weight, simultaneously in all areas where it is needed. On behalf of some who for quite a while have taken the brunt of the burden in the fight against the Communists, I want to state emphatically:

We too need a general staff for political warfare;
 We too need a central body which can work out the general line of attack and defence;
 We cannot afford any longer to be two or three months behind.

The Kremlin launched the Stockholm-appeal on a world-wide scale. After delaying, we responded on a national scale. A puny congress in Stockholm gave the start to the greatest propaganda success of modern times.

Just now another Communist drive for petitions is under way, this time in connexion with the meeting of the Big Four representatives in Paris. The demand of the petition-campaign is for a Five-Power Peace Pact. They are making an even better start than they made with the Stockholm-appeal.

And again we seem to be without a programme for counter-action. Again, most likely, we shall slowly start digging up the arguments we need. And meanwhile, their drive will prove to be a dividing force in our camp and a uniting one behind the Iron Curtain.

12. There is no need to let the Communists monopolize the cause of peace. From personal experiences I know that it is worth while to take the offensive in this field too. At Christmas the Labour Parties and Federations of Trade Unions in Denmark, Sweden, Iceland and Norway worked out their programme, "Peace with Freedom", and launched a campaign in every labour organisation in Scandinavia. We caught the Communists flat-footed, and for three months we have been conducting an educational campaign on international affairs.

Why should it not be possible to launch a similar campaign on a much wider scale? Why should it always be left to the Kremlin to catch the imagination of the millions?

13. Also, I am completely convinced that a job can be done outside our own Atlantic community. I am, first and above all, thinking in terms of the borderland of the Iron Curtain-Austria, Finland, Germany and Yugoslavia. For more than a year I have worked with the Yugoslavs against the Cominform Communists. The Yugoslavs are potential allies. A few days ago I spent a week in Germany. We had better give the Germans more than arms, if we want to turn them into reliable friends. I feel confident that this can be done. And in Austria as well as Germany. And do not believe Mr. Kekkonen when he talks about Finland's willingness to fight as an ally of Russia. He does not fool a single Finn - Communist or non-Communist.

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What we can do behind the Iron Curtain, and in the Middle East and the Far East I do not know. My personal experiences are limited to Western Europe.

14. Parenthetically: there is one point of Communist propaganda technique I want to call your attention to, their ability to personify political facts. The fight against Nazi slavery they embodied in the slogan "Thälmann free". In every European country, in the '30's, one saw this slogan painted on walls, printed on posters. Meetings were called and resolutions passed demanding the release of Mr. Thälmann. The Communists know that a slogan like "100,000 women and men are suffering in Hitler's concentration camps" would make no impression. The human mind would not grasp the meaning. But the fact that one human being with a name and a face was suffering - that, the human mind and the people would understand.

We should adopt the same technique. The ordinary, average person cannot see what is involved when we claim that millions suffer in Stalin's camps and prisons. But if we were to launch a world-wide campaign for the release of Miss Anna Kathly, Grand Old Labour Leader of Hungary who, two months ago, in a secret trial was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment at hard labour, every woman and man would grasp the meaning of Soviet justice and Stalin's camps and prisons. Anna Kathly might, in the course of a few months, become a symbol for our fight against Communist tyranny.

15. For a long time it seemed to me that the fight against the Communists was the job only of organized labour. When the discussion on the Marshall-plan and the Atlantic Pact raged at its highest, we told all other political parties to stay out of the fight. We wanted to settle the issue without any interference from outside.

Today the situation has changed. The defence of freedom is the job of every citizen. It is especially true of the fight against that creeping defeatism which, any day, may break out into the open. Ahead of us lies a tug of war which is bound to last for years to come. Will our peoples be willing to carry the burden of defence, when the Russian peace campaigns are followed by Russian tactical retreats? We should not take for granted that our peoples will do this. We must work out long-range plans aiming at making our peoples realize that their freedom is in danger so long as half of Europe is dominated by authoritarian Communism, a system fundamentally opposed to our way of life.

16. In Denmark and Norway we have tried to meet this problem by establishing non-governmental associations for the defence of freedom. In Denmark it is done through the "Association for Information on the Atlantic Pact and Democracy". This

organization has been given a fairly modest lay-out. Its membership is not large. It was formed by key men in the resistance movement. Important organizations and the political parties have endorsed the association, but they have not been asked to join it. The association intends to work through committees on pamphlets, press, radio, film and lecturing. Personal contacts with people and organizations influencing public opinion seem to be the watchword.

In Norway we have taken a step further. On the initiative of the Prime Minister and with the support of the political parties, 81 nation-wide organizations, spear-headed by the Federation of Trade Unions, The Employers Association, the Farmers and the Fishermen's unions, the Sport Organizations and the Youth movements, have established "Defence and the Nation". This is an association whose main task will be to support the defence effort. It will be done through lecturing, radio, films, press, etc. Personally I consider planned conferences between military people and representatives of the affiliated organizations as the most important task to be accomplished.

The formation of these two organizations should be taken as an indication, in Denmark and Norway, of the will to fight. The most effective effort to counteract defeatism, however, in my country, is the recruiting of 80,000 members in the Home Guard, and the arming of 20,000 workers for the defence of their factories. These are deeds, and deeds count more than words.

17. Let me finish by striking a note of impatience:

The most absurd of all absurdities must come to an end. The world of oppression, slavery and militarism must not be allowed to masquerade successfully as the world of freedom, human rights and peace. The world of freedom must seize the initiative and go on the offensive. I know perfectly well that it is easier to make such a statement than to put it into effect. Much will depend on the organization which has called us to this conference.

Thank you for offering me this chance to speak my mind on matters which are vital to all of us.

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