

The visit of Nikita Khrushchev this month has prompted the hope in many quarters that "things as they really are" will inevitably banish the misconceptions and distortions he harbors of American life. Some idea of the Soviet Premier's mental image of the United States is given in the August 16 issue of *The New York Times Magazine*. A series of quotations from Khrushchev's recent speeches reveals his conclusions on a number of subjects.

On American freedom: "Freedom in the capitalist countries exists only for those who have money and, consequently, power."

On armaments: "The policy of the Cold War, arms drive and aggravating international tension is needed by the imperialists for the purpose of reinforcing the dictatorship of monopoly capital."

On prosperity: "The continuous alternation of critical slumps and feverish upturns testifies to the instability of the capitalist economy. Neither the arms race nor other measures can rid the economy of the United States and other capitalist countries of crises of overproduction."

On democracy: "Regardless of whether representatives of the Republican party or the Democratic party sit in the U.S. Congress, these representatives defend the interests of the ruling classes—the capitalists, bankers, land magnates and big business men."

On character: "It is well known that the capitalist system makes man withdraw into his shell, hold aloof from others and count only on his own powers, for he has no one else to count on. He knows that if he should be out of work he would be deprived of the means of livelihood, would be doomed to poverty and starvation."

On housing: "The shortage of housing and the high rents, which constitute 25 to 30 per cent of the family budget, constantly dog the working people in the capitalist world."

On medical care: "In the capitalist countries nobody shows any concern for the working man, for his health and life. For any medical service, large or small, the individual must pay big sums from his own pocket."

On scientific training: "While we annually graduate more than 70,000 engineers and technicians, the U.S.A. graduates no more than 25,000 to 26,000, and even these graduates have nothing to do because of the economic decline being witnessed in America."

The summer issue of *Cross Currents* contains two articles on the subject of war and nuclear

weapons, one by E. I. Watkin (see p. 8) and the other by Reinhold Niebuhr.

Dr. Niebuhr covers a variety of topics: the Cold War and the nuclear stalemate, disarmament and the distribution of power, and the various solutions to nuclear tensions proposed by such commentators as Linus Pauling, Philip Toynbee and Henry A. Kissinger. Dr. Niebuhr closes with a discussion of the possibilities of "competitive co-existence," an easier task than the abolition of nuclear weapons because "it does not demand that the impulse for survival of each collective system be challenged directly. It is only required that each side allow historical developments to modify the animosities and to change the power realities within each system."

The two things to work for, Dr. Niebuhr writes, are a recognition by both sides of "their involvement in a common fate," and the encouragement of "those aspects of the Communist system which offer some promise of gradual change in the despotic rigidity of the Communist totalitarianism." In exploring the prospects for "gradual change" Dr. Niebuhr cites some features of the Communist structure which may be expected to yield, and others which may grow ever more tenacious. Change, he seems to feel, is a certainty, and particularly susceptible to change is the system built on "revolutionary ardor."

The August 3-10 issue of *The New Leader* finds Dr. Niebuhr in an analysis of "The Balance of Terror: Credit and Debit." Here Dr. Niebuhr considers the degree to which possession of nuclear power actually acts as a deterrent to war. He notes that nuclear weapons are different in kind from all previous forms of military destructiveness, and warns against a sense of fatalism induced by historical precedent: "History is as full of surprises as of disappointing recurrences." The chances of open war are still subject to possible misadventure or miscalculation; apart from this grim prospect, it is unlikely that the Russians will initiate an armed conflict as long as they are able to reap political gains in Asia and Africa. "Our security lies in political and economic measures which will counter the advantages Communism has won in the undeveloped nations. If we gain the same degree of prestige in Asia and Africa as democracy possesses in its European birthplace, we might well prevent the hysteria of defeat without creating a corresponding hysteria in the Communist empire."

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