The Limits of Foreign Policy

second.

read Dr. Ernest Lefever's statement

Sir: In view of the importance of the subject, I have

Cariiegie Foundution for International Peace.

The writer

of force and foreign policy, and it is no answer to

clear war and Soviet world dominance. The com-

order. It is incumbent then to aoid both thermonu-

rable to walk away from them. M'e must seek the

apply it with precision in dealing with tlie questions

our minds with issues so charged with tragedy. To

be in a position to avoid both thermonuclear des-

of the Soviet. This entails keeping up our relevant

strike capability and establishing cover enough to

strike against us. The perils

of not doing them.

As a matter of style, Dr. Lefever may overdo the
tone of objectivity, but surely this does not deserve
the reproaches—callousness and a willingness to harm
the future for the benefit of the present—leveled by
Dr. Bennett.

The charge of callousness in reference to Dr.
Lefever's estimates of the potential of civil defense
for reducing casualties in event of thermonuclear
attack suggests an analogy. Suppose someone were
to say that installation of adequate lifeboats might
ensure the survival of eighty per cent of those aboard
ship in event of disaster at sea. Would it be in point
to charge him with cruel indifference to the fate of
the other twenty per cent?

Dr. Lefever does not recommend a resumption of
thermonuclear testing. He merely indicates a con-
tingent necessity of appraising the genetic effects
of such testing in perspective with the possible
dire consequences of not resuming testing. This
occasions Dr. Bennett's reproachful remark about
favoring the present at the expense of the future.
It might be in point if Dr. Bennett had some policy
proposal of his own sure to serve the welfare of
generations to come. If he has such, I am surely
unable to discern it.

Dr. Bennett does acknowledge at one point the
requirement of preventing Soviet dominance. Yet he
also introduces speculations regarding other possible
developments to counter the Soviet thrust and to
spare us the burden—(a) "many kinds of resistance
in the various countries," (b) "a question . . . as to
how far Russia would be able to exercise control
at a distance," (c) "the effects of more humane
institutions in Russia on the degree of ruthlessness
it would exercise abroad," and (d) "the effect of
rivalry of the great Communist powers in leaving a
space for some form of freedom in other countries."

The apparent tendency of all this is to indicate that
other factors independent of our actions may well
take care of the problem of Soviet power and that
for us the problem of peace is therefore reduced to
the avoidance of slaughter.

I do wish for more clarity in his line of argument.
Does he intend to counsel us to drop out of the
competition in military invention and yield a mon-
opoly of prodigious weapons to the Soviet Union?
Does he wish us to put our hope in a possibility
that, if the worst comes to the worst, others, with
far less resource to draw upon than we have, will
show less, if more courage than he thinks we should
expect of ourselves? Does he seriously suppose that
a quarrel between Communist China and the Soviet
Union over primacy would afford a new birth of
freedom in a conquered world? Does he seriously
think we should count on a windfall in the form of
forces within the Soviet Union to stay it from ex-
ploting its position in the sequel to so great a
victory?

I hesitate to believe that Dr. Bennett is proposing
such dubious hypotheses as a basis for policy. Yet if
he is not, I cannot see why he is taking issue with
Dr. Lefever, unless it is over a mere question of
style growing out of Dr. Lefever's failure to express
himself in more anguished terms.

CHARLES BURTON MARSHALL