

# QUESTIONS FOR AMERICANS

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From what perspective should we who are concerned with religion and international affairs view the current foreign policy situation? Two factors of overriding importance stand out. First is the movement away from a bi-polar world and toward the pluralization of the world; second is the power shift, doubtless limited in character, but no less real, favoring the USSR at the expense of the U. S. A. (Henry A. Kissinger flatly asserts that "the missile gap in the period 1961-65 is now unavoidable"; and it is recognized by all competent observers that the USSR is leading the U. S. A. two to one in scientists under age thirty-five.)

Despite the first of these factors and because of the second, we must continue to focus attention on Soviet intentions and Soviet strategy. It remains true that the Soviet ultimate goal is an all-Communist world. This is part and parcel of Soviet doctrine, and Mr. Khrushchev has reiterated it with relentless insistence on countless occasions. While the intentions appear to remain constant, the strategy has changed since Stalin's day, for Stalin's method was violent competition with America for preponderant international control. Since Stalin's death, the Soviet strategy has been characterized by one Russian specialist as "the strategy of persuasion"—"geared to the maximizing of Soviet influence throughout the world." However, it should be noted that careful reading of the statement coming from the eighty-one leaders of the Communist world who met in Moscow last November as printed in the *New York Times* on December 7, 1960, makes clear that the agreement presumably reached on Khrushchev's "peaceful co-existence" line was more apparent than real. The document is schizoid. The Stalinist line of the Chinese is there despite all the assurance of unity in the Communist camp. It must be considered extremely doubtful that Khrushchev's thrust for peaceful coexistence really changed the Chinese ideological determinism regarding the inevitability of war.

Perhaps three other points about the USSR need to be kept in mind right along. First, that in spite of some decline in recent years in the Soviet rate of industrial growth, the rate is approximately twice the average rate of the U. S. since 1946. Second, the Soviet leaders feel sufficiently confident of their military power so that they feel free to use, arrogantly,

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the nuclear threat. Philip E. Mosely has said: "I do not know of any moral or political factor which would inhibit the Soviet leadership from engaging in a preventive war (against the United States) if it felt it could do so to its own advantage and with relative impunity." Third, specialists agree that when Mr. Khrushchev says that the close of the 20th century will see the triumph of Communism throughout the world, he really believes it.

Granting the Soviet intentions and strategy, the cardinal question concerns what the U. S. stance shall be during the 1960's. There can be no doubt that we must start by being militarily strong for **deterrent purposes**. Quite possibly this will mean a larger defense budget during the immediate years ahead. It should also mean that a very serious reappraisal be made of the role of conventional armaments in limited war, in order to determine whether we shall not again need to build up our conventional force in being to reduce the possibility of using nuclear weapons. In my own judgment we shall have to move in this direction. When working on weapon build-ups, we should assuredly emphasize "second strike" as over against "first strike" capabilities, insofar as this differentiation still has meaning in today's world. Those who maintain that the concept of deterrence no longer has validity would appear to be surrendering the single possibility remaining of arriving at a peaceful *modus operandi* with the Soviet Union, short of surrender. Military strength for deterrent purposes must be considered a holding operation, not an end in itself as the containment doctrine tended to make it. The prime value of the holding operation is to buy time in which to lessen the nuclear threat and to help direct into orderly channels the explosive ferment among the formerly oppressed and depressed people of the world. If the time is not so used, much more effectively than it has been, there may be a legitimate question about the value of the holding operation, which obviously involves extraordinary costs and incalculable risks.

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How shall the time be used? The two clear lines of approach are intensive efforts (1) on arms limitation and control and (2) on world development. Advances on these two fronts must now be made with reasonable speed if both government by consent and the open society are to survive and flourish.

On limitation and control of armaments—what the Russians call "controlled disarmament"—much more concentrated effort must be devoted by individuals, institutions, and the government. Simultaneously work must be carried on by research to develop techniques and by negotiations to mitigate mistrust. It is axiomatic that negotiations must be more than weapons in the Cold War, and heretofore they have been so used all too often by both sides.

A hopeful aspect is that such institutions as the RAND Corporation, the Harvard Center of International Affairs, the MIT Center of International Studies, and others are devoting concentrated attention to the disarmament question; and a group of individuals in the State Department has been in recent months giving their full time to it. Similarly it is hopeful that under the new administration such men as John McCloy and Paul Nitze will be focusing their energies on this area.

In what appears to be an arms race without limits, both sides feel threatened and neither feels that it dares to fall behind in the production of the latest weapons. Perhaps a little progress has been made in recent years because both sides appear to be nearer to recognizing their mutual interest in ending the arms race in ways commensurate with the national security of each. It also should be becoming more apparent every day that we shall need to reevaluate our entire China policy because of its direct relevance to policy on arms limitation and control.

At the same time that we work more intensively on arms control, we must devote vastly more imagination, brains and resources to world development or mutual aid in the free world. During recent years the American people have not given adequate support to the Administration in this area, and there are a number of qualified specialists who have insisted that the asking of the Administration has been far too small. Each spring the up-hill fight to win the approval of Congress for administrative requests for foreign aid is more difficult than the preceding year. (Harlan Cleveland in this context has talked about our having twenty-five-year needs, a five-year program, two-year personnel, and one-year appropriations.) We can of course be defeated immediately if we do not keep ourselves militarily strong. We can be defeated over a somewhat longer period of time if we do not succeed in making progress with respect to slowing down the arms race. But there is no question about the decisive defeat which faces the free world if we fail to develop and carry into action an adequate program for world development.

The urgent question is: Can the free world demonstrate that the standard of living and the over-all development of nations in the non-Communist orbit can be materially and fairly soon increased? Many Asians recognize this problem clearly. They understand that the rapid advances made in China under a totalitarian regime appear extremely alluring to the South and Southeast Asians. Even when deeply committed to free institutions, they wonder if their nations can develop rapidly enough to meet the challenge of accelerating progress in Red China. Many of them feel as overwhelmed and baffled as we do when we think seriously about the slow rate of development in the non-committed countries in terms of their population explosion.

We must look hard enough at the rapid development of the Soviet Union and Communist China to recognize once and for all that the appeal of these nations' fabulous growth is very persuasive to the underdeveloped areas. When the end results are viewed, the totalitarian methods that have been and are being used to attain them are often minimized. For one thing, nature's toll of human life and resources has been and is immensely expensive in areas bound by immemorial poverty. Perhaps the toll of dictatorial means would be no greater, it is thought, and apparently it can be effective in bringing into being a better material life. Such an argument, specious though it be, is elaborated persuasively by some Southeast Asians even when they themselves are devoting their energies to the development of effective government by consent.

The economic component is manifestly only one of many included by connotation in the phrase "world development." There are also political, social, and psychological components. Africa is now our best illustration, as we witness what has been called "the fury of political passion that now rules most educated and semi-educated Africans." Louis E. Lomax, a capable American Negro reporter, last summer made a tour of Africa. He tells us in his book, *The Reluctant African*, that the "freedom explosion" in Africa is taking place in an "anti-American, anti-capitalist, anti-Western context." Within this context, the whole matter of world development boils down to whether we as a nation are willing to commit adequate human and material resources to make an impact on a hostile continent; even more important, whether we as a nation can develop the imagination and sensitive understanding to cope with what Mr. Lomax calls "the ache in the African's heart, the pain in his soul."

The free world in general and the United States in particular must yet demonstrate that it can induce reasonably rapid development in nations within the non-Communist orbit.

The way in which America will meet its responsibility on these several fronts will be determined by the American character. Is it not a sad reflection on the American character that during recent years, of decisive import for the survival of the free world, our national fiscal policy has been dominated by the objective of a balanced budget? That all too often the first question raised about a proposed foreign policy has been not its substantive merit but how much will it cost? That as a people we have been so profoundly preoccupied with a constant flow of consumer goods that, despite our immense prosperity, the public standard of life has been allowed to decline substantially?

One prominent publicist has bluntly said: "Our

people have been led to believe in the enormous fallacy that the highest purpose of the American social order is to multiply the enjoyment of consumer goods. As a result, our public institutions, particularly those having to do with education and research, have been, as compared with the growth of our population, scandalously starved." The totalitarians can easily advance the public standard of life at the expense of the private standard, and the USSR has at this point a short-range advantage. But a democratic society like America must *choose* to put the public standard first, if we are not to be decisively defeated, whenever it is not possible—as we hope it may be in this country—to keep both at a high level.

Despite the underscoring of our "affluent society" during recent years, I doubt that we as a people have yet answered the question: Are we willing to pay for an adequate foreign policy—adequate military strength for deterrence, adequate foreign aid, adequate U. S. information-abroad programs (along the lines of the Sprague report), and adequate exchange programs?

A second area where the present nature of the American character will be demonstrated is in the new United Nations, now with ninety-nine members (ninety-eight seated), and the attitude of the United States toward it. Already I see signs that the American people are restive about what may happen in the UN. My concern is that we will become more isolationist as the chance increases that votes will go against us. Just at this time we must make every effort to reinforce what is presently our basic approach: namely, that America dare not go it alone or play a free hand if it wishes to survive or to have values it cherishes survive. A while back Grayson Kirk, making an address in Geneva, said that isolationism remains a potent force in the U.S. "It would still be the preferred policy of millions of Americans if they believed the conditions of the modern world would permit its continued use. It may never again rule our foreign policy, but it is a potent force and one not to be disregarded." Dr. Kirk is of course correct. Therefore we must now raise the bulwarks against the isolationism in our country, ever on the watch for a favorable climate to become resurgent. That favorable climate may be supplied during the months ahead by what happens in the United Nations. Here again a re-thinking of our China policy is indicated.

The third challenge to the American character concerns our moral and intellectual leadership.

Assuredly we shall fail utterly in the adequate development and wise use of our military and economic power without moral and intellectual leadership of a very high order. That we have stumbled

and fallen on our faces in many respects in this area is obvious. But we are a people of great strengths, many of them firmly rooted in our religious heritage and in our democratic national tradition. We must draw upon and develop these strengths.

For all too brief a time the release of Sputniks I and II helped to awaken the country as a whole to the dangerous threat to our intellectual leadership in the world, but we quickly relapsed into apathy. In recent years an anti-intellectualism has grown among us which ought to scare us more than the threat of intercontinental missiles. We are beginning to realize that we must make a massive effort to rehabilitate education in this country, and doubtless to do so we shall need federal help. We have made a small beginning, spurred primarily by our realization of our urgent need for scientists of top quality. But if we become preoccupied with technological training, we shall endanger our traditional democratic values. All the disciplines must be nurtured—culture, morals, religion, historical sciences, the entire gamut of the liberal arts—in addition to the physical sciences. Then it may be that we can manage to stay alive even while making life worth keeping alive.

Pointedly relevant in this connection are a few sentences from the Rockefeller Report on Education, significantly called *The Pursuit of Excellence*. "It is possible for us," the Report reads, "to cultivate the ideal of excellence while retaining the moral values of equality. Whether we shall succeed in doing so is perhaps the fundamental issue in the development of our human resources. A challenge must be recognized before it can be met. Our society will have passed an important milestone of maturity when those who are the most enthusiastic proponents of a democratic way of life are also the most vigorous proponents of excellence."

The questions that confront us as a people today can be summarized in these terms: Will we develop as a holding operation effective military strength, both conventional and nuclear, for deterrent purposes in the face of the power shift from the U. S. A. to the USSR and in view of the pluralization of the world? Will we use the time bought by the holding operation—with imagination, adequate resources, and our best brain power—to make significant advances in arms limitation and control as well as in world development? Do Americans have the character relentlessly to pursue excellence across the board, regardless of cost, recognizing that the easiest price we shall have to pay is financial?

These questions are replete with moral dilemmas, and the dilemmas must be faced courageously. This is the exciting and enormous task to which America today is summoned.