

I saw peasants and intellectuals enjoy the same freedom of criticism. In common with others who have mingled freely and at length with the Soviet people I can say that I know no land where there is more political discussion (over 36,000,000 people attended meetings discussing the new Constitution and sent in 154,000 amendments), and no land where so many of the people express themselves at such length in their press, from the wall newspapers in local institutions to the papers and magazines of their national organizations. The Orthodox Church, for example, now has its own printing plant.

It is a democratic principle that freedom of expression stops at the point

where the peace and security of the nation and the stability of the chosen form of government is endangered. People who have only recently been through a revolution against repression, especially in Eastern Europe where opposing opinions and direct action are usually united, draw the danger line finer than we do, with our long stability and security. In this matter of the press as well as the kind of governments of occupied Europe the core of the difference between us and the Soviet people is whether democratic freedom includes freedom for fascist groups, their financial backers and collaborators, to destroy democracy.

In the last analysis this boils down to the fifth freedom concealed under our

pious moral phrases, the freedom that unchecked destroys all the others, the freedom to make money regardless of the consequences to society and the world. Even those who view that freedom of expression as a basic right of the individual admit that no one has the right to yell "Fire!" in a crowded theater. We now have to make up our minds quickly whether anyone has the right to start a fire in the crowded theater of the world where the greatest drama of history is being played, by spreading lies about any nation, race or religion. When we settle that according to our own need we shall have less trouble with the Soviet Union and in trying to organize the United Nations.

Common Sense Perverted

By Corliss Lamont

THE will to wage wars of aggression against peace-loving peoples did not die with the United Nations' victory over the Axis. Even during the world war against fascism there were irresponsible minorities among the United Nations, especially in the United States, who harped constantly on the necessity of fighting Soviet Russia after Hitler was beaten. As far back as the spring of 1943, for instance, Maurice Hindus, one of our most objective observers of Soviet affairs, published his book *Mother Russia* and felt called upon to devote an entire chapter to the theme "Will We Have to Fight Russia?" Rare was the American, Mr. Hindus said, who failed to ask him this question. Throughout the war I myself kept receiving letters from men in the service who were alarmed over the undercover talk of future armed conflict with our Soviet ally.

Now, with the coming of peace, this talk has turned into a torrent of open propaganda directed toward dragging the American people into a war with the Soviet Union, our loyal and heroic partner in the struggle against world fascism, a country that lost between 15,000,000 and 20,000,000 dead in our common cause and which needs a long and lasting peace more than any other member of the United Nations. This hideous, senseless idea of a military crusade against Soviet Russia has obviously gained considerable impetus from America's successful use and possession of the atomic bomb secret.

In the October 1945 issue of *Common Sense* Mr. Bertrand Russell, Earl Russell, to be exact, once a leading liberal philosopher, becomes spokesman for the anti-Soviet reactionaries of every land. "Sooner or later," he states, "almost inevitably, there will be war. . . . Owing to the monopoly of the atomic bomb, a war between Russia and the Western democracies at the present moment would probably result in a fairly quick victory for the latter. But if the war were postponed for a few years, there would be more equality. . . . So far, this might seem like an argument for immediate war against Russia."

Not only seems, but *is*. And Russell's disclaimer—"this conclusion could only be reached by omitting important factors"—is not borne out by the rest of the article. Mr. Russell emphasizes, but expresses no relief over, the undoubted fact that neither the British nor American people would want to plunge into another conflict right now. And he proposes as the one hope of civilization "a vigorous and more or less imperialistic policy in the United States during the few years' respite before other powers possess atomic bombs." Totally ignoring the United Nations Organization, Russell advocates that America build up a League of Powers consisting, at the outset, of every important country but the Soviet Union.

This league, with an imperialist America always as its guiding force, would, Russell subtly suggests, exercise some effective atomic blackmail. And

then after a few years "it is by no means impossible that the Soviet government may become willing to take its place as part of a genuine international authority." Note that here Russell pretends that Soviet Russia is not cooperating at present for world peace and does not even mention its participation in the United Nations Organization and various international agreements.

ONE would not have been astonished had this shameless article of war-inciting doubletalk appeared in the Hearst press. To find it in the pages of *Common Sense*, however, originally founded twelve years ago as a genuinely progressive organ of opinion, might offhand be considered something of a surprise. But only for those who have not been reading *Common Sense* during the past year or so. For this magazine, even before printing Russell's piece, had become one of the leading anti-Soviet journals in the United States, a sort of special monthly supplement to the *New Leader*, weekly mouthpiece of the bitter-end anti-Soviet group, the Social Democrats.

During 1945 not a single issue of *Common Sense* has appeared that does not contain a vehement attack on Soviet policies. The first issue of 1945, that of February, started the ball rolling with a lead editorial entitled "Russia's Dead Idealism." In March came "Crimea: A Cynic's Peace"; in May an article by Kenneth Crawford claiming that the *Nation* and *New Re-*

