

**Article: DEMOCRACY IN EUROPE by A. Sokolov, From the New Times, No.9,  
October 1, 1945**

**Source: MARXIST MISCELLANY, Edited by G. Adhikari, VOLUME SIX, First Edition,  
April 1946, People's Publishing House, Raj Bhuvan, Sanhurst Road, Bombay 4.,  
Printed by Sharaf Athar Ali, New Age Printing Press, 190B, Khetwadi Main Road,  
Bombay 4 and published by him for People's Publishing House, Raj Bhuvan,  
Sandhurst Road, Bombay 4., p. 19-34**

**Transcription by: KSG-LB, February 2006**

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## **DEMOCRACY IN EASTERN EUROPE**

**By A. Sokolov\***

ATTENTION has already been called in an earlier issue of this journal (**War & the Working Class**, April 15, 1945) to the rather peculiar idea promulgated in the foreign Press that there are two conceptions of democracy: Anglo-Saxon and Soviet or Western and Eastern. For that section of the Press which formerly stolidly and stubbornly denied the existence of any democracy in countries where the political and social system substantially differed from the West-European and American brands, the discovery of these two conceptions of democracy was, in a manner of speaking, a distinct advance. Evidently, the old point of view was no longer tenable. It was in too glaring a contradiction to the facts which have left an indelible impress on the minds of men. The chief among them is the fact that, in the defeat and destruction of Hitlerism—that bitter and mortal enemy of democracy—the decisive role was played by the Soviet Union. The epochal feat of the Soviet Union in saving the world from fascist barbarism dispelled not a few prejudices and misconceptions. It simply became impossible to go on repeating old hackneyed phrases and catchwords, now that they had been shot to pieces by hard facts. A change of front was needed and the upshot was the theory of the existence of two conceptions of democracy.

This theory, which was first advanced in the concluding stages of the war, is attaining wide currency in the period following the termination of the war. But, while it was an advance on what the foreign Press had been writing before, it very soon became evident that this advance was of a very limited character.

"East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet...." The philosophy contained in these words of Rudyard Kipling was at one time designed to justify relations between colonial East and colony-owning West. It is being trotted out again today with a no less transparent practical purpose.

The doctrine that there are two conceptions of democracy, Western and Eastern, is being formulated to provide the criterion by which to judge the political situation which has arisen in various European countries liberated from Hitler's rule. The question is how to assess the present governments in countries of Eastern Europe liberated by the Red Army and how, on the other hand, to assess the regimes established in other European countries where British and American military authorities are installed. The suggestion that democratic ideas differ according to geographical longitude is intended to explain and to justify the criteria applied by the Western politicians.

The point at issue, therefore, is one which concerns matters that demand a common viewpoint and concerted action on the part of the Allied Powers. And the theory of two different conceptions of democracy is intended to explain the numerous difficulties which arise in the field of international policy. The

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\* From the New Times, No.9, of October 1, 1945

practical purpose of this theory is obvious. It is to bolster up the assertion that there is no real democracy in the liberated countries of Eastern Europe; that, judged by the standards of the West, the regimes existing in these countries cannot be considered democratic.

How is this thesis supported? The meagreness of arguments is only too apparent. Notwithstanding the freedom of the Press which, under "Western democracy" allegedly implies opportunity to express the most diverse opinions, you will find, in all the foreign Press which is, discussing the question of democracy, literally not more than 'three or four arguments served up in different variations.

### **ARE EAST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS NON- REPRESENTATIVE?**

First, it is asserted that the governments in liberated East-European countries-in Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary-and also in Yugoslavia, are "non-representative." These governments, allegedly, do not enjoy the support of the majority of the population but express the will only of an insignificant minority. Strictly speaking, this is not an argument at all but only a naked assertion unsupported by any factual evidence. What is more, it not only ignores facts but completely distorts the truth.

Here is a characteristic example. Not long ago the voice of the American radio station broadcast a statement by the United Press to the effect that the Rumanian Government of Dr. Petru Groza is supported by only 5% of the country's population. But one has just to reckon up the membership of mass popular organizations which openly and unreservedly support the present Rumanian Government, and the absurdity of this figure becomes only too obvious. The trade unions affiliated to the General Confederation of Labour which unequivocally support the government have 1,300,000 members. The Farmers' Front, of which Premier Petru Groza is the leader, has a membership of 1,500,000. Political parties belonging to the National Democratic Front-the Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party and that part of the National Tsarist Party which has joined the Front-have a total of no less than 340,000 members. Add to this number other public and political organizations which support the government, and we get a total-of not less than four or five million persons. Yet, in the last parliamentary elections in Rumania in 1933, there were 4,380,000 voters. How, from a comparison of these two figures, the figure 5% can be derived remains the secret of the United Press and of all who keep harping on the "non-representative" character of governments in the East-European countries.

In general it should be remarked that, regrettable as it is to all who are not disposed to regard truth as an outworn prejudice, certain official and unofficial champions of "Western democracy" are extremely loose in their handling of facts and figures. Here is another example. Sometime ago a statement made round of the world Press that, in the forthcoming elections in Yugoslavia, 60% of the population will be disfranchised. In refutation of this malicious slander, representatives of the Yugoslav Government cited facts to

show that, in reality, the number of persons deprived of franchise (for collaborating with the alien invader) represented no more than 2 to 3% of the electorate. Why, it may be asked; does the Press circulate such falsehoods and, what is more, falsehoods regarding an Allied country like Yugoslavia when, sooner or later, the truth must be out? But the lie about 60% was widely circulated by the Press in all its countless ramifications and by the radio, while the truth about 2 to 3% forced its way only with difficulty into a handful of newspapers.

The agitation over the alleged non-representative character of the democratic governments in a number of East-European countries is indicative of the haughty contempt for the policy which, amid the arduous conditions of the post-war dislocation, these governments are conducting in pursuance of the will of the people and in the interests of the people. After all, the best criterion of the democracy of a government is its policy. One cannot seriously discuss a democracy regime and, at the same time, close ones eyes to the main thing, namely: whom does it serve, for whose benefit does it exist—for the benefit of the people or their most bitter enemies; the traitors and betrayers of people's interests? If this criterion is applied to the governments of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary, all grounds for calling them non-representative simply fall away.

How can the democratic character of governments which have carried out such radical, profound and unquestionably democratic reforms be doubted?

Agrarian reform implies the destruction of the former omnipotence of feudal landlords. The renunciation of oppression of minorities by the leading nation state and proclamation of equality among nations make it possible for peoples who were formerly torn by dissension and bickering provoked by enemies of democracy to live together in peace.

The nationalisation of a number of vital branches of heavy industry undermines the foundations of anti-popular dictatorships, rapacious trust and bank magnates, agents of foreign capital who grovelled at the feet of the Nazi invaders.

The fact that masses of the people who formerly had virtually no say in the direction of their destinies are now taking an active part in political life is an undeniable democratic achievement. The renunciation of the former adventurist foreign policy which made these countries pawns and counters in hands of imperialist cliques signifies a switch over to the democratic foreign policy of good-neighbourly relations, peace and co-operation with other peace-loving countries.

This popular policy of democratic governments in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary has only to be contrasted with the anti-popular home and foreign policies of fascist-monarchist cliques, which are setting the tone in Greece, to make it clear which of these countries has a representative and which a non-representative government.

It should be borne in mind that profound democratic reforms could not but change the balance of forces in the social, political and economic life of the East-European countries. The excessive influence of feudal landlords and of agents of foreign capital has been undermined. The strength of the masses, on the other hand, has grown. But is this change in the balance of forces contrary to the principles of democracy? Is it not rather the surest guarantee of the consolidation of democracy and of discomfiture to its enemies?

The second argument is that democracy is not purely and simply majority rule but only such majority rule as fully respects the rights, views and opinions of the minority. For where minority opinion is repressed, the argument runs, there can be no real democracy. And such, it is alleged, is the case in the liberated East-European countries.

The howling contradiction between the first and second arguments is at once apparent. Either in Rumania, Bulgaria, etc., the majority is governed by the minority; and, in that case, there can be no question of the opinion of the minority being repressed. Or, the ruling majority in those countries is treating the minority unfairly; but, if that is so, what justification is there for asserting that a regime which expresses the will of the majority people is "non-representative"? Let us, however, examine argument number two on its merits.

In the first place, a democrat cannot plead for respect for minority rights and abstract himself from a consideration of the character of that minority and from the way it gives expression to its views and opinions. For, indeed, whoever demands full freedom of action for minorities and ignores these paramount aspects of the question, is either futilely beating in the air or is allowing himself to fall a victim to those dangerous sophistries which were, in no small degree, instrumental in helping fascists in a number of countries to come to power by taking advantage of the feebleness, irresoluteness and flabbiness which then characterized democracy in these countries.

This lesson of history is too fresh in our memories to be lightly forgotten. Did not Hitler march unhindered to power with the criminal connivance of the notorious Weimar democracy? Hitler's gangsters were at that time in a minority, but they demanded respect for their "rights" and "opinions" in accordance with principles of democracy over whose head they had raised an axe.

So much for history. But what of today? It would be simply a miracle, if in the countries where fascist and pro-fascist regimes have dominated for years and even for decades, all fascist elements were to vanish completely a day after the collapse of these regimes. Such miracles, of course, do not happen. It was with full consciousness of the realities that the leaders of the Three Powers at the Crimea Conference provided in their decisions for the important and difficult task of destroying vestiges of fascism and Nazism in liberated Europe.

The fascist rump in any country represents, of course, only an insignificant minority. But would anybody seriously suggest "respecting the rights" of this minority who consider it the sole purpose of their being to forcibly seize power and to establish their bloody tyranny over an overwhelming majority of the population? There is such, a minority in Poland, for instance, which calls itself **Narewowe Sily Zbrojne**. This "minority" expresses its opinion with the help of grenades, tommyguns and machineguns directed against peaceful rural inhabitants, active members of democratic parties and representatives of the Polish people's government. How would the advocates of the "Western conception of democracy" have such a "minority" treated?

Or take an analogous minority in another country-in Rumania. Fascist terrorist bands were recently discovered which, in deep conspiratorial secrecy, plotted the assassination of prominent political and public leaders of new democratic Rumania. Naturally, these people were isolated from society, tried as criminal offenders and condemned to various penalties. Is it not obvious that this is the only way to defend democracy against its bitterest enemies? Of course; when the will of the overwhelming majority of the people is, being carried out in liberated countries a numerically small-but extremely vociferous and active-minority is bound to be disgruntled.

Criminal fascists and their accomplices are disgruntled at being called to account, at being put in prison instead of being elevated to cabinet posts, as happens in certain other countries. Diehard landlords are disgruntled with the agrarian reform and profiteers with the measures taken against the black-market. Agents of foreign imperialisms are disgruntled with the independent foreign policy. But such disgruntledness on the part of such a minority, far from casting a doubt on the democratic character of the government, only serves as an added proof that it is a government of, for and by the people.

The advocates of the "Western conception of democracy" have an argument; they assert that, in the liberated East-European countries, a "single-party system" exists. But they close their eyes to the fact that what each of these countries really has is a government coalition consisting of representatives of several democratic parties, organizations and groups which had already joined forces in the course of their heroic struggle for liberation from the Nazi invaders. Is it surprising that these parties and groups set such store by the unity won at the cost of such heavy sacrifices on the altar of their joint struggle against fascism? The whole experience of the past teaches democratic liberated countries of Europe that nothing would benefit reactionaries so much as disunity in the democratic camp and that, on the contrary, unity of democratic forces is a sure guarantee of victory over the machinations of reactionaries.

### THE "SINGLE PARTY" HOAX

But what do the apologists of the "Western conception of democracy" care about that? With a zeal worthy of a better cause they keep on harping: "Yours is a single-party system"! They make assertions which can only

amaze sincere democrats. They claim, for instance, that, in the liberated countries of Eastern Europe, "one totalitarian regime has been replaced by another." This juggling with the word totalitarian-what has it got to do with the truth? It is one of those typical catchwords which are invented not to explain things but to obscure them. Champions of anti-Communism with their characteristic unscrupulousness use this catchword to put fascist states and the Soviet Union-the most consistently democratic country and the most irreconcilable enemy of fascism-on a par.

Their purpose is obvious. It is, on the one hand, to defame the Soviet Union and, on the other, to divert attention from the fact that the social and economic systems both of fascist countries and of the "Western democracies" have many things in common. We are referring to the activities of the capitalists, the monopolies, trusts, cartels and banks with their expansionist proclivities, to the social gulf between the small minority, the rich, and the great majority, the poor and near poor and, the like. It goes without saying that the existence of these common social and economic features does not mean that fascist countries and the "Western democracies" can be bracketed together. But this fact must be borne in mind if we want to uncover the roots of the subversive activities which pro-fascist elements are conducting in the "Western democracies."

The countries of liberated Europe are confronted with big and complex political, economic, social and cultural problems. They can be solved only if all genuinely democratic forces of the people are solidly united. That is why, in these countries, really democratic parties, for which interests of the people are not empty words, prefer to act in concert. The fragmentation of democratic forces in many European countries before the war cost the people dear. Taking advantage of disunion in the democratic camp, small but politically experienced and solidly united reactionary cliques were able, in many cases, to gain the upper hand over democracy. Such was the case in France where reactionaries, acting on behalf of the "Two Hundred Families," succeeded in splitting the **Popular Front** and paving the way for the disastrous home and foreign policies which, in the end, led to the disgrace of Compeigne and four years of the nightmare of Nazi occupation.

In Czechoslovakia democratic forces on the eve of the war were divided into a score of different parties; the trade union movement was similarly split. Democratic disunity was effectively exploited by the Czechoslovak reactionaries who did no little to facilitate Hitler's aggression against that country. Is it then surprising that four parties in Czechoslovakia-the People's Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Communist Party and the People's Party-have now united in the National Front? There are analogous organizations in Bulgaria-the Patriotic Front; in Rumania-the National Democratic Front; in Hungary-the bloc of all anti-fascist parties which have formed a coalition government; in Yugoslavia-the People's Front; and in Poland the coalition of four parties represented in the Provisional Government of National Unity.

This does not imply that there are no opposition parties and groups in these countries. There are such parties and groups and they enjoy freedom of speech, publish newspapers and take part in the election campaigns. But who is to blame if the masses, made wise by experience, refuse to follow these groups and their leaders?

This talk of a single-party system is all the more unwarranted when it is remembered that the Anglo-Saxon countries are not particularly distinguished by a superabundance of political parties. In Great Britain, as in the United States, what we virtually have is a two-party system. During the war Great Britain had a Coalition Government which was supported by all parties. But nobody thought of calling this a single-party system. Just before the termination of the war the Coalition fell to pieces, the government was reorganized and became a purely Conservative one and, after the elections in July, the Conservative Cabinet was succeeded by a Labour Cabinet.

We know, however, that the Government party and the Opposition party-which, in England, significantly enough, is known as "His Majesty's Opposition"-hold very kindred views on important national questions and especially on questions of foreign and imperial policies. It will be remembered that the programme enunciated in the House of Commons by Ernest Bevin, the Labour Foreign Secretary, was cordially greeted by the Conservatives-in fact far more cordially than by the Labourites. The Press, -especially the Conservative Press-laid great stress the "continuity" of foreign policy displayed by the Labour Cabinet.

It was remarked that the Conservative leaders were far more gratified by this continuity than the millions of electors who had cast their votes for the Labour Party in the hope that it would pursue a more democratic policy in foreign affairs too. Facts, therefore, show that the two principal parties in Great Britain are linked by much stronger bonds than might, at the first glance, appear. What warrant is there, therefore, for denying democratic parties, in liberated countries of Europe the right to unite their forces in order to tackle difficult problems that confront their respective peoples?

The proponents of the "Western conception of democracy" assert that what the liberated countries of Eastern Europe actually have is a "dictatorship of the Communist Party." They declare that all other parties are only a sort of a democratic stage scenery, since their leaders consist of specially delegated and carefully disguised Communists.

The only semblance of evidence adduced in support If this assertion-which is as malicious as it is absurd-is that many democratic parties have replaced their old leaders by new ones. At the recent Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Hungary, for instance, its former leader, Peyer, who refused to co-operate with the Communists and other democratic parties, received an insignificant number of votes. The Congress elected new leaders headed by Szakasics. Analogous processes are to be observed in some other liberated countries.

In Rumania the old leaders of the national Tsaranist and National Liberal Parties-Maniu and Bratianu-have long been Generals without armies: The bulk of their former followers have given their allegiance to other political leaders, among them old ones like the liberal Tatarescu ad new ones. In Yugoslavia, Macheck, the former leader the Croatian Peasant Party who co-operated with the German invaders and with their agent Pavelich, is hated by the Croatian peasants. New men have come forward to lead the Peasant Party which is now known as the Croatian peasant Republican Party. The same thing is going on in some democratic parties of Poland and other countries.

In this state of affairs devotees of "Western democracy" assume the pose of an irate cleric and, shaking a minatory finger at Continental peoples say, "Follow your old leaders or we will ex-communicate you from the democratic church!" But what has this demand in common with true democracy in home and foreign affairs? Who will deny that one of the elementary democratic rights is the right of every party freely to select its leaders and, if necessary to replace them by others? After all, the leadership of a party, if it is really a democratic party, cannot be regarded as a lifelong privilege. In the period of the great upheavals Maniu, Bratianu, Macheck and their ilk lost their political capital. By the support they gave to fascism and the German invaders, by their treacherous attitude towards the national liberation struggle of the masses and by their frank speculation on differences arising among the Great Powers, these bankrupt politicians earned the contempt of their peoples. Whoever attempts, at this time to foist such leaders on the liberated peoples only sets himself down as one who uses the banner of democracy as a cloak for an anti-democratic policy which implies anything but respect for the will of the people or for the sovereignty of other countries.

At the same time, let it be remarked that the achievements of democracy in the liberated East-European countries do not imply "Sovietization" of these countries as the most unscrupulous reactionary calumniators claim. As we know, these countries retain their former social and economic systems which are based on private ownership of the means of production. Neither agrarian reforms nor measures taken against the black-market, nor the nationalization of a number of factories or even certain branches of large-scale industry, indicate a departure from the social and economic system existing in these countries. As we know, the nationalization of a number of branches of heavy industry is being discussed in England while in France feudal estates were broken up a century and half ago.

In the Soviet Union there is nothing to warrant the existence of several parties, inasmuch as classes with radically differing interests no longer exist in our country. But who can forbid them to join forces in fulfilling the will of the masses who regard unity as a cardinal condition for rebuilding their political life on new and more reliable lines?

It should be remarked that an astonishing confusion of ideas is sometimes betrayed in this discussion of democracy. In illustration we might cite an article which recently appeared in connection with the World Trade Union Conference in the French weekly **Volontes**, organ of one of the groups in the resistance movement known as the **Ceux Dela Resistance**. The author of the article is prepared to admit that the Soviet economic system has a number of definite advantages. He writes,

"When we turn to Soviet Russia we find that it is an exemplar of planned economy where private ownership in the means of production does not exist. This system of production was put to the test during the war and proved its effectiveness. Now; when the war is over, and when the Anglo-Saxon world is threatened with the horrors of unemployment, Russia, on the contrary, is marching toward to realize the new Five Year Plan."

In this acknowledgement of the incontestable advantages of the Soviet Union's economic system we find a reflection of the fact that millions of people all over the world ardently wish the economic system of their countries, like the planned socialist economy of the Soviet Union, to be exempt from the unemployment crises and similar miseries. But, while granting the advantages of Soviet planned economy, the author of the article blindly parrots the long-discredited libels of our enemies to the effect that "liberty and democracy" do not exist in our country. After weighing all pros and cons the article expresses the modest desire "to find a synthesis which would combine the economic regime of the Soviet Union with the political democracy of the Anglo-Saxon countries." This reminds us of Gogol's Agafya Tykhonovna who sighed for a lover who would' have lips of one of her suitors and the nose of another.

Evidently, the author of this article fails to realize that the "economic regime" and the political system of the Soviet Union constitute an integral and inseparable whole. For, the Soviet political system, which is anchored in the economic achievements of socialism, not only formally recognizes the democratic rights of citizens but also assures them the material possibility of enjoying these rights by guaranteeing the right to work, freedom from exploitation and from national and racial inequality etc. The Soviet system is, therefore, the highest form of political democracy. It is consistent democracy-which cannot be said of these countries where democracy, being only a formal right to work, is only a dream while many other rights, as far as the majority population is concerned, are purely nominal.

Lastly, it is an unpardonable crime in the eyes of certain champions of the "Western conception of democracy" that the liberated countries of Eastern Europe in their foreign policies have adopted a firm course of friend ship with the Soviet Union. It should be stated that, as a rule, this accusation is not made openly. However, the hints are clear enough. In particular there is a disposition to deny the governments of a number of countries the right to call themselves democratic on grounds that, in the opinion of certain interested circles in Britain and America, they are going too far in the matter of economic

co-operation with the Soviet Union.

This attitude betrays a hearty contempt for geographical and historical facts. As to geography, one has only to glance at the map to realize the vital necessity for such countries as Rumania, Hungary and Poland of maintaining a close economic contact with their great eastern neighbour. And, as regards history, everybody knows that, in the post-Versailles period, the absence of normal economic relations with the Soviet Union was the result of the malevolent anti-Soviet policy of circles which then ruled the neighbouring countries and that it did a grave injury to the vital interests of the peoples in these countries.

This argument, moreover, testifies to the obvious disregard of the indisputable interests of the Soviet Union which is scarcely calculated to make for lasting co-operation among the Great Powers. What would the authors of the argument say if a protest were raised against close economic ties between, say, Mexico or Canada and the United States or between Holland or Denmark and Great Britain? One must be blind indeed not to realize that the Soviet Union, which occupies one-sixth of the land surface of the globe, has every right to establish close economic ties with its immediate neighbours in the west and the east.

### **THE TRUTH ABOUT "WESTERN DEMOCRATS"**

How is this blindness to be explained? Light is thrown on this question by certain foreign observers, like the American radio commentator, Steel, for instance, who believes that Anglo-American pressure on the Balkans and on Rumania, in particular, is being exercised under the influence of commercial interests. And perhaps those observers are not far from the truth who profess to detect, in many of the disquisitions in the foreign Press on the subject of democracy, a distinct smell of oil. **Laturquie**, for instance, one of the very few progressive Turkish newspapers, wrote in middle September,

"Why did the English reactionaries immediately pounce on the Rumanian question and play upon it with such astonishing unanimity? The answer to this question is extremely simple and has nothing to do with the professed necessity to protect democracy. The crux of the matter is-Rumanian oil. Anybody who knows anything at all about the interest displayed by Wall Street and the City in the Ploesti oil region will not be surprised at the violent reaction of these circles to the Rumanian-Soviet **rapprochement**."

That oil trusts regard every problem from the standpoint of their own interests is quite understandable. At the same time there are many who would like to see the "Greek regime" established in all liberated countries. But what has this got to do with democracy? And if reactionaries loudly call for a "firm policy" towards the Soviet Union one need not doubt that what they mean is a hidebound policy which ignores the enhanced role of the Soviet Union in international affairs. Nor need one doubt that this policy is scarcely likely to

earn any laurels for its champions.

Such are the arguments advanced by the proponents of the "Western conception of democracy." As we see, they are not very convincing. Yet they are indicative of definite tendencies which must not be overlooked when analyzing present-day international affairs. These tendencies are not new. After World War I, be it remembered, these same circles, whose views and opinions are expressed by the present-day enthusiasts for the "Western conception of democracy," readily reconciled themselves to such regimes as that of the butcher Horthy in Hungary or of the Pilsudski adventurers in Poland or of the fascist Tsankov In Bulgaria. Nobody thought of drawing a distinction between the "Western" and "Eastern" conceptions of democracy then. Any anti-popular regime was considered a good one provided it pursued a policy hostile to the Soviet Union.

This was the time when many statesmen of the Western democracies considered it the acme of wisdom to create a **cordon sanitaire** around the Soviet Union. In the West nowadays there is reluctance to recall the **cordon sanitaire**. That is not surprising, for that policy ended in a fiasco and was utterly discredited in the eyes of peoples. Discontent is often expressed abroad when the Soviet Union finds it necessary to give a reminder of these lessons of the recent past. But in this case the discontented have only themselves to blame. For many conceptions of international policy today quite distinctly bear the hallmark of the inglorious post-Versailles policy of the Western Powers.

At the same time, even some of the new notes in the old refrains far from harmonize with the principles of democracy and international co-operation. Take, for example, the persistent campaign conducted in some American newspapers demanding that the United States use its monopoly of the atomic bomb production to extend "American ideals" and the American conception of democracy" to the whole world. These undisguised appeals for world dominion of one power are usually accompanied by attacks on the Soviet Union which is accused of "power politics" and of "unilateral actions." But the real motives of these plans for the "atomic democracy" are perfectly clear. Walter Lippman, a conservative American journalist, is undoubtedly right when he writes in this connection:

"If we allow fools among us to brandish the atomic bomb with the idea that it is a political argument we shall certainly end by convincing the remainder of the world that their own safety and dignity compel them to unite against us."

As to the Soviet people, all their sympathies and good will are with the democratic forces in their fight to extirpate fascism and to eliminate its deplorable consequences. The Soviet Union, faithful to its principles of respecting the sovereignty and independence of the small countries and of not interfering in their internal affairs, is consistently pursuing a policy of supporting democratic regimes in the liberated East-European countries. It is borne out by its establishment of diplomatic relations with Finland, Bulgaria,

Rumania, Hungary, by a series of political and economic agreements it has concluded with these countries and by food relief and other economic assistance it has rendered them. This policy is not only in the interest of our country and of our immediate neighbours; it also serves to consolidate victory over fascism—that supreme aggressor—and to promote international peace, social progress and triumph of democracy.