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The Theory and Strategy of Communism

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THE THEORY AND STRATEGY OF COMMUNISM

A lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
on 8 September 1952 by
Dr. James Burnham

Admiral Conolly, Admiral Beakley and Gentlemen:

The philosopher, Spinoza, has observed that in order to say what a thing *is*, you must also be able to say what it is *not*. I'm going to follow his advice at the outset this morning. My object is to explain what Communism *is* and I am, therefore, going to begin by discussing two things that Communism is *not*.

To begin with, Communism is not a philosophy, not a doctrine, belief, or theory. It may seem surprising to you that I should start by denying that Communism is a philosophy or a belief. Many books have been written by both Communists and anti-Communists on "The Philosophy of Communism." Many other books about Communism, especially if written by professors, begin with several chapters on Philosophy.

They explain how Karl Marx, as a young man, was a student and follower of the dialectical, idealist, and very complicated philosophy of Hegel. Then they say that Marx and his friend, Friedrich Engels, stood Hegel (philosophically speaking) on his head. They substituted matter for mind and, making use of Hegel's logical principles, they set forth their own philosophy which they called "dialectical materialism." This, they conclude, was the beginning of the history of Communism.

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Now, I do not believe that Communism began with the philosophy of "dialectical materialism," or with any other philosophy. I do not even believe that Communism, as we know it, began with Marx. It was not Marx but, much later, Lenin who founded Communism—and what he founded was not a philosophy, but an organization.

Of course Communists do believe in a particular philosophy, and the philosophy in which they believe is the doctrine called "dialectical materialism." Anyone who wishes to make a thorough study of Communism has got to meet and master the principles of dialectical materialism. It would be a good thing for our country if more citizens were available who had made a thorough study of that kind. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the philosophical road is not the best approach to a correct understanding of the nature of Communism. The Philosophy is a by-product, a surplus—important, but not the heart of the matter.

In the *second* place, Communism is not a political party. You will at once protest: "But it is obviously a political party. It runs candidates for elections. It is registered as a party. In many countries Communists are mayors, governors, members of parliament, municipal councillors. How is it possible to say that Communism is not a political party?"

Somewhat as in the case of Communism considered as philosophy, I can agree that the Communists act frequently as if they were a political party. They use the form of a political party. But, in reality, they make up something quite different from what we ordinarily mean by the phrase "a political party."

There is an issue here—something much more than an academic dispute over a verbal definition. Curiously enough, the

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Communists themselves are most anxious that we should think of Communism as either a political party or as a philosophy. Why should that be? What difference does it make? As things work out, it makes a very practical and serious difference.

Notice! If Communism is a political party, then that means it is the same kind of thing as the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, the Socialist Party; the Conservative Party or the Labor Party in Britain; the Christian Democratic Party in Italy, and so on. It then seems to follow that Communism should have the same rights and privileges as all of these other parties. Constitutional provisions about freedom of assembly and opposition then apparently apply to Communism, and Communists should be granted all the normal civil rights of ordinary citizens going about their ordinary business. If any one calls for outlawing the Communists, for illegalizing their organization, then he is a Reactionary and a Fascist, endangering the liberties of all parties and all citizens—or, so it would seem if Communism is a political party.

A similar practical conclusion follows if Communism is a philosophy. Then it is argued that the belief in and advocacy of Communism come under the right of "Free speech." To urge the outlawing of the Communists is "hysteria" and "witch hunting."

Is it clear why Communists are happy when non-Communists believe that their movement is a philosophy or a political party? These beliefs are a kind of insurance policy for Communism which protects it from many legal and practical hazards. Unfortunately these beliefs are widespread—even more so among high places than with the general public.

I think that we can best promote a clear understanding of the nature of Communism by calling it an "Enterprise." I use this

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word in much the same sense that it has when we speak of a "business enterprise." Communism is not at all an ideal, an abstraction. Communism is, as we sometimes say of a business institution, a "going concern."

The Communist Enterprise is unique in history. Considered in its entirety it does not have any exact historical precedent. If we analyze it into its primary elements, we do find precedents or analogies for each of the elements taken separately. What is unique is the fusion of these elements into a single entity.

The chief elements out of which the Communist Enterprise is formed are three. Or perhaps I should put it in this way: we can understand Communism upon analysis from three different points of view. Let me review these. Communism, to begin with, is a *secular religion*. Let me explain just what I mean by the use of these two words. It is secular in the sense that it exists in terms of this world—not a transcendental world, not a hereafter, not a heaven which is beyond space and time. Its supreme goal, its paradise is an earthly paradise—in history, in space and time—not hereafter. Nevertheless, like all religions, it does have a supreme goal.

By calling it a religion, I mean on the one hand that it is a powerful and dominating faith—a faith of a kind that can absorb the whole heart, mind and soul of a man, in terms of which his whole life can become organized so that everything else and all other activities are subordinated to it.

On the other hand, by calling it a religion I mean that it contains elements which are non-scientific, non-rational and, indeed, irrational. Of course Communism claims to be the only scientific social philosophy, but examination proves that this is not the case.

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As a matter of fact, in certain respects it is stronger because it is not, because the irrational elements (or some of them in Communism) correspond to very deep impulses, appetites and emotions in human beings. For this reason, the Communist is at least partly immune to rational argument.

This is often illustrated very directly. For example: All over the world today, one of the principal items in anti-American propaganda that is put forward by the Communists is on the negro question. They say that in this country the negro is an oppressed, terrorized and exploited race. In order to prove this, they claim that lynchings go on by the hundreds all over the United States. In the Communist press, in the Communist meetings, they speak of lynchings not only in the deep South (where, incidentally, they no longer take place), but even in northern cities. They speak of negroes being hanged from the lamp posts of northern cities.

Now, rationally, it is very easy to refute this because the facts are all there in statistics. You can point out just how many lynchings have taken place and where. You can show that they have come down to a very, very few. In most of the years of the last decade there have been none at all.

But this doesn't affect the Communist propaganda because in rousing up this anti-American feeling, in linking it with a racial question and in many cases very subtly with certain suppressed sexual impulses also, they appeal to a side of man that has nothing to do with reason, science or statistics. This also applies to their belief in the inevitability of their own victory, which has nothing to do with any arguments that are put forward one way or another.

Communism is secular religion, then, in these various senses,

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and, finally, in the sense of being Messianic—in the sense of proclaiming a mission which will save the world.

The closest analogy to this whole aspect of Communism is, I imagine, Islam—of the early period just after the death of Mohammed. Of course Islam has an other-worldly goal as well as a secular goal in this world. Islam wishes to establish, in its strictest interpretation, a kingdom of this world as well as of the next. It doesn't say: "Put all your faith in the hereafter." Acting on their double faith, they became a crusading movement which, as you know, within a few generations swept all around the basin of the Mediterranean into the heart of Western Europe itself. I believe that this analogy between Islam of the early period and Communism could be pressed rather far.

I want to turn now to the *second* major element in Communism, the second fundamental way of looking at the Communist Enterprise. Communism, secondly, is a new kind of army. It shows in its organization, in its discipline, in its mode of operation, most of the classic characteristics of an army. It has the hierarchical principle of organization that the military has. The command is at the top, the command issues from the top and runs from the top down. The leaders give commands—not suggestions, opinions or advice. The Enterprise has the discipline of an army—enforces by rules and regulations which, at least for the inner core, are even stricter than those within an ordinary army.

It is noticeable that the Communists tend to use military terminology. This applies even in the most humble things. If they are going to take the DAILY WORKER out into the subway to try to sell it to a few passengers, or to get it known even if it is not sold, they speak of "shock troops." They consider it as a mili-

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tary action which has a military objective, and they will draw up orders along military lines to carry it out. They speak of their highest bodies, like the Politburo, as the "General Staff of the World Revolution," and so on.

Finally, *third*, Communism is a conspiracy: integrally, not accidentally, not merely under some circumstances. This is part of its essential and fundamental nature. As a conspiracy, it shows the characteristics and modes of operation which other conspiracies display. It operates illegally, clandestinely, in the underground, in secret—and this type of operation is continuous. The Communists of course often disguise it, camouflage it, and pretend that this is only necessary under conditions of police terror. Not at all! As a matter of fact, Communist doctrine on this point is unequivocal. Illegal work takes precedence over legal work. The illegal organization is the superior of the legal organization. The legal organization is only the "front" for the fundamentally illegal conspiracy.

In keeping with this, they develop a whole set of lessons based upon the protection of the conspiracy and its effective operation; all the things that one is accustomed to in these matters—the mode of cell organization, so that only a small part of the structure can be hit at once; the mode of communications, of code, of liaison, and so on.

Let me stress again that the Communist Enterprise is the integral fusion of all three of these aspects, or elements: secular religion, army, conspiracy. That is what makes it unique. When you consider any *one* of them, you can find a historical precedent. And I think it is illuminating, in studying the nature of Communism, to search out such precedents. However, putting them

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all together into a single enterprise has, I think, never happened before in history.

Now let me turn to an analysis of the structure of this Enterprise. We can look at the structure, also, in several different ways. However as we approach it we find that it has what I called in that little outline "an onion-skin structure"; a central core or nucleus around which there are concentric layers of skin, concentric circles. I would like you to think of the cross-section of an onion; think of that central core and, around it, these concentric rings. To get at the central core, we have to peel away the rings.

Another way of putting this is to say that the Communist Enterprise is organized in accordance with the "cadre" principle, more distinctly, perhaps, than this is applied in any other field, though United States military organizations make use of this principle, also. There is a cadre (or a set of cadres) which acts as the central nucleus and the backbone for the whole, which informs and controls the entire structure that is built around it.

Let me, to begin with, look at this concentric ring structure in terms of "organization." Here, if we lift away one layer after another, we come to the nucleus or core which is the Supreme Leadership—the leadership which is physically located within the Soviet Union; in fact, more particularly within Russia: one of the constituent republics of the Soviet Union. The Leadership has its best-known persons assembled in what has been called up until now the "Politburo," but which will be called after next month the "Presidium." As a matter of fact, it is impossible to be certain exactly who belongs to the Supreme Leadership. It includes others besides the ones who are, formally speaking, in the highest committee; and probably one or two of the committee mem-

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bers are not quite as important as some who are outside. The conspiratorial principle applies here, also; the concealment of some of the members of the Supreme Leadership must unquestionably be expected.

In the first layer around the core you have the immediately lower echelons of the central leadership and then the regional leaderships of the various sections of the Enterprise, which are operating in nations outside of Russia—operating, of course, in all other nations.

Then around the secondary leadership are organized the "cadres," as the Communists themselves call them. We must distinguish between the cadres and the ordinary Party members. The ordinary party members constitute the next ring, the next layer. The cadres mean those who are true Bolsheviks, who have been through a process of indoctrination and of practical and conspiratorial training—a training in the real meaning of the Communist Enterprise, hardened over a period of many, many years. It is not a matter for six months or one or two years, in a kind of finishing school: by no means. The training is carried out through the activities of the movement as well as in its intellectual training centers. The people who enter into the cadres have to show their mettle in action. They have to come up against the police; they have to fight, they have to kill people; they have to show that they are adept at terror and sabotage, as well as being skilled in Dialectical Materialism.

The ordinary party member is a less abnormal human being. It is easier to think of him going in and out of the movement under certain pressures. Hardly a handful of the cadres go, or ever are allowed to go—they are ordinarily prevented from leaving.

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So far as proportions go, I have seen estimates in France, for instance, that when the French Party had close to 700,000-800,000 members a couple of years ago, the cadres probably were around 70,000-75,000.

Around the Party members (in fact, the outer ranges of the Party members would fade into them) are the "sympathizers" and "fellow travelers," an absolutely essential part of the Communist Enterprise. Without the fellow travelers and sympathizers the Communists never could have functioned in any of the Western countries, nor even in the Asian countries. It is they who act as the buffer, and as the filter for the absorption by the Communists of more and more of society, and as the gateway to their active infiltration of society. They are the bridge. They are the seemingly more or less respectable people—the people who, when any one attacks them, arouse the disturbance of the Liberals, who begin howling about "hysteria" and "witch hunting." They can function where Communists themselves would be altogether excluded, would not be listened to, or would be simply run out.

Still further in the outer layers of our onion are the "innocent dupes"—those who are not in their own consciousness following along with the Communists, but who have been taken into camp through one or another device of deceit. Please observe that among the dupes are to be found many people who in their own minds and in the minds of the public are non-Communists, or even anti-Communists. The Communists have found remarkable methods for making even their enemies serve their purposes.

A former member of the Secretariat of the Communist International, a very important member from one of the Scandinavian countries, has stated that in the eyes of the Communists

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themselves 80% of their effective propaganda work is done through what they call the "bourgeois" press and radio. They rank all the hundreds of millions of dollars that they spend on their own press and their own radio as counting only 20% in terms of total effect. What they have discovered about the press of the enemy enables them to manipulate, sometimes in great detail, even the make-up of your morning newspaper.

For example: One of the great means of political and psychological attrition that is used by the Communists is the "hot and cold" method, turning it on "hot" one day and "cold" the next day—war looks just around the corner today, but all is ready for peace and negotiation tomorrow. This keeps non-Communist public opinion perpetually unbalanced. Now, the sensationalist methods of our press play completely into the hands of this hot and cold method. What deserves a big headline better than the thought that maybe there will be war tomorrow, or in a month from now? On the other hand, what better deserves a second major headline a few days later than the fact that Stalin hints that maybe he is ready to negotiate? So they always get the big headlines, whichever move that they are attempting. They study the methods of our press precisely for that purpose.

A number of you, I imagine, have been in Berlin during these past few years. If you have, you know that East Berlin is incomparably worse off than West Berlin. There is little food in East Berlin. There is nothing worth buying in the shops, no clothes, the people look completely drab. When you walk down the streets, where in the middle of the road there is the border between the Soviet sector and the Western sector, you can know immediately which is which because the appearance of the Western side is so much better. Yet the **NEW YORK TIMES**, a few days ago, pub-

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lished several photographs about the magnificent Soviet reconstruction in the Eastern zone. The Communists take one street—they do a grandiose, a tremendous job on that at the sacrifice to the well-being of all the people in the city, and that is what gets into our press. But the day-by-day hard work, the routine work that gives people more food or jobs, better conditions of life, more freedom—that is not news.

Of course there are many reasons why people become dupes. Some are misled by sentimental reasons—they think that they are helping the negro or the savages of Africa, or helping solve some trade union or civil rights problem.

Incidentally, though I haven't time to do so, this organizational structure could also be analyzed in terms of institutions rather than of different types of persons. The way I have done it—from leadership out to ordinary members, to dupes—we are speaking of individual persons. You could put it in terms of the Politburo, or the highest committees of the party, the ordinary party committees and then out through the various United Front organizations right into the enemy organizations.

I want to turn now to another aspect of the structural principles of Communism: the ideological.

The same principle is observable, only here we have to introduce a complication. The interior, the heart of our onion, I have called "true Bolshevism." In a moment I will say a little more about it. This, let me note, is not a written doctrine. This is what is taught in life, is taught inside the highest leadership over a period of years. It is like some of the ancient religions which had one secret doctrine for the high caste, or the priesthood, and a quite different doctrine for the ordinary believers. In the Middle

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Ages, the Catharist movement had two doctrines of this kind—one for what they called “the perfect,” and the other for “the believers.” This inner Bolshevik doctrine one has to know about through direct experience—either of one’s own, or by knowing people who have been in the leadership and have absorbed this doctrine in life, or by picking up a bit of it in books, especially novels and autobiographies.

The next layer surrounding “true Bolshevism” is what is ordinarily called “Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism.” This is the official Party doctrine which is in official books beginning with the *Short History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, in the books of Lenin, of Stalin, and the other members of the hierarchy.

Finally, around this is a quite different doctrine—the doctrine that is put out by the Party and its sympathizers for the benefit of the general public, of the dupes, of people who have Liberal, sentimental, humanitarian views—sugar-coated very suitably for their digestion. I’ll wait a minute to mention the subsidiary, supporting rings which are not quite capable of being put into the concentric circle scheme.

Let me illustrate the difference between these three doctrines by one or two specific cases. What is the goal of Communism? Well, that depends—it depends upon which of those three doctrines you are talking about. For ordinary people, the Liberals and the Progressives, Communists say that the Communist goal is the same as that of all “forward looking” persons. They say to Liberals: “Communists are different from Fascists, because we Communists seek the same ideals and values as you Liberals, even though we disagree somewhat about the methods to reach them.”

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"Peace and prosperity"—that is usually what it comes down to. Once in a while of course they mention, their ultimate goal of ideal Communism, or a classless society, in which there will be no war, no exploitation, and everybody will be happy with each other.

Suppose you consult Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism. What is the goal? Well, the official doctrine will say: "Ultimately, we are for ideal Communism, the classless society. But, so far as this period of history goes, we are for the dictatorship of the proletariat." They won't argue that this means peace and prosperity.

If you look in the official doctrine, it says: "No, the proletariat dictatorship, like all dictatorships, makes use of suppression. It is a government that has armies and police, there will be wars and civil wars, and revolutions and counter-revolutions during this period. But it is a dictatorship which represents the interests of the great mass of working mankind, and it is exercised by the Communist Party in their benefit, for them and in their name."

But, what is the true doctrine for which these are only one or another layers or disguises? The true doctrine, which is not at all ambiguous in the mind of any real Bolshevik, is that the goal is a monopoly of power for the Communists themselves—a monopoly on a world scale; that no one else, except the Communists, and no other institution, shall have any power. In the last analysis, because of the nature of their structure, that means no one except the Communist cadres—the real inner core of the entire Communist movement.

"The International Party," the official song says "shall be the human race." In an indirect way, that symbolizes its goal.

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The Party will be the only part of the human race which has a power standing.

Take the question of "terror." What is the attitude of the Communists towards terror? According to the outer coat, they don't believe in terror—that is a slander by Fascists. It is Fascists, Reactionaries and Imperialists who use terror. Communists are against war, too, for that matter.

According to the official doctrine of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, they admit that under certain circumstances there must be violence, but they say "no individual violence." The Communist Party is absolutely against individual violence." It wants to represent the interests of the great majority and, particularly, the working majority. If the minority of Reactionaries, Fascists, and Capitalists try to thwart the will of the majority, the majority legitimately takes action against them. But they say: "We are not like Anarchists or Nihilists, who kill individuals, or who commit individual assassination." In fact, Communists have an elaborate theory that claims to explain why assassination is useless because it results in a counter-action against the masses, makes the masses more apathetic instead of enlivening them, and so on.

Now, incidentally, let me observe in general that Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism is the doctrine of Communism as it is understood by what are called "experts." Among the credited experts in this and in other countries you will find this to be the case if you consult the books they write. The experts in the State Department, in the Rand Corporation, and so on, go through the official literature, they cull out the paragraphs that they think to be the key sources, they systematize these, and say: "This is the

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Communist Doctrine." Naturally, that is more or less what they have to do if they are analyzing from the outside.

On this point of "terror" the experts are completely fooled, as a rule—even very wise people. I remember that in the discussion of the attempted assassination of President Truman, even people like Dorothy Thompson (who is a considerable expert in modern international politics) said that this couldn't have had anything to do with the Communists because they don't believe in individual terror. Of course from the point of view of true Bolshevism, this is nonsense over which Bolsheviks must get a good deal of laughter. They use individual terror all the time, every day, and the list of their individual acts of terror includes thousands of incidents.

They blow up the homes of workers who vote against them in trade unions. In the Spanish Civil War they assassinated or captured hundreds of non-Communist opponents, Trotskyists, Anarchists, Socialists, and so on, and shipped them back to the Soviet Union. In the streets of Berlin, they have picked up several dozen journalists who were firm anti-Communists. Dr. Linse, one of the heads of the Free Jurists Association was kidnapped from in front of his apartment a couple of weeks ago. In New York, Juliet Stewart Poyntz was shipped off in a Soviet ship. Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico. They have developed entirely new methods of terror, some of which have gradually been discovered. They consider that Dialectical Materialism shows a whole new way of conducting "terror" operations.

Well, I'm running behind so I had better just say a word or two more about these other two theories. These also act as protection. There is a double function here. True Bolshevism controls

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the outer layers, and these prevent the world from understanding what True Bolshevism is.

The *diversionary theories*: by that I mean theories that are developed so that people will spend their time and energy in ways that do not hurt Communism. For instance, the theory that is a favorite now in Washington and Wall Street—the theory that Communism is a product of adverse economic conditions, so that if you just fix up economic conditions a little you will get rid of Communism—is an extremely convenient theory for the Communists because it keeps people from doing things that really hurt Communism, and it also wastes the substance of the United States in ways that do not bear on the main point. This theory is propagated in the outside world by the Communists. In their own inner world, as far back as 1904, their official theory, beginning with Lenin, said that this notion was totally false. There are many other instances of this kind.

By the *ad hoc* theories I mean theories that are invented for tactical purposes—again to obscure the truth. For instance, in the case of China, you had a whole series of theories about the Communist movement that it was “just Agrarian Reformers,” just “peasants,” and so on in order to hide its true character. Today, the principal form of the *ad hoc* theory in the case of China is the idea that Mao Tse-tung is not really dependent upon Moscow, and is therefore a potential Tito.

In the Alger Hiss case you had another whole system of *ad hoc* theories as you went along. As soon as a new fact comes out, you invent a new theory to allow for it—often in contradiction to the preceding one; anything other than to recognize that Alger Hiss was a Communist agent. Hiss’ opponent, Chambers, was “a sexual pervert,” “was crazy,” “was trying to get vengeance on Hiss.”

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Or, when all of those failed and the proof was too great, then "Maybe he did something wrong, but he was trying to cover up for some one else."

Well, I had better get along. Looking at Communism geographically, you find the same kind of onion-skin structure. If you centered the world on Moscow (of course it doesn't work out quite perfectly in geometric terms), you have first Russia, which is the real heart. I mean Russia specifically, not the Soviet Union; unfortunately, this map does not show the national differences within the Soviet Union. Russia is the inner core.

The next circle around it, which will include this whole area, would be the other sections of the Soviet Union—the non-Russian section: here, the Ukraine, and down here Georgia, the Moham-medan groups, and so on in there.

Then, you begin to get a new layer in 1939: all around this group (the satellites). Outer Mongolia came considerably before that, beginning in the Twenties. Then it extends to China.

Then the next ring is the countries that are infiltrated heavily, where the Communists have a kind of veto power but don't yet control positively. This includes, for example, parts of the Middle East—like Iran. In the Communist opinion, this would include, I believe, all of Western Europe. They consider that they have now succeeded in paralyzing Western Europe. They are now working on Britain. In the outer circle there is only the United States.

Let me repeat that this onion-skin structure, as I call it, accomplishes simultaneously many things: An ease and flexibility of control, a camouflage adjusted to each kind of person, a legal

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camouflage which protects the central core from legal action, and a system of actual physical protection.

I want to turn now (and I am going to have to go very much more rapidly over the remaining part of the outline that was distributed to you) away from the problem of structure to the statement of the Communist Strategic Plan. I will just summarize the material here.

In the Communist Plan the first major step, which we can call Phase I, was made in 1903. This was the founding date, or the date of incorporation, we might call it, of the Communist Enterprise. It took place in the course of a Convention of the Russian Social Democratic Party which began in Brussels and then, after some police difficulties, shifted to London. There were a series of disputes, but it is interesting to observe that the principal dispute was over the "organization" question. Lenin insisted that the Revolutionary Movement had to be a movement with centralized discipline, a movement of professional Revolutionists. The others wanted a looser organization, more decentralized—with amateurs and semi-pro's in it. At the Convention itself, though not in the Party as a whole, Lenin was in a majority—from whence comes the name "Bolshevik," meaning "majority." That was Lenin's first step, confirming, I think, my account of what we should regard as the core of the meaning of Communism. The organization of Lenin's professional faction, of his initial *cadre*, began the history of Communism.

Let me jump from the first phase to the last, which I have called Phase L (L, in the mathematical sense of a "limit" phase). Incidentally, among other things, I use that term because, like a mathematical limit, it can be approached but never quite reached.

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As I mentioned before, the final goal is a world monopoly of power by the Communists. This is sometimes called "World Communism," sometimes it is called a "World Federation of Socialist Soviet Republics," or the "Classless Society." The content, whatever the words, means a Communist world power monopoly—a domination of the world exclusively by the Communist Enterprise. It is very important to understand the exact meaning here. It means that no other social grouping shall have any power—they can exist, but not have power. They can perhaps have their costumes, or even their language, or their ritual, or their games and athletics—but no power: neither nations, nor classes, nor businesses, nor churches, nor lobbies, nor parties.

Notice that this is perhaps the key contrast between our conception of a community and theirs. In our society there is a plurality of powers—spread out in trade unions, in business firms, in central government, in local government, in parties, lobbies, and voluntary groups of all kinds. Incidentally, it is this that makes Communism "totalitarian" and also what makes it literally impossible to compromise or negotiate with the Communists. Negotiation is always a capitulation if it is carried through. The goal, by the way, is not only the ultimate goal of the Communist Enterprise but the goal within each limited field where Communists work. It is the goal in a trade union to destroy all other factions, all opposition—to have Communists alone holding power in the union. Even in a Boy Scout Troop it is their goal.

The present phase (an intermediary between Phase I and Phase L), I call Phase L *minus* 4, and I define it as *the period of preparation for the open stage of the Third World War*. This phase began in 1944. It began as soon as the Politburo was convinced that Hitler was defeated. It was publicly indicated by the

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Communist mutiny in the Greek Army at Alexandria; by the altered policy in the Balkans, where Tito turned his guns definitely against Mikhailovich and stopped fighting the Nazis; and by a turn in China where they shifted over from a friendly policy towards Chiang Kai-shek, which was followed from 1937 to the end of 1943, into the road toward the liquidation of Chiang.

Incidentally I defined this phase in that same year in the same terms that I use now—in 1944—and I made a lengthy study for the Office of Strategic Services at that time, a study which was finished in July, 1944. Most of this I later incorporated in my book, "THE STRUGGLE FOR THE WORLD," which was written in 1946. I mention this fact, not to take personal credit, but rather as a proof of the soundness of the principles which form the basis of my analysis.

Let me elaborate just a bit on the nature of the present phase. In terms of geographical perspective, there are two tasks: The consolidation and strengthening of the main base (that is, the Eurasian base); and the simultaneous weakening and undermining of the non-Communist nations. Incidentally, you have here an instance of what the Communists call "dialectic"—the opposition of "thesis" and "antithesis." The "thesis" operates inside the Soviet Union—positive, strengthening; the "antithesis" operates outside—weakening, breaking down. The "synthesis" is the revolutionary process considered as a whole.

This "thesis" - "antithesis" set-up, by the way, explains what to some people is paradoxical in Communists: how they seem able to believe two inconsistent things at one time. They can believe in disarmament here and in a maximum of armaments for the Soviet Union; they can believe in "no strikes" in the Soviet Union

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and "strikes" all the time in other countries. One side is a belief concerning the "thesis," and the other concerns the "antithesis."

As to the selection of means in carrying out this double task. Priority in this phase is given to economic, political, psychological, and propaganda measures. This applies both inside the Soviet Union and outside; that is, in strengthening and consolidating inside and in weakening and undermining outside. Of course, there are also military measures in this phase. However, in relation to the whole process these can be considered supplementary and preparatory. There is actual fighting, but this is carried out by secondary and auxiliary forces, the main force is held in reserve and not committed in this entire phase. At the same time, in a preparatory way its strength is built up.

I included in the outline a *third* element: The continuing central sociological objective of the preservation of the integrity of the Communist elite. I am afraid that I will have to let that go because it is rather complicated, and it would take a more lengthy discussion than I have time for. Let me mention that this sociological objective follows from the whole conception of the structure of the Communist movement. The key point is the cadre, the fundamental nucleus of the movement. That is what must be preserved, and that is what acts in the really crucial moment. This applies even geographically. Because Russia is the primary seat of the cadre from a geographical point of view, you must at all costs protect Russia.

You also aim to protect the cadre—the elite—in ideological terms. That is why so much attention has been paid to purging intruding ideas that might interfere with Communist education, and

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to keeping out alien literature and alien science in the interest of a purely Communist art, movies, music, biology, physics, psychology, and so on.

Then Communists carry out diversionary actions which help them in this task of the preservation of the integrity of the elite. There are ideological diversions, which I referred to in connection with the ideological structure of the Enterprise, and military or subversive diversions—the peripheral actions which have been mounted since 1944.

Notice that the ordinary explanation of these peripheral actions is that the Communist movement, being very dynamic, moves to fill any vacuum which presents itself. To some extent that is true. But there is another way of looking at it, which I am convinced is also true. These actions—such as have been carried out in Greece, in Iran, in Tunisia, of course in Korea on the biggest scale, in the Philippines, in Malaya, in Burma—keep the enemy occupied on the periphery, keep him nibbling at the fingertips, with the whole vulnerable section preserved from any kind of interference. That vulnerable section is Russia itself, the geographic base of the elite that embodies, historically speaking, the Communist Enterprise.

In the outline I listed five chief strategic principles of the Communist Enterprise and I will have time only to say a sentence or two in connection with each.

First, *the Party is the principal instrument of the Revolution*. This is really the principle that has been implicit in much of what I have been saying in relation to the structure and activity of the Communist Enterprise. The understanding of this is

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what made Lenin a great and creative political leader. The Party comes first, before everything.

Incidentally, this principle explains some difficulties that arise in the minds of observers of the Communist movement. They say: "Why do Communists carry out foolish strikes that have no chance of succeeding or use provocative tactics that merely get people beat up when they know that they are not going to accomplish anything positive?"

The reason is because that through these methods they may be able to recruit two or three new people into the Party; or they can perhaps carry forward the training of half a dozen people toward their incorporation in the fundamental cadre. A half a dozen people into the cadre is far more important to Communists than the question of whether a hundred thousand workers get a raise or not, or even whether a union is smashed or not.

Prior to the full Revolution, most of the actions which the Party takes are considered as training exercises for the revolutionary shift of power itself. This, by the way, is another one of the forces that sharply distinguishes the Communists from all ordinary political groups. They do not pursue reforms, or temporary actions, or partial actions, or elections for their own sake—but only as methods of preparing the Revolution and training their own forces.

The Soviet Union, after the Revolution in Russia, is the fortress of the Revolution—not by virtue of geography, but by being the principal locale of the Party. If the Revolution had begun in some other country—Germany, Britain, say, or China—unquestionably there would have been a different view of the political strategy to be followed by the Communist Enterprise. But it happened

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to be in Russia, from their point of view very fortunately, since greater Russia has the strongest natural position in the world.

It follows as a corollary that it is the absolute duty of all Communists to defend the Soviet Union before any other task whatsoever except the defense of the integrity of the Party. Therefore, it also follows that all Party members and fellow travelers are traitors to all nations other than the Soviet Union. This is a necessary conclusion, and a conclusion which is completely borne out in practice. Incidentally, its military relevance should certainly be considered. In their own eyes Communists are not traitors, but true to the Revolution. But from the point of view of any other country they necessarily are traitors. This holds for every Communist who has now been brought into the NATO armies.

The proletariat is the primary social base of the Revolution. This does not mean quite what it says. It doesn't mean that the party is made up of workers, which it is not, or that it genuinely represents either the will or interest of the workers. Workers are assigned the key role because they are strategically placed within the economies of the advanced nations. (I think that the Communist theory is in error here. It did not anticipate the growth or the importance of the engineering and technological groups).

Secondly, workers are more available, because they are already organized by industry itself and by the trade unions into great groups—not just dispersed masses. The proletariat, it is observable, is as a class less volatile, less up and down, than the middle classes and therefore more dependable from the political point of view. In many countries the workers are what the Communists would call “alienated” within the culture, both economically (they don't share any economic benefits) and also morally you

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might say (they don't share spiritual values. This conclusion, by the way, does not apply to the United States, or at least it doesn't hold to anything like the extent which the Communists anticipated. It largely does in Europe. That explains why the Communists have got very far among the European workers and not very far among the American workers.

The peasantry is the main ally of the proletariat. Notice that the Communists never orient their strategic perspective on the peasants. The peasants are too dispersed; they are separated in individual lands and holdings. They don't work together like the workers in a factory. They are too reactionary, the Communists would say, in holding strongly to religious beliefs and wanting to have private property.

But the Communists saw, originally, that in great parts of the earth the peasant mass had to be flung behind the Revolution if the Revolution were to succeed, because the peasants constituted the overwhelming majority. This was the key to the Russian Revolution itself. It was accomplished when Lenin simply lifted the Social Revolutionary Party's Peasant Program, or Agrarian Program, from its platform and put it into the Bolshevik Platform. Then the principle was applied in Asia. Of course it is applied everywhere, but it doesn't make much sense in a country like the United States or most of the countries of Western Europe.

Essentially, the Agrarian Program has two stages: A pre-Revolutionary stage, which is designed to rouse the peasants, to get them politically behind the Communists. This features a program of distributing the land to individual workers on the land, of getting rid of taxes and debts, and granting certain subsidies and marketing benefits. Then, when the Revolution succeeds, you begin a transformation through various stages to "collectivization". Finally,

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what they still have not been able to reach as a matter of fact, though they have attempted it in recent years in Russia here is the stage of "factory farming." The reason for collectivization and factory farming is also political. The aim is to eliminate the possibility of the peasants acting as an opposition class in society by taking away the economic base from which they could successfully and seriously oppose the regime.

Finally, another of the great creative insights of the Bolsheviks: *the Colonial and National struggle is the chief auxiliary of the Revolution*. Marx insisted that the Communist Revolution was a Revolution of the workers—"workers of the world unite!" Lenin and Stalin added to that conception: "...workers of the world *and oppressed peoples and nations unite!*" which was a great departure from the orthodox tradition. This again shows how it is the political dynamic that the Communists always fasten on. They saw that a great deal of the world outside the advanced countries was parceled out to the Western industrial powers; that these colonies and subject or controlled nations were capable of being stirred to revolt. This, they figured out, would undermine the Great Powers by taking them as it were from the rear, destroying their reserves of men and material, wasting their energies, lowering their morale. Along with that, colonial revolt would add to the quantitative weight on the Communist side of the world balance.

In the last decade, it is this principle which has been the primary one, in connection with which the great world successes of the Communist Enterprise have been staged.

I regret that I do not have any time at all today to deal even briefly with the tactical methods used by the Communist Enterprise—the methods by which the Communists carry out these strategic principles. These methods range from the well-known

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maneuvers of the United Front to paramilitary operations in such fields as sabotage, terror, and guerrilla warfare. In order to complete a systematic account of the nature of Communism, they must be included. However, that will have to wait for another occasion.

I think that I have said enough to indicate to you what you surely do not doubt in any case—that our enemy is serious and formidable, the most serious and formidable that we have ever faced. He will not be defeated by money and firepower alone.

In December, 1916, in his Swiss garret, Lenin had neither money nor firepower at his disposal. Within a year, he was in command of one of the world's greatest nations and was already forging that nation into an additional arm of his unprecedented Enterprise.

It will take all our resources of mind and of will, as well as of matter, to defeat this enemy. Even these will not be enough unless we understand clearly what he is and what he seeks.

Thank you, gentlemen!

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Biographical Sketch of Dr. James Burnham

Dr. James Burnham was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 22 November 1905. He was graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University in 1927 and continued his studies at Oxford University, England, where he received a B. A. degree in 1929 and an M. A. in 1932. He has been a member of the Department of Philosophy at New York University since 1929. During the 1930's he was active in the unemployed and trade union movements and in the attempt to build a new revolutionary Communist party, independent of the official Stalinist party. He edited "The New International," then generally recognized as the foremost theoretical Marxist journal, and wrote widely for labor and radical papers. But he never accepted the general philosophy of Marxism, and in 1940, after an extended controversy with Leon Trotsky, he broke definitely with every variety of communism. He is author of four books which have found a world audience: "The Managerial Revolution," 1941; "The Machiavellians," 1944; "The Struggle for the World," 1947; and "The Coming Defeat of Communism," 1950.

Dr. Burnham is a Trustee of Free Europe University in Exile, which is being developed as a center for training young East European exiles. This summer he was granted an honorary degree by the Free Ukrainian University (Munich) in recognition of his contribution to the struggle against Communism.

He is now on leave of absence from New York University and is presently engaged in lecturing and free-lance writing. He has lectured at the Naval War College yearly since 1948.

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