

REMARKS BY HUBERT H. HUMPHREY, JANUARY 8, 1945

BEFORE: MEN'S CLUB OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

TOPIC: PROBLEMS CONFRONTING US IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF WAR

Problems confronting us in the European Theater of War may be divided into three group:

Quite obviously, the first is that of military strategy and organization with the ultimate objective of complete defeat of our enemies.

The second problem is that of relief and rehabilitation for the liberated areas and

the third, diplomatic relationships which exist first of all between the major powers themselves and, secondly, the relationships of the major powers to the liberated countries.

One of the basic axioms of international politics is the direct relationship between war and diplomacy. It is with this in mind that I say that military decisions made in Europe by Russia, Britain and the United States are at all times prejudiced or affected by the diplomatic occasions or decisions which have been arrived at. Some communities were of the belief that the slow-down in Russia's action on the Eastern front, particularly in reference to the Polish and Baltic states, was due to the failure of diplomatic unity on the part of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. There was still the question of the Polish state for the composition of its government and there was yet the question of the Baltic states and their inclusion into the Soviet Union.

It may not be just coincidence that the German break-through against the American First Army came at a time when the allies were having terrific diplomatic problems in Greece and Belgium. The unity of the United Nations was receiving its first severe test in the early months of this winter and history will record that the lack of diplomatic harmony produced an opportunity for German resurgents and offensive action. There is reason to believe that the

Russian offensive through Poland will not take place until the Polish question has been decided and may I say decided in such a manner that it is satisfactory to the Soviet.

Having listed as the second major problem confronting us in the European Theater of War the relief and rehabilitation of the liberated areas, I think it is only proper that some analysis be made of the activities of UNWRA and military government in these areas where the Allies have driven out the Nazis. News from Rumania, Bulgaria and other Balkan areas seems to be rather scarce. That which trickles through reveals that were it not for the iron grip of military authority, there would be ^{general} chaos and revolution. The Rumanian peasantry has always been poor and three years of Nazi occupation has done nothing to relieve the situation. Right now Russia has a fairly free hand in the Eastern Balkans and is not permitting local disturbances to in any way jeopardize her military operations.

The tragic scene of a liberated area is to be found in Greece. Her population, already disseminated by war and disease, and her country ravished by the Nazis, liberation apparently offered nothing but freedom for greater trouble. The liberation of Greece was a British enterprise and the maintenance of order has become a British problem. In Greece, as in other areas, poverty is rampant and the shortage of food stuffs, clothing and industrial produce is beyond belief.

UNWRA has not been too successful either in Greece or in Italy. What the difficulties are is not clear at this time. The trickle of food which arrives cannot meet the situation. There is no doubt but what the transportation is still a major handicap and the fact that there is real difficulty in rejuvenating the industrial and agricultural life of the countries involved is the most serious limitation.

The major problem confronting the United Nations in the European Theater is one of governmental institutions and the diplomatic relations between the major Allies and the liberated countries. Right here it should be stated that what is

drastically needed is another meeting of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. The closer the United Nations come to victory the more obvious and apparent become some of their differences. We have always had these differences and there is no reason to believe that the war would minimize them. I do not believe that Americans should be unduly alarmed over minor differences with Russia. If it will be but remembered that it was not until 1933 that we even recognized the Soviet Union as a state and that bitterness through misunderstanding and deliberate perpetration of falsehood has been the pattern between Russia and America, then it becomes more obvious why differences may occur. I would say that we have to keep in mind what Russia wants and needs. I would list them in this manner:

1. A practical program of collective security as outlined in the Dumbarton Oaks proposal, establishing the Security Council.
2. Border states which are friendly to the Soviet Union and governments in those states which will not serve as agents of anti-Soviet forces.
3. An outlet into the Mediterranean.
4. A ratification of her boundaries with Poland and Rumania.
5. The inclusion of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union.

I would say that these are the major demands of the Soviet Union, none of which are in any way impossible of solution and all of which fit very nicely into a more secure and stable Russia. It is to be remembered that Russia has been living in a society opposed to its institutions of government and economics. The Russian leadership has been fearful this psychology of fear and has motivated her to be highly nationalistic, sensitive and at times, militant. The answer to a fear psychosis is the establishment of conditions which promote and guaranty security.

Russia, more than any other major power because of her past history and because of evidence of intrigue against her, is going to demand conditions of security and obtain them, even if she has to do it through a system of alliances and outright absorption of neighboring states. The best assurance of a cooperative and peaceful Russia is the establishment of an international organization strong enough to guaranty the peace.

The major political danger arising in Europe is not that of Communism but is rather the greater danger of the old Rightist ruling forces of the past seeking to dam up the change that is certain to sweep over the continent. That is what happened in Greece and today the people of Athens are paying for the political obstinacy and conservatism of the old ruling groups by their blood. There is one thing certain -- this war will not leave Europe unchanged. Those who guided the destiny of Europe prior to 1939 are, with few exceptions, in disgrace and hated by their people. Rumania is not going back to its King Carol and Madam Lupescu. Poland is not going back to the military dictatorship of Pilsudski or the fascist minded leadership of Beck. The Greeks are not going to settle for the mediocrity and questionable nobility of King George the Second. The Italians have no desire to see Mussolini supplanted by an even more evil genius and France has already shown her scorn for the political opportunism of her leaders of the 30's.

I do believe that Europe is definitely going to the left. This does not necessarily mean Communism or Socialism but it does represent a revolutionary change in the thinking of a great part of the people. It means that the old world of purely private and monopolistic, capitalistic enterprise is losing ground. I think the best example of this whole movement can be found in France's DeGaulle who symbolizes to a great extent the movement toward the left. Before that, DeGaulle was a member of the French military Hierarchy. He was even reported to have been a Royalist, yet today DeGaulle's statements reveal that he is capable of accepting the nationalization of French key industries. Even the conservative mind in France feels that DeGaulle's program of nationalization is acceptable.

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"Problems"
not "Solutions to
Problems"*

Problems confronting us in the European Theater of War may be divided into three groups:

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(3) The third, diplomatic relationships which exist first of all between the major powers themselves and, secondly, the relationships of the major powers to the liberated countries.

One of the basic axioms of international politics is the direct relationship between war and diplomacy. It is with this in mind that I say that military decisions made in Europe by Russia, Britain and the United States are at all times prejudiced or affected by the diplomatic decisions or lack of decisions. It is believed in some quarters that the slow-down in Russia's action on the Eastern front, particularly in reference to the Polish and Baltic sectors, was due to the failure of diplomatic unity on the part of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. There was still the question of the Polish state or the composition of its government. There was yet the question of the Baltic states and their inclusion into the Soviet Union. All of these problems are yet to be settled.

It may not be just coincidence that the German break-through against the American First Army came at a time when the allies were having terrific diplomatic problems in Greece and Belgium. The unity of the United Nations was receiving its first severe test in the early months of this winter and history will record that the lack of diplomatic harmony produced an opportunity for German offensive action. There is reason to believe that the Russian offensive through Poland will not take place until the Polish question has been decided and may I say decided in such a manner that it is satisfactory to the Soviet Union.

*Diplomacy
&
War
Wants against
Diplomacy*

Having listed as the second major problem confronting us in the European Theater of War the relief and rehabilitation of the liberated areas, I think it is only proper that some analysis be made of the activities of UNNRA and military government in those areas where the Allies have driven out the Nazis. News from Rumania & Bulgaria seems to be rather scarce. That which trickles through reveals that were it not for the iron grip of military authority, there would be general chaos and revolution. The rumanian peasantry has always been poor and three years of Nazi occupation has done nothing to relieve the situation. Right now Russia has a fairly free hand in the Eastern Balkans and is not permitting local disturbances to in any way jeopardize her military operations.

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UNNRA has not been too successful either in Greece or in Italy. What the difficulties are is not clear at this time. The trickle of food which arrives cannot meet the needs of the situation. There is no doubt that transportation is still a major handicap. There is also difficulty in rejuvenating the industrial and agricultural life of the countries.

The major problem confronting the United Nations in the European Theater is one of governmental institutions and the diplomatic relations between the major Allies and the liberated countries. Right here it should be stated that what is drastically needed is another meeting of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. The closer the United Nations come to victory the more obvious and apparent become some of their differences. We have always had these differences and there is no reason to believe that the war would minimize them. I do not believe that Americans should be unduly alarmed over minor differences with Russia. If it will be but remembered that it was not until 1933 that we even recognized the

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- Russian Demands*
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I would say that these are the major demands of the Soviet Union, none of which are in any way impossible of solution and all of which fit very nicely into a more secure and stable Russia. It is to be remembered that Russia has been living in a ^{world} society opposed to its institutions of government and economics. The Russian leadership has been fearful. This psychology of fear has motivated her to be highly nationalistic, sensitive and at times, militant. The answer to a fear psychosis is the establishment of conditions which promote and guaranty security.

Russian Demands for Security!
Pre-war Position

Russia, more than any other major power because of her past history and because of evidence of intrigue against her, is going to demand conditions of security and obtain them, even if she has to do it through a system of alliances and outright absorption of neighboring states. The best assurance of a cooperative and peaceful Russia is the establishment of an international organization strong enough to guaranty the peace.

The major political danger arising in Europe is not that of Communism but is rather the greater danger of the old Rightist ruling forces of the past seeking to dam up the change that is certain to sweep over the continent. That is what happened in Greece and today the people of Athens are paying for the political obstinacy and conservatism of the old ruling groups by their blood.

There is one thing certain -- this war will not leave Europe unchanged. Those who guided the destiny of Europe prior to 1939 are, with few exceptions, in disgrace and hated by their people. Rumania is not going back to its King Carol and Madam Lupescu. Poland is not going back to the military dictatorship of Pilsudski or the Fascist minded leadership of Beck. The Greeks are not going to settle for the mediocrity and questionable nobility of King George the Second. The Italians have no desire to see Mussolini supplanted by an even more evil genius and France has already shown her scorn for the political opportunism of her leaders of the 30's.

Europe to the left.
France - De Gaulle

It appears that Europe is going to the left. This does not necessarily mean Communism or Socialism but it does represent a revolutionary change in the thinking of a great part of the people. It means that in the old world purely private and monopolistic, capitalistic enterprise is losing ground. I think the best example of this whole movement can be found in France's DeGaulle who symbolizes to a great extent the movement toward the left. Before that, DeGaulle was a member of the French Military Hierarchy. He was even reported to have been a Royalist, yet today DeGaulle's statements reveal that he is capable of accepting the nationalization of French key industries. Even the conservative mind in France feels that DeGaulle's program of nationalization is acceptable.

In spite of handicaps, French leadership is now working the political miracle of 1944. It is the re-establishment of France as a major power. It has now been included as one of the members of the Security Council and an active and participating partner in the war against Germany.

French, British, Russians and Americans have one common denominator that supercedes all obstacles and all differences, political and economic. The demand for world organization for peace springs from every element and every group in each and every country. The separatism and nationalism that was so characteristic of the 30's has been bled white by the tragedy of the 40's. There is real concern over the nature of the peace that will have to be written and the difficulties that will be encountered in rebuilding a devastated world.

Britain - Trade fears - Temper of British Opinion Today - Greek Situation



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