Communism Declared No Basis for Friction

Nation Has Right to Own Kind of Government, Says Writer

By David Lawrence

Relations between the United States and Russia do not necessarily depend on whether Communism is or is not a desirable philosophy of government in the world. As long as Russia does not seek to impose on us her form of government there will be no basis for friction on that score.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in her syndicated column, which is copyrighted by the New York World Telegram, has written a paragraph which accurately expresses the present viewpoint of the Government of the United States. It is the same under the Truman administration as it was under the preceding administration. Because Mrs. Roosevelt expresses it so clearly and because it is the way our Government would doubtless express it officially today, the paragraph is reproduced here:

"We, in this country, feel that any nation has a right within its own borders to the kind of government it feels best meets the needs of the people. It is only when those beliefs begin to encroach on other nations and on other people, and to endanger their free beliefs and actions by attempting to propagandize them, either openly or secretly, that fear is awakened. The next step, we have learned through the rise of Fascism, is to try by force to push upon the rest of the world the beliefs which your particular nation holds. That is what we, including the Soviet Union, have had to fight, and the war has been a long, cruel war."

What Frightens Us.

Mrs. Roosevelt went on to say that it frightens us to see any group in our midst proposing to propagandize, and that the French Communists and the American Communists "who encourage a policy of world revolution have done the peace of the world harm."

There will be persons who will wonder, of course, whether the policy outlined above does not in effect say that Fascism as a form of government is unobjectionable. But it would be argued in reply that "Fascism" is associated with cruelties and totalitarian abuses and has long since ceased to be known in the world as a form of government, but only as a form of vicious tyranny in which the individual is completely at the mercy of his government.

The principle of noninterference in the affairs of another country, however, would cease to apply if Communism or Fascism or any other form of government resulted in such arbitrary acts of a national government as had external effects.

Thus, if a Communistic government felt that it had the right not only to supply funds directly or indirectly to propagandize in another country so as to weaken or undermine or build up a revolutionary movement to overthrow such a government, this would be construed not as a manifestation of a Communistic government but as the unfriendly action of one government toward another irrespective of the merits of its particular economic or social philosophy. One government's internal policy may lead to war as an external policy as Hitler's experiences prove.

Churchill's Stand.

The whole subject was treated by Prime Minister Churchill in a public address when Russia entered the war against Germany. He declared that he did not retract one iota of what he had previously said and felt about Communism, but that he nevertheless welcomed Russian co-operation in the war.

The same thing can be said now about the peace. Communism is not regarded by the vast majority of the American people as a desirable form of government for us or for our neighbors but this has nothing to do with the right of the Russian government to maintain Communistic forms in governing the Russian people.

The big question mark is as to the propagandizing of countries near Russia by the Communists. With America demonstrating that it is possible for a democratic country to be on friendly terms with a Communist country, it would seem that the example could be followed in Europe.

Another way of stating the American concept is to declare that the United States does not think it is necessary for the security of Russia for her to impose Communism upon any of her neighbors and subject them to Moscow influence and that in the long run peace will be better constructed if each nation figures out for itself what form of Government and what social or economic philosophy it cares to utilize in its own domain.

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Relationship between Russian Government and United States Government

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