

ally summarizing the whole of it. I want to come straight to the dilemma which the paper itself raises for the authors and for all who want to find the way to peace.

The USA, Daniel-Squires argue, must take the initiative in an objective weakening of its own power position over against the USSR. Such weakening must, above all, not be phony. Clearly, therefore it must be substantial. But, they contend, this need not mean complete disarmament. Indeed, the USA will presumably be still so potent in a military way (what with the atomic weapons as to which it possesses the know-how and to the production of which it could return plus the military establishment which it still holds in reserve) that the first—and chief?—argument in favor of their proposal for unilateral action is that if Russia does not follow the U.S. example, it will be threatened with “early war, which it cannot win. . . . If the Kremlin refuses to match America’s move within a reasonable period, the hand of those Americans who advocate ‘preventive’ war will now be greatly strengthened.”

The U.S. will objectively weaken its position since its actions must be “unambiguously on the side of peace”; but the result of such weakening of its position is to be that Russia is put at a great disadvantage in the propaganda battle and the U.S. is left so strong in a military way as to be unquestionably able to lick Russia, if it “misinterprets” our gesture, in a “preventive” war which is very likely to come about and may even be speeded up because the Russians misinterpret—or interpret only too accurately?—what the U.S. is about.

I think that any move toward such a moratorium on the production of atomic weapons as Daniel-Squires propose would have a considerable psychological effect, and I am all for it. But I question whether the U.S. can both weaken and not weaken its power position.

One reason suggested for avoiding complete disarmament is that taking this step “would create a power vacuum inviting early Russian domination of all Europe.” But the threat of atomic attack by the U.S. in case Russia advances further in Europe either is or is not a factor in the power struggle and a deterrent to Russia. If it is, then removal of that factor may lead to a forward move by Russia and a softening of resistance to the Kremlin in Western Europe. If it is not, then on Daniel-Squires own showing the U.S. is not objectively weakened.

It is also doubtful whether in the economic field a partial, limited or gradualist transition can be made from a war to a peace policy. What would be the effect on the American economy at this jittery moment if atomic weapon production were suddenly curtailed and an indication thus given that the economy was probably going on a peace basis shortly?

The point of the various questions that I am raising is that I believe thoroughly in the thesis which underlies the Daniel-Squires paper, viz., that the way to disarm is to disarm. I think that what they are really proposing is complete disarmament—i.e. so far as any ability to wage modern war is concerned. They point out that if Russia accepted the American example, then we’d have to maintain the initiative by at once disarming further. It seems to me that the only logical answer they could give to the question, “But what if Russia remains recalcitrant and ‘takes advantage’ of our kindness?” is that in that case, too, we ought to take further steps toward disarmament to prove that we don’t mean war. If that is what we are setting out to prove, then war is just what we refuse to turn to *under any circumstances*.

Finally, one reason why Daniel-Squires do not come out for complete disarmament is, I surmise, that they believe it is too much to ask the American people to accept in one dose. But they are as a matter of fact asking the American people to make a great moral decision—to act unambiguously for peace, to stop threatening the Russian people and so on. Their observation that the threat of “preventive” war “could not be constructive if put as an ultimatum” is, of course, entirely correct and very revealing in this entire context. But if the American people are to “wage peace,” then they will have to be free from “ambiguity” and divided motives in their own minds and they will have to know the price they may have to pay. Therefore, the way to meet

their undoubted hesitation and questioning is to hold forth the possibility of non-violent resistance, not to suggest that we can make a motion toward non-violent procedure and still fall back in the ultimate extremity on atomic war.

A. J. MUSTE

Sir:

Messrs. Daniel and Squires are naive. The political kernel of their proposal is their *hope* that if the United States destroys its atomic bombs and plants, Stalin will be ashamed of himself and abandon his dictatorship. The Stalin regime cannot permit the kind of inspection and control they desire without relinquishing the dictatorship of the Communist Party—a dictatorship which instead of growing weaker over the years has grown stronger.

Anyone who has studied the structure of power in the U.S.S.R. realizes that this is a fantastic assumption to make. The only time Stalin *refrains* from aggressive action is when he is weaker than those whom he wants to destroy. The only time and place he acts aggressively is when and where he is relatively stronger. Stalin never takes chances. This is demonstrated by the factional history of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, by the domestic policies of the Soviet regime, and by its foreign policy.

Berlin does not disprove this generalization. When I was in Berlin last summer I learned from the best possible sources that the American military authorities had been aware of the possibility, before it happened, that the Soviets would impose a blockade on the city. The original intention of General Clay’s staff was to force that blockade with troops and planes and armored trains. But this proposed plan for breaking the blockade was vetoed by Truman. There is every reason to believe that Truman’s veto was known to Stalin—whose sources of information, as perhaps everybody is now aware, are excellent!—before he gave the orders to the Russian commanders to go ahead. As it was, he gave the orders gradually, first for one mode of transportation, then for another, until he became convinced that Truman would stick by the veto, especially in an election year.*

If we were to adopt the Daniel-Squires proposals, we would be inviting ten Pearl Harbors, or as many as Stalin has atomic bombs for. For once we disarm, he would be free of the only thing he fears—retaliation and failure.

Stalin cannot disarm for the same reason that Hitler could not disarm—it would mean the end of his dictatorship. I wonder whether Daniel-Squires would have made the same proposal to Hitler in 1939 if we had discovered the bomb then. My guess is that if Hitler had known we possessed the bomb, he would *not* have gone to war, mad and incautious as he was. And Stalin is *not* mad and far from incautious.

The nub of the whole matter is that Stalin cannot be controlled by a free public opinion in the Soviet Union because there isn’t any. Nor does he care a damn about free public opinion elsewhere.

I am *not* in favor of a preventive war because I am as confident as one can be in human affairs that so long as Stalin fears he will be blasted off the face of the earth once he strikes against the West, he will wait. We can see to it that he is never free of that fear. Even less than the romantic Hitler has he the demonic desire to bring the world down on him in a universal ruin.

Our own free public opinion can prevent the West from waging a preventive war. But there is no free public opinion in the U.S.S.R. and its satellite countries to prevent Stalin from waging a preventive war. But there is no free public opinion in the strategy is wrong. While the preponderance of power is still in the hands of the West—and Daniel-Squires apparently believe that it can be retained for at least five years—all efforts must be directed to spread a passion for elementary political freedoms among the peoples behind the iron curtain. There are many ways in which this can be done—not by governments, and certainly not by those businessmen of the Western world who believe they

* I recommend in connection with Stalin’s strategy a close study of Boris Souvarine’s book on *Stalin*, together with his remarkable newsletters *L’Observateur des deux Mondes*.

can do business with Stalin as they once thought they could do business with Hitler.

I speak in the first person only for purposes of expository emphasis. Give me a hundred million dollars and a thousand dedicated people, and I will guarantee to generate such a wave of democratic unrest among the masses—yes, even among the soldiers—of Stalin's own empire, that all of his problems for a long time to come will be internal. I can find the people. . . .

SIDNEY HOOK

REPLY BY DANIEL & SQUIRES

Hook tells us that Stalin never takes chances. This is not quite true. He never takes chances which he can avoid. Our proposal poses alternative, inescapable risks for the Soviet leaders: (1) weakening of their power by a real exposure of its role, accompanied by implied threat of an early war which they cannot win; or (2) weakening of their power by minimal inspection inside Russia. Our proposal makes it easier for them to accept the latter risk, in order to forestall the former. Stalin, like any other man, will take chances when he must—e.g., with the Nazi-Soviet pact—e.g., if the United States government carries out partial unilateral disarmament.

Does Stalin care about free public opinion? The American Communist Party, with its fronts, worthy causes, and progressive parties, exists solely to influence American public opinion. Stalin's letter to Wallace during the recent Presidential campaign, his current "peace offensive," the Wroclaw conference of intellectuals, and a hundred other maneuvers are known to Hook as to us. A nearly unanimous American opinion in favor of immediate "preventive" (i.e., aggressive) war would be a political fact of first importance to Stalin.

Can Hook have understood our proposal? Its political kernel is not a hope to shame Stalin; its aim is not to get him to abandon his dictatorship. That will be relaxed degree by degree only under the pressure of alternatives which appear less desirable to the Soviet leaders. An American step toward disarmament will pose one such pair of alternatives.

Hook asks if we would have proposed such a step against Hitler in 1939. Our proposal is made now, before all the mistakes have been made, before war is inevitable, before the U.S.S.R. has atomic bombs for "ten Pearl Harbors" (or one). Our proposal is made while military strength is still largely industrial strength and America could not make herself weaker than Russia even by total disarmament.

There are defects of method in Hook's argument even more disappointing than his defects of content: the polemical exaggeration, the inside dope, the anthropomorphism of Stalin-scaring, the simple demagogy (if we are to take it seriously) of his last paragraph. Give him 10³ dollars and 10³ men—the request of every latter-day savior, with no word of how he or they will proceed. No inkling of the interaction of means and ends.

Hook's program for peace has two elements: (1) stay more powerful and keep the Soviet leaders intimidated; (2) spread a passion for elementary political freedom behind the Iron Curtain. The first element can be called political only in the sense that the average American gets his view of world politics by multiplying his own feelings of pugnacity and fright by a factor of a hundred million. We are for the second element, but wonder whether Hook takes it seriously himself. A hundred million dollars is less than one per cent of the Federal military budget. If we can have peace so cheaply, why not tell us more about it? And why a counter-proposal? Such a small item as this could be carried alongside anything or everything else.

As stockpiles of modern weapons grow higher, both Stalin and his scarers abroad will get very afraid. When that happens, they will all draw the same conclusion.

We too are frightened.

REJOINDER BY SIDNEY HOOK:

I do not recognize myself in the picture of scaremonger, demagogue and would-be savior which Daniels and Squires paint. Nor do I usually continue discussion with people who call names when they cannot answer arguments. But it is high time that scientists learn to think about politics instead of losing their temper, as well as their sense of humor, when their ignorance is exposed.

Daniels and Squires have evaded every point I made. The Acheson-Lillienthal proposals for international control of atomic energy—in which we offer to destroy our bombs provided only we have some assurance that bombs will not be dropped on us—requires even less of Stalin than the Daniels-Squires plan. Yet Stalin spurned it despite the fact that the USA is stronger than the USSR. What reasonable ground is there for believing that Stalin will yield more if the USA makes itself relatively weaker? The "implied threat" of a preventive war—we are told. But if Stalin can be moved to agreement by such a threat is he more likely to give way when the U.S. is weaker than when it is stronger? Even in its own terms, the Daniels-Squires plan simply doesn't make sense.

Daniels and Squires do not and cannot know whether Stalin has the atomic bomb or something as powerful. Yet they brashly assert that to-day "America could not make herself weaker than Russia even by total disarmament." This is irresponsible talk. Daniels and Squires, as they themselves confess, are certainly frightened—frightened plumb out of their wits.

Nor has my question about Hitler been honestly answered. But we know enough to answer it even if these two innocent scientists don't. Hitler would have regarded unilateral disarmament at any time as a golden opportunity to move faster to his goal of world domination.

Stalin does not care a rap for free public opinion, as the Moscow and Mindszenty Trials show. Of course, he uses the Communist Parties to influence public opinion in free countries in order to put pressure upon the government in those countries. But he doesn't permit public opinion in free countries to influence him. These are two entirely different matters and anyone who cannot see it should leave politics strictly alone.

One of the reasons Stalin is indifferent to free public opinion is that he thinks it is synthetically contrived, like the public opinion he manufactures in his own countries, and through his fifth columns, in other countries.

One final point. In making my counter-proposal, I explicitly stated that I was speaking in the first person only for the sake of emphasis. Yet Daniels and Squires sneer at me as a would-be "savior" who offers no word on how he would spend other people's money. Let me spell it out for them. When I wrote "me," I meant "us"—a group that can and should be organized some day among all the democratic elements in the West.

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The Existence of Jews and Existentialism

LIONEL ABEL

THE modern Jew is concerned to know what being a Jew means. This is what distinguishes him, on the one hand, from religious Jews for whom this question was answered by their life in common, the Bible, the Talmud, and the expectation of the Messiah, and on the other hand, from the secularized Jews of Europe and America who were intent on becoming Europeans or Americans, and for whom the question did not exist. The religious Jew thanked God in his prayers for having made him a Jew, the secular Jew supported the governments of the democratic bourgeois states for permitting him not to be one. But the modern Jew who is estranged from Judaism, and has begun to feel himself an alien even in the democratic countries as a result of the virulent development of Anti-Semitism—for this Jew, who does not see the way clear to a condition of real non-Jewishness, the meaning and import of his being a Jew appears as a problem, and a problem of a very special sort: in a way, it seems to be a problem which cannot be confronted without having been already resolved, and in a way there seems to be no satisfactory resolution of it.

To say this is to say that the question of what being a Jew means, when raised by a Jew, is an existential question, since the one who is doing the questioning is included within the question. The Jew, asking about the meaning of his Jewishness, recognizes that he is being asked to reply, and his feeling of distress at not being able to do so satisfactorily is inseparable from his feeling that he must.

What is the character of his togetherness with other Jews with whom he has not shared a common life—a togetherness which, not realized in concrete beliefs and customs, is simply implied by the fact that he is—or can be called without contradiction—a Jew? What does it mean for him to be in a situation of such evident reality, but which he is not really in?

A MODERN philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre, has taken it upon himself to ask the question as to the meaning of Jewishness and to try to answer it. But let us note at once that since he is a non-Jew, the question has a different character for him than it has when asked by Jews. For Sartre, the existentialist, the question as to what a Jew is, is rationally formulable and thoroughly objective, and, at least in principle, could be answered by an analysis sufficiently subtle and concrete; whereas the same question, when asked by a Jew, even if one without metaphysical flair, has at once an existential character, and instead of being asked to be answered, has to be answered in order to be asked.

It would be unmannerly for Jews to be insensitive to the moral earnestness and generous spirit with which Sartre set about making their problem his, and I for one shall always admire in his *Anti-Semite and Jew* (Shocken, \$2.75), as in so many of his works, a quality rarer in contemporary writing than even Sartre's noted verve and intelligence; his zeal to make his mind available to others, and to make of thought, not just a display of cleverness, but an act of solidarity. In answering Sartre's answer to the

question as to the meaning of being a Jew, I'm aiming less at the pleasure of being right on certain points against a thinker of such vigor—to eliminate that pleasure entirely would be to destroy reflection—than at preserving the question itself in its integrity. I want to restore it to those who, if they cannot ask it as intelligently on a single occasion, must continue to ask it, and with their whole life.

Sartre's contribution has been to define the Jew as someone caught in what the French philosopher calls the *Jewish situation*. For the Jews are neither a national nor a religious group, they are not a race, and they are not members of a civilization alien to the West's; in addition to being Jews, they are Germans, Frenchmen, Italians, Europeans or Americans, Socialists or Communists. What makes them Jews is the fact that while they may regard themselves as other, others may regard them as Jews: "If they have a common bond, if all of them deserve the name of Jew, it is because they have in common the situation of a Jew, that is, they live in a community which takes them for Jews." And the fact that those who regard them as Jews are enemies, while those who disregard their Jewishness are friends, changes nothing. For the democrat is friendly to the human being which he takes the Jew to be, while the anti-Semite, for all his malice, takes note of the Jew in his Jewishness. However bad the motives of the Anti-Semite, and in his book, Sartre has described these motives in all their odiousness, yet it is the Anti-Semite who performs the magical transformation of the Jew who does not know he is a Jew into the Jew who does. As the poet, according to Heidegger, calls the existant to *be*, so the Anti-Semite, according to Sartre, calls the Jew to *appear* as such. Conversion to Jewishness, if not to Judaism or to Zionism, is effected through the play of Anti-Semitism: "it is the Anti-Semite who *makes* the Jew." And the Jew must be a Jew for himself because he is a Jew for others—first, because he has no alternative, and then, because he *ought* to be a Jew, ought to assume the burden of his Jewishness and recognize the past that it implies, which is not the same past as that of non-Jews. If the Jew is to be authentic, he must not refuse to be what the Anti-Semite insists he is.

FOR Sartre it is irrelevant to ask whether the Anti-Semite's insistence that the Jew is a Jew is true or false opinion. This is what is peculiar and novel in his discussion. For it might be argued that whatever the Anti-Semite thinks or says should not matter, and that what should matter is what happens in fact to be the case. The Jew should be a Jew if such indeed he is. But no, according to Sartre, the question as to whether or not the Jew is *really* a Jew is irrelevant, and the fact that the Anti-Semite persists in his opinion is what finally counts. So the Jew has the peculiarity of being a creature of opinion, and of the opinion of those who despise him, and who, in turn, are morally and politically despicable.

Yet on the other hand there are those who persist in not regarding Jews as Jews but take them for human beings: these, as we saw before, are the democrats. And the