

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR OF *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

There is one passage in Mr. Mabbott's interesting analysis of the Conflict of Ideologies which should not pass without challenge.

He says (p. 202, top): "Christians do not now believe that their government has a duty to propagate Christianity by political methods throughout the world. There is no reason why any Communist should believe this of Communism."

The conclusion in the last sentence overlooks a vital dilemma of Communism. Its essence was indicated in the reply made by Stalin at the 18th Communist Congress in March, 1939 to those slightly disgruntled disciples who were asking why the State had not "died." The death of the State was, of course, Marx's solution of the problem of individual liberty in a Communist society. It must, of course, be obvious that a State which undertakes all responsibility for production in the modern sense cannot possibly "die." It is also obvious that those who represent the State, i.e. the ruling oligarchy, do not intend to let it die. But they have to find a palatable reason for its continued existence. Stalin gave it. He said (paraphrased): "You must understand that when Marx said the State would 'die' he was contemplating a world which had become entirely Communist. Until that has happened the State is necessary for defence. Therefore, until all the world has become Communist you cannot have perfect Communism anywhere."

(The statement is quoted in my article in the *National Review* of April 1941, and is referred to in the Report on Strategy and Tactics of World Communism issued by the United States Embassy.)

It will be seen then that this interpretation of the situation, convenient for the ruling oligarchy, provides a strong urge for the idealistic Communist to press on by every means with the process of converting the whole of mankind to his faith.

Yours faithfully,

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