Discorso sulla pace nell’era atomica

Address on Peace in the Atomic Era

12 febbraio 1950
I am grateful to you, Mr. Roosevelt, for the opportunity to express my conviction in this most important political question, that the idea of achieving security through national armaments is a disastrous illusion. The present state of military technique, a atomic bomb, at the present rate of increase has been particularly fostered. On the part of the USA this illusion has been particularly fostered. The belief seemed to prevail that in the end it would be possible to achieve decisive military superiority. In this way, any potential opponent would be intimidated, and security, way, of the atomic age, brought to us and all of humanity, so desperately needed.

The conclusion we have been following during these last five years has been in short: security through superior military power, whatever the cost.

This materialistic, technical-military psychological attitude has been governed exclusively by one viewpoint - the opponent in case of need, the most important power. Establishing military bases at all possible strategically places is the main task of the state. Military economic strengthening of the financial power in the hands of the military, militarization of the youth; close supervision of the loyalty of the citizens, in particular the small seamen, by a police force growing more complex every day. Intimidation of people of independent political thinking, sabotage of the public by radio, press, and schools. Growing restriction of the range of public information under the pretense of military secrecy.

The armament race between the USA and the USSR, originally supposed to be a preventive measure, has become a political factor. On both sides, the means to mass destruction are perfected with frightful haste - the same, the respective walls of secrecy. The hydrogen bomb appears on the public forum as a probably unavoidable goal. Its accelerated development has been solemnly proclaimed by the President. If it is successful, radioactive poisoning of the atmosphere and public annihilation of any life on earth has been brought within the range of technical possibilities.

The ghostlike character of this development lies in its apparently compulsory trend. Every step appears as the unavoidable consequence of the preceding one. In the end, becomest more and more clearly general annihilation.

Is there any way out of this impasse created by man himself? All of us, and particularly those who are responsible for the attitude of the USA and the USSR, should realize that we may have vanquished an external enemy, but have been incapable of getting rid of the mentality created by the war. It is impossible to achieve peace as long as every single action is taken with a possible future conflict in view. The leading point of view of all political action should therefore be: what can we do to bring about a peaceful coexistence and even loyal cooperation of the nations?

The first problem is to do away with mutual fear and distrust. Solemn renunciation of violence (not only with respect to means of mass destruction) is undoubtedly necessary. Such renuncia-

Le sono grato, signora Roosevelt, per avermi offerto l'opportunità di esprimere la mia opinione su questa importantissima questione politica.

L'idea di ottenere la sicurezza attraverso l'armamento nazionale non è altro che una tragedia illusionaria, considerato l'attuale livello della tecnologia militare. Negli Stati Uniti, tale illusione è stata particolarmente alimentata dal fatto che questo è il primo paese in cui si è riusciti a fabbricare la bomba atomica, ragion per cui sembrava prevale la convinzione che si poteva unire nel possibile conquistare una definitiva supremazia militare. In questo modo, ogni potenziale nemico sarebbe stato intimidito, permettendoci di raggiungere quella sicurezza che tanto desideravamo per noi stessi e per il resto dell'umanità. La massa che abbiamo seguito in questi ultimi cinque anni è, in poche parole, la seguente: la sicurezza attraverso la superiorità militare, a qualsiasi costo.

Questo atteggiamento psicologico è un caso del meccanismo e della tecnologia militare ha portato inevitabili conseguenze.

Ogni singola mossa di politica estera è ora dettata esclusivamente da una unica considerazione: che cosa dobbiamo fare per conquistare una totale superiorità sugli avversari in caso di guerra? Dobbiamo installare basi militari in tutte le zone del pianeta che possono avere un'importanza strategica? Dobbiamo armare e sfruttare economicamente i nostri potenziali alleati? E, all'interno del paese, dobbiamo concentrare un enorme potere finanziario nelle mani dei militari; militarizzare i giovani; verificare attentamente la lealtà dei cittadini, e in particolare dei funzionari pubblici, per mezzo di una sempre più ingente forza di polizia.
tion, however, can be effective only if at the same time a supra-
national judicial and executive body is set up empowered to
decide questions of immediate concern to the security of the
nations. Even a declaration of the nations to collaborate loyally in
the realization of such a "restricted world government" would
considerably reduce the imminent danger of war.

In the last analysis, every kind of peaceful cooperation among
men is primarily based on mutual trust and only secondly on
institutions such as courts of justice and police. This holds for
nations as well as for individuals. And the basis of trust is loyal
give and take.

What about international control? Well, it may be of second-
ary use as a police measure. But it may be wise not to overestimate
its importance. The times of Prohibition come to mind and give
one pause.