

LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

SPECIAL SECTION

The Future of the Russian Empire: REFORM or REVOLUTION?

by TONY CLIFF

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FIVE CENTS

TWO CRIMES THAT WILL LIVE IN INFAMY:

Russian Butchers Crush Hungarian People, As Western Imperialists Assault Egypt

By HAL DRAPER

The joint attack on Egypt by the British, French and Israeli forces is as gross an imperialist aggression against a small country as any in the history of colonialism.

Led by Britain and France, with Israel acting as their catspaw and junior partner in behalf of its own aims, the attack by the Western allies is a continuation of their three-month-old drive to blackjack Egypt over possession of the Suez Canal and reverse the nationalization of the Canal Company, to put the waterway under "international" (i.e., imperialist) control.

But Egypt had and has a sovereign right to take over control of this piece of Egyptian territory.

Cairo was willing to, and proposed to, concede various guarantees of free shipping through the canal, of compensation for the Canal Company coupon-clippers,

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As we go to press, British Labor's great struggle against the war has forced a cease-fire on the Eden government short of seizure of the canal, with the outcome still in doubt. And Ben-Gurion has made official the Israeli aim to grab Sinai and other territory.

Hungary and Egypt: Blood-Relations

Marguerite Higgins of the N. Y. Herald Tribune:

"Would the Russians have dared invoke new bloodshed in Hungary had they not had as an excuse British and French unilateral intervention in Egypt? ... The British and French timed their ultimatum to Egypt so as to take advantage of Soviet preoccupation with the satellites. Now the Russians have turned the tables and are taking advantage of the West's preoccupation with the Mid-East to try and crush forever the spirit of freedom in Hungary."

The British Labor Party's Daily Herald: Without the Western split over the attack on Egypt—

"Russia would never have risked her influence in Asia by an act of gangsterism. Eden has provided a cloak for the murder of Budapest. A share of the blood of Hungary should be on Eden's conscience."

Scripps-Howard correspondent Denny from Sopron, Hungary:

"But they say, 'When Britain and France attacked Egypt, then Hungary was lost.' Almost everyone I've talked with, young and old, say the same."

Austrian socialist leader Helmer in Vienna:

"The police action in Egypt provided the Soviet Union with a pretext for its own action. This we must realize with great bitterness in the very hour that Hungary's fight for freedom ends."

The Russian totalitarians are crushing the great Hungarian revolution with massed troops and murderous tanks, openly playing the role of counter-revolutionary butchers and hangmen in the face of an appalled world.

The Khrushchev regime will go down in the history of infamy alongside the red-handed assassins who massacred the Paris Commune; alongside Chiang Kai-shek's blood-letting suppression of the Canton revolution in 1926; alongside the white terror under the fascist Horthy in Hungary after 1920; alongside the exterminationist fury of Hitler's stormtroops after his accession to power; alongside the slaughter of millions of peasants, workers and oppositionists in Stalin's Russia in the '30s.

Stalin's heirs, the masters in the Kremlin, now stand in the front ranks of all those executioners of mass-murder and strangulation of freedom. They have out-Stalined Stalin.

These are the same men who yesterday were being hailed by so many dupes as leaders who wanted to "democratize" Russia because they were filled with revulsion at Stalin's detestable methods...

The revolutionary people of Hungary, who have already overproduced their share of freedom's heroes and martyrs, are fighting again back to the wall, against military odds that no people has

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Communist Militants: Which Side Are You On?

By GORDON HASKELL

Russian tanks, in crushing the revolution in Hungary, have also dealt a mortal blow to the world Communist Parties from which they will never recover. The shells exploding in Budapest have blown up the last myth with which this movement was trying to paste itself together: the myth that "Stalinism without Stalin" was in fact, or was in the process of becoming, democratic socialism.

Ever since the world leaders of the Communist movement "revealed" that Russia, the "socialist bastion," had lived under a brutal totalitarian regime for twenty years, this movement in the United States and throughout the world has been in a process of ideological turmoil and disintegration.

Thousands of members and leaders who had lived, fought and sacrificed for this movement because they believed it offered an infinitely more democratic, more humanitarian method of social organization than that which prevails in the capitalist world, began to re-think what they had been taught, and what they had taught others, about the rela-

tionship between socialism and democracy.

As is to be expected, individuals and groups in and around the Communist Party have differed in the speed and depth with which they were willing or able to re-assess their political ideology. As the further implications of the "revelations" about Stalinism presented themselves, some began to hesitate, and others to draw back. The discussion in the American CP (and in most others) swung away from the central question of the social character of the Russian regime and of the others built in its gary," the statement adopted by the CP as the correctness of the domestic policies of the leadership during the past

few years, the reasons for the isolation of the movement, and the like.

But the events in Poland and Hungary of the past few weeks confront every member and sympathizer of the American Communist movement with problems and questions which cannot and will not be denied.

This was illustrated as clearly as it could be in the Daily Worker editorial on October 30 "Popular Upheaval in Hungary," the statement adopted by the CP national committee on November 1, and in the editorial following the crushing of the Hungarian revolution which appeared in the issue for November 5.

"Our own analysis," says the national committee statement, "is that the great upheavals in Poland and Hungary were initially and primarily mass democratic upsurges of the working class and peo-

ples of these countries for democratization, for a solution to their economic problems, for full national sovereignty and equality in their relations with the Soviet Union."

"This is so despite the fact that in Poland and, more successfully in Hungary, reactionary forces and others influenced by agents and propaganda of capitalist countries including our own, have been trying to use these democratic movements for the purpose of restoring capitalism in these lands.

"Nevertheless, the basic cause of these upheavals is to be found in the fact that the Communist parties of these countries mechanically followed the experiences of the Soviet Union ... as well as the wrong policies pursued by the Stalin regime towards these countries.

"These wrong policies aggravated by the stringencies of the cold war led to the deterioration of economic conditions ... to the imposition of bureaucratic rule, the violation of Socialist Democracy, the jailing and even execution of leaders of the people including leading

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NEXT WEEK IN L. A.

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and Labor's Course

Assault on Egypt — —

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etc. But Britain is really concerned that any victory for Egyptian rights would inspire other Arab and Middle East countries to make difficulties about the foreign exploitation of their oil resources and European domination of their affairs; the French government hates Nasser's support to the Algerian fighters for national freedom; both are deathly afraid in the first place that any backdown before Egypt's rights on Suez will inspire the whole region to defy the European colonialists and encourage resistance to their power.

This, the irrepressible revolt against colonialism that has swept the world since the Second World War weakened the old colonial empires, is the background and context of the Middle East war that has been unleashed with the decision by London and Paris to settle affairs with the defiant Egyptian regime by the same methods and instruments as Russia is using to settle with the defiant Hungarian revolutionaries.

They are not attacking Egypt because Nasser is a despotic military dictator. They are not attacking Egypt because Nasser's regime rules over an oppressed and poverty-stricken people who need domestic reforms instead of an expensive army buildup. They are not attacking Egypt because Nasser has been keeping Israeli ships out of the Suez Canal in violation of Israel's rights ever since 1949-50. They would be glad to prop up this same oppressive dictator if he would play ball with their power-play.

In fact, up to just the other day the British and French were so insistent on keeping Israel out of the Suez fight that they did not even invite that country to the London conferences which tried to gang up on Egypt.

None of Nasser's real wrongs is behind the joint imperialist attack which is made on Egypt's real rights, to wrest the Suez Canal away.

GIFT TO THE KREMLIN

What the British and French are afraid of is, in its own way, similar to what Russia is afraid of: the old empires are cracking up, and they can be saved only by brutal force and the massacre of nations aspiring to independence. This is the basis of the horrible symmetry of the patterns in Hungary and Egypt.

It is a measure of the Western allies' free gift to the Kremlin that the Russian butchers, with the blood of Hungary still spurting under their guns, can come before the world as "protectors" of national freedom in Egypt. It is precisely their guilt in Eastern Europe which spurs them to such plays for the sympathy of that part of the world, especially Africa and Asia, which has reason to know, fear and hate capitalist imperialism.

By his proposal for the U. S. and Russia to intervene with force in defense of Egypt, Bulganin was hoping to cover up the fact that the actual force which Moscow is using is not to defend any colonial country but to keep its chains on its satellites in East Europe. He is depending on the cooperation of the ignoble Asian neutralists like Nehru and the Indonesian leaders to keep the spotlight on the crime against Egypt and to play down the crime against Hungary.

For the last three months, British and French efforts—aided by the U. S. as long as it was not a question of open armed attack—have been to provoke

Egypt into some move which would give them a chance to intervene. They played with the idea of sending a "Users Association" convoy through the canal on their own terms, daring Nasser to react. They pulled out Western pilots from the canal hoping that its operations would break down.

Nothing worked. Nasser, to preserve himself, was playing it easy. The Suez issue was threatening to peter out; the factitious indignation which the British, French and U. S. had whipped up in their own countries was getting stale. Something would have to be done.

"PREVENTIVE WAR"

Their aims converged with a different set of aims in the minds of the leaders of the Israel government, who had their own accounts to settle with Egypt.

Up to the day before yesterday, figuratively speaking, the main open advocate of Israel's starting a "preventive war" by initiating aggression against its Arab enemies was the Herut party, second largest in Israel, which shades from extreme reaction into fascism. With the outbreak of the Suez dispute, Herut leader Beigin openly proposed backing Britain and France in their assault on Egypt. Prime Minister Ben-Gurion ruled it out, at least in public.

All over the world, and most particularly in America, Zionist leaders held up their hands in horror at the very idea that Israel ("the democratic bastion in the Middle East") could even be thought to be capable of such an offense against peace, international morality and simple good sense.

As we remarked in LABOR ACTION August 20: "If one wishes to conjure up an appalling prospect that would finish off Israel in the Middle East, then one can take seriously a suggestion made by the Franco-fascist organ *Arriba* (Madrid) that Britain use Israeli troops as 'Sepoys' to reoccupy the Suez Canal." In this article, however, we refused to take this seriously, and instead gave credence to Ben-Gurion's proclaimed intention of keeping out of the British-French line-up.

The "unthinkable" is now a fact on both counts—launching of "preventive war" and open alignment with the brutal colonialist aggression—and the result is bound to be an historic tragedy for the people of Israel and the Jewish people generally, regardless of military victory and regardless of how much added real estate the Israeli leaders may be able to grab.

The strategic timing of the attack may well have been determined for the Israeli leaders by three considerations,

(1) The Suez affair, as we explained above, seemed to be petering out; yet the Israeli leaders had undoubtedly hoped that, without their having to take a hand themselves, Britain and France would "take care" of Nasser. No better cover for Israeli action than the Suez fight could be expected for an indefinite period. If the time for decision was ever going to come, it was now.

(2) November 6 was a deadline set by the U. S. election; till that date, they expected, Washington would be hamstrung by vote-getting considerations from taking too strenuous action against them.

(3) Then, when Russia became unexpectedly embroiled in revolts against its rule in Poland and Hungary, and therefore also seemed immobilized, the plotters may well have decided that their cup was overbrimming; never again would they be able to meet simultaneously such auspicious conditions for getting away with a barefaced challenge to everything which is usually hailed in after-dinner speeches at international gabfests.

CYNICAL PLOT

It was the Israeli partner which fringed off the events by sending its armies across the border into Egypt, to seize the Sinai peninsula. It was the British and French partners who moved in to seize Suez, cynically using as pretext their benign desire to stop the fighting between their partner and their intended prey. To this end they issued their farcical ultimatum to "both sides," which invited the Israelis to move up to 10 miles from the Suez Canal while their victim moved away from the canal so that the outside imperi-

alists could step in and seize it just as they had been threatening to do all along.

This little piece of play-acting was no less and no more ham-handed than the equally benign consent of the Moscow murderers to bring the blessings of peace to Hungary by rolling tanks over the bodies of the Freedom Fighters.

The primary character of the present war, therefore is determined by the British-French colonialists' aggression on Egypt, which is a continuation by guns and jetplanes of its three-months-old drive to punish that country for asserting its national rights over Suez. It is an outright imperialist attack against which the Egyptian people have every right to defend themselves.

The defense of Egypt will not be helped by the oppressive dictatorship under which they resist imperialism; it will not be helped by the social backwardness in which this regime has kept the country. Above all, it will not be helped by the fact that Nasser has forfeited great sectors of sympathy in the world by his own (and the other Arab states') reactionary and provocative declamations about destroying Israel as a state, their militaristic threats to go with this, and refusal to consider a peace settlement with Israel; and by the Egyptians' share of responsibility for the tension by organizing, stimulating and encouraging border raids and *fedayeen* forays into Israeli territory.

It is in spite of this, and only because of their socialist abhorrence of the colonialist politics behind the aggression, that the British Labor movement, both on top and in the ranks, is unlimbering such fighting spirit and fiery opposition to the warmongering of the Eden government, as shown in the great Trafalgar Square demonstration and in Labor speeches and press attacks on the crime in the Middle East.

We hail British Labor's fight all the more in contrast to the heinous role being played by the two self-styled "socialist" premiers who, with the Tory Eden, plotted this outrage against national freedom.

The role of Guy Mollet's France against Egypt is a continuation of the frenzied persecution of nationalist freedom fighters in Algeria. In Algeria, French colonialism is bogged down in a hopeless struggle to suppress North Africa. Floundering in its crisis, the jingos in Paris drive themselves to try to break out of the North African impasse by "teaching Nasser a lesson." They hope that a crashing success in Egypt will restore European supremacy all around the Mediterranean. Thus they try to break out of one trap by a desperate dash into another.

POLITICS OF DESPERATION

The role of Ben-Gurion's Israel is at once more complex and more tragic.

It is, in the first place, a subordinate partner in this imperialist enterprise, as we have been pointing out; and so also is its armed struggle subordinated to the over-all colonialist character of the war. Yet, at the same time, it must be recognized that the politics of which its attack was a continuation, from its own side, are different from that of Britain-France.

The question leads us to the current apologies being offered wholesale in the press for Israel's disgraceful decision to launch that very "preventive war" which its leaders and spokesmen had so often sworn was the Unthinkable.

In this connection we have naturally been hearing a great deal about that share of responsibility for the border tension which is Egypt's, and which we took up above. This is one side of the truth.

The other side of the truth consists of the Israel government's contributions, since the 1948 war, toward provoking border incidents, embittering relations, and refusing concessions indicated by simple justice.

This side of the truth would have to tell that the majority of the so-called border "infiltrators" are Palestinian Arabs who had been cruelly driven out or kept out of their native homes by Israeli force and laws, and that a good part of their "infiltrations" consist of attempts to recover some of their own

property; that the Arab refugee problem, which is in very substantial part the creation of and responsibility of the Israelis, has been spurned by the government and all concessions refused; that in reply to the "infiltrations," the Israel regime has steadily, since the Kibya massacre, taken the initiative in raising the ante and heightening the savagery of the border fighting, up to and including the recent provocative shelling of Gaza by Israeli cannon; that the hatred of the Arab world has been wooed by the Zionists through the indefensible, discriminatory and second-class position in which even *Israeli* Arabs are placed by law and practice, including military rule over most of them. . . .

This is a long story in itself (see LA March 5 for part of it), but it is not a story which can easily be heard in any part of the press in this country.

It is a story which would explain why Israel, through its reactionary chauvinist policies, has been working itself into an inextricable trap in its part of the world—a trap which closes in both economically and politically—as long as it sets a course which fails to integrate it into the Middle East of which it is a natural part and without which it cannot exist healthily. Its reactionary chauvinist policies have made it easy for the Nassers to isolate it (just as, we explained, Nasser's reactionary regime makes it easier for world sentiment to be mobilized against Egypt's rights).

Israel's tumble into the pit of "preventive war" is a desperate attempt to extricate itself from the consequences of its chauvinism—by resorting to more of the same, and worse. It is like an alcoholic who is trying to cure the jitters with more drink, except this time the shot must be stiffer and the alcohol rarer. It is a classic pattern of the consequences of reactionary politics.

Thus the people of Israel too, like the Egyptians whom they have invaded, are pushed by the Ben-Gurion regime into becoming victims of the rapacious European imperialists who are using them as catspaws, instead of seeking a progressive road which would combine them with the Arab peoples against imperialism and indeed against the Nassers.

JAMMED HALL HEARS SHACHTMAN

New York, Nov. 2

A crowd of between 200 and 250 jammed into Adelphi Hall's largest meeting room this evening to hear Max Shachtman, ISL national chairman, speak on the crisis of Stalinism in Hungary and Poland. Hailing the revolutionary struggle of the people, Shachtman flayed the Russian despots and explained why revolutionary opposition is undermining the Stalinist world.

The old empires, east and west, can no longer be held together, he said. The Hungarian revolution is a refutation of the wave-of-the-future theorists who inflated Stalinism's invulnerability, and it shatters the myth of the "Popular Democracies." Stalinism's power seems invincible until its ruling circles divide in the face of opposition.

Now no one comes to side with the Russian power in Hungary; the people are united against it. It will be the same in the other countries, and in Russia too. The people ask for democracy; not for restoration of capitalism but for full freedom. Shachtman explained why workers need democracy, and why socialism requires it to exist.

No confidence in Gomulka and the Nagy-Kadar regime, he said.

The revolution has pushed back the danger of war, but the Western leaders are not at all overjoyed by it; because revolution is contagious. U. S. leaders have been confessing their bankruptcy in the face of it. The capitalist world acts to get Russia off the hook by invading Egypt. Thus they confess their social incapacity to cope with Stalinism in crisis. "The day of the people is here," as Gene Debs proclaimed.

These were some of the highlights of the ISL chairman's comprehensive exposition of the forces and background of the revolution against Stalinism. A collection of over \$100 came from the responsive audience.

Next day, Saturday afternoon, an excellent picketline demonstration in front of the Russian Delegation building was held by the ISL and YSL, together with the Libertarian League.

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The Future of the Russian Empire: REFORM or REVOLUTION?

1 A Page from History

In 1855 Tsar Alexander II succeeded to the throne of Russia on the death of his father, Nikolai I. One of his first pronouncements was a declaration of his intention to abolish serfdom, which in 1861 he duly carried out.

Two main factors impelled the tsar along this path. First, serfdom had become a serious impediment to the development of the economy, and the big landowners, especially those in the South, whose crops were beginning to enter the field of international trade and bring in handsome profits, had become more and more convinced that serf labour was inefficient and inferior to that of wage-workers.

That this actually was so became apparent after emancipation had been in force some years. At the end of the forties, a few years before emancipation, the average annual yield of four principal crops (wheat, rye, barley and oats) was some 430 million cwts; after it, in the seventies, it was 630 million cwts. The great Marxist historian M. N. Pokrovsky stated that without doubt "free labour did prove far more productive than forced labour." (*Brief History of Russia*, London, 1933, Vol. I, p. 116.)

The second main cause for the emancipation was a steady rise in the number of outbreaks of localised but violent peasant revolts.

There were 400 in the ten years 1845-55 and 400 more in the five years 1855-60. Fearful of the outcome, the tsar, at a meeting of Moscow nobility, uttered his startling and famous phrase: "It is better to abolish serfdom from above than to wait until the serfs begin to liberate themselves from below."

However, the emancipation of the serfs was carried out half-heartedly, and it did not turn them into really free wage-workers, but in fact left the peasants with less land and a heavier economic burden to bear.

Following upon the emancipation of the serfs, Alexander implemented some other reforms:

- On January 1, 1864 he granted local government to the provinces and districts of European Russia.
- On November 20, 1864 he reformed the judicial institutions: trial by jury was introduced for all criminal cases and court proceedings were made public. (And there is no doubt that freedom of expression in the court-room and the publicity given to trials helped greatly in the formation of democratic anti-tsarist public opinion.)
- April 6, 1865 saw the partial abolition of preventive censorship. (One of the results of this was the legal publication in Russian a few years later of Marx's *Capital*.)

That all these democratic reforms were very restricted was soon made quite clear. Thus, for instance, while the press was freed from preventive censorship, it was not allowed to publish accounts of any meetings of societies and clubs without special permission from the Provincial Governors; the Ministry of the Interior was empowered to inform editors of papers what subjects were "unsuitable" and were of "State significance."

The tsarist police soon showed its iron hand. Many a radical was incarcerated. Thus in July 1862 N. G. Chernichevsky was arrested and condemned to prison and eventually exiled for life to Siberia. He remained there until 1883, and was not allowed to return to his home town Saratov until 1889, where he died a few months later.

DEUTSCHER'S ANCESTORS

In the first flush of Alexander II's promises of reform, many were eager to believe in his words. Thus the two leaders of Russian radicalism, the moderate Alexander Herzen and the revolutionary democratic socialist Chernichevsky, in 1857-58 praised the tsar when he announced his intention of abolishing serfdom.

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Herzen went so far as to write letters full of admiration to the tsar.

Both suffered a rude shock a few years later when the terms of the emancipation of the serfs were made known. But the political conclusions that they drew from the new situation were poles apart.

Herzen, whose following had dwindled to nothing, continued to believe in the reforming zeal of the tsar and to place his faith in the desire and ability of the "enlightened nobility" to persuade the tsar to carry his reforms further. (Was he a Deutscher?) Chernichevsky and his increasing number of followers concluded that the tsar was, in fact, the chief representative of the exploiting land-owners, and that only the overthrow of tsarism could clear the road for social and political progress.

The rude awakening led a number of radicals to issue illegal, anti-tsarist leaflets. Thus one of them entitled "To Young Russia" (May 1862) called for an "immediate revolution, a bloody and merciless revolution, which must radically change everything, all the foundations of society without exception." It ended

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with the words: "Long live the social and democratic Republic of Russia!" (Pokrovsky, page 178.)

But the tsar 'Liberator' showed himself most vicious in his attitude to the Poles.

Tsar Nikolai's brutality, his method of governing by means of the rod, had earned him the hatred of the Poles. His son, who was not a fool, realised this and started his rule wooing Polish public opinion. He mitigated the severity of Russian rule over Poland, and curtailed somewhat the powers of the tsarist viceroy in Warsaw. He even replaced him with a new "liberal" face.

But it was obvious, even in the early days of his reign, that Alexander II intended to curb his "reforming zeal" even more strenuously in Poland than in Russia. He made it quite clear when he said laconically to representatives of the Polish gentry and bourgeoisie at their first meeting in 1856: "No dreams!"

HOW REFORMS WAKEN REVOLUTION

Yet the reforms carried out by the tsar, however shadowy they were, inspired many a Pole, and their dreams of liberty grew wings. The people in the Polish towns, who had attained a far higher degree of political consciousness than in Russia, could not but hope to see in this first ray of light piercing the black clouds of tsarist oppression the approach of a new dawn.

More and more societies were founded in Poland, illegal leaflets were issued, and demonstrations took place. And immediately the Cossack's *nagaika* and gun played their usual part. Already in February and March 1861 mass demonstrations in Warsaw were shot down.

Two years later, in January 1863, a Polish national insurrection broke out. The insurrection was doomed to defeat.

The Poles did not possess a regular army and the whole of the country was garrisoned by Russian troops. But even more serious for the fate of the insurrection was the fact that only a minority of Poles supported it actively; the Polish peasants were quite indifferent to a movement led by the nobility. Out of a population of some five million persons, only ten thousand badly armed and inexperienced insurgents joined the armed struggle.

The rebels managed to hold on for eighteen months in a guerrilla war. This was partly due to the lack of enthusiasm that many of the Russian garrisons showed for their job of killing. A number of officers expressed sympathy with the Poles, and were court-martialled; others escaped to the insurgents and even assumed command over their detachments.

Again the "revolutionary contagion" spread, even if not very widely, beyond the borders of Poland. In March 1864 insurrection spread to Lithuania, and the same year saw an incipient rising in Russia, near the Volga—but this was nipped in the bud.

Alarmed, the government made some concessions. It granted the serfs in the so-called Northern Provinces—

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Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia—exclusive property rights in the land they held.

The Polish national revolution ended in defeat. But the blood of Poland did not flow in vain. Two years after the defeat of the insurrection, on April 4, 1866, the first revolutionary attempt on the life of the tsar was made, by the Russian student Karakozov. He failed and was executed; but his was the first act in a revolutionary drama that ended with the overthrow of tsarism, half a century later.

Even this brief historical outline shows quite clearly that under autocracy reforms from above necessarily tend to waken revolution from below.

One cannot cross the abyss separating autocracy from democracy in a number of small steps. (Of course the autocracy does not want to make that crossing.) Any concession from the top, instead of averting the revolution from below, kindles the flame of liberty; and in the final analysis armed autocracy has to face the armed insurgent people.

The similarity between the first years of rule of the "Tsar Liberator" Alexander II and those of the First Secretary "Democratiser" Khrushchev is indeed great. And one can learn a number of important lessons from a comparison of the two.

The analogy, however, must not be pushed too far: • Russia of the horse age moved far more slowly than Russia of the jet age.

• Poland of the nobility was a weakling compared to the mighty Polish mass peoples' movement.

• The different oppressed nationalities, isolated from each other geographically, economically and spiritually in the past, are now bound closely to one another.

• The social content of the revolt against autocracy in the twentieth century differs enormously from that of the nineteenth century.

• The mighty working class of all the nationalities oppressed by the Russian autocracy (and above all the Russian working class) is a waking giant which is bursting asunder the chains of social and national oppression.

2 The Post-Stalin Reforms

Stalin's method of approach to each new failure or difficulty was to increase pressure and terrorism. But this rigid method became not only more and more inhuman but also more and more inefficient. Each new crack of the whip increased the stubborn, even if mute, resistance of the people.

Where serfdom under Tsar Nikolai hampered the productive forces in agriculture, rigid Stalinist oppression became a brake on all modern agricultural and industrial progress.

Two and a half decades after the inauguration of the forced collectivisation, it became clear that Russian agriculture was stagnating.

Nothing could highlight this crisis better than Khrushchev's report to the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union delivered on September 3, 1953. He painted the situation in sombre colours.

He stated that while in 1916 there were 28.8 million cows, in 1953 there were only 24.3 million. At the time of the tsar there were six persons for every one cow; in 1953—nine!

Khrushchev went on to say that "districts which had long been famous as butter suppliers are now producing less butter than before. Siberia, for instance, produced 75,000 tons of butter in 1913, and only 65,000 tons in 1952."

Vegetable farming, another intensive branch of agriculture, shows the same trend.

Agriculture in the satellites fared no better. The cause is not to be sought in a lack of agriculture machinery or fertilisers.

Indeed, the mechanisation of agriculture and supply of fertilisers was sharply stepped up. Thus the number

of tractors in Poland rose from 15.5 thousand in 1949 to 49.3 thousand in 1954; in Hungary from 9.2 thousand to 15.4 thousand; the other satellites showed similar rises. (UN, *Economic Survey of Europe in 1954*, Geneva, 1955, page 273.)

The amount of fertilisers supplied per hectare of land in Poland in 1948-9 was 17.7 kg. (of pure content); in 1953-4—30.8 kg.; in Czechoslovakia—31.1 kg. in 1948-9 and 51.0 kg. in 1952-3; and so on. (Ibid., page 274.)

In spite of the better supply of machines and fertilisers, grain output in every one of the Eastern European satellites has not risen, but has declined since the beginning of collectivisation.

In the 1934-8 period they produced 42.8 million tons of grain annually; in 1951-3 they produced only 37.5 million tons. (Ibid., page 120), a decline of 12.4 per cent.

Eastern Europe, which was a big exporter of grain, has become a net importer.

The very low level of productivity in Russian agriculture is clear from the following facts: it was estimated that in April 1956 not less than 56.6 per cent of the Russian population lived in the countryside (*The National Economy of USSR*, Russian, Moscow, 1956, page 17), nearly all—i.e., practically half the total population—engaged in agriculture. And this half hardly manages to produce sufficient food to feed both itself and the urban population.

As against this, in the United States only 13 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture and it supplies enough food not only for the whole of the American people, whose level of consumption is much higher than that of the Russian, but also for export. In Britain the farming population makes up only 5 per cent of the total population, but it supplies half the food consumed in the country.

CRISIS ON THE LAND

The low productivity of agriculture alarms the Kremlin for three basic reasons:

- First, it impedes the rise of productivity in industry—hungry workers cannot be expected to work well.
- Secondly, it makes it impossible to syphon off labour power from the countryside to the town. (The loss directly and indirectly of some 30-40 million lives during the Second World War makes such syphoning particularly difficult.)
- Thirdly, the low productivity combined with the state's pillaging of the kolkhozniks lowers the morale of the rural population, a corroding influence which is liable to spread throughout the land.

It was not accidental that the crisis in agriculture came to a head just after the post-war rehabilitation of the Russian economy.

During the thirties Russian agriculture was mechanised on a large scale; this made possible, if not an increase in the absolute size of agricultural output, (a development sabotaged by the passive resistance of the peasantry), at least a decrease in the number of people employed in agriculture. The number of people in the countryside declined from 121 million in 1926 to 115 million in 1939. The 6 million so released, plus the natural increase in population, was syphoned off into the towns, where the peasants, and especially their sons and daughters, were turned into industrial workers.

With the annexation in 1940 of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Western Ukraine and Byelorussia, the actual population of the USSR increased by 21 million—which gave further opportunities for mechanising agriculture in the new areas and syphoning off millions of people from the countryside to the towns.

During all this period agriculture was in stagnation if not in decline. As *Pravda* of October 4, 1955 had to admit:

"A total of 5 per cent fewer grain crops were planted on the collective farms in 1953 than in 1940. This reduction was even greater for individual crops: 11 per cent for winter rye, 35 per cent for millet, and 6 per cent for corn. At the same time the proportion of grain crops for forage dropped. These crops accounted for 29.6 per cent of the total area under cultivation in 1913, for 24.1 per cent in 1940 and for only 19.0 per cent in 1954."

With agriculture stagnating, and without the annexation of new areas with a large population (not to speak of the tremendous loss of life during the war) and with the added crisis of agriculture in the satellites, where output was considerably lower than before the war, the agricultural crisis reached alarming proportions. (Perhaps the Lysenko sleight-of-hand, and the much trumpeted but now totally forgotten "Stalin Plan for the Transformation of Nature," were but opiates to calm the nerves of the Russian rulers.)

CRISIS IN THE FACTORIES

The industrial workers in Russia and her satellites do not show any greater enthusiasm for production than the peasantry. The best proof is the fact that the productivity of labour in industry lags far behind the technical level of its equipment.

Russian industry, being quite new and built in very large units, has equipment which on the whole does not fall short of the level of American industry if indeed it does not surpass it, and certainly is far more advanced than that of the countries of Western Europe. Despite this, the productivity of labour in Russian industry in 1950 was calculated to be only 40 per cent of that in United States industry, or about the same as that in Britain and Western Germany. (W. Galenson, *Labour Productivity in Soviet and American Industry*, New York, 1955, p. 263½)

To raise labour productivity in industry, great efforts have been made to improve the skill of the workers through better technical education. But the more cultured and skilled the worker, the greater is the feeling of frustration and resentment against the exploiting bureaucracy and the poverty and drabness of his life.

How oppressed must an engineer engaged on building jet planes feel when he returns from work to the one-room "apartment" in which he and his family live!

The longer the time since the industrial revolution, the longer the worker is "cooked in the factory," and the greater his skill, the more resentful, if not rebellious, does he become.

BUREAUCRATS VS. THE KREMLIN

The third largest class after the peasants and workers in the Russian empire is the bureaucracy.

One of the paradoxes of the Stalinist regime is that even the socially privileged bureaucrats are not at one with it. Of course they are glad to know that the Kremlin protects them. But alas, too often the MVD, besides arresting workers and peasants, also lays its hand on the exalted bureaucrat himself! (Thus it was estimated that in 1938-40 some 24 per cent of the technical specialists were imprisoned or physically eliminated—see N. De Witt, *Soviet Professional Manpower*, Washington 1955, p. 231.)

The less zeal the toilers show in labour, and the greater the desire of the Kremlin to push production forward, the more does the whip lash at the individual bureaucrat who has to make the former carry out the wish of the latter.

Toward the end of Russia's industrial revolution, from 1936 to 1938, the vast mass purges were carried out. Then came the war with its terrible destruction. At the end of the period of reconstruction, in 1949, the campaign against "cosmopolitanism" was launched, directed mainly against members of the ruling class; the "Titoist" show trials took place, which culminated in the "discovery" of the "Doctors' Plot"; and the stage was set for an unparalleled mass purge. Stalin was just about to crown his life's work when he died.

Many sons of the tsarist nobility rebelled against the tsar, a number of them turning to terrorism to overthrow him. Many a bureaucrat and his children must have become embittered against the later tsar, Stalin. Stalin was certainly the most hated man in his empire.

TENSION IN THE SATELLITES

In the satellites during the later years of Stalin's rule, the tensions became even more acute than in Russia herself. A number of factors contributed to this.

First, national oppression was added to social. One aspect of this is the economic exploitation of the satellites by the Russian states.

Thus, for instance, the Polish-Russian agreement dated August 16, 1945 stipulated that from 1946 onward Poland was to deliver to the USSR at a special price the following quantities of coal: 1946—8 million tons; from 1947 to 1950—13 million tons each year; and subsequently, 12 million tons annually as long as the occupation of Germany continued. This coal was to be paid for not by Russian products but by reparations taken from Germany by Russia and transferred to Poland.

According to Professor W. J. Rose, the price agreed on was said to be \$2 per ton. (*Poland, Old and New*, London, 1948, p. 290.) As far as is known, Poland did not get anything on this account.

Anyhow, 12-13 million tons of coal at \$2 a ton was extremely cheap. At the time of the signing of the Polish-Russian agreement, Denmark and Sweden were offering Poland \$12 per ton, subsequently to be raised to \$16.

The robbery of Poland through this transaction alone amounted to over \$100 million a year. (To get some idea of this amount, it is worth mentioning that British capitalists never got such a large annual profit out of their investments in India.)

In 1948 Russia cut her demands for Polish coal to 7 million tons a year; even so, this is a heavy commitment for Poland. (Y. Gluckstein, *Stalin's Satellites in Europe*, London, 1952, pp. 66-7.)

The presence of Russian garrisons in the satellite states could certainly not help to foster a love of Moscow. Moreover, some of the satellites at least had higher living standards than those existing in Russia, and therefore could not take happily to Russian rule.

In addition, whereas in Russia Stalin had to deal mainly with a backward peasantry and new raw workers at the beginning of his rule, some of the Eastern European countries—mainly Eastern Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland—had a relatively large and not so raw working class, with its own socialist traditions.

The social and national tensions in the satellites became unbearable. A distorted expression of this was the anti-"Titoist" purges.

3

In Fear of Revolution

To meet the economic, social and national difficulties, Stalin's heirs carried out a number of reforms.

For lack of space we will not describe the reforms from above carried out in the different parts of the Russian empire. In general, it can safely be said that the reforms went further in the peripheral provinces than in its centre.

Also in the different satellites the extent of the reforms varied. In Poland and Hungary they went much further than in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Rumania.

This is probably mainly because the Communist Parties in these two countries are very weak and unpopular, having risen to power on the ruin of the considerably stronger socialist parties; under such circumstances the local Stalinist rulers had to make greater efforts to ingratiate themselves with the people.

However, the reform has its own logic.

The more concessions given, the greater becomes the

pressure of the people for new ones. The rulers' who were formerly hated and feared are now not feared so much as despised. This is especially the case with the quislings leading the satellites.

Hence after the concessions are given from above, an attempt is made from below to wring more. The further the rulers go on this path the more difficult they find it to withstand the popular ire. The process is cumulative.

THE PEOPLE DEMAND MORE

A few examples from Poland will demonstrate this process.

A short while after the death of Stalin, the Polish leaders made it clear that the Plan was exceeding the country's resources, overtaxing its capacity and depressing the standard of living. The first step was a small cut in the rate of capital investment.

While in 1949 21.8 per cent of the national income was invested, the rate rose to 26.9 per cent and it was expected to reach 28.0 per cent in the last year of the Plan (1955). Actually the rate was cut in 1953 to 25.1 per cent, in 1954 to 21.2 per cent, and in 1955 to 19.8 per cent. (Bierut's Report to the Central Committee, October 29-30, 1953, *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy!*, November 20, 1953.)

Whether this cut was enough to satisfy the people is another question: after all in 1938 the rate was only 12.7 per cent (Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques, *La Pologne*, Paris, 1954, p. 214).

The original Six-Year Plan imposed by Moscow had provided that of all the capital invested in industry 76 per cent should be devoted to the means-of-production industries, and only 24 per cent to the consumer-goods industries. (H. Minc, "The Six-Year Plan for Economic Expansion and for the Laying of the Foundations of Socialism in Poland," *Nowe Drogi*, July-August, 1950.) But shortly after the death of Stalin, Bronislaw Minc (brother of the vice-premier) stated: "There must not be too great a discrepancy between the manufacture of producers' goods and consumers' goods." (*Gospodarka Planowa*, March 1953.)

The Six-Year Plan provided that in 1955 producers' goods would make up 63.5 per cent of all industrial output. (H. Minc in *Nowe Drogi*, July-August 1950.) In November 1953 the Central Committee of the Unified Polish Workers' Party (the name of the Communist Party) announced that they had revised the target of the Plan so that in 1955 only 50 per cent of all capital invested in industry would go to the producers' goods sector. (*Trybuna Ludu*, November 4-5, 1953.)

On November 14, 1953 and in May 1954 two price cuts were announced on certain industrial articles and food products. Promises were made that by the end of 1955 real wages should rise by 15-20 per cent above the 1953 level. Again, on April 6, 1956 Edward Ochab, First Secretary of the party, declared that from May 1, 1956, the minimum wage would be raised from 364 zlotys per month to 500 zlotys, some 37 per cent. (*Polish Facts and Figures*, issued by the Polish Embassy in London, April 14, 1956.)

While on the one hand promises became greater and greater, on the other hand the frantic efforts to shed the responsibility for the present suffering of the people impel increasingly frank admissions that all the promises and declarations of the past meant little or nothing.

For instance, we quote two versions of what happened to the standard of living of the people:

(1) On December 23, 1955 Vice-Premier Minc stated that in the six years 1949-1955 real wages rose by 27.6 per cent. (*Trybuna Ludu*, February 23, 1956.)

(2) In July 1956, after the mass workers' strikes and demonstrations in Poznan, First Secretary Ochab admitted in a speech to the Central Committee that there had been a rise of only 13 per cent in real wages in the five years 1951 to 1955 and that an "important part of the working population is no better off than in 1949!" (*Trybuna Ludu*, July 20, 1956.)

But promises alone, or even recantations of past mistakes, are not enough. If the concessions in the economic field and the increasingly glowing promises of future reforms are to carry any weight, the rulers of the satellites must clothe the iron fist in a kid glove.

As late as April 1955 five Jehovah Witnesses were accused in court in Warsaw of "opposing conscription" and spreading "propaganda for a third world war." Three of them were condemned to 12 years imprisonment, one to 8 years, and one to 6. (*Polish Facts and Figures*, April 9, 1955.) A year later after the Poznan riots, the condemned got a maximum of 4½ years. A few weeks later a general amnesty to Poznan "rioters"—excluding those connected with murder and robbery—was announced.

With every breath of air, the lungs demand more!

NEW HEADS FOR OLD

As the pressure of the people increases so that it can no longer be contained in the channels of concessions, promises and recantations, the regime, in a last attempt to divert the stream (before resorting to armed force) changes its figurehead. "New chiefs for old" becomes the slogan of the day.

When Alexander II came to the throne, he was known as the Tsar Liberator. Following this pattern why should not Gomulka or Nagy assume the laurel wreath of Liberators? They are ideally placed, as for many years these persons were not responsible for running the country, nor for all the exploitation, terror and suffering.

Were not they themselves among the ranks of the persecuted? Thus Gomulka, after five years of imprisonment by Stalin's gaolers, can surround himself with the aura of martyrdom.

"After all, Stalin and his agents are the enemies. Gomulka was Stalin's enemy. Hence he is our friend. The enemy of our enemy is our friend!"

While such illusions about Gomulka and his ilk exist,

they must quickly disappear under his rule. Indeed, such illusions can scarcely be spread at all, as Gomulka has a past which is not calculated to endear him to the people. And the Eastern European peoples, especially the Polish people with their centuries of struggle against Russian oppression, have good memories.

When Gomulka lost power in 1948, Poland was already a totalitarian one-party state, and Gomulka had played an important role in bringing this about.

Gomulka did not protest at, and actually benefited from, the purges of the leadership of the Communist Party of Poland carried out by Stalin. As Poland lay on the Russian border and the Polish Communist Party was illegal, the most important leaders of the party were usually in the USSR, and were thus involved in the big purges of the thirties. Many of them were executed or perished in forced-labour camps—Domski, Sofia Unschlicht, Warski-Warszawski, Kostrzewa-Kozutska, Prochniak, Huberman (brother of the violinist), Winiarski, Sochacki, Lenski, Rval, Zarski, Wandurski and Jasienski.

Apparently the purge so decimated the Polish Communist Party leadership that the Russians found it necessary officially to dissolve the party (1938), using as an excuse the "infiltration of Trotskyites and police agents into the party." It was this purge which opened the door to the rise of Gomulka (an obscure trade-union official who was also practically unknown in the party) to the Central Committee. (The killing by the Nazis of the Secretary General Merceli Nowotko and his successor Paul Finder hastened Gomulka along the road to supreme power in the party.)

THEY REMEMBER HIS RECORD

Again, during the Warsaw uprising, one of the most magnificent chapters in the history of the Polish people, Gomulka showed himself to be a traitor and a Russian quisling.

On July 30, 1944 the Russian army under the command of Marshal Rokossovsky came to within 10 kms. of Warsaw. Next day mobile patrols of the Russian army had advanced as far as Praga, a suburb of Warsaw on the eastern bank of the Vistula. German troops began to be evacuated en masse from the city and its environs. Radio Moscow called upon the people of Warsaw to take to arms. But when the people of Warsaw, organised and led in the main by the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), rose up in arms against the German Army of Occupation, the Russian troops stopped their advance and waited on the eastern side of the Vistula until, after 63 days of struggle, Warsaw was in ruins, 240,000 of its inhabitants were killed and 630,000 deported by the Germans.

Gomulka, as First Secretary, that is, chief of the Polish Communist Party, never raised his voice against Stalin for this murder, and did not hesitate to smear the Warsaw insurgents.

Finally, it will not be easy to forget that Gomulka played a leading part in the liquidation of the Polish Peasant Party and the Socialist Party.

The people of Poland will remember Gomulka's past.

4

On the Razor's Edge

Eight years ago, in 1948, Tito broke with Moscow. In the process of defending the national independence of the country from outside, while preserving the rule of his own bureaucracy inside, he was pushed into carrying out a number of reforms.

The logic of the struggle against the domination of Moscow, which compelled the Yugoslav leaders more and more openly to expose the real character of Stalin's regime, forced them to renounce, or at least to pretend to renounce, its more obnoxious features. The struggle, by making it a question of life and death for the Yugoslav government to enlarge its mass support, forced it to "liberalise" the dictatorship. The economic difficulties connected with the isolation of Yugoslavia from the Russian bloc of countries, and even more, the very severe drought of 1950, pushed the government in the same direction.

As a counter to Stalin's "bureaucratic centralism," Tito attempted to implement "socialist democracy." The administration was decentralised, beginning with the economy. The federal ministries of Electricity and Mines were abolished by a decree of February 17, 1950, and responsibility for the management of these branches of the economy handed over to the governments of the component republics of Yugoslavia. On April 11, another six ministries of the central government were abolished—agriculture, forestry, light industries, commerce and supply, and state supplies. At the federal level the departments are headed by councils, and the decrees grant wide autonomy to the governments of the republics.

On June 26, 1950 the Yugoslav Federal Assembly passed the "Basic Law on Management of State Economic Enterprises and Higher Economic Associations by the Workers' Collectives."

The Yugoslav leaders do not try to explain how decentralisation of the administration can be compatible with the existence of a monolithic, highly centralised, one-party system, managed by the Political Bureau; nor how "workers' management" of an enterprise can be compatible with a central economic plan determined by the same nine people in the centre of political power.

What autonomy can a workers council have when it is elected from a list of candidates put forward by the trade union, which is centralistic and controlled by the party?

Again, what autonomy can it have when the economy

is planned and the vital decisions on production, such as real wages (the amount of consumers' goods to be produced and distributed nationally), are made by a central government independent of the people?

How can there be genuine local self-government in a situation where everything, from factories to papers, from people to machines, is in the hands of the centralised, bureaucratic party?

THE LIMITS OF TITOISM

To illustrate the limited rights the Yugoslav worker has in "his" factory, it need but be mentioned that not a single strike took place either before or after the law on workers' management of June 26, 1950; that the labour-book (the *karakteristika*, a sealed record of the workers' political reliability which has to be shown every time he takes on a new job) continues to exist; and that the most severe punishments are meted out to workers who break discipline or pilfer, even if they do so only to ease their hunger.

This last point shows clearly the contradiction between the outward form—"the workers own the factories"—and the real social content, and it will therefore be relevant to give an instance. The *Manchester Guardian* of August 19, 1950 gave the following report under the heading "Death Sentence in Workshop for Stealing":

"The novel procedure of trying offenders in their place of work instead of a courtroom was introduced in Belgrade a few days ago. Seventeen workers were tried in a big workshop of an engineering works for having committed numerous thefts. One man was sentenced to death and 16 to penal servitude ranging from two months to twenty years. The whole staff of the works had to attend the trial that was designed to serve as a warning.

"It is small wonder that Yugoslav workers resort to stealing and have to be warned off by spectacular methods. Rations are small and the government finds it hard to honour them. Prices on the free market are extremely high..."

One other characteristic feature of Titoism, interwoven with its nationalism, was its soft-peddling of collectivisation of agriculture.

Tito's cautious attitude toward this has been determined by economic-political considerations. He knew that in Russia "collectivisation" so isolated and weakened the state that its very existence was in the balance. He could not conduct a war on two fronts, externally against Russia and internally against the peasantry, and any attempt at large-scale and compulsory "collectivisation" would have put him at the mercy of Stalin.

As a result, while in Bulgaria in June 1953, 51.7 per cent of all arable land was in collective farms, in Czechoslovakia 40 per cent was; in Hungary (March 1953) 26 per cent was; in Rumania 12 per cent was (UN, *Economic Survey of Europe, 1954*, op. cit., p. 61), and in Yugoslavia only 9.5 per cent was. (Satellite Agriculture in Crisis, New York, 1954, p. 62.)

Notwithstanding the basic similarity of the Stalinist and Titoist regime, there is one big difference between the two. Stalin's regime became more and more tyrannical while becoming less and less efficient, these two aspects mutually strengthening each other. Under the policy in Yugoslavia the regime, although totalitarian, has not led to increasing convulsions. No opposition parties are allowed, and in the party no oppositional voice may be raised (see the case of Djilas and Dedijer), class differences continue, and the bureaucracy rules supreme. However, there are no bloody trials, no bloody "collectivisation" and no increasingly draconic labour laws.

CAN GOMULKA DO A TITO?

There can be no doubt that Gomulka, Nagy and the other rulers of the satellites are making attempts to follow the Yugoslav model. The first steps in this process—decentralisation of the administration, "democratic management of industrial enterprises," and back-peddling on the collectivisation of agriculture—have already been taken in Poland and Hungary.

But one cannot simply presume that the satellites will be able to copy Tito and stabilise their regime as "enlightened totalitarianism." This is so for a number of reasons.

First of all, there are economic reasons which make this impossible. The "liberality" of the Titoist regime is dependent on the modesty of the industrial targets it sets out to achieve. It does not set its sights very high, thus avoiding overtaxing its capacity and exceeding its resources.

As a matter of fact the rate of growth of industry in Yugoslavia since the 1950 reforms is very low indeed. It is much lower than the rate of growth of industry in the satellites, in Russia, or even in the countries of Western Europe, as can be seen from the following table:

| PERCENTAGE GROWTH OF GROSS OUTPUT OF INDUSTRY 1950-1953 | |
|---|----|
| Yugoslavia | 6% |
| Russia | 46 |
| Czechoslovakia | 52 |
| Bulgaria | 57 |
| Eastern Germany | 60 |
| Poland | 75 |
| Rumania | 76 |
| United Kingdom | 6 |
| France | 9 |
| Belgium | 12 |
| Austria | 17 |
| Western Germany | 39 |

[Sources: for Russia, *The National Economy of the USSR*, op. cit., p. 47; for all other countries, UN, *Economic Survey of Europe in 1954*, pp. 72, 199.]

The avoidance of forced mass collectivisation in

Yugoslavia is integrally bound up with its extremely slow industrial advance: without syphoning off surpluses from agriculture, the sources of capital accumulation must be quite small.

(Apologists of Stalinism in its different variants, who praise Russia and her satellites for their speedy industrial advance and Yugoslavia for its "democratic" political regime, will have to choose: either they argue for industrial advance paid for by vicious oppression, or for more "democracy" paid for by relative economic stagnation.)

A fall in the Russian rate of industrial development to the Yugoslav level would entail a drastic curtailment of the armaments drive; it would force China, now seeking aid for industrialisation, to gravitate toward the U.S. and the Western European capitalist powers; it would demand the surrender of any ideas of world supremacy.

And it must be remembered that even the modest rate of growth of Yugoslav industry was made possible by fairly lavish American economic aid to bolster her up against mighty Russia. But will U.S. imperialism grant the same support for all the satellites, especially since Russia will obviously be weakened, as the shock of their defection takes effect? Or can one expect U.S. imperialism to give economic aid on a large scale to Russia?

FROM TITOISM TO REVOLUTION

Above all, Gomulka and Nagy are not, as is Tito, masters in their own homes. Unlike the other leaders of the "People's Democracies," Tito and his friends came to power without the support of the Russian army. And while there are no Russian troops on Yugoslav soil, Poland, Hungary, Eastern Germany and Rumania are heavily garrisoned by them.

Again, while Yugoslavia is so situated geographically that it can get military aid from the West and so balance between Russia and America, no other "People's Democracy" (except Eastern Germany and Albania) is as advantageously situated.

Furthermore, unlike the case of Yugoslavia, the Communist Party leaders on coming to power had mass support only in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria; and even in these countries, where the support had not been forged through years of heroic struggle in a war of national liberation, it was much weaker than in Yugoslavia. The relative popularity of the party plays a significant role in the extent of the stability of the regime.

In the last analysis it is clear that to do a Tito, Gomulka & Co. will have to wage a revolutionary struggle against the Russian army, a struggle which can only attain a victorious conclusion if the whole people is mobilised. And what the people have achieved in bitter struggle they will not surrender to local bureaucrats, turncoat quislings.

The Gomulkas are balancing between the workers, peasants and intellectuals of their own country on the one hand, and Russian imperialism on the other. They try to use the pressure of the one in order to wring concessions from the other.

Turning to the Russians, Gomulka says in so many words: "Unless you retreat and give Poland greater freedom, the people will rise in arms against you." To the Polish people Gomulka says: "If you go too far, the Russian troops will intervene, and the Polish people will bleed to death."

Without the Russian garrisons Gomulka, Nagy & Co. will be swept aside by the popular masses. Without the mass movement, they will be the helpless slaves of Russia.

REVOLUTION IS CONTAGIOUS

But balancing on a razor's edge is a difficult trick and it can not continue indefinitely.

The outbreak of the French Revolution in 1830 and the revolt in Belgium ignited the great Polish rising of the same year. In 1848 the French and German revolutions sparked off the Hungarian revolution, in which many Polish volunteers aided the struggle against the Russian troops that had come to crush the revolution. French and Belgian, German, Polish and Hungarian blood together watered the tree of liberty.

In 1864, after the collapse of the recent Polish uprising, a socialist delegation from France came to London, and at a meeting which it called to protest against the cruel suppression of the Polish national revolution, it was decided to found the "International Workingmen's Association," the First International. In it Polish and Russian, French and British, Italian and German socialists and workers joined hands to struggle for the emancipation of humanity.

Whether the fighters of Warsaw and Budapest win their present battle or not, the international working class will remember them as the glorious harbingers of the new world, the world of revolutionary democratic socialism. Stalinism will have earned eternal loathing and contempt.

In victory or in defeat the Eastern European revolution will have blazed the trail for the new consolidation and spreading of the ideas of independent, revolutionary and democratic socialism.

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Western Leaders, Too, Fear Revolution in Russian Empire

By PHILIP COBEN

According to a myth spread on both sides of the Iron Curtain, the leaders and statesmen of the capitalist West should have been overjoyed by the depth and extent of the Hungarian Revolution.

It is therefore important, and politically enlightening, to detail the fact that it just wasn't so.

Precisely in proportion as the Hungarian Revolution became a social revolution and not merely nationalist, precisely to the extent that it took on a deepgoing character, there was a clear reaction of alarm in Washington, London and Paris.

We remind our readers that this phenomenon was almost as clear at the time of the East German revolt against Russian rule in June 1953. It is a regular pattern. But this time the reaction can be documented in some detail.

The Hungarian Revolution was of course directed against the Russian power, which is the enemy of capitalism as well as the enemy of socialism; but social revolution anywhere seems to make our capitalists jump with the jitters...

"U.S. Fears Rebels May Act Too Fast," was the headline over a report (Oct. 25) by the N. Y. Times' Washington bureau head, James Reston. "The hope in official quarters," he said, "is that the pace and anti-Soviet aspect of events in Budapest will not offer a pretext for such intervention."

What intervention? By the Russians. But the Russian troops and tanks were already intervening with merciless slaughter of the freedom fighters! Nagy had called them in. Explains Reston: the "official quarters" mean "massive intervention."

Naturally, if the Hungarian people pulled back on their "pace and anti-Soviet aspects," and allowed the Russians to clean up with only the troops that were already intervening, then no further "massive" intervention would be necessary! The dynamics of a revolution are that you either push forward or you are thrown back. The way to avoid "massive intervention," therefore, is to allow yourself to be defeated by non-massive forces...

The thinking behind this "hope" in Washington was not, however, made too clear by Reston. That the hope was there indeed was certified by another member of the Times bureau, Thomas J. Hamilton, who wrote on October 28 of the "Hungarian patriots" that "Their successes thus far, paradoxically enough, cause some forebodings in Washington."

All this would merely be puzzling to the mythologists unless we looked a little further into the motives for the forebodings. These are documented too.

A CLEVER PLAN

On October 25 the N. Y. Herald Tribune's Marguerite Higgins was a good deal more educational than Reston's delicate reference of the same date:

"The anxious question in Washington about the Budapest uprising—which indicated an even greater violence of anti-Soviet feeling than the Western world suspected—is whether it might prompt the Russians to turn the screws back on in the satellites.

"Specifically there is worry that the Kremlin might seize on events in Hungary as an excuse for going back on its rather grudging promise to Poland to permit it to go its own 'Titoist' road to socialism.

"It is feared in Washington that the Hungarian uprising could give ammunition to the factions in the Soviet Politburo who have been arguing that 'democratization' in the satellites has gone too far and threatens to get out of hand."

The politically informed reader will be instantly struck by the fact that this transcription of the Washington state of mind is virtually a word-for-word duplication of the notorious thesis laid down by the Stalinoid apologist Isaac Deutscher in connection with the East German "June days." They should not have made

trouble for the Russians, he explained then; "democratization" and "liberalization" and other good things are going on apace in the Kremlin; leave Stalin's heirs alone, don't scare them, and they will hand down democracy, or an installment of it, to people who behave themselves.

Now for Deutscher, of course, this thesis flows from the same political analysis which causes him to believe that the Russian system is a "socialist" and "progressive" one which all good men should support and defend, and not fight against. It is a theory which has a good deal of influence among some Bevanites in England, certain Stalinoid groups in the U.S., and so on.

But has the State Department gone "Deutscherite" too? Hardly.

We should mention now that on the same October 25 the Times' London man reported similarly on what "sources" in that capital were saying. In Poland, said the "sources," now that Gomulka is in, "it is best to 'make haste slowly.'" Cut out demonstrations, no "sharp and open deviations from Soviet policy"; otherwise the Russians may get tough and "liquidate democratic movements"; and "this, some sources fear, is what is happening in Hungary."

So once again, we are told that the way to avoid forcing the Russians to liquidate democratic movements is... not to have any democratic movements, but merely to stick to a little more national-Stalinism or "Titoism." This prescription for preserving democratic movements by eschewing them in the first place is so clever that it is hard to understand how the admirable Hungarian people could continue to overlook it, especially when it seems to be so thoroughly clear both to Washington "official quarters" and London "sources."

QUESTION OF PRETEXTS

Indeed, we can round this out for the Big Three. From Paris came a bit of wisdom which was not from any anonymous sources or flying sources, but from a Source with feet on the ground, Foreign Minister Christian Pineau.

Warning against any Western attempts to "exploit" the Polish and Hungarian revolts, Pineau said on Oct. 26:

"It would be dangerous to try to cut the links that countries like Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia have with the Soviet Union. This would provide the Soviet Union and some statesmen in those countries with a pretext to go back on de-Stalinization."

This almost views the hard-eyed bureaucratic despots who run Russia as if they were just sentimental, petulant children who can be jollied out of their empire in time if only you don't take away their candy too roughly and make them cry. It would be hilarious if anyone really believed that Pineau (or the Washington "official quarters" and London "sources") actually swallowed this.

If the Russian leaders are looking to seize on a "pretext" for going back on de-Stalinization, then how reliable is it to put any trust in their intentions or proclaimed promises? Isn't it true that the people have won concessions from reluctant masters only to the extent that they have fought them, and in reverse proportion to the extent that they put any trust in them? That is a fundamental lesson that was learned in the long painful education of the working class under capitalist democracy; how much more is it true when one deals with totalitarians!

But it is not necessary to come to the conclusion that the foreign offices of the Big Three have been captured by Deutscherism. We can document more hard-headed motivations for the alarm and fear that was stirred behind foreign-office shirt-fronts by the Hungarian Revolution

and the stormy development of the mass actions in Poland. They are not quite as suitable for public distribution, however.

WAR CALCULATION

One of the clearest came from Drew Middleton, N. Y. Times correspondent in London, again reporting on the views of "government opinion" and "observers" in that capital. To understand what he is saying it is useful to recall that Western bourgeois proponents of "liberation" have long discussed that underground movements or tendencies toward dissent and dissatisfaction in the Iron Curtain domain should be viewed primarily as a military ally of the Atlantic bloc. That is, in case of war with Russia, revolt behind the lines or the organization of sabotage for the Western side would be desirable. But all of that is only for wartime, when Western victory would "liberate" the satellites, and any revolutionary action by the people themselves would be strictly subordinated.

But this links the prospect of anti-Stalinist revolution only to the holocaust of war, even assuming that the Western capitalists could inspire any mass movement of the people there, which is scarcely likely. But for socialists, the forces of revolution against Stalinism offer precisely a road to prevent a war, as current events show. The socialist approach is the reverse of the capitalist-military.

Middleton wrote from London (Oct. 27): "Some observers feel that Hungarian resistance now, gallant though it may be, weakens democratic forces for any future struggle against the Soviet Union. . . . If they [Hungarian demonstrators] are slaughtered by the Soviet army, it is noted, time will be necessary to rebuild resistance."

So they should preserve themselves for the future. For when? for some time when there will be a better chance to pull off a revolution? But he does not indicate that the "observers" are setting themselves up as experts on good revolutionary situations versus poor ones. The suspicion may dawn that the future for which the "democratic forces" have to be preserved has nothing to do with their own revolution at all, in which these "observers" are hardly interested, but in the strategic plans and hopes of the Western powers in connection with war.

The next day Middleton wired from London even more clearly. "Government opinion" on Budapest is "ambivalent," he said. On the one hand, there is rejoicing at the courage, etc. but—

"In contrast there is the objective view that the Hungarian anti-Communists have exposed themselves, that events have moved beyond the capacity of the West to guide or advise." (Bold face added.)

Indeed and truly, the Hungarian Revolution was far away from any control or "guidance" from these people.

DREAM OF A DEAL

This line of thought ties up with a third formulation which crops up as the press accounts for the indubitable symptoms of alarm caused by the Hungarian Revolution in the State Department and Foreign Office. Here is a Washington dispatch in the N. Y. Times, Oct. 27:

"There was some consideration of what might confront the U.S. in case the rebels should succeed in setting up a government of their own. This could present a major dilemma.

"The U.S. would be sympathetic to a free regime in Hungary. But Washington officials do not want to offer a major provocation to the Soviet Union, through recognition of a Hungarian government unfriendly to Moscow.

"Such a provocation possibly could lead to war, it is felt here. The view prevailing among U.S. officials, it appeared, was that 'evolution' toward freedom in Eastern Europe would be better for all concerned than 'revolution,' though nobody was saying this publicly."

This report would be astounding if you

took it literally. It speaks of "evolution" versus "revolution" as if discussing a parliamentary regime where this time-honored vocabulary of reform had at least a frame of reference.

But if we overlook this twaddle, then what remains is the conception that the way to try to maintain peace is by dividing up the world with a Russian empire which is "contained" within the present Iron Curtain by an amicable deal in which Moscow is assured undisturbed sway in its domain as long as it ceases to make trouble for us capitalists in the rest of the world.

This is at least not sheer rubbish, like some of the other things we have had to quote; it is the cynical voice of imperialism looking forward to the only kind of peace it knows about, the peace that blesses the world when powerful imperialisms divide it up for exploitation in a friendly sort of way. This is the theory behind the Truman-Acheson-Kennan doctrine of "containment" which is still operative in Washington in spite of the official GOP demagoguery about "liberation." It is a dream, but it is the only dream of peace they have.

So: having revolutionary forces behind the Iron Curtain is a good thing—but only for use after war breaks out. Till then, they must be held in check under "guidance and advice" lest their revolution get in the way of the current stratagems of the capitalist world.

THE BASIC FEAR

And behind this there is something else which is all-pervading in the thinking of a ruling class:

Revolution is contagious. Once the brushfire starts, who will guarantee to keep it within the bounds of the Russian empire?

This has been put down on paper in the present situation by that dean of American pundits, Walter Lippmann, who once long ago used to be a socialist and now, as a braintruster for capitalism, is sensitive to revolution.

In a series of columns (N. Y. Herald Tribune) he firmly and clearly put forward the thesis that the interest of the West is to see the Hungarian and Polish people restrain themselves to Gomulka-type regimes satisfactory to Moscow, and not to go any further, above all not to social revolution. In his reasoning there is an echo of the "U.S. will be on the spot" motivation, and also of the motivation that reduces the action of the East European revolution to a convenience for Western military plans. But the unique service he performs is to speak frankly on a much more basic point.

Unless the Polish crisis is "stabilized" under Gomulka-Titoism, he argues—

"... then we may expect to see, I would guess, the Polish crisis become a far-reaching crisis of the European continent. For it will then spread to and involve not merely the rest of Eastern Europe and the Balkans but the two Germanys. There is no telling what would come of such a crisis. For the essential character of the crisis would be that there was no power and authority—be it Soviet, Western, or local—to organize Central Europe." (Oct. 26.)

No one to organize Central Europe, he says—except, of course, the socialist revolution. For what else is this spreading "crisis" which is beginning in Poland and which may communicate its flames not only to East Germany but to West Germany too?

In his October 30 column, he made this explicit. "Our true interest," he wrote, is limiting the East Europe turmoil to "Titoism," since this is what has meaning to prevent Russia from East Europe as a military base against the West. What are the only alternatives to this limitation? One is Russian reimposition of "Stalinism."

"The other alternative would be a spreading rebellion which went beyond Titoism and engulfed it. If such a rebellion were to spread to Eastern Germany, as it might well do, it would almost certainly mean that in some way or other Western Germany would be sucked into the conflict."

And after Western Germany—what? A portentous revolutionary perspective opens before Lippmann's eyes.

It opens for us too. Fortunately the East European victims of Moscow will not listen to the wisdom of Lippmann or the State Department strategists. They will fight because they have to fight. And when they overthrow their Stalinist rulers, the capitalist world will rock to its foundations also.

Russians Crush Hungary — —

(Continued from page 1)

ever faced before, with an undying courage and stupendous tenacity that must become the marvel of the century.

We mourn for their dead, and our hearts are torn in suffering with them, but at the same time we say that there is no power on earth that can long withstand the battering-ram of such revolutionary élan as has erupted from the Hungarian masses, and which tomorrow will burst out in Poland or East Germany or Czechoslovakia or elsewhere in East Europe, and the day after, will explode the heartland of the tyranny in Russia itself.

The Hungarian Revolution won a tremendous victory, far greater than anyone had anticipated, far more glorious than anyone had thought possible when it first broke out. Indeed, it is only because of the smashing scope of this victory in the first stage that the Russians were faced with the challenge to expose themselves once and for all as brutal enemies of socialism and democracy and national freedom, and to deliver an historic deathblow to any possibility that any honest Communist worker may continue to believe in the Russian myth.

NO MISTAKE

It will be said, as it was being said even in advance, that the Hungarian revolutionists "went too far," they made a "mistake," they should have settled for a "Titoist" regime that might have kept Moscow's confidence, etc.

There is not an ounce of truth to this. It is coming particularly from bourgeois pundits like Walter Lippmann who made clear from the beginning that he looked with dismay upon the very idea of a socialist revolution in Hungary that might undercut the Western war camp's plans and possibly even spread the contagion of revolution to... Germany.

It will be coming from experienced apologists for Stalinism who will use the treacherous Russian butchery to explain that the Hungarian people's fault was that... they didn't trust the Russians enough.

It will be coming from cynical ideologists like Isaac Deutscher, who also greeted the East German "June days" of 1953 with the complaint that such mass action from below might antagonize the Khrushchevs from carrying out the "democratization" which they promise and which is sure to be handed down from above if only the people behave themselves and don't fight.

From all of these and more varied sources, the people will be told, as they have always been told by such types, that the mistake is... to fight.

TOO MUCH TRUST

The truth is evidently just the opposite.

The Hungarian people put too much trust in those who were ready to betray them to the enemy.

They stopped fighting, having been told that they had already won everything, at the behest of the government that put the "Titoist" Stalinist Nagy at the head of a regime still run by the Janos Kadar who betrayed the revolution to the Russians and now superintends the massacre; a regime which was loaded with the same men, like Apro and Muennich, who now reveal themselves as Moscow's hangmen.

Are these the "Titoists" who, if only the people hadn't gone "too far," would

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have ensured the handing down of national or social freedom from above?

They were hoping indeed that the turbulent mass action and self-confidence of the people would ebb, that they would quiet down, go home as they were told, sink back as objects of rule once again instead of acting as doers and shakers; so that the Stalinists still at the helm, with a few ex-bourgeois figleaves in the cabinet, could get started once again on the climb back to totalitarian power.

It is, in truth, because the revolution did not quiet down and go home at the request of these Judases, who had kept themselves in power at the top because of the inexperience and naiveté of the revolution, that the terrible choice faced the Russians of doing that which will forever plague them and finally bring their power down in ruins.

And it was possible for the Russians to do that because the Hungarian Revolution did not surge forward uninterruptedly to rouse the allies that could save it—the Polish working class in the first place, and the Russian ranks in the second place; and beyond them, who will set a bound?

We do not point this out as a complaint against a revolution which was a hundred times more politically advanced and conscious of its demands than we or anyone else had a right to expect. This is the first revolution against the Stalinist power.

The revolution learns from its experiences. All the more reason therefore to see the experience. We do not believe that the Hungarian people will trust vermin like Kadar again; nor will they believe that a man's victimization by the previous Stalinist regime ensures his revolutionary bona-fides. The Polish people and the others, will learn too.

THE GUILTY

The Hungarian Revolution was betrayed and rebuffed by those to whom

the Hungarian people had a right to look for aid. In Poland, the Kadar who presently rules in Warsaw, named Gomulka, was bending every effort to prevent the Polish people from coming to the aid of their Hungarian brothers. Had it not been for the false popularity he had won when he succeeded in bridling the first revolutionary wave in Poland, he might have been unable to keep Poland from opening a second front of the revolution.

But he was indeed acting like a good Titoist. Tito himself, from Yugoslavia, greeted the Russian butchery of the revolution in Budapest with Titoist cries of congratulation.

The blood of the Hungarian people is on the hands of every one of those leaders and statesmen whose actions and words encouraged the Russians to believe that they could get away with their gamble with a minimum of ill consequences to them.

There will be, one must be afraid, enough to go around to take care of all those who qualify for this distinction, in addition to the lion's share that belongs to Russia. There is the share for the jackals.

First and foremost (as indicated on our first page) this blood is on the hands of the leaders of Britain, France and Israel, who—after utilizing the Hungarian and Polish revolts as a cover for their own assault on Egypt—gave Moscow a cover, in turn, for their massacre in Hungary. The ball went back and forth, in a display of objective team-play between the twin forces of reaction and oppression in the world, capitalism and Stalinism.

We accuse Anthony Eden, Guy Mollet and David Ben-Gurion.

We accuse Nehru of India, who by his shameful silence on Hungary almost until the end, while he spoke out indignantly against the attack on Egypt, helped give the Russians the idea that the Middle East crime by the Western imperial-

To Communist Militants — —

(Continued from page 1)

Communists. They resulted in denying participation in the political life of the countries to parties and personalities that represented large sections of the population. They resulted in infringements upon the sovereignty and independence of these nations.

"Such policies cannot be defended by those who want to see a better and more democratic way of life in the world."

The statement then condemns the Hungarian Communist Party particularly for calling in Russian troops to put down the movement, hails the Russian statement of October 31 "on the relations between socialist countries" as representing a real implementation of the "decisions of the 20th Congress," and finally calls for a withdrawal of all foreign troops from European soil.

SIGN OF CONFLICT

This statement is to be welcomed by democratic socialists as a reflection of healthy changes in the thinking of numerous Communist militants and sympathizers, perhaps even some leading people—changes which started with the 20th Congress "revelations" about the nature of the Stalinist regime and have been given a further push by the recent events in Poland and Hungary. It signals an irrepressible conflict inside the American Communist Party between those who will want to continue to hang on to Russian Stalinism as the ideological and physical base of their movement, and those who seek to move forward to a truly independent, democratic socialist movement.

The statement of the CP committee on the Polish and Hungarian events reflects this conflict; it does not consummate it, even though two leading members of the committee abstained from the statement. For far as the statement goes from the Stalinist position of two years ago, it is evident throughout that the authors are still trying to straddle two horses which are moving rapidly in opposite directions.

While the statement points to the past crimes of Stalinism, and charges that the Russian leadership has yet to "fully apply" the promises of the 20th Congress, it is still framed in terms appro-

priate to regretful supporters and sorrowfully friendly would-be reformers of an essentially worthy regime. Witness the welcome it gives to the Russian declaration of October 31, which events have demonstrated was merely a military ruse to induce the Hungarian people to lower their guard while Russian troops were pouring into the country to crush them.

The statement of the CP national committee was written before the reinforced Russian troops drowned the Hungarian revolution in blood. But the *Daily Worker* editorial of November 5, after this event, speaks in the same regretful tones.

"The use of Soviet troops in Hungary will bring no lasting solution to that country's problems," says the editorial. That is why we support the Hungarian masses who sought to solve their own problems as they were settled in Poland without violence, without foreign troop intervention and without allowing supporters of the old fascist regime to remain in power."

The section of the CP leadership which is running the *Daily Worker* is still straddling an impossible contradiction. They "support the Hungarian masses," but they do not condemn those who have been shooting them down in the streets of Budapest.

They are in a position like that of a French socialist who might write that he "supports the Algerian masses," without being willing to say that he opposes the imperialist rape of their countries by French troops.

LET'S NOT STRADDLE

One can get away with such phrasemongering in an editorial as long as one does not have to propose a policy. Then the question arises inevitably: which side are you for, and which side against?

The use of Poland as the example of the right way to "democratize" a Stalinist regime, as against the "wrong" Hungarian way, serves the same purpose. The fact of the matter is that in Poland the revolution was halted before it really got under way. There is absolutely no guarantee that there will be multi-party

elections and freedom of speech and press in Poland; quite the contrary. There is absolutely no guarantee that the Russian troops will leave Poland; quite the contrary.

ists could effectively cover up the crunching of Russian tanks in Budapest. That goes for his "neutralist" associates in Indonesia and elsewhere too.

We accuse all those who have spread abroad in the world the idea that the Stalinist despots can be expected to hand down democracy from above provided only that they are not irritated by unremitting struggle. Now we have seen Mikoyan, who was supposed to be the real honest-to-goodness democratizer in the Kremlin, as the special agent of Moscow against the Hungarian Revolution. We have seen Mao Tse-tung congratulating Kadar along with Tito. We have seen Gomulka letting the Hungarian Revolution go down in blood.

THE WAY TO MOSCOW

But it is down only for the moment. We have never before been able to say so confidently: it will rise again.

Hungary only opened a new era. It cannot be closed. Russian tanks are shooting down all illusions about this Stalinism without Stalin. Next time, the world will not even be astonished when the Polish people show what they have learned.

Above all, the bottomless abyss of hatred against Stalinism which was revealed in the heart of the Hungarian people is not confined to the satellites. Who will now dare repeat the discredited Orwellian cliché about the hopelessly indoctrinated and hypnotized character of people who have been brought up under Stalinism?

Who will now repeat that sort of chatter with regard to the peoples inside Russia itself—the Ukrainians, the incorporated Baltic Slavs, the various minority nationalities, and indeed the Great-Russian heartland too?

The new era opened up by the first revolution against Stalinism, the new era which was heralded by East Berlin and Poznan, also had a herald in the great strikes in the Vorkuta concentration camps and other labor camps inside Russia. The revolution is on the march; Stalinist savagery cannot stop it; and its way lies through the Kremlin itself.

The Hungarian events have underlined what is in store for the Stalinist regime in any country where the people really get a chance to break out of its repressive control, and Gomulka and his colleagues have noted it. Even more clearly, the Russians have sought to teach all the peoples of Eastern Europe what will happen to them should they seek to establish real independence. In the circumstances it would appear that this lesson was meant at least as much for the Poles as for the Hungarians.

It would be pointless to go through every sentence in the statements now being issued by the CP leadership with a view to pointing out their various inadequacies. Their attempt to straddle between ideological loyalty to the Russian regime which remains Stalinist in all essentials, and support to the struggle for democracy of the victims of this regime cannot long continue.

Men like William Z. Foster recognize clearly that to break with support of Russia, no matter what crimes are committed by its rulers, means the end of the world Communist movement as it has developed over the years. CP militants who want to move in the direction of democratic socialism no doubt sense this too, and this is one of the reasons for tortured attempts to reconcile what is irreconcilable.

The Hungarian people, led by the working class, have paid a terrible price for their heroic attempt to break out of the grip of Stalinism at home and out of the Stalinist empire. Their triumph, short-lived as it was, will be remembered with the Paris Commune as one of those events in which history casts its shadow before. Not the least among their achievements is this: they posed to every member or sympathizer of the world Communist movement who has an ounce of revolutionary democratic socialism in him the question which has to be answered:

Which side are you on?

New Ferment in the CP Youth Movements

British YCL Convention Sees Mood of Revolt Among Delegates

London, Oct. 31

The recent Young Communist League national conference, which took place in London on October 26-27, revealed that discontent with the official line has reached an unprecedented level here.

The efforts of the leadership to channel off all the dissatisfaction in a rather futile controversy—should the League attempt to appeal to youth with rock-and-roll music and pictures of Marilyn Monroe, or with more political education?—did not prevent several outbursts of real hostility.

One of the major examples of this was the passage in the face of official opposition of an amendment to a resolution on conscription. Hitherto it has been YCL policy to demand "Cut the Call-Up" from two years to one. The amendment, which was passed 98-69, demanded a speedy abolition of conscription.

The feeling of the conference was manifested in voluble protests from the floor against allowing a well-known supporter of the party line, who was not a delegate, to move the resolution calling for one year's conscription. Although he was allowed to speak by conference vote, he did not prevent the delegates from turning down the official policy.

This decision—embarrassing as it is to the CP leaders—did not, however, quench the delegates' desire for change. Numerous speakers called for a return to the ideas of Lenin, and one was even bold enough to call for the publication of the works of Trotsky and Bukharin.

Later on in the conference, when a speaker in passing mentioned that he had been listening to the arguments of the Trotskyists while waiting outside the conference hall, there was a round of applause which was not confined to visitors of Trotskyist persuasion.

The tensest part of the meeting, how-

ever, followed the address given by John Gollan, the new CP general secretary and Harry Pollitt's successor. After he had mustered all his oratorical powers to denounce the "counter-revolutionary" rising in Hungary and to defend vehemently the use of Russian troops who had "shed their blood to liberate Hungary from the fascists in 1945," it was found convenient to hear a report from the Standing Orders Committee on an emergency resolution dealing with Hungary that had been introduced.

The speaker did not read the resolution but stated that it demanded the withdrawal of Russian troops from Hungary and sought to line the YCL up with international reaction. Despite the willingness of the committee to accept emergency resolutions, stated the speaker, this one would be an insult to the conference. Amid all sorts of protests, the Standing Orders Committee recommendation not to discuss the resolution was put to the vote and carried 107-34.

After such strenuous efforts to convince the delegates not to discuss the question, for a quarter of the delegates to vote against the recommendation shows the degree of opposition within the YCL. It was not, however, surprising that a reference by the chairman shortly afterward to the discussion on inner-party democracy produced hoots of derisive laughter from the body of the hall.

PARTY LEADERS WORRIED

It is clear that this opposition is seriously worrying CP leaders in Britain. A discussion on Trotskyism is being carried on among YCL members in Merseyside and similar discussions are being conducted elsewhere in YCL ranks.

Furthermore, the disquiet is not confined to the YCL. The publication of the *Reasoner*, an opposition journal produced by CP intellectuals, is only one manifestation of dissatisfaction with the official line.

Longstanding dissatisfaction with the Communist Party program, "The Socialist Road to Britain," among some CP circles has been brought to a head by the Khrushchev speech and recent happenings in Eastern Europe, and the trickle of resignations threatens to swell into a powerful stream. Throughout the big cities of Britain many CP members are anxiously buying and discussing Marxist literature of an anti-Stalinist complexion.

More than anything, the factor which holds them back is the absence of a clear alternative. The Labor Party leadership is regarded with contempt by most and its anti-Stalinist left wing is divided among a number of different tendencies.

Clearly the aim of all those who want a real advance in the development of a healthy anti-Stalinist left wing must be to work for a closer relationship between the different groups. Only then can the maximum benefits be derived from the growing realization within the CP that the so-called Communist movement is nothing but a barrier to the achievement of socialism.

LYL Leader Evinces Political Re-Thinking

By EDWARD HILL

A discussion meeting at the University of Chicago last week brought to light some very interesting developments in American youth politics. Two speakers made presentations, William Jennings Jr., Illinois acting chairman of the Labor Youth League, and Michael Harrington, national chairman of the YSL.

Jennings began by endorsing the idea of the meeting and the whole conception of discussions between LYLers and various socialist groups such as the YSL. In his summary, Harrington greeted this notion, and reaffirmed the YSL's desire to engage in such discussions with the LYL throughout the country.

Efforts to arrange a debate with the LYL in New York had failed when the LYL representative turned down the YSL challenge. At that point, the LYL was pushing for a "broad" kind of discussion involving a whole array of political points of view and shied away from any direct confrontation. So Jennings was making a break, and a welcome one, from the attitude of various LYLers in other parts of the country.

But this was not the most interesting aspect of Jennings' talk. It was his analysis of the 20th Party Congress which exhibited the sharpest break from what the LYL line has been in the past.

In discussing the congress, he spoke of the "bureaucratic caste" which was being brought into line, of the pressure of the people, and so on. In passing, he had words of blame and praise for Trotsky and for the *Militant*, the organ of the Socialist Workers Party. One would have to describe his politics as at a half-way (or even two-thirds) point in the direction of the SWP.

He refused, however, to carry out all of the implications of the ideas he was putting forth—he would not answer a direct question as to whether he backed the Hungarian workers. This, he said, was not a proper question (and interestingly enough, the SWPers present applauded this statement).

Harrington told Jennings and the audience that he was happy to see an LYL spokesman move as far as this away from the ideas of Stalinism, even while criticizing Jennings' analysis. And even though Jennings had announced that he was speaking for himself and not for the LYL, Harrington pointed out that his ideas went far beyond what the LYL usually describes as its range of difference, and led to the notion of supporting not only the Hungarian workers but a revolution of the Russian working class against their bureaucratic class as well. Jennings said he felt that this was an attempt to stifle discussion in the LYL, and this statement met with applause from the LYLers and SWPers in the audience.

CHANGE-OVER

What the Chicago meeting demonstrates is that the crisis in the world Stalinist movement and in the American CP is at work in the LYL too.

The LYL was founded in the late forties at the instigation of the Communist Party (which recognized the "need for an independent, non-party Marxist youth organization"). At the time of its constitution, there was a Young Progressives of America already in existence as a broad front of Stalinists and Stalinoids. As a result, the LYL was something of a tight, politically homogeneous Stalinist organization, not as much so as the old Young Communist League but more in that direction.

In 1952 a shift in line was made. Some

years later, Leon Wofsey (then national chairman of the LYL—he resigned this spring with a statement of self-criticism) described the change. Prior to 1952, he said, "an atmosphere of 'false discipline' was permitted to develop and such high standards of membership set that no 'ordinary' young mortal could be expected to join," i.e., the pre-1952 LYL was a cadre organization, the post-1952 LYL more of a broad front.

The process which was initiated in 1952 (the date of a similar CP turn) was accelerated by the events of the 20th Party Congress and the news of the Khrushchev revelations. Wofsey was replaced as an extremely broad line was announced.

However, the LYL did not stop there. Since the change-over, there has been discussion in the LYL looking toward the dissolution of the organization. One possible perspective is a drive for broad socialist clubs including anti-Stalinists. This has already been attempted in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago.

WELCOME DEVELOPMENT

However, this must be placed in the context of the fact that the LYL has suffered a precipitous decline in membership. Its membership in traditional centers like New York is only a fraction of what it was only three or four years ago.

There has been a tremendous speed in the shift of points of view in the past months (a YSLer was denounced as a "Trotskyite" in the spring for bringing up Marxist objections to the Khrushchev report, while Jennings in Chicago, a few months later, speaks with a certain admiration for Trotsky); and this must have had a tremendous demoralizing influence on the "broad" LYL.

The YSL, of course, welcomes these developments. There are many sincere socialists in the LYL—Jennings would seem to be a case in point—and the breaking of the ideological straitjacket of Stalinism may make it possible for them to take their place in the democratic socialist movement.

This is not to say that the LYL has been transformed overnight, or even that Jennings' position is typical of the organization as a whole. But there are stirrings, significant ones; there are those who are painfully working their way to an independent position. It will take time, and there will be half-way houses such as Jennings has found. Yet the development is, in itself, moving in an excellent direction.

After the discussion, Harrington stated that he wanted to reaffirm the YSL's stated position in favor of a confrontation and discussion of the YSL and LYL points of view. The Chicago meeting, he said, proved that this is a fruitful approach in the current period.

CHICAGO PICKETLINE

On Saturday, Nov. 3, the Chicago unit of the Young Socialist League sponsored a picketline demonstration at the British consulate in the city, in protest against the imperialist attack on Egypt. It received wide press, TV and radio coverage. *Story next week (crowded out of this issue).*

Forum in Los Angeles

The Forum For Democracy and Independent Political Action, a discussion group sponsored by Los Angeles socialists and pacifists, held a symposium on "The Causes and Consequences of The Civil War in Russia's Satellites" on November 2. B. Glen of the Socialist Party and Ted Enright of the Independent Socialist League were the speakers.

The Forum (formerly called The Forum For The Third Camp) exists in order to provide "a meeting place and an audience for the confrontation of ideas and ideologies." Its sponsors are: Gordon Carey, pacifist; Ted Enright of the ISL; Gordon Smith of the Los Angeles Socialist Party; and Arlon Tussing of the Los Angeles unit of the Young Socialist League.

BERKELEY (Cal.) YSL

Sunday, Nov. 4—4-6 p.m.
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All meetings at 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Rm. 31, except the meeting of November 9 which will be held at the Wesley Foundation, Bancroft and Dana Streets. (The Foundation does not necessarily subscribe to what will be said, but continues its tradition of supporting free speech.)