

'INSIDE STORY' OF SOVIET OUSTERS TOLD BY L'UNITA

ROME, July 8 — The Italian Communist newspaper L'Unita printed today what it called the inside story of the Kremlin shakeup. It said the Vyacheslav M. Molotov "anti-party" group tried to oust Nikita S. Khrushchev with a carefully planned surprise action last month.

It took Khrushchev 13 days of bitter struggle to gain the upper hand, L'Unita said in a dispatch from Moscow.

L'Unita's Moscow correspondent Giuseppe Boffa said his version of the behind-the-scenes struggle was based on official information given to all branches of the Soviet party.

He said Molotov and former Premier Georgi Malenkov "opened hostilities suddenly with an apparently insignificant request" June 18 or 19. They asked for an urgent extraordinary meeting of the Party Presidium, or leadership, under the "pretext" of discussing the speeches to be delivered in Leningrad on the 250th anniversary of the city.

Boffa said the request was accepted although it sounded "rather strange" and that "three effective members of the directorate were then absent from Moscow." Premier Nikolai Bulganin and Khrushchev were in

Finland at the time.

"As soon as the session opened, however, the four men raised far different subjects," Boffa said. The four were Malenkov, Molotov, Lazar Kaganovich and Dmitri Shepilov.

"One after the other, they attacked, asking for profound changes in the membership of the Party Secretariat and the Government, because the political line followed lately was in their opinion radically wrong, or—so the four called it—Trotskyite and opportunistic.

"The list of the new appointments was already prepared. The first who would have had to go was obviously Khrushchev.

"Although in the past there had been not a few differences among the members of the group, this time their attack was planned in full agreement.

"... They demanded an immediate vote, counting on a majority also because of the absence of the three (presidium members.) . . .

The Malenkov-Molotov group suffered a first setback when the three absent Presidium members rushed back to Moscow before a vote could be taken, Boffa said.

The Khrushchev group then

claimed the Presidium was not competent to make such big decisions and said a decision must rest with the Party's Central Committee.

"The four replied boldly that they were not afraid of the judgment of the central committee," Boffa said. "But they demanded—and this should be noted because it is a point of extreme importance on which the four fought to the last—not only that a decision be made right away but that it be published in the press together with a political declaration" which Shepilov had been entrusted to prepare.

"Only after that would the plenary session of the central committee have been called, finding itself practically faced with an accomplished fact."

The two groups battled on this point for at least three days. Then news of the struggle spread to members of the central committee members living in Moscow. Eighteen of them turned up and demanded to know what was going on.

The central committee members demanded an immediate session, but here was a delay until 127 central committee members reached Moscow.

"Faced with this unequivocal demonstration, the four, after trying to win a further postponement, had to resign themselves to a debate before all party representatives," he said. Finally 225 members arrived.

The central committee session began June 22. Debate raged, with the four still on the offensive. But the four "had very soon to find out their isolation."

"Not one, not a single one, supported the four."

Boffa said the four, "faced with unanimous opposition," tried to retreat and water down their requests, but the central committee demanded their full disavowal.

Party representatives charged that the entire attitude of the group was aimed at paralyzing the party rather than spurring it to advance. Then came the decision to expel the four.

Boffa said there was a distribution of roles inside the group—"Molotov was essentially its political brain and 'ideologist' while Malenkov was rather the organizer."

The account in L'Unita said it was taken from the stenographic minutes of the debate in the Presidium and the central committee.