

LABOR ACTION

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RUSSIA WITHOUT STALIN—WHAT'S AHEAD AS NEW DESPOTS UNITE AGAINST 'PANIC'?

Outside Russia: Futile Talk In U.S. on 'Exploiting Rifts'

By GORDON HASKELL

What effect will Stalin's death have on the power-relationships in the world of the cold war? Will the American government "exploit the opportunity" of the uncertainties and conflicts inside the Stalinist world which may be given impetus by the disappearance from the scene of the chief jailer and tyrant of the peoples behind the Iron Curtain?

The government has been showered with speculations on this score by just about every man, woman and child in the nation who can get into print. The "experts" on Russian affairs from the universities and every editorialist and columnist have had their say on the matter.

But even a very patient and extensive reading of their output about the advantages for American "psychological warfare" which this event presents falls to turn up anything that looks remotely like a "plan" or even an approach to what actually can be done.

The heads of the government seem to be just as much at a loss. Aside from dark hints that John Foster Dulles will be "unleashed" to show what he can do in this field, nothing is forthcoming. After the hurricane of speculations peters out, by virtue of its own emptiness, it will be clear that the American government which could not launch any political offensive against the bastions and outposts of Stalinism when the master was alive is no more capable of launching one against his heirs. All they can do is wait in the hope that somehow the Stalinist empire will blow up from within of itself.

WAR OR PEACE?

In fact, it is on such hopes that most of the speculations base themselves. Will Mao Tse-tung find it rankling to take orders from Malenkov? Perhaps the other satellite ruling cliques will use this propitious time to loosen their ties with the Russian Stalinist machine? But on the other hand, is it not possible that the Russian bureaucracy will launch a war against the West in the effort to halt any disintegrative tendencies either at the core of their power or on their borders? All of these questions, and all the speculations which are put forward with varying airs of authority in place of answers, are based on grains of truth about the Stalinist economic and political system. The problem is to winnow the grains from the chaff, and to take a new look, in the light of this important event and the reactions to it, at the real relationships and dynamics of the cold war.

To start with, it is virtually excluded that the Russian bureaucracy is so bent on self-destruction as to launch World War III as a method of getting out of internal political difficulties.

A major war puts the greatest strain imaginable on any society. Every section of the Stalinist bureaucracy must realize that whatever their uncertainties about the future may be now, they would be infinitely greater if subjected to the additional impact of war.

World War III, however it may begin, cannot possibly be a war of quick and easy victories. Even the last war which began for Russia as a mass invasion of its home territories (a situation most calculated to unite the people behind their government) revealed widespread tendencies toward disaffection in many portions of the empire. If there is any validity whatever to the idea that Stalin's death may give impetus to the disintegrative national tendencies, the test of war is the last thing

His Page in History Is Red—but Only With Blood



Inside Russia: The Ruling Class Girds to Save 'Unity'

By HAL DRAPER

Niagaras of ink, poured out in the press during this past week, have been based on two facts: (1) Joseph Stalin died last Thursday; and (2) Georgi M. Malenkov succeeded to his post as Russian premier and apparently as No. 1 man in Moscow.

Rarely have so many pundits written so many millions of words on the basis of so little that was known.

There is no one in the world who knows the answers to most of the concrete questions the commentators have been asking about the immediate consequences of the changing of the guard in the Kremlin—that is, no one at least outside of the inner circle of the top Russian bureaucracy, and it is not at all certain that they are an exception:

What the articles in this issue of LABOR ACTION propose to do is discuss and analyze the political framework and forces operating in the Stalinist system which the despot who has died bequeathed to the despot who inherits his bloody scepter, and how these political forces of the system condition the possibilities in a change-over of the top personnel.

SPOTLIGHT ON A CLASS

Georgi M. Malenkov is not merely taking over a post or a power or a machine; he is taking over a social system. This social system was created under the leadership of Stalin in one of the world's bloodiest counter-revolutions, in which all the conquests of the workers' power under Lenin and Trotsky were destroyed. But though created under his leadership, this social system was bigger than the man Stalin who clawed and bludgeoned his way to dictatorial power as the embodiment of the new state bureaucracy. All the more, it is bigger than the man Malenkov.

This is the first consideration to be borne in mind under the barrage of the dense masses of free-roving speculation which fill the papers.

The commonest mistake is incarnated in the remark made by Louis Fischer in one of his recent books. This writer himself incarnates everything that is philistine and superficial in the American journalists' approach to the Stalinist phenomenon. It was Fischer who wrote that the "only free man in Russia" was Stalin. Presumably it is now Malenkov, and the pundits search through the personal biography of this anointed bureaucrat for hints on what he has in store for the world. But even Stalin was not the free agent of Fischer's sense; even as a "personal" dictator, he was the leader of a class, and represented the needs, interests and mentality of that class—the state bureaucracy, formed from the degeneration of the Russian Revolution, which pushed him to power as their man.

Even more, Malenkov comes to power today as the executor of the ruling class of the Russia that Stalin built. We put the spotlight on that class and on the dynamics behind it in this, the first situation of its kind that the Stalinist bureaucratic system has had to meet.

WHAT AN INTERNAL STRUGGLE MEANS

There is a distinctive characteristic of the system which conditions the first question that political commentators have been asking themselves: *Will there now be a disruptive struggle for power within the bureaucracy among the aspirants to Stalin's mantle?*

The trouble is that these experts ask this very legitimate question as if they were dealing with the kind of bureaucracy with which they are familiar—as if the Stalinist bureaucracy is of the type of the political machine which they know from experience with political bosses in the U. S.

They tend to deal with it in terms merely of a contest of powerful personalities—is it Malenkov versus Beria, or Molotov versus Malenkov, or is Bulganin allied with Beria's clique or no?—or else they

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A Symbol Dies—the Bureaucracy Trembles

By S. HOROSHCHENKO

In the mind of the average worker in the USSR, Stalin's death will evoke two sets of thoughts: (1) How will his death, and the installation of a new regime, stimulate and strengthen the forces of foreign capitalist intervention and restoration; and (2) how will this be reflected in the strengthening in power of the counter-revolutionary state bureaucracy?

In the simplest terms they will ask: What about the war? Will they (the West) again "liberate" us? And—What about our own bureaucratic "magnates"? Will they squeeze us even more?

It must be stated clearly and unconditionally: the workers and collective farmers in the USSR are in a position between Scylla and Charybdis, between two dangers either of which is difficult to avoid without encountering the other. This position determines their way of thinking and their state of action at the present time.

In the mind of the average bureaucrat the death of Stalin raises the sole question: What will happen to me? The whole bureaucratic

Those crowds of Muscovites marching to the Hall of Columns, on the order of factory or office party organizers, to pay tribute to Stalin's corpse need not have been guarded by ranks of armed policemen: they would not take action at present. Why? Because they know even without reading the *Wall Street Journal* of March 5 that there "in Washington, the men around Dulles and Eisenhower have immediately begun talking of an aggressive effort to exploit the Soviet's situation."

WAITING

We say figuratively that the workers of the USSR know this; at least, they feel and think so, because they have a lot of experience, and—what is most important—they are not mistaken.

The masses of Russia are waiting. They wait for the settling-down of the present contradictory situation. Which will win: increasing danger of war and capitalist restoration, or peace and the nervous efforts of bureaucracy to stabilize its power?

In case of the first, the masses

will support the bureaucracy; Malenkov's regime will be stabilized and strengthened at least till the danger is over. In case of the second, the masses will gradually begin to act. The bureaucracy will lose ground under its feet; its fears and nervousness will mount; the bureaucrats might even begin to fight among themselves on how best to serve the cause of their class. But this will be their doomsday.

Peace is urgently needed. Or—as an alternative—a heavy blow against capitalism somewhere in the world, a blow independent of Moscow. At present the masses of Russia need time more than at any other period. They might be willing to wait for months and years. During this time, in the balance of history, in proportion as the danger of capitalist intervention goes up, in like proportion the masses' fight against their bureaucratic exploiters will go down. And vice-versa: to the degree that this danger from the outside diminishes, the weight of the workers' fist will be felt more heavily in the scale. Its blow to the bureaucracy will be mortal.

LAST LINK

The settling-down of the present contradictory situation may not come overnight. Stalin's death evidently caused wide alarm within the bureaucracy, but this alarm, this fear of the people, may soon cause an inner consolidation of the bureaucratic forces. Fear, as is known, causes not only a weakening of will and power, but very often also the opposite. It is quite possible that Malenkov's regime will increase terror and purges, especially in the longer run. But if Malenkov actually succeeds in consolidating his power this would by no means signify that everything is over and that a stable synthesis has been reached.

For the bureaucracy Stalin was not only a powerful leader but also a useful shield: he was the living symbol of the October revolution with which it was possible to camouflage the bureaucratic counter-revolution—a false symbol, to be sure, but still a link.

Now this symbol is dead forever. Bureaucracy lost its last (even though false) historical tie with the revolution. The significance of this fact will become evident only in the future. At present it is possible that Malenkov will begin to shout about "revolution," "socialism" and "building communism" even more than did Stalin. But the umbilical cord is cut off and this child will be fed only by his real and living mother—the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy.

THE GENERALS REMAIN

Malenkov's new cabinet already reflects the true nature of his regime. He assembled new people around himself. The appointment of the puppet Lazar Kaganovich to the vice-premiership reveals Malenkov's fear of being accused of anti-Semitism. The most significant step is, however, the reorganization of the war Ministry.

The elevation of Marshal Zhukov, former tsarist officer and well known anti-Communist, to the post of deputy minister is an evident shift by the new regime to what may be called its right. Zhukov has long been openly considered by the fascist Russian émigrés of the NTS (Solidarist) group as their candidate for military dictator of Russia. Marshal Bulganin, Malenkov's new war minister, was recently suggested by the *Wall Street Journal* for the post of military dictator of Russia, too. This paper said that the U. S. must support and encourage his possible coup d'état. We don't believe that there will be any competition between Wall Street and the NTS, but we also don't believe that their instincts failed them in making their choices, assuring it was only instinct.

The full significance of the change of personalities on the top of the Russian pyramid will become clear in the future. One aspect of this change is, however, clear right now: the new regime necessarily goes to the right, in the above-mentioned sense. In the process of development it will become even more reactionary. This is inevitable because the umbilical cord with October has been cut off forever.

LONDON LETTER

BLP Executive Censures Right-Wingers

By ALLAN VAUGHAN

LONDON, March 3—Last week the National Executive Committee of the Labor Party held one of its longest meetings on record, the outcome of which marked a real concession to the pressure of Bevanism in the party.

The background is the contradictory situation within the Labor movement since Aneurin Bevin's resignation from the Labor cabinet in April 1951—particularly the situation within the Parliamentary Labor Party (the formal name of the party's parliamentary group) and in the Trades Union Congress.

Since Bevin's resignation, the two latter bodies have been unable to reflect the true aspirations of the party's constituency branches and the trade-union branches. It was the Bevanite minority in the Parliamentary Labor Party, some 53 MPs, who were in fact transmitting the views of the majority of the Labor Party membership. The majority of the leadership, led by Attlee and Morrison, was in fact representing only a small fraction of Labor Party support.

The same goes for the seven "Bevanite" members of the General Council of the TUC. This minority is the voice of the active and militant trade-unionists.

ALTERNATIVES

The severe blows inflicted on the right wing by the rank and

class is evidently terrified by the death of its god. Nervous appeals for the "unity of the party and the people," and the swift concentration of power in the hands of ten men with the frankly stated purpose of "preventing any kind of disarray and panic," brilliantly reflect the state of mind of this class. It is afraid of the people.

But bureaucrats vastly exaggerate the situation. Their reaction may be described by a Russian proverb: fear has big eyes.

file of the party at two successive annual conferences of the party only further isolated the bureaucracy of the party and TUC. But this situation cannot last forever. At one point or another the bureaucracy is faced with the alternatives of (1) seeking to crush the Bevanite challenge by organizational means which it has not yet dared to use; or (2) refusing to carry out the decisions of the party conference even if it means leaving the Labor Party; or (3) accepting the decisions of the party, with bad grace, at least in appearance.

The Attlee leadership could not remain indefinitely suspended in mid-air without eventually taking steps toward allying itself with the Tories or else compromising with the left-wing currents within the party.

It is this untenable position which brought about the developments in the recent NEC meeting. Last week the party machine leaders took a couple of painful steps indicated to them by the last party conference at Morecambe.

TWO CENSURES

For the first time, the NEC condemned the *Daily Herald*, official Labor Party organ, for its scurrilous attack on the Bevanites some weeks ago. And it also condemned Sir William Lawther, the right-wing trade-union leader, for his idiotic remarks comparing the Bevanites to the Hitlerites and

Stalinists. At the same time, in partial balance, the Bevanite "brain trusts" were criticized, but they were not banned, as last week's issue of the *Tribune* had feared.

Over the weekend Arthur Deakin, the leading spokesman of the trade-union bureaucracy, had this to say of the NEC statements: "The 'socialist' chiefs last week decided that the *Daily Herald* should be told that articles attacking the Bevanites were not in accord with Labor's appeal for restraint from personal attacks from either side." And: "I suggest that the *Daily Herald* has a definite responsibility to tell our people the facts, to ask for an end to these bickerings in our midst, just as it did in 1931 when it ex-

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ISL FUND DRIVE

Big Gain—but It's Just a Start!

By ALBERT GATES
Fund Drive Director

The third week in the ISL's 1953 Fund Drive has been the best yet. Contributions reached a total of \$1134, making a grand total of \$3537 or 30.7 per cent of the goal of \$11,500. A comparable weekly income for the remainder of the drive will insure the completion of the goal set in the campaign.

St. Louis is the first city to reach 100 per cent of its goal. "It's the old story," writes our good friend S. H., "actions speak louder than words. Let's hope for plenty of action." Many thanks, S. H.!

"General" came in for a large share of the income in the past week too, passing the 50 per cent mark with total contributions of \$605. That is really the national office's part of the drive. The N. O. is almost ready to challenge any branch.

Chicago too came through with a sizable contribution. As a matter of fact, it was second high to General and raised its total to \$565 or 31.3 per cent of its quota. A little more push and it might easily have passed New York, which showed up poorly in this week. New York was poorest of the branches sending in contributions, so that its standing has not altered very much. It was, however, bypassed by other branches.

Although still far down in the standings because of its high quota, the SYL is slowly inching up. It is far behind its record of last year, when it paced the cam-

paign, but we're told that this is only a temporary lull. Chicago leads the SYL with 36 per cent of the quota assigned to it, followed by SYL General with 40 per cent. New York and Berkeley SYL tie with 15 per cent each, while the Los Angeles SYL has yet to be heard from.

This week reduced the zero areas to four. We hope that the

next week will see every assigned quota in the money column. What do you say, Akron, Indiana, Oregon and Seattle?

WARNING! Don't think that one good week guarantees the success of the drive. A glance at the box score will show that we have a long haul ahead. We need at least seven weeks like the past one to make it!

LOS ANGELES

Public Meeting

MAX SHACHTMAN

National Chairman, ISL

will speak on

**Russia Without Stalin—
What's Ahead?**

and

Stalinist Anti-Semitism

SUNDAY at 3 p.m. — March 22

CASE HOTEL, 11th and Broadway (downtown)
Upstairs Auditorium
LOS ANGELES

Fund Drive Box Score

	Quota	Paid	Per Cent
TOTAL	\$11,500	\$3537	30.7
St. Louis	25	25	100
General	1,075	605	56
Pittsburgh	150	67	44.6
Streator	25	10	40
Reading	50	20	40
Cleveland	200	75	37.5
New York	4,000	1291	32.2
Chicago	1,800	565	31.3
Buffalo	650	200	30.7
Philadelphia	250	65	26
Los Angeles	600	141	23.5
SYL	1,250	288	23
Detroit	500	100	20
Oakland	500	75	15
Newark	250	10	4
Akron	50	0	0
Indiana	75	0	0
Oregon	50	0	0
Seattle	200	0	0

THE NEW 'DIRECTORY' IN POWER

Cross-Currents in the Bureaucratic Clique Behind Malenkov

By ABE STEIN

At the congress of the Russian state party last October (the so-called 19th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) an important division of labor was established in the delivery of reports.

Speaking as the party's second secretary, and therefore Stalin's deputy, Malenkov summarized the events of the last 13 years. However, Malenkov was one of a series of top-ranking reporters. Molotov spoke on foreign policy; Beria accounted for the work of the state-security organizations and the nationalities question (!); Bulganin spoke on the party's wartime role and the present tasks of the armed forces—supplemented by Marshal Vasilevsky, then acting minister of war; the report on trade was delivered by Mikoyan, and the new party statutes outlined by Khrushchev. Stalin restricted himself to the rôle of elder statesman, delivering a brief message of welcome to the representatives of the foreign parties.

The distribution of spheres of influence established under Stalin's control at the October party congress has been scrupulously observed in the allotment of posts in the new governing Directory. Malenkov is now chairman of the Council of Ministers and first member of the party presidium; Molotov is minister of foreign affairs; in Beria's hands are now concentrated the entire security apparatus (the MGB, dealing with internal security and intelligence, and the MVD, which runs the slave labor camps, have been fused); Bulganin has assumed his old post as minister of war, with Vasilevsky as his first deputy minister; Mikoyan is minister of internal and external trade, and Khrushchev has apparently taken Malenkov's place as head of Secretariat party work.

The Directory has departed from the organizational pattern laid down at the October congress in only one respect. The large and unwieldy Presidium has been cut down from 26 members and 11 candidates to the approximate working size of the Politburo it replaced—it now consists of 10 members and four candidates.

The reduction of the Presidium to working size refutes those who argued that it would have a purely decorative function, and that the real chain of command from the top down was now being shifted to the state apparatus as against the party machine. The party apparatus remains the instrument of supreme importance.

The Lines of Power

The October party congress smoothed the way for the new Directory in another decisive respect: it legitimized the tremendous concentration of power in the hands of the top party leadership. Under these statutes, the formal rights of party members were virtually nullified; there remained only the duty to obey and to inform on those who didn't.

We have traced the events at the October congress in order to confirm what now seems an obvious fact: the distribution of power within the new Directory was not the product of hasty improvisation at the moment of Stalin's death but was carefully prepared in advance by Stalin himself. Stalin's decisions in these all-important matters must have been known not only to the small circle of Politburo members immediately involved, but to a much wider circle of their supporters and collaborators in the upper levels of the bureaucracy.

The one condition which might have inspired a "palace revolution" by some members of the Kremlin clique at the moment of Stalin's death—uncertainty and confusion as to who was Stalin's heir—was forestalled.

If this reasoning is correct, and all the evidence points in this direction, then one must replace speculation about a personal struggle for power by a more intelligent question: what are the forces that bind the collective leadership of the Directory together at this time? The answer to this question will indicate the degree of cohesiveness of the coalition that is now ruling the Stalinist empire.

A basic problem binds the new ruling group together. As the collective embodiment of the dictatorship, of the state-party machine, it must assert its primacy as against the demands of its individual parts. The bureaucracy which ruled the Stalinist empire is composed of various social groups and within those groups of different layers and sectors. Malenkov, Beria, Molotov and Company must now perform collectively what Stalin did as an individual—serve as the arbiter between the demands of these different social groups for more power and privilege.

This means that for the present, at least, Beria does not represent the claims of the secret police inside the Presidium, but rather the reverse. He is the Kremlin's representative and authority over the security organs.

Bulganin and Kaganovich

Another example is even clearer and more expressive of this fact. Marshal Vasilevsky, minister of war, has been reduced to first deputy minister and his post taken by Marshal Bulganin. But who is Bulganin? He is a "political general," an old member of the Stalinist clique, the former head of the Moscow Soviet, who served as one of Stalin's top agents inside the armed forces during the Second World War. The answer given by Bulganin's history is that he represents the control of the dictatorship over the army.

Kaganovich, who has no official post, has as his general province the supervision of heavy industry, besides performing special assignments in the name of the Presidium. There are many stories of Kaganovich's ruthlessness, not only in demanding impossible results from the heads of industrial trusts, but of his famous expedition as "pacifier" of the Ukraine in 1947. Certainly, Kaganovich does not represent the viewpoint of the industrial managers. His loyalty lies not with any specific group or layer within the bureaucracy but with the expression of

the totalitarian power as a whole, the ruling clique.

The ability of the new ruling group to assert and consolidate its authority must be viewed in the light of certain historical facts. As a group, its essential core was assembled and installed in the leading bodies of the party by Stalin between the 18th Party Congress of 1939 and the Party Conference of February 1941. Over the period of the last 11 years, it has surely learned to work together and allow for a mutual accommodation of differences and weaknesses.

But an even stronger historical tie binds this group together. It personifies the Stalinist counter-revolution that marched to power over the murdered corpses of the old Bolshevik Guard. And one of the indispensable conditions for the victory of the Stalinist clique was the monolithic unity of its ranks and leadership at the moments of greatest crisis; i.e., the famines of the collectivization years, and later, the second half of 1941, when the Hitler armies invaded Russia and inflicted stunning defeats on the Russian forces. The force of this organic habit of the Stalinist clique should not be underestimated.

Factors for Cohesion

Two additional factors add to the cohesiveness of the coalition in the immediate period ahead; the first is internal, the second external.

The absolute concentration of power in Stalin's hands until the very last reduced the present rulers to the status of deputy administrators: none has ruled in his own right, and a certain time must elapse before the stature of each is truly measured both by the other members of the Presidium and the upper layers of the bureaucracy. But overshadowing even this factor is the political and military pressure of the Western bloc led by American imperialism.

A clash for personal power now, which might erupt into the open, before the Directory has had a chance to establish its collective authority, would weaken the position of the new regime not only in relation to the West, but within the framework of its empire and its alliance with the Chinese totalitarian regime.

The crisis always implicit in the transfer of power under a dictatorship—where no legitimate line of descent exists—has been forestalled and resolved for the present by organizational measures. However, not even Stalin can rule from beyond the grave. And the very event that created the crisis—Stalin's death—has created a political problem that the regime must resolve. The new ruling clique must define its relationships to the different bureaucratic groupings and layers, and through them to the masses. More specifically, even dictatorial regimes strive to create some degree of "mass support."

The chief instrument for this task should be the party. Within its ranks the various social layers are fused into one common mass that is subject to the control of the Kremlin clique. This, however, is only one side of the coin. The ranks of the party also represent the bureaucratic "mass base" of the totalitarian regime. Were it simply a matter of terrorizing the party membership into submission, the torture chambers of the MVD-MGB would suffice. In its "heroic" period the Stalinist dictatorship crushed its opponents with the NKVD and rallied its forces with the ideological banner of "building socialism in one country."

However, the new Directory is separated from the lower and middle ranks of the party by a gulf. The party no longer functions as an "ideological" mechanism binding the ranks with the leadership. A brief review of the party's history will show why this affects its future.

The New State Party

In Stalin's climb to power in the late twenties and to autocracy in the early thirties, each stage was invariably marked by the destruction of a different section of the party and its replacement by a new set of inexperienced recruits totally devoted to Stalin, in many cases even fanatically so. But following the bloody purges of 1936-38, Stalin abruptly reversed his course and threw the doors of the party wide open.

In 1939, the party claimed approximately two and a half million members; by the beginning of 1941, it had swelled to almost four million; during the war, membership qualifications were reduced to a minimum, and as a result the party grew to almost five and three-quarter millions. In reality, the numbers recruited must have been much greater, because the loss of life among party members was great. Although the rate of party growth was deliberately slowed down in the post-war period, it continued to grow. At the end of 1952, it stood at almost seven million members.

Needless to say, the new party membership was not drawn from the workers and peasants. Although the Kremlin has stopped issuing figures on the social composition of the party, we do get glimpses of the party's nature today.

Reporting to the party congress last October, Marshal Vasilevsky, then minister of defense, declared that 84.6 per cent of the generals and officers belonged either to the party or the Komsomol. A delegate from the Moscow party organization reported that as a rule engineers and technicians were serving as party secretaries. Nor is the social composition of the party in the national republics any different. A delegate from Azerbaijan declares at the party congress that the "growth of our party organization is based on the membership of functionaries, professionals, leading workers in the kolchozes [again, functionaries] and representatives of the intelligentsia."

People of this type today constitute the majority of the party. They are members not because they believe in the party, its leadership or in "building communism," but because a party card is necessary to a career.

Standing on a slightly higher plane by virtue of their experience and age are the remnants of the Stalinist generation of the late twenties and early thirties. This is the generation that obeyed Stalin's behest to carry out the forced collectivization, that believed that in industrializing the country it was "building socialism." This was the generation that saw unparalleled social perspectives opening up before it. Tens of thousands of these young people were drawn up into the party and state apparatus. They identified the "socialist future" with their own climb to power and success.

Today, this generation is older and wiser. It is a curious fact that has not been too closely marked that the purges of 1936-39 destroyed not only the old Bolshevik Guard but also annihilated a good part of the loyal Stalinist supporters. Those who had gone through the civil war of collectivization, the storms of industrialization and survived the bloody purges now had to endure the horrors of war. And after the war came the painful, exhausting period of reconstruction and again . . . the threat of a new war.

Instead of a relaxation of the dictatorship, even greater repressions. Instead of a rising standard of living, the demand for more sacrifices.

This disillusioned generation neither believes in the old slogans nor the new leaders. Because of its past years of service, this group plays an active and responsible rôle in the middle layers of the party apparatus.

At the October congress which signed the death warrant of the old Stalinized party, 76 per cent of the 1,192 delegates ranged in age from 41 years and up. Without in any sense idealizing the Stalinist generation of the late twenties and early thirties, its historic rôle must be understood. It was a political force that enabled Stalin to carry out collectivization and created the new industries from scratch. This group was an important link between the masses of the people and the régime because it had roots in the lower levels of society and because it believed in what it was doing.

Today this political force is no longer at the disposal of the new Directory which rules in the Kremlin.

Role of the Generals

The political impotence, indifference and disillusionment of the conglomerate party mass is a faithful reflection of the condition of the bureaucracy en masse. The accuracy of the reflection is determined by the numerical proportions between the two groups. The party numbers, almost seven million; the bureaucracy, taken as a whole, numbers somewhere near 15 million.

At every stage in its growth and evolution, Stalin granted the bureaucracy material privileges with one hand and destroyed its political and civil rights with the other. With one hand he raised it to the status of a distinctive caste, with the other he bound it in the totalitarian straitjacket. Today the process is complete and the ranks of the bureaucracy have discovered that the straitjacket prevents them from enjoying their material privileges.

The new Directory has inherited not only Stalin's power, but his program of imperial expansion and consolidation as well. This policy has imposed a double burden on the country: accelerated rearmament and the continued emphasis on the rapid build-up of heavy industry, it demands material sacrifice and an impossible ideological conformity, and worst of all, it has helped create the real danger of another world war by its military and political adventures.

The ferocious ideological campaigns on the "war danger" and "international agents," the denunciations of carelessness and lack of zeal, indicate that a considerable section of the bureaucracy does not accept this program with any degree of enthusiasm. This inertia and passivity constitute a real brake on the future freedom of action of the new ruling clique.

Nevertheless, all the signs indicate that the new Kremlin rulers intend to establish their authority by continuing the "hard line": consolidation of the empire and the rapid build-up of the armed forces. To buttress its strength, the Directory has drawn on prominent military figures to play leading rôles in the new government.

This process began at the last October party congress, when more than 30 top-ranking members of the military hierarchy were elected to the party's central committee as full members or candidates. This was the first sign that Stalin had decided to reverse his post-war policy forcing the popular military leaders of the Second World War into obscurity.

Two recent appointments confirm this line of development. Marshal Sokolovsky has been named chief of staff of the Russian army. Sokolovsky was the Russian military commander who conducted the blockade of Berlin in 1948-49. And Marshal Zhukov, perhaps the most popular military figure in Russia today, the defender of Stalingrad and conqueror of Berlin, has been named second deputy minister of war.

The linking of such names as Zhukov and Sokolovsky with the régime gives it an aura of "popularity" it does not have in its own right. In addition, the support of the military caste, which is the most privileged social group in Russia, provides the régime with a "mass base" in the ranks of the bureaucracy, and through the junior and non-commissioned officers down into the army rank and file.

Does the important rôle which the officer caste is beginning to play make it the candidate for a coup d'état? There is no doubt that Stalin feared such a possibility and acted accordingly right after the Second World War. However, the Berias and Malenkovs would hardly use the services of men about whom they had the slightest suspicion. To speak of a palace revolution by the military now is hardly realistic.

Stalin's Bloody Rise to Power:

By ALBERT GATES

The unwarrantedly peaceful death of Joseph Stalin has unloosed a flood of quickie biography, much of which seems to follow the genteel maxim, "Speak not ill of the dead." But it is more important that we speak the truth—the truth about the man who, from a relatively obscure role among the militants of the Russian Revolution, "rose" to be their executioner and the hangman of the counter-revolution.

In the pre-revolution days of the struggling Bolshevik party, he became known to the party leadership as an indefatigable party worker; who could be relied on in the dark days of tsarist persecution when all revolutionary democratic and socialist groups were periodically driven underground. He was one of the "practicals," a man from the provinces.

He could lay no claim to any significant intellectual achievements. He was without special learning; he was not a writer or a speaker; and this in an organization which contained perhaps the most outstanding group of leaders ever seen in any political party, socialist or otherwise.

There were not only Lenin and Trotsky, two who stood far out in sheer intellectual ability and attainment; not too far behind them was a considerably larger group of remarkably able men with talents in a wide variety of fields, especially social, political and economic theory—outstanding socialist internationalists. We need only mention Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rakovsky, Piatakov, Preobrazhensky, Riazanov, Serghiyakov, Sokolnikov among many others.

In an analytical paragraph of his brilliant biography of Stalin, Trotsky wrote:

"It may be said that all of the historical men of genius, all the creators, all the initiators, said the essence of what they had to say during the first 25 or 30 years of their life. Later came only the development, the deepening and the application. During the first period of Stalin's life we hear nothing but vulgarized reiteration of ready-made formulae."

In all those years of struggle, of seemingly never-ending factional conflicts within the party between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, Stalin continued to remain the unknown, except, as we have said, to the central leadership of the party, more to Lenin than to anyone else. He was one of the many qualified provincial leaders. He had little or no contact with the brilliant exile leadership, and in fact, looked with scorn upon these men who spoke many languages, engaged in theoretical activity and wrote much.

In those early years before the First World War he already nurtured his hatred for intellectuals and intellectual achievement, and developed those attributes of his character which we have come to know as extreme envy, respect for physical power, slyness, abuse, vulgarity and revenge upon opponents.

Before 1917, there were many party workers who like Stalin, were in the secondary leadership, some with greater talent than his, some with less. Their experiences were similar. They functioned in the organizations of the party below the Central Committee; they were often arrested and many times exiled to Siberia. Some es-



LENIN AND TROTSKY

aped, while others were liberated by the First World War. Some left the movement in its darkest days, while others, like Stalin, went through periods of inactivity.

It was while he was in exile that Stalin exhibited that cunning patience for which he became noted in the years when he was reaching out for complete power. All reminiscences of his comrades-in-exile or in jail describe his anti-social behavior, intrigue and isolation from his comrades. He was an envious, resentful and bitter person. As a result most comrades shied away from him and left him in peace.

In 1912, Stalin worked on the editorial board of *Pravda* in Petersburg, at the time when the whole staff was hostile to the policies of the Central Committee, which then resided abroad under Lenin's leadership. The Central Committee sent Yakov Sverdlov, who became the first president of the Soviet Republic, to Petersburg to correct the ambiguity created by an editorial staff in opposition to the Central Committee. Part of that cor-

rection was Stalin's first extended trip abroad. He went to Cracow to see Lenin. The visit coincided with a meeting of the Central Committee in December, 1912, and January, 1913. Stalin remained in the country for two months thereafter and it was while he remained with Lenin that he wrote his *Marxism and the National Question*.

Historians have wondered why the man had never written anything previous to 1913, or subsequently, that compared with this acceptable Marxist work on the national question. The answer would obviously seem to be Lenin's presence, his tutelage and assistance. For this was to be the first and last important literary work by Stalin until he became the general secretary of the party in 1922, or more precisely, until he was part of the triumvirate with Zinoviev and Kamenev in the struggle against Trotsky and the Left Opposition. He then issued his infamous book *Leninism*, a collection of dry-as-dust platitudes and revisions of Marxism and socialism, which became one of the bibles of Stalinism.

Turning Point

Little more is heard of Stalin until after the Russian Revolution, when the Bolsheviks were in power. He was not inactive in the revolutionary days, to be sure, but it was in a subordinate capacity, and mostly, during the civil war. In the Kazan province of the country. Before Lenin arrived in Russia after the March revolution, Stalin was one of the editors of *Pravda* who called for support to the Provisional Government in opposition to party policy. As on other occasions, this "old Bolshevik" found himself in company with the Mensheviks. At the famous April Conference in 1917, at which Lenin proposed a complete revision of the course pursued by the party in Russia, Stalin fell into silence. He was so closely identified with the false policy of *Pravda*, that he preferred to remain anonymous at the conference.

The history of the events of 1917 recorded the activities of all the important figures, bourgeois, Social-Revolutionary, Menshevik and Bolshevik. The great names of the revolution were widely known. But Stalin's name rarely appears. One need only read a list of the men whom Stalin had purged and assassinated to learn who the leaders of the revolution were.

Stalin became commissar of nationalities in the new government. Although it was an important post, his work was undistinguished. Undistinguished? Nay, it was distinguished for the rude Great-Russian policy which emerged from his direction—the Georgian-become-Great-Russian-nationalist. It was necessary to sever his connection with this important field of work.

The great turning point in Stalin's career occurred in 1922, when, ironically enough, he was proposed as the general secretary of the party by Zinoviev, an act which the latter undoubtedly regretted to the very day when a GPU pistol was fired into the base of his skull.

No great importance was attached to the post then. For the most part, it had been primarily an administrative-technical post, important in itself, but completely subordinate to the Political Committee of the party. Then began that subtle, unrelenting drive by this modern Genghis Khan (as Bukharin later called him) to make the post the most powerful one in the party.

Shortly after this appointment, Lenin became gravely ill. As a result of this illness he was unable to function as the active leader of the government and the party. It was in this period that Stalin began to reach out for control of the party. In a Party whose revolutionary élan was high and whose authentic leadership thought in quite other terms than that of inner-party intrigue; it came as a surprise that Stalin had unostentatiously filled hundreds and thousands of posts with the "apparatus men," that large layer of bureaucratic elements to whom the revolution had been the means to "success." They were Stalin's appointees.

The old comradeship, the old system of elective posts, the essential ideological unity of the party, was shaken by the new bureaucratic rule. This rule was accompanied by rudeness, physical assaults upon opponents, and a veritable reign of terror against all protestants.

Lenin's Testament

The adoption of a false, but temporary, measure at the 10th Party Congress in 1920, which barred factions and factional dispute in the party because of the dire threat of the counter-revolution in the midst of civil war and the severe economic hardships that prevailed, became a lever for Stalin's seizure of control of the party apparatus. In the name of unity, and the above-mentioned statute outlawing factions, all opponents were hounded, and driven from their posts and authority. Stalin was creating the monolithic party.

He was aided by both Zinoviev and Kamenev, to their everlasting shame. Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky allied themselves with Stalin. They joined hands to destroy the power and influence of Leon Trotsky.

In his brief recovery in 1923, Lenin became aware of the vast change that had taken place in the organization and in the state apparatus as well. He was greatly alarmed by the rise of the new bureaucracy, by the manner in which Stalin and his host of apparatus men had triumphed over the party and ruled it in the most brazen and cynical manner.

Lenin then dictated his famous "testament" which called for the removal of Stalin from his post as general

secretary of the party. The testament contained two parts, the first dealing with the danger of a split in the party in the conflict which impended between Trotsky and Stalin. He criticized Trotsky, whom he regarded as "the most brilliant and able man in the present Central Committee," for his "too far-reaching self-confidence and a disposition to be too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs."

Of Stalin he said, he "has concentrated an enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution."

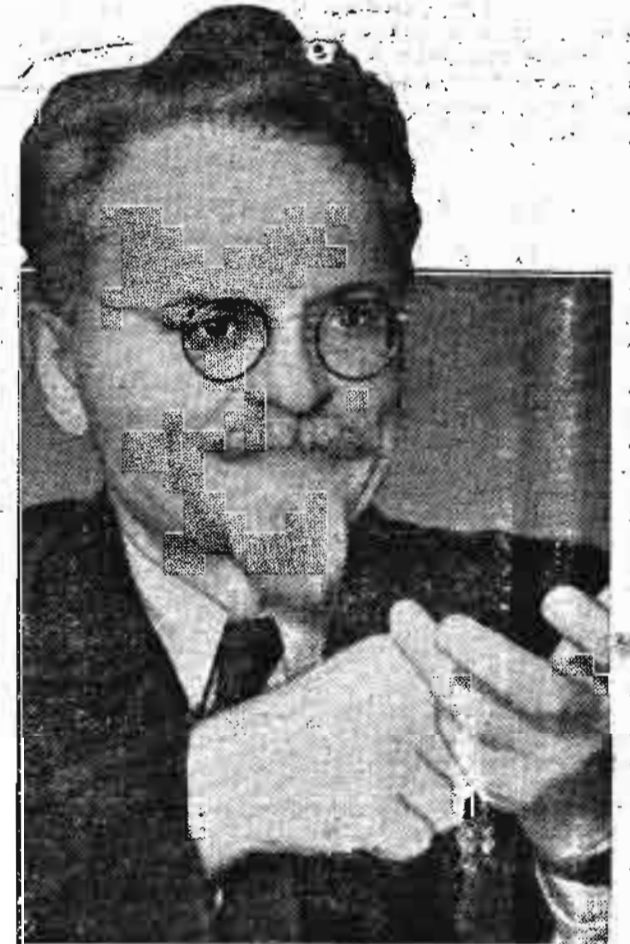
Finally when all his efforts to halt Stalin's stranglehold on the party apparatus had failed, he wrote a postscript to the above testament saying:

"Stalin is too rude, and this fault, entirely supportable in relations among us Communists, becomes insupportable in the office of general secretary. Therefore, I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another who in all respects differs from Stalin only in superiority—namely, more patient, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc."

But it was already too late. With Lenin incapacitated and Trotsky ill, Stalin was able, with the assistance of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky, to dominate the party. The 12th Party Congress was filled with hand-picked delegates.

This was to become the rule. Elections were swiftly becoming a thing of the past. Within a few short years, party congresses would become a grim, bureaucratic joke. Once the most democratic deliberative centers of the Bolshevik Party, they were destined to occur less and less frequently and then to meet purely as a rubberstamp to all decisions taken by Stalin.

When Trotsky published his *Lessons of October* in 1923, all the pretenses of the Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev triumvirate about unity and peace with the party were



LED THE FIGHT AGAINST STALIN

dropped. Then came the great "Struggle Against Trotskyism" in the demagogic name of Lenin and party unity. It ushered in a new kind of inner-party life.

Once the party was the great arena of ideological dispute and factional contention. Free discussions allowed for the development of ideas, the exchange of conflicting viewpoints and the possibility of honest conflict with the prospect of influencing one another in debate. This was now ended. A reign of terror was unleashed in the party, in the trade unions and in the soviets.

The New Order Emerges

The groundwork for Stalin's dictatorship was laid in the years of 1924, 1925 and 1926. The unrelenting drive of Stalin for personal power after the death of Lenin caused a break-up of his alliance with Zinoviev and Kamenev. They belatedly joined forces with Trotsky and the Left Opposition in a bloc aimed at halting Stalin's domination.

It was already too late. Stalin was striking out against the Left, against those forces in the party who called for a vast industrialization of the country, for a collectivization of agriculture, for a genuine internationalist socialist policy abroad.

The struggle produced a reactionary, nationalist assault upon the Left. Stalin introduced his reactionary, nationalist theory of building "socialism in one country."

Story of a Counter-Revolution

and railed against "foreign adventures." The reaction and relapse after the heroic revolutionary days was in his favor. The weary masses remained quiescent in this conflict. The party apparatus, the vast bureaucracy, pushed Stalin forward in its name, for "peace" and for their kind of reconstruction.

In the ensuing struggle, Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had gone into opposition, capitulated; but Trotsky and the Left Opposition continued the fight. This struggle has nothing in common with the present much speculated-about clique fights in the top hierarchy of the Stalinist regime today. Then what was at stake was revolution and counter-revolution, and it was irreconcilable social forces that were at war.

For its principled stand Trotsky's opposition suffered expulsion, arrest, imprisonment, and exile. Later the same fate awaited Stalin's allies of the "Right," Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky. Stalin extended his monolithic control to the Communist International and its Communist Parties, converting these into docile tools of the Russian bureaucracy.

This was the victory of the counter-revolution in Russia. It marked the end of the socialist revolution and the beginning of a new kind of state and society, so imperceptible in those years, but to emerge more clearly in the thirties, the years of the purges.

Those are the years which are still familiar to many. They marked the consolidation of the personal dictatorship of Stalin and the physical destruction of all the remaining figures of the revolution, whether of importance or not. Many of those murdered during the purges, were already completely destroyed politically and morally.

A new generation of bureaucrats had grown up—the Stalinist generation, a generation to whom the revolution was known only through the falsification of history undertaken by Stalin's robot historians. A new regime was constructed out of these elements. It was under this leadership, too, that the purges were completed. It was this leadership which contributed to the Second World War through the Stalin-Hitler Pact. It was this generation that directed the nation through the war and the post-war imperialist expansion. But it did all of this under the direct leadership and tutelage of "Cain" Stalin. From it emerges the regime of the new bureaucracy, the new class of a new society in Russia.

Why Stalin Triumphed

How could it happen that a man like Stalin could triumph over the Bolshevik party and men of greater stature than himself? How could he have triumphed over the Soviet state which marked a tremendous advance of democracy in Russia?

Superficial bourgeois historians and critics, as well as liberal and social-democratic observers, have asserted that the triumph of Stalin and his totalitarian regime were the inevitable result of Bolshevism and its highly centralized and disciplined party; that the Stalinist system describes the real evolution of socialism. Incidental and accidental factors which aided Stalin (the death of Lenin, or Trotsky's failure to fight immediately) are given the weight of decisive historical importance. The arguments of these historians and critics have already been effectively replied to by Marxists, in the first place by Trotsky himself.

Despite his own great error in regarding Stalin's Russia as a "degenerated workers' state," Trotsky wrote at great length against the completely superficial analyses made by these critics, which, he pointed out, was not so much a criticism of the specific nature of Bolshevism or Stalinism but of socialism. The explanation for the rise of Stalinism, said Trotsky, must be sought in the objective situation of society.

Stalin's role in this situation was not unimportant; on the contrary, Trotsky himself has supplied to the world a wealth of detailed analysis and information on the manner in which Stalin's intervention in the course of events determined their concrete development. But for a genuine understanding of the historical forces which pushed Stalin forward as a leading actor in the social drama of our times, it is necessary to seek out the fundamental factors behind that terrible development.

No one decisive factor brought this about, Trotsky wrote. Several very important ones were joined in the confluence of events.

The Russian Revolution occurred in a country of great backwardness—economic and cultural backwardness—in which the political level of the masses was far in advance of the economy or the culture of the nation. This was the startling contradiction of the combined development of a peasant land with an archaic agricultural system, but at the same time with a small, advanced and concentrated industrial system. It happened that the tsarist regime, at one and the same time the weakest and most corrupt in Europe, could not rule with any strength or confidence in the crisis created by the First World War in which it suffered the greatest losses of any country involved.

In the perspectives of the leaders, the Russian Revolution appeared only as the advance post in a revolutionary Europe where working class or socialist power seemed imminent in a number of countries, most notably Germany with its advanced industry, technology and wonderfully organized working class. The curve of the revolutionary wave was, however, extremely uneven. The revolution in Russia was visited by internal counter-revolution and external intervention by the Allied armies, including the American Expeditionary forces.



"MEDIOCRITY, YES—NONENTITY, NO"

Although the new regime successfully withstood these assaults, it came out of the war years greatly weakened. The economy of the country was virtually at a standstill. The sufferings of the peoples were incalculable. The flower of the Russian people had been destroyed in the war and the counter-revolution following 1917. Great weariness gripped the population; it was interested in peace, quiet, order and an end to sacrifice. A conservative reaction had set in.

A similar reaction occurred in Europe too, after the defeat of the German and Hungarian revolution. Fascism, under Mussolini, came to power in Italy. The consolidation of bourgeois society in the West led to the extreme isolation of the revolution, and in a backward country at that. Reconstruction became the watchword in Russia. The internal dispute over industrialization covered up temporarily the great weariness and conservatism which was present.

On the Back of Reaction

In these circumstances, it was possible for Stalin to rise to power, for he stood at the head of the conservative reaction, the personification of the new bureaucracy. Was this, therefore, the inevitable evolution of Bolshevism? To this Trotsky replied:

"Those theoreticians who attempt to prove that the present totalitarian regime of the USSR is due not to such historical conditions, but to the very nature of Bolshevism itself, forget that the Civil War did not proceed from the nature of Bolshevism but rather from the efforts of the Russian and international bourgeoisie to overthrow the Soviet regime. There is no doubt that Stalin, like many others, was molded by the environment and circumstances of the Civil War, along with the entire group that later helped him to establish his personal dictatorship—Ordzhonikidze, Voroshilov, Kaganovich—and a whole layer of workers and peasants raised to the status of commanders and administrators."

It ought also to be remembered that the Bolshevik party had changed considerably in those few years. Five years after the revolution, more than 97 per cent of the party consisted of new members. Another five years, and the membership had only the vaguest recollections of the revolution and the generation which led it.

When Stalin consolidated his power, fully three-fourths of the membership had joined after 1923. This was a new generation of party members; it had no ties with the glorious past of the organization, its traditions, its work and experiences.

"Thus," wrote Trotsky, "Stalin, the empiricist, without formally breaking with the revolutionary tradition, without repudiating Bolshevism, became the most effective betrayer and destroyer of both."

Trotsky recalled that in the spring of 1924, following a plenum of the Central Committee from which he was kept by illness, he told I. N. Smirnov: "Stalin will become the dictator of the USSR." Smirnov replied, "But he is a mediocrity, a colorless nonentity."

The reply Trotsky made to Smirnov in 1924 should be remembered by all for its perspicacity:

"Mediocrity, yes; nonentity, no. The dialectics of history have already hooked him and will raise him up. He is needed by all of them—by the tired radicals, by the bureaucrats, by the Nepmen, the kulaks, the upstarts, the sneaks, by all the worms that are crawling out of the upturned soil of the manured revolution. He knows how to meet them on their own ground, he speaks their language and he knows how to lead them. He has the deserved reputation of an old revolutionist, which makes him invaluable to them as a blinder on the eyes of the country. He has will and daring. He will not hesitate to utilize them and to move them against the party. He has already

started doing this. Right now he is organizing around himself the sneaks of the party, the artful dodgers. Of course, great developments in Europe, in Asia and in our country may intervene and upset all the speculations. But if everything continues to go automatically as it is going now, then Stalin will just as automatically become dictator."

"National-Socialism"

One other point needs to be made about Stalin, his theory and perspectives. We have already referred to the presentation of his single "original" bold idea: Building Socialism in a Single Country. The very idea is in complete contradiction to the beliefs of socialism, which was conceived by its founders as an internationalist, universal system, in contradistinction to an international capitalism made up of antagonistic national entities.

Stalin put forth his theory for the first time in 1924. Prior to that year, it was unheard of in the socialist or Marxist movement. There have been national-socialists before, many of them indeed, but none of them ever advanced or developed the theory promulgated by Stalin.

Actually Stalin had toyed around with the idea of a genuine social order of "national-socialism" before 1924. At a party gathering in the year of the revolution he began a speech containing the essence of the views formulated in 1924. But at that time nobody paid any attention to him whatever, and he retired quietly.

Stalin began his political life in nationally oppressed Georgia. He began, therefore, as a national revolutionary and in the course of his development became attracted to Marxism and socialism. What did the great internationalist doctrines of Marx and Engels mean to the young man living in the deadly isolation of a backward oppressed nation of backward Great-Russian imperialism? It would seem to this writer that the theoretical and political horizon of Stalin, molded as it was in his formative years in backward Georgia, grasped in Marxism and socialism only national liberation and a species of national-socialism. By socialism, he understood the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and perhaps the nationalization of industry and collectivization. It is difficult to say, for in the matter of theory, Stalin was ever the improviser, the borrower. Being an empiricist, he undoubtedly developed his policies as he went along.

Monument in Infamy

But the fact that he was, in essence, an anti-internationalist, a national-Bolshevik with deep-rooted and unshakable prejudices against the great movements of the West, the leaders with a Western education and a high culture, would seem to indicate quite accurately the insularity of the man and how this insularity determined the course he pursued as dictator of Russia.

This is further borne out in the utterly reactionary campaigns he has repeatedly initiated against internationalism, cosmopolitanism, and all things progressive in the fields of culture.

The basis for his power, and the power of world Stalinism, rested, as it still does, on the complete failure of capitalism, in its state of permanent crisis, and the total incapacity of the American bourgeoisie, so backward politically and limited by its narrow bourgeois ideology, to know how to fight Stalinism. Stalin's power, and the power of his movement, rested, as it still does, on the failures of the working-class movements of socialism to turn the tide of social retrogression.

For that is what Stalinism feeds on, the decay and disintegration of world capitalism, the fear of war, the terrible poverty and insecurity of the peoples of the world. Because capitalism is bankrupt in the struggle against Stalinism, the new totalitarianism has been able to grow and expand.

He is the architect of the greatest totalitarian slave state the world has ever known. He is the architect of a new exploitive society, a society based upon collectivized property and ruled by a new bureaucratic class. He is the architect of bureaucratic collectivism, an anti-capitalist, anti-socialist society that has emerged from the chaos of modern capitalism and the defeat and disappearance of a socialist revolution. It is a new kind of society, never before seen in history, a society of modern slavery based upon an immense industrial structure in an atomic age.

This is his "contribution" to history. For this his name will live—but in the blackest pages of infamy.

Leon Trotsky's
"STALIN"
The Definitive Biography

This book is out of print, but we have some
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YOU and SCIENCE

Operation Immortality: The Institute of the Thirty Stalins

By ROBERT E. FRAZIER

One of the fascinating non-political sidelights that comes to mind on the death of Stalin is the gargantuan scientific effort made on his demand to explore ways and means of prolonging man's life. In this case, to a large extent, "man" is truly in the singular, for it was the life of one man, Stalin, which was the crux of the effort. But it also involved large-scale research in geriatrics (the study of old age and its diseases).

It is well known that Stalin had a special dread of death. Constantly, ceremonial greetings to Stalin by Russian sycophants played on this theme: "May you live a thousand years!" said the messages. Papanin, the Russian Arctic explorer, wrote: "You are immortal, our beloved leader! May you live three times as long as you have already lived!" Out of this personal drive Stalin constructed a gigantic scientific project (reportedly, also on the urging of Maxim Gorky) beginning about 13 years ago.

The government appropriated several hundred million rubles. A huge tract of land near Serebryany (a choice suburban spot near Moscow) was set aside for an Institute of Experimental Medicine. Laboratories, clinics and living quarters for a tremendous personnel were built. The massive Academy of Science was moved lock, stock and barrel from Leningrad to Moscow at fabulous cost, together with its leading authorities.

Stalin's then personal physicians, Professors Preobrazhensky and Speransky, were put at the head of the Institute. The famous Ukrainian scientist, A. A. Bogomolets, could not leave Kiev, and so a new institute was built for him and his staff, the Kiev Institute of Experimental Biology and Pathology.

THE GREAT SEARCH

By far the most important result of the research subsidized by the latter institution was the connective-tissue serum developed by Bogomolets.

At Bogomolets' disposal were all the centenarians in Russia. He and his associates located nearly 30,000; and in 1937, in Sukhum, they even found 12 people between the ages of 107 and 138—so remarkably lively that some climbed trees to pick fruits for the scientific visitors. One 107-year-old had tried to pass as a lively youngster of 70 in hope of luring an attractive woman into marriage.

Bogomolets found that the connective tissues of these oldsters were remarkably healthy and fresh, confirming his theory that the connective tissue plays an important part in the body's ability to fight disease and aging.

During the war, the entire battlefront became his clinic. In 1944,

when Bogomolets was given a national award, it was revealed that his serum had been effective in speeding the healing of wounds and the knitting of fractures.

Stalin's medical research workers left no stone unturned. Every type of therapy plus types of research and experimentation available only for an oligarch came into play. One that began in the spring of 1939 was by far the most amazing.

THE 30 STALINS

A group of doctors from the Kiev Institute visited the Caucasus, Stalin's birthplace, pretending to be on a health mission but actually on the lookout for men about 60 years of age. Two hundred so-called patients were sent to Kiev for further searching examination—actually a screening process.

From all this, 30 Georgians were weeded out: they were of Stalin's age, probably had the same blood grouping, the same stock, similar physiques and constitutions, and in some cases even looked like Stalin. They were also men who smoked and drank a great deal like the man they resembled. The Institute of the Thirty Stalins was a sort of weird collection of human guinea pigs on whom the scientists tried their new drugs and experiments.

Eleven of these ersatz Stalins died within the first 3 months and three more conked out before the end of the year. These expendables were replaced by other Georgians, including Jakov Geldhze, a cousin of the dictator and practically his double.

The Thirty Stalins were removed to a sanitarium at Kislovodsk in the Caucasus; they had to rest in bed every day till 2 p.m. and sit at desks from 8 p.m. to midnight, in imitation of the working habits of the Boss. The number of cigarettes he smoked, the drinks he took, his exercises, walks—all were faithfully duplicated by the Thirty, down to his daily car journeys.

As we mentioned, Bogomolets was trying to give special study to a portion of the connective-

tissue system of the body, seeking a tissue serum which would stimulate the basic capacity of an organism to resist disease, including aging, and repair itself. This portion is called the reticulo-endothelial system, and the serum he developed was named "antireticulocytotoxic serum," or ACS for short.

BOGOMOLETS' WORK

The scientist hoped that ACS would partially fulfill the function of energizing the material within the body's cells to regenerate itself biochemically. The protoplasm of the connective-tissue system undergoes a process of aging like other tissues.

It also becomes less finely dispersed and more sluggish. A small dose of toxin for this system apparently stimulates it, perhaps resulting in an electrical discharge of the small particles of the system, promoting activity. Since connective tissues help nourish other tissues, mobilize the body to repair and regenerate itself, and help fight diseases, Bogomolets compared its action to that of a flame lighting up combustible material, which then spreads to become a blazing fire. Actually, it may be more like a spark recharging the cells of a battery and setting in motion electrical currents that keep a complex machine whirring.

Tiny doses of ACS first react on some connective-tissue cells in the spleen and lymph nodes, causing them to produce other stimulants which gradually spread, speeding up activity as they travel.

There were emergency measures taken also. An autojector was never far from Stalin's side during the last three years of his life. The autojector had been invented by the famous scientist Dr. Negovsky; it is a machine devised to take over the critical functions of the heart and lungs and keep the blood circulating in the critical minutes after death.

Stalin's autojector, plus a former assistant of Dr. Negovsky's, was kept handy; it was about the

size of a piano and made to be wheeled about easily. Both the doctor and the machine were kept out of Stalin's sight. It is possible that this machine was kept operating for days during last week. This is to be conjectured from the comparatively lingering nature of his death.

STALIN COULDN'T USE IT

The autojector has been used to revive dead soldiers, in certain cases, before deterioration of the nerve cells took place. Had Stalin's body not featured such extensive degeneration, it is possible that such means might have kept him going until natural forces of regeneration caused a resorption of the clot. There have been records of small cerebral clots being resorbed. Fifteen per cent of all such strokes are cases of cerebral hemorrhage associated with high-blood pressure. This is the type of stroke suffered also by Roosevelt.

Although ACS has shown results in some fields—healing rates of wounds and fractures, protection against some communicable diseases, sometimes prevention of cancer and reduction of pain in inoperable cancer—it was in practice unavailable to the man for whom it was developed. For its stimulating effects on the aged often cause an added strain on the degenerated cardiovascular system. In only a few isolated cases, cited by the late William Málisoff, an American experimenter, and by Dr. Bardach and Dr. Sobieski of the Pasteur Institute in Paris, has it produced some favorable responses as a rejuvenating serum. But even in this respect its results are not predictable.

FINAL IRONY

There is a final ironic note to be mentioned on this whole question of research into the prolongation of life. The investigations of the American, Dr. Raymond Pearl, indicate that centenarians tend to have only one thing in common: they were all contented, easy-going people. This fits in with the experiments being carried out by Dr. Hans Selye of Canada, who indicates that physical and emotional stresses are of great importance in bringing on premature physical degeneration and death. Perhaps Stalin's best bet would have been that of the king in the old myth—he should have looked for the shirt of a happy man.

What we saw last week, non-politically speaking, was the end of one of the largest-scale operations in scientific history: the patient died.

London Letter — —

(Continued from page 2)

posed the defections of the MacDonald element."

The informed reader will recognize the rather shabby device of equating the *Daily Herald's* 1931 attacks on Ramsay MacDonald, who went over to the other side and betrayed the membership of the party, with its attacks on Bevan, who represents the socialist aspirations of the majority of the membership against the right-wingers who head the party machine.

It seems that the trade-union leaders are rather sensitive to criticism even from their friends in the Parliamentary Labor Party and on the NEC. Unfortunately for them, they have to pull their punches when the party rebukes them. They cannot afford to open a struggle against the Labor Party, as its conclusion would never be in doubt. The trade-union rank and file would rally around their party, against the trade-union leaders.

The other victory for the left—partial though it may be—took place at the beginning of this week, when the "Shinwellites" (adherents of the former Labor defense minister) came out for a reduction of the period for National Service (conscription) and also for a cut in armament expenditures, on the grounds that the Commonwealth countries were not giving their "fair" contribution to the all-around Commonwealth effort.

So far, 2,890 million pounds have been spent for armaments, in terms of 1950 prices. And yet the target figure of 3,800 million pounds in September 1950 was raised to the impossible sum of 4,700 million pounds. Even at the end of 1953 it is now realized "only" 4,180 million pounds will have been spent for the arms program.

RIGHT WING'S POLICY

The physical impossibility of reaching the target figures, as well as the general lag of the Commonwealth and European expenditures and effort, has forced the Parliamentary Labor leadership to think twice about supporting Tory policy in this field. If the party decides to divide the House of Commons on this issue—this we will know at the end of the week—a Bevanite victory will have been assured. To this extent, the Labor Party leadership will have become "Bevanite" despite itself, as we predicted some time ago.

The Labor Party right-wing leadership clearly does not want to take the road of "National Laborism" à la MacDonald, at least at this time. They know they have no future along that way.

National-Laborism has reared its ugly head on many occasions in Labor history. It is a tendency within the Labor movement which is strongest in periods of backwash, defeat or confusion in the workers' movement. In 1918, for instance, when all the anti-war Labor candidates were defeated, 60 pro-war Labor MPs were elected and 15 Coalition Labor MPs. In 1922, 14 of these ersatz Labor MPs went down in defeat before official Labor. In 1931, 13 National Labor MPs were elected, and 46 Labor MPs. By 1935, the Labor bloc had gone up to 164, the National Labor bloc had gone down to 8. Since that time, the right wing has preferred to work within the party.

Crowded out

of this issue, which is specially given over to a discussion of Stalin's death, were virtually all our regular features and articles. The article on "Sidney Hook, Logic and Joe McCarthy," begun last week with a first installment, will be continued in the next issue.

N. Y. ISL BRANCH FORUMS

WEDNESDAY

March 18

Sidney Hook
on the
Smith Act

THURSDAY

March 19

Samuel Lubell's book
'The Future of American
Politics'

Forums at 8:30 p.m. at

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LABOR ACTION

Independent Socialist Weekly

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Inside Russia: the Ruling Class Girds — —

(Continued from page 1)

speculate in terms of a clash between the bureaucracies of the army, the secret police, the party, the industrial managers, etc., as if these were all coordinate and autonomous forces capable of maneuvering separately for group power. It would be equally one-sided to deny that all of the above is involved indeed.

But these considerations are overshadowed by another, which cannot be understood merely by analogy with Tammany, Tom Dewey's apparatus in Albany, Crump, Arvey or Boss Hague. The Stalinist state bureaucracy is not a blown-up counterpart of any other bureaucracy in the world; the Stalinist state party is not a party like any other in the world. They exist in a different social system and have a different dynamic.

Under capitalism, governmental bureaucracies are servants of the ruling class and they take care of one function of the ruling class, the political forms of its rule, while the main business of the dominant class takes place outside the governmental framework, which assures the foundations of its power by its control over the economic life of the nation.

The bureaucracy of the Stalinist system, which Malenkov now heads, is not the servant of the ruling class. It is the ruling class. This difference has enormous consequences on the political dynamics of the system.

The Stalinist bureaucracy does not take care of one function of the ruling class. It is responsible for every aspect of every function of the whole system, all concentrated in its hands.

Under capitalism, a fierce squabble among rival bureaucratic cliques takes place in one sector of the system, and not at the heart where the centers of social power pulsate; for this heart lies in the capitalist class's control of the means of production and distribution. In capitalist politics, bureaucratic rivals can tear each other to pieces in frenzy, with all grades of disturbing effect on the life of the state as a whole but without necessarily putting the entire class state in jeopardy.

Under the Stalinist system, such a fight means class suicide, nothing more or less.

It is not unthinkable, of course; in the end, the Stalinist system of bureaucratic-collectivist exploitation and terror will founder and die to the accompaniment of just such wracking struggles tearing the regime apart from within as the people tear it apart from without, bureaucrat by bureaucrat. But that will be the end of the story and not the chapter to be looked for tomorrow.

Building Up for a Letdown

In blithely speculating about this possibility in the immediate future, the speculators do not understand the kind of bureaucracy they are discussing. Tomorrow, when they do not see Beria slitting Malenkov's throat in public, they will marvel in chagrin at the dictator's "success" in stabilizing himself in the face of the anticipated sea of troubles, exclaim over the "stability" of the Stalinist system; heap the reluctant admiration of uncomprehending enemies on Malenkov's "great ability," help to build up the myths about him which they (as much as Stalin's sycophants) built up about Stalin's ability and even "genius," and finally once more decide that nothing can be expected from within the dictatorship and that all reliance must be put on A-bomb brandishing or negotiated deals with the "unshakable" tyrant who magically overcomes all internal instability.

As we are writing, the "expert" analyst of the N. Y. Post—by no means the least sophisticated paper we could mention—finds proofs of an internal split in the words spoken by Malenkov, Beria and Molotov over Stalin's corpse. He parses each sentence, counts words, compares phrases, finds "differences," and asks "Is the Red Power Struggle Already On?" This is on the day of Stalin's funeral! The Big Three are already arguing in public! Next week maybe Beria's GPU troops will be maneuvering in Red Square against a phalanx of Malenkov's party secretaries, and it remains only to speculate whether Bulganin's elite corps will side with one or utilize the occasion to seize the telephone exchanges and the dossier files in the Kremlin.

This is an exaggerated case, to be sure, but what it exaggerates is a common misunderstanding.

This is not to deny that struggles for power among the bureaucratic leaders are inevitable! Throats will be slit, heads will roll, there will be other funerals, names now high will sink to oblivion and new bonds will crunch old faces . . . just as all of this has gone on up to now, and intensified . . . but the kind of mortally disruptive struggle which the Western press writes about hopefully is not to be lightly predicted, because it is virtually equivalent to predicting the imminent death throes of the regime. Such a fatal spasm will be a symptom of coming revolutionary overthrow, not its initiating cause. To raise other hopes in the immediate sense is not only to kid oneself but to lay the groundwork for irrational pessimism and exaggerated respect for the stability of the Stalinist system later, a stability which it does not possess.

The Role the "Party" Plays

The nature of this bureaucratic-collectivist social system of Stalinist Russia also conditions another course of wide speculation. This concerns the role of different sections of the bureaucracy.

In this intra-bureaucratic struggle which is looked for, a common expectation is that primarily involved will be a struggle of interests among different bureaucratic machines. There is the party machine, the army machine, the secret-police machine, the industrial managers, the bureaucracies of the separate republics, etc. Will the army take over? Will the industrial managers take over? and so on.

Here again, this line of thought is not pointless, but

it does ignore another fundamental feature of the system. The hallmark of this mistake is the coordinate listing of the party bureaucracy alongside the others, as one among them.

But the ruling party of the Stalinist state is not a party like any other previously known. In fact, it is a "party" only in quotation marks. It plays a rôle peculiar to the society in which it exists. The Bolshevik party was long ago completely destroyed by Stalin. What exists today is not some distorted form of that party; not even a Stalinist caricature of it; it is an entirely different organism not merely in program, personnel and methods—it is an entirely different type of organization.

Under capitalism it is natural to look upon the political parties of the ruling class as representing one organized interest within the system alongside (say) the army caste or the capitalists themselves. Especially under democratic forms of capitalism there are likely to be many autonomously organized or unorganized interest groups even within the sphere of interests of the ruling class. In political affairs the government mediates among them to soften and solve conflicts among such different sectors or agencies of the ruling class—acting as that class's executive committee.

But, under capitalism, it is not the government which basically integrates these conflicting interest sectors into a functioning system. It is not the government which regulates the smooth functioning of the system as a whole, at bottom. Capitalism is distinctive especially because of the fact that the most vital aspects of social life, which depend on the economic setup, are regulated basically by blindly operating forces—the "blind" operation of the capitalist market and its profit motive. An army caste may "take over the government" but—however important the changes this entails—this by no means necessarily upsets the equilibrium of the capitalist system (such a step may be beneficial to the capitalist interests). The society is held together not by the intervention of the government, however important government intervention may become to overcome painful defects of the system; the society is still fundamentally held together by the capitalists' control over economic life.

There is no such "cement" in the Stalinist system. The function of the market as the regulator of economic life, the basis of all life, is destroyed with the destruction of capitalism. The Stalinist system requires a different "cement," something else which plays that function.

It is not enough to say simply that this function, in the Stalinist system, is performed by the bureaucracy. As we have seen, here too there are different sectors of the bureaucratic ruling class, as there are different sectors of the capitalist ruling class. Here too conflicts of interest can arise among these different sectors. And what is there to dominate these conflicts in the interests of the system, that is, to impose the interests of the ruling exploiting class as a whole over all?

Where, under capitalism, this is done in the last analysis by the "blind" operation of the capitalist economy, which imposes its will by setting limits to the free-wheeling whims of any "irresponsibles," under Stalinism this function can only be performed by a conscious organism. It is the distinctive rôle of the Stalinist state "party."

Struggle in the Bureaucracy?

It is misleading, for example, to counterpose the "army bureaucracy" to the party bureaucracy. One of the most important parts of the party bureaucracy is that section of it which exists to control the army. It is misleading to counterpose the "industrial managers" to the party bureaucracy for the same reason. The "party" is precisely that organism which exists to control all of these sectors of the bureaucracy from a single set of levers. (The rôle of this party does not stop with the task of control of the bureaucracy alone, but we can stop at this point here.)

What this spells out, from one point of view, is simply the meaning of totalitarianism in its state-structural aspects. But what follows is that at least half of the current speculation about coming bureaucratic struggles is talk up a spout.

"Unity of the party" in the mouths of Malenkov, Beria, Bulganin & Co. today is not the same sort of talk that one heard after the GOP convention between the Taftites and the Eisenhower supporters! The words are the same, but the thought is too deceptively familiar. These jittery bureaucrats are talking about something else: the life and death of their system of exploitation.

The army, the secret police, the industrial managers, the kolkhoz bureaucracy, the bureaucrats of the republics—these are the limbs of the ruling class. The force which moves them is the skeleton within, the "party"—which-is-not-a-party.

The successor to Stalin could only be one who controlled the party. This is as sure and certain as it is sure and certain that, in a Latin American military dictatorship, the successor to the dictator within the same framework can only be one who controls the army.

This is not a hindsight way of "proving," after the fact, that the accession of the man Malenkov was inevitable. That does not follow. What does follow is that (say) Beria could have seized the reins only if he had been in a position to seize the reins of the party machinery first.

But this is not the way this matter is widely discussed. It is often put as if Beria (to use the same example) might have been able to make the grade by pitting his "control" over the secret police against Malenkov's control of the party; or as if one of the army generals might have been able to pull a coup by pitting the army against Malenkov's party dominance. This is thinking in terms of capitalist norms.

By the same token, it is likewise still a question of

intra-bureaucratic struggle whether Malenkov can be unseated by a rival; nothing excludes that possibility. But if this will take place, it will not be through some dramatic coup; it will be a process of infiltration to undermine Malenkov's control of the apparatus, if that is possible for anyone.

But while Malenkov's victory was not inevitable, it has been quite obvious to all that his rôle in the bureaucracy under Stalin was what gave him the inside track.

Malenkov comes to power as the very incarnation of the Russian ruling class, the bureaucracy. Rarely in history has there been so close to a one-to-one correspondence between a class and its chosen leader. It is as if history had become a cartoonist.

The Neo-Stalinist Bureaucrat

We are not referring merely or primarily to his personal characteristics, which would do credit to Ar Young's stereotype of the bloated exploiter. Within this bureaucratic machine which sits on top of the Russian pyramid and apart from the people, a man emerges to the very summit who is virtually unknown to the people; who has made his way as a cog in the apparatus and through the cogs in the apparatus.

There can be doubt cast on the current journalistic stereotype of Malenkov as the "machine-like" man with the "card-index" mind. The man may have more ability than that would indicate. But it is the ability of the bureaucratic manipulator, "machine-like" or no.

This is a man, moreover, who is the first child of the Stalinist system to take over. He has no real ties with the revolution which still permitted Stalin to cover his crimes with its tradition. He will no doubt continue to manipulate the phrases of "socialism," which are the contemporary Russian code-words for the contemporary Russian reality, but they do not mean to him what they mean to the Russian people, what they mean even to Western Stalinists in their own fashion—not even what they meant to Stalin, who was not himself a product of Stalinism.

The difference we have in mind was given with great insight by Arthur Koestler in *Darkness at Noon* in his portrait of the jailer Gletkin, the new Neanderthal man of the Stalinist era who succeeded the Stalinized "Old Bolshevik" as head of the prison. The latter was a Stalinist too, yes, who rationalized the Stalinist horror as the "historically necessary" path to socialism. Gletkin needed no rationalization. The Stalinist society in which he developed and which formed him was not a path, it was his world.

Writers have been referring to this type as the "new Soviet man." This is false to the core. The type is that of the new Stalinist bureaucrat. Malenkov-Gletkin is the image of this type.

This is important in connection with the fact that the Stalinist bureaucratic system, as it has developed up to now, can by no means be considered as a "finished" phenomenon. Many of the problems about the nature of this system (as we have pointed out in the course of an ISL resolution) exist because the system itself has not yet entirely answered them. It is a society which is still in the process of becoming. And the coming to power of the new Stalinist-born cadres, with no roots whatsoever in the past, will push it in the direction of further developing its own distinctive physiognomy, with less of the excess baggage that was inherited from Stalin's task of distorting the tradition of the revolution into new social channels.

Edge of the Knife

This is in the longer run, as long as the Moscow tyranny has a longer run. In the immediate future, it is quite likely that the new hands at the helm of power will seek to identify themselves all the more closely with the old formulas; just as, in the same immediate future, it is not at all unlikely that the new set of masters may prefer to ease up on purges and terrorism for a while, as long as their problem is still consolidation.

In the longer run, too, the present forces of cohesion among the top rulers, which will tend to overcome personal and clique antagonisms in the interests of self-preservation, will also not be stable. The line of development points to an ever greater separation of the summits of the bureaucracy from both the masses of people below and even from the lower layers of the bureaucracy itself. The consequences in the train of the death of Stalin only reinforce the trends of this kind which the last party congress had to take up, under the slogan of "Closer ties with the people!" The new Malenkov regime (whether or not Malenkov himself ever succeeds in gathering in all of the reins of Stalin's personal power, or whether he has to share it as simply the No. 1 man in a Directory) has only its bureaucratic levers and machinery in its task of consolidation; it has nothing of the distorted "idealism" of the generation which helped Stalin put through his counter-revolution and build the new totalitarian society as its bridge to "socialism in one country."

The very factors which push the new men to close their ranks today, and to warn against "disarray and panic," because it is a question of life and death for them, because they sit on an inactive but live volcano and know it—these very factors underline the knife-edge instability of the regime.

The very fact, which we have emphasized, that the integration of this society can be accomplished only by a conscious organism, dependant on the inner unity of a totalitarian bureaucratic machine, underlines the consequences of any real break in this mechanism. The mere fact of Stalin's death does not yet by itself constitute such a break. But the fear of "disarray and panic" which it was enough to produce does speak in thunderous tones of the disintegrative potentialities which exist in this monstrous system of terroristic exploitation.

Outside Russia: The U.S. Talks — —

(Continued from page 1)

were in power or in opposition, as servants of the Russian ruling class.

The defection of the Tito bureaucracy in Yugoslavia, however, taught the Russian bureaucracy two very important lessons. First, it indicated to them the power of the nationalist centrifugal drive in Stalinist countries. From this they drew the conclusions which have led to the repeated purges of the bureaucracies of every East European satellite, and the installation of completely trustworthy representatives of the Russian power in all these countries.

And secondly, they learned that when dealing with countries where the Stalinist movement has won and consolidated its own power independently of the Russians they cannot take the same approach as with the satellites.

This has major importance with regard to China. Here their attitude cannot be one of simply exploiting and manipulating the economy and government in their own interests. The Chinese Stalinists must be treated more nearly as partners, and must be bound to Russia by a careful cultivation of the common interests and objectives of the two bureaucracies. Russia must seek to maintain her pre-eminent position with regard to China on the basis of her industrial and military might.

IN THE SATELLITES

The death of Stalin changes nothing in this picture. The Gleichhaltung of the satellite governments and bureaucracies will continue. Every means will be used to crush elements who might aspire to an independent role. And in the case of China, a combination of the mutual interests and the external pressures on the Stalinist empire can be counted on to prevent any serious rift from developing. All sections of the Russian bureaucracy are united in the pursuit of these objectives. To count on anything else is to postulate the most extreme irresponsibility verging on insanity of one or another stratum of the Russian ruling class.

This does not mean, of course, that the solidity of the Stalinist empire is assured for all time. The desire of the various bureaucracies to gain some degree of independence as against their Russian masters will remain a constant factor, the importance of which will grow or wane with the fortunes and political strategies of the Russian rulers. The other factor which can affect the solidity of the empire is the dissatisfaction of the peoples who groan under the yoke of Stalinism and

the double yoke of national oppression in the non-Russian reaches of the empire.

Any political offensive against Stalinism, to be successful, would have to direct itself to these peoples. Stalin's death could offer an opening to such an offensive to the extent that it intrudes an element of uncertainty into the structure of the Russian bureaucracy, and removes a symbol of the unity and power of Stalinism around which the world Stalinist movement has sought to rally the loyalty and sympathy of their followers.

But the American government is totally incapable of seizing whatever advantage Stalin's death may offer. The political content of American foreign policy is to offer the peoples, not freedom and democracy, but a restoration of the capitalist regimes which were ousted by Stalinism. The emphasis of American foreign policy, now stronger under Dulles and Eisenhower than ever before, is to apply a maximum of economic and military pressure to the Stalinist empire in the hope that this will be an adequate substitute for a politically attractive policy.

U. S. REACTION

One of the major reactions of the American government to Stalin's death was one of worry. The papers have been full of official leaks from high government sources to the effect that after all, Stalin was one of the more "moderate" of the Russian rulers, and that in any event, years of experience with him had taught American policy makers what they could expect. With new personalities coming to the top in Russia, things might be even worse. Although there was no stability in the cold war under Stalin, at least the lines of conflict under which it would be played out were pretty well set. Under Malenkov and the rest, who can tell.

This is the characteristic reaction of a ruling class which is seeking not to revolutionize the world (freedom and democracy for all peoples), but to keep the world from changing.

LABOR ACTION has often commented on the fatal inclination of the American government to seek to bolster existing ruling classes everywhere in the world against any internal or external change. Even where Stalinism has not been a factor, the architects of American foreign policy have invariably taken the side of the existing rulers, i.e., of stability, of "law and order," no matter how despotic and reactionary the "order," in the social struggles

which have swayed or rocked one country after another in the non-Stalinist world.

Hence the element of uncertainty raised by Stalin's death is more frightening than reassuring to many government leaders and publicists. If the new rulers of Stalinism should fall out among themselves, or should unite on some new method of keeping the capitalist world in turmoil, who can tell what the consequences would be? To the political representatives of the only really stable and powerful capitalist class in the world, stability, a situation in which everything is "under control," is as blissful a vision as can be imagined in this hard and difficult world.

STRANGLER VOICE

This is particularly true when the more intelligent among them realize that due to internal circumstances in this country they are least able, at this particular moment, to launch any kind of ideological offensive against Stalinism as such, or against the Russian domination of the Stalinist world.

At the moment of Stalin's death, when his crimes and those of his successors could be contrasted most strikingly to the ideals of freedom and equality which animated the Russian revolution and which have inspired masses of people who helped or willingly acquiesced in the establishment of Stalinist rule in Eastern Europe and China, the Voice of America—a feeble voice even before—is being purged and demoralized by McCarthy.

Under the blows of the most know-nothing section of the Republican Party, all divisions of the American propaganda machine are strapped into the strait-jacket of counterposing to the crimes of Stalinism only the glories of "Americanism," which to them means American chauvinism.

PURGE HERE

The bureaucrats and peoples of the Stalinist empire, to whom the possibility of a new sweeping purge is now a very real nightmare, are treated to the spectacle of a purge going on in this country. It is not the same thing, that is true. But especially as reflected through the Stalinist propaganda machine, it does not look too dissimilar. At least two men have committed suicide under its threat, and others are now standing up in open hearings, repudiating their former ideas in self-abasing terms, and groveling before the inquisitors. Throughout the width and breadth of American political and cultural life fear and its companions of conservatism and conformity are getting the upper hand.

What could America do to take advantage of the uncertainty in Stalinland which follows the death of the chief tyrant? This government, with its social base and consequent political approach, knows of nothing to do except to

build up its military forces and apply the kind of external pressure on Stalinism which tends to consolidate it rather than disintegrate it.

But there are forces in American society which could take advantage of the situation. The prerequisite for their doing so is to separate themselves politically and ideologically from their alliance with the American ruling class and its parties.

HOW TO BEGIN

The potentiality was shown by Walter Reuther, president of the CIO, when he recently proposed three measures by which America could take the political initiative. These were the passage of a fair employment practices law with real teeth in it; repeal of the McCarran Act with its discriminatory provisions against foreigners and the foreign-born; and "aggressive action to stop the growing campaign of fear, hatred and hysteria that under the guise of defending freedom in the world would strangle freedom in America."

These would be the kind of domestic measures which could lay the base in actions for support of the struggle for freedom and democracy of the oppressed peoples of the world on both sides of the Iron Curtain. It would only be a beginning. But such a truly democratic offensive will not and cannot be accomplished by any American government which is controlled by the two existing capitalist parties. And Reuther fails to call for the organization of a new party which could take "aggressive action" against the witchhunt and in the interest of the people. Yet it is along such lines that the beginnings must be made not only for the purpose of changing the relation of forces in America, but for the purpose of changing them throughout the world.

The death of Stalin introduces an element of uncertainty in the cold war, as it does in the structure of Russia's ruling class. At best, we can delimit the area within which the uncertainty is likely to have effective impact. But nothing reveals the helplessness of the American government to deal politically with the Stalinist world more clearly than the emerging idea that, after all, Stalin was a source of "moderation" and "stability" in the world struggle.

The ISL Program In Brief

The Independent Socialist League stands for socialist democracy and against the two systems of exploitation which now divide the world: capitalism and Stalinism.

Capitalism cannot be reformed or liberalized, by any Fair Deal or other deal, so as to give the people freedom, abundance, security or peace. It must be abolished and replaced by a new social system, in which the people own and control the basic sectors of the economy, democratically controlling their own economic and political destinies.

Stalinism, in Russia and wherever it holds power, is a brutal totalitarianism—a new form of exploitation. Its agents in every country, the Communist Parties, are unrelenting enemies of socialism and have nothing in common with socialism—which cannot exist without effective democratic control by the people.

These two camps of capitalism and Stalinism are today at each other's throats in a worldwide imperialist rivalry for domination. This struggle can only lead to the most frightful war in history so long as the people leave the capitalist and Stalinist rulers in power. Independent Socialism stands for building and strengthening the Third Camp of the people against both war blocs.

The ISL, as a Marxist movement, looks to the working class and its ever-present struggle as the basic progressive force in society. The ISL is organized to spread the ideas of socialism in the labor movement and among all other sections of the people.

At the same time, Independent Socialists participate actively in every struggle to better the people's lot now—such as the fight for higher living standards, against Jim Crow and anti-Semitism, in defense of civil liberties and the trade-union movement. We seek to join together with all other militants in the labor movement as a left force working for the formation of an independent labor party and other progressive policies.

The fight for democracy and the fight for socialism are inseparable. There can be no lasting and genuine democracy without socialism, and there can be no socialism without democracy. To enroll under this banner, join the Independent Socialist League!

This Is Not 1924

The American press has been full of articles which attempt to draw analogies for the present situation in Russia from the struggle for power which followed Lenin's death in 1924.

The misleading results which are achieved on this basis serve as an illustration of the dangers involved in attempting to interpret history by analogy. In this particular case, the source of the error lies in the failure of the "analysts" to understand that the class relations involved in the two cases are entirely different.

When Lenin died, the new bureaucracy in Russia was in the process of consolidating itself and becoming the ruling class of the country. It was opposed by the representatives of the workers' power which had been established in the October revolution of 1917. The former had to overcome and smash the democratic tradition established by that revolution, though this tradition had already been deeply impaired during the civil war and the difficult years which followed.

The struggle for power which started in 1923, and lasted until the last of the old Bolshevik lead-

ers had been murdered in the late 1930s, was a distorted but yet a very real CLASS struggle. In its course, the new bureaucratic ruling class was able to destroy all vestiges of the democratic and socialist organizations and institutions of the working class which had been created during and before the revolution, and to replace them with the monolithic structure of their own totalitarian role.

The present situation bears no semblance to that one. All the present aspirants for the top positions of power belong to and represent the bureaucratic-collectivist ruling class. They are completely united in opposing any democracy for the workers and the mass of the population, since their position as a class can only be preserved through autocratic rule. Though this does not exclude palace intrigues and clique struggles among the bureaucrats, it places such conflicts on a completely different plane. An analogy with the earlier struggle would only become meaningful if such clique fights were to so demoralize the whole ruling class as to permit the masses to pour through the cracks in their power and challenge their rule.

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