

The Indictment Of Stalin

by V. B. Karnik

THE truth about Stalin and his regime, that Khrushchev revealed in his speech at a secret session of the twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was not unknown to serious and disinterested students of communism and Soviet affairs. A number of books, treatises and articles have appeared during the last two decades giving first hand accounts of the terror and brutal violence that raged under Stalin. Communists and fellow-travellers, however, denounced these publications as capitalist and anti-Soviet propaganda. In other circles also there was a tendency to disregard and disbelieve them. But Khrushchev has outwitted all these friends and admirers and dupes of Stalin. His speech has revealed that all the charges that had been made during the last twenty years against Stalin and his regime were more than true. He has in fact added a few more details to the sordid story of Stalin's crimes and made it all the more shocking and reprehensible. There can be no dispute now about the real character of that vicious tyrant and of the rule that he imposed upon the Russian people.

Stalin, who for over twenty years was hailed throughout the communist world as a sort of a demi-god, a king of kings, is revealed after Khrushchev's disclosures as one of the most revolting figures of history. According to Khrushchev, Stalin was a cruel and mean despot who sent hundreds of innocent persons, including his close associates, to the gallows and to prisons and concentration camps. He was suspicious of all. He saw everywhere and in everything "enemies," "two-facers" and "spies". He was responsible for securing confessions through inhuman tortures. He used to fabricate evidence to secure convictions. He killed over seventy per cent of the elected members of the Central Committee of the party within a year of their election. He liqui-

dated whole ethnic groups like those of the Chechens and the Ingushes. He was thinking of another blood-bath just before his death. He concentrated all power in his own hands and did not allow party committees and other organs to function. He falsified party history in order to glorify his own role and work. Khrushchev has also torn to shreds the legend about the military genius of Stalin. He blames Stalin for the lack of preparations when Hitler attacked Russia. Warnings had been given to him of the impending attack, but out of foolishness and lack of foresight he

ON THE SUBJECT OF FISTS

BY

DIMITRI MANUILSKY

in the *Lenin School of Political Warfare*, 1931.

War to the hilt between Communism and Capitalism is inevitable. Today, of course, we are not strong enough to attack. Our time will come in twenty or thirty years. The bourgeoisie will have to be put to sleep, so we will begin by launching the most spectacular peace movement on record. There will be electrifying overtones and unheard-of concessions. The capitalist countries, stupid and decadent, will rejoice to cooperate in their own destruction. They will leap at another chance to be friends. As soon as their guard is down we shall smash them with our clenched fist.

ignored them. Khrushchev holds him responsible for the judicial murders of Marshal Tukachevsky and other leading officers of the Army. During the war Stalin played no role in the direction of operations. He merely appropriated to himself the victories won by the military leaders and other organisers. He was responsible for the break with Tito and had boasted, Khrushchev tells, "I will shake my little finger and there will be no more Tito." Marshal Tito, the leader of Yugoslavia, is still alive and kicking, while Stalin lies in the mud kicked and spat upon by his close associates.

To the communists and fellow-travellers these revelations made by Khrushchev came as a bolt from the

blue. He cruelly destroyed by his speech the God that they had worshipped for over twenty years. The God was stripped of his mantle of benevolence and omniscience and exposed before the eyes of the world as a mean and capricious tyrant who played havoc with the life and wellbeing of millions of Russians. It was indeed a cruel blow and it is yet to be seen how the international communist movement will survive it.

The communists have made no secret of the confusion and bewilderment that the Khrushchev speech has caused in their ranks. Senor Togliatti, the leader of the Italian Communist Party, has stated in his well-known interview: "The criticisms of Stalin made at the Twentieth Congress, coming for the most part unexpectedly, certainly hit the leadership of the Communist Movement and also to a lesser extent, the masses behind it... among them there was not only surprise. There was also sorrow, and here and there bewilderment." The resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India also states that "the facts mentioned in the report have come as a great shock to communists and to millions of progressive people all over the world." It also speaks of the bewilderment caused amongst the masses.

The method that Khrushchev and other leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union chose for making the revelations is significant. They did not give any previous intimation of the facts that they were going to make public to the leaders of the communist parties of other countries. Even after the report was made no copies were made available to the leaders of the so-called fraternal parties. They and the communists in general had to turn to what they call "enemy sources" for the speech as it was made. Even now no authoritative version of the speech is published. This shows the scant respect that the Soviet rulers pay to the communist parties of other countries. They are merely regarded as tools and it is taken for granted that whatever is propounded in Moscow will be ultimately accepted.

Communist parties of various countries have not disappointed this expectation of Moscow. Initially, there was a lot of dissent and some plain speaking. The Italian communist leader, Palmiro Togliatti led the way. The British, the French and the American communist parties followed. It became necessary for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to get together a meeting of its Central Committee. The Committee met and adopted a decree giving some sort of an explanation about the rise and growth of Stalin's tyranny. The publication of the decree has stilled the dissent. All communist parties have dutifully accepted the explanation and ranged themselves behind their new leaders. The discipline that was shaken for some time has been re-established. But one cannot be sure that the faith has returned. The faith that is once shaken cannot be reestablished so soon and in the same measure.

This is very clear from the reactions of some of the fellow-travelling writers and thinkers. The most explicit has been the reaction of the American novelist,

Howard Fast. In his article in *New York Daily Worker*, Fast writes about the Khrushchev report: "It is a strange and awful document, perhaps without parallel in history; and one must face the fact that it itemises a record of barbarism and paranoic blood-lust that will be a lasting and shameful memory to civilized man." Expecting "that the document itself would be a warning of the monstrous dangers inherent in secret and dictatorial government", he writes: "I, for one, looked hopefully but vainly at the end of the document for a pledge that the last execution has taken place on the Soviet soil. I looked for a pledge of civil rights, for the sacred right of habeas corpus, of public appeal to higher courts, of final judgment by one's peers rather than by professional judges." But his expectation was not fulfilled. He writes with deep sorrow: "Instead, I learned that three more executions have been announced from the Soviet Union, and my stomach turned over with the blood-letting, with the madness of vengeance and counter-vengeance, of suspicion and counter-suspicion." Announcing himself a friend as well as a severe and implacable critic of Soviet Russia, he concludes: "Never again will I remain silent when I can recognise injustice—regardless of how that injustice is wrapped in the dirty linen of expediency or necessity. Never again will I fail to question, to demand proof."

More significant is the reaction of the Indian thinker, Adib, who writes every week in the *Times of India* on Life and Letters. He is moved by the 'nightmare' described by Khrushchev. He writes "The ultimate horror of the spectacle which Mr. Khrushchev detailed the crimes of Stalin

of the victims but in the silence of those who twenty long years knew what was happening and said nothing." He asserts: "A silent witness to a crime is also an accomplice." Raising the question how all this happened he asks: "Could one man do it all by himself? . . . Was there nothing wrong in a system under which there could be no whimper of protest even in the face of so much cruelty?" Adib is not satisfied by the slick answers which he says are designed to "cover the ugliness rather than explain it." He is convinced that there must be 'some social base on which the superstructure of one-man rule raised itself

(Continued on page 10)

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Notes

Dissolution Of Peace Front

IT was recently reported that the Kremlin's World Peace Congress would be dissolved shortly. The dissolution of the Congress was expected as a natural corollary to developments in Russia since the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Cominform.

For many years now, the World Peace Congress and its stooge-organisations like the Peace Councils in India and the rest of the world have been thoroughly discredited as Communist Front organisations started with the design of roping in naive and innocent people in the cobweb of the communist ideological system. Fortunately, the real motive of the Peace Councils was known before it was too late and many an honest man was saved from their clutches. It was no wonder, therefore, that Mr. Khrushchev was recently reported to have admitted that the Peace Councils throughout the world had failed to win over general mass of the people. When during Stalin's time, the Peace Councils failed to evoke satisfactory response from the thinking people in the free world, the Kremlin's World Peace Congress sponsored a system of awarding Stalin Peace Prizes to lure at least some astray individuals in non-Communist countries, and these individuals, whenever lured were publicised in Communist papers in Russia and elsewhere as the "great leaders" of the "people's" peace movement of the world. Actually, they were little known even in their own respective countries.

While referring to the Stalin Peace Prizes, Mr. Khrushchev, in his "Report on Stalin" to the secret session of the Russian Communist Party said; "Let us take the matter of the Stalin Peace Prize. Not even the Czars created prizes which they named after themselves. Many of these prizes were awarded to his (Stalin's) sycophants in Russia and abroad." What a tribute to Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Major-General S. S. Sokhey the two Indian winners of the Stalin Peace Prizes! The "tributes" are enough for them to hang one's head in shame.

Identity Of Ideals

MR. MORARJI Desai, Chief Minister of Bombay, while speaking at a meeting held to celebrate the 180th American Independence Day on 4th July, declared that mere material prosperity had never been the dream of America. He stated that Americans were "in fact pioneers of fostering a happy human race based on absolute equality of opportunity. This is the real American dream and not material prosperity. It has been fulfilled to a large extent, though not fully." Proceeding, he observed that no country need fear aggression from a nation which produced lead-

ers like Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. Further, he said, that the American ideals were in no way different from those pursued in India, and the basic concept of socialism — equality of opportunity — was also the same as that cherished by the United States. These are undoubtedly high tributes to America and the American people, and the tributes are well-deserved.

"Still" asks Mr. Desai, "when friends across the seas criticise us, I wonder if they have forgotten their own ideals?"

It is obvious that here Mr. Desai has in view the American uneasiness at India's foreign policy. We ourselves have often been critical of America whenever she has tried to soft-peddle her opposition to the colonialism of some of the Western European nations. But we will be reluctant to agree with Mr. Desai if he chooses to find fault with any one, who grows uneasy at India's foreign policy. We have no objection to honest neutrality. But India's foreign policy is one-sided "neutrality", it is heavily prejudiced in favour of the Soviet Bloc on the chess-board of the cold war. If a record of India's alignments in international relations is made, it will be quite clear that India has catered more to the interests of the communist world than of the free world. Even China's rape of Tibet was gulped in a complacency. In view of these glaring facts it will be difficult to find fault with America if she grows uneasy, at India's foreign policy. Yet, we have no doubt that Mr. Desai's sentiments with regard to America and the American people will go a long way in cementing happy relations between the two great countries.

"Thoughtless Statement"

WE agree with Mr. Purshottamdas Tandon, a former Congress President, when, at Allahabad some time ago, he expressed amazement at a reported statement of the Congress President, Mr. U. N. Dhebar, in which he had said that if people really loved their Prime Minister they should not do anything that he did not like. Mr. Tandon rightly said that such a statement could be made only in a moment of thoughtlessness, "I want the people to be independent in thinking and not mere yes-men," he stressed.

It is unfortunate that in our country today there is too much of unthinking obedience to the will of the Prime Minister. We do not deny that our Prime Minister is a great man or that his sincerity to the cause of the country is above question. Yet, as human history has shown, great men and sincere men have often committed mistakes and blunders, which have cost humanity dearly. Even Gandhiji admitted Himalayan blunders and was ever ready to be corrected. And, as Mr. Tandon rightly points out, nobody could say for Gandhiji what Mr. Dhebar has said about Pandit Nehru.

An attitude such as that advocated by Mr. Dhebar is bound to sow the seeds of totalitarianism in India. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Only an effective application of that principle in our daily lives

can provide perennial safeguard for democracy. However great may be a national leader, his policies and programmes need to be scrupulously watched and even disapproved whenever they are likely to affect people's interests adversely. And the leader, if he is a democrat, must always take the people into confidence.

That the trend which Mr. Dhebar expressed is widespread was prominently brought out last week in the reactions of Congress parliamentarians to the speech that Mr. C. D. Deshmukh made explaining the reasons of his resignation. They expressed surprise that Mr. Deshmukh should have launched a frontal attack on Mr. Nehru "who symbolises the basic unity of the nation." At this rate it may not be long before it will be said that any criticism of Mr. Nehru is an attack on the unity of the nation. This is, indeed, a dangerous trend which needs to be vigorously combated.

The State As Educational Publisher

TWO announcements early in June refer to new ventures in the world of publishing that promise a fillip to the production and distribution of good books. One relates to a Central Government plan to set up a National Book Trust to encourage the production of good literature and to make it available at moderate prices to libraries, educational institutions and the general public.

The Trust will publish the classical literature of India, translations of famous books from foreign languages, translations of standard books from one Indian language to another, standard works of Indian authors and standard books in the educational, artistic and other fields of knowledge.

The Trust includes reproductions of Indian paintings, sculptures and other art treasures within the scope of its publications.

The Trust may also assist in the publication of approved books by universities, learned societies, and institutions. Regional Trusts may be constituted on the same lines as the National Trust.

The second announcement relates to a Conference in Madras of booksellers, publishers and wholesale distributors hailing from South Indian States. The Conference was held on the 9th and 10th June and was inaugurated by the Madras Education Minister Mr. Subramanyam. The stimulus for this conference came from the Southern Indian Languages Book Trust started last October with financial assistance from the Ford Foundation of the U.S.A.

The conference decided on starting a Book Industry Council to bring together all branches of the Industry and organize a widespread distribution system for increasing book sales and spreading the reading habit.

These proceedings and decisions of the conference are evidence of the awakened consciousness of publishers and booksellers in regard to the new needs of the vastly increasing reading public in the present era of expanding literacy and schooling. Though the Central Government's plan for a National Book Trust is commendable for its zeal and scope, it raises far-reaching questions of democracy, for it proposes to

enter the field of book publishing "in a big way," to use the Prime Minister's words on a former occasion.

It is not healthy to have the State as a large publisher on its own. It is an unwelcome addition to the ever-increasing proliferation of bureaucracy. The administration of this Trust will give undue power to the hands of officials and politicians in the selection of books and the grant of patronage to authors and translators. The selection of classics and the selection of particular works for large scale publication by the State involve delicate questions of scholarship and taste best left to the free judgement of authors, artists and publishers.

It would be a better plan for the Central Government to confine the scope of the proposed National Book Trust to that of giving grant-in-aid to publishers and authors in cases where the market is not yet ready to absorb standard works. The principles of the grants-in-aid may be published and administered by the Trust on the analogy of the practice in vogue in regard to the universities and industries.

The State will then stimulate and maintain standards without becoming a trader and publisher on its own. This is a healthier practice freeing it from the temptation of influencing thought in accordance with the views of ruling groups or of patronising the not-so-worthy among publishers and writers for extraneous considerations.

Further, it will preserve a wide field for enterprise and encourage the growth of a free and varied republic of letters and arts establishing its own standards of judgement.

Socialists In Communist Jails

FREEDOM First published with its June issue a supplement giving the list of Trade Unionists and Social Democrats in jail in Soviet Russia and other Communist countries. It will be recalled that a similar list was presented by Mr. Gaitskell, the leader of the British Labour Party, to Mr. Khrushchev, during the latter's visit to Great Britain, to which his only reply was an angry outburst.

We are happy to note that a Labour Committee to Release Imprisoned Trade Unionists and Democratic Socialists has been formed in New York to continue the agitation for the release of imprisoned Trade Unionists and Social Democrats. The Committee has received world-wide support. We are particularly gratified to note that a number of important leaders of the Indian Trade Union Movement have joined the Committee.

Two Centenaries

IN July were celebrated the birth centenaries of two distinguished Indians. One was that of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the other of late Mr. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. The Tilak centenary was celebrated as a national event owing to his long association with the national movement and the prominent part that he played in it. Leaders of all parties paid him well-deserved tributes on the occasion.

The other centenary was equally important. Agar-kar died at an early age, long before the national movement had assumed a mass character. His role was different from that of Tilak. He did not believe in mere political independence. He stood for an all-round regeneration of the country — social, political and economic. In emphasising a rational outlook and complete social equality he was far ahead of his time. Now that independence has been attained and a new society is being developed, his teachings will prove of great significance.

Conformity In Excelsis

THAT elder statesman, Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, has rendered a distinct service by calling attention to the waning influence of the Press today in India. He points out that "after independence, patriotism and public cooperation in India have swung to the other end of the arc, and the Indian Press has gone all out for praise and admiration leaving the Prime Minister in a dangerous state of loneliness, for unqualified adulation day in and day out is loneliness."

Mr. Rajagopalachari stressed the benefit that "great Governments derive from public criticism without which they are bound to deteriorate in self-complacency and unchecked self-will." A free play of thought and expression in public discussion is vital to the health and vigour of democracy. The value of an independent Press giving a lead to the country, in addition to functioning as a forum for the ventilation of all shades of opinion, is all the greater today in view of "the weakness of opposition parties who are divided into separate small self-interested groups."

He notes sadly that "the daily Press which at present flourishes in a business sense is daily chiming concord and approval and in all cases waits to form an opinion until the Prime Minister indicates his own and contributes little or nothing by way of criticism." "Papers now have lost the habit of criticism either of the Government or of their small adversaries". For a democracy to be good, says C. R., "the Government requires statesmen who educate and guide the people and are not merely politicians occupied in conserving their popularity for future power. Without guidance, adult suffrage and democracy based thereon, will confirm the worst fears of those Indians who opposed the movement for independence.... The Press too should not only aid at reflecting and forecasting public opinion but should try to educate and give guidance to the reading public."

We endorse the foregoing analysis of the present state of the public Press in the country as well as the exposition of the essential role of the Press as a leader of instructed opinion in a democracy.

Modern democracy functioning in large nation states with populations running into tens of millions, throws up new classes of politicians, newspaper and periodical journalists and organisers of pressure groups of various kinds who engage themselves in meeting some need or other, legitimate and illegitimate, of innumerable interests. A stable and progres-

sive democracy needs the evolution of clear and well-understood codes of public conduct governing the classes dealing with power in public life. Among these the Press occupies a dominant place and has great influence in developing an alert and informed public opinion on questions affecting the welfare of the nation. The Press has to evolve a tradition of respect for truth irrespective of persons and courageous impartiality in comment, eschewing the arts of the demagogue characterised by the ancient practice of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. Today another factor in worsening the tone of public discussion is the increasing prevalence of unscrupulous methods such as tendentious reporting, criticism by abusive epithet, slander, character assassination and smear campaign. These motifs are being added to the usual temptations of sensation-mongering to which papers aspiring for large circulation are prone.

Mr. Rajagopalachari's warning and advice are timely.

Aid with Rope Attached

Mr. Richard Nixon, U. S. Vice-President, observed the other day that Soviet aid "is offered not with strings but with a rope. And the recipient runs the almost certain risk of having the rope tied around its neck".

As the man who successfully unmasked the Soviet spy, Alger Hiss, despite patronage in the highest places, Mr. Nixon is evidently a good student of Marxism-Leninism, for the concept of aid with a rope attached originates from none other than Lenin in his *Left Wing Communist: An Infantile Disorder* (reprinted in the *Essentials of Leninism*, Vol. II, published by Lawrence & Wishart, 1947). Explaining the true meaning of the United Front which he advocated the Communist Party of Great Britain should offer to the British Labour Party, Lenin then wrote:

"I want with my vote to support Henderson in the same way that the rope supports a hanged man."

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The Guilty Men And Their System

by K. K. Sinha

AT the twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union held in February 1956, three years after Stalin's death, a new chapter was opened when Stalin was condemned by Khrushchev, the First Secretary, and Mikoyan, an important leader of the Party. Following it, thousands of party propagandists are today busy educating the membership in terms of the speeches, namely, condemning the "cult of personality" initiated by Stalin and resurrecting the Leninist principles of collective leadership.

What can be the significance of this change, if change it be? Does it mean that Russia's leaders have now undergone a profound change and, with time passing, should become more acceptable to the rest of the world, more dependable and trustworthy, and that by this they have initiated a chain reaction of civilising influence operating on communist theory and practice? Or, does it mean no essential departure from the broad stream of communist practice?

It may be interesting to pose one or two questions before going into the matter. If, as they declare, the Russian leaders were too afraid to protest against the behaviour and policies of Stalin, why then did the non-Russian communists keep mum? What were they afraid of? Now they come before us dittoing Khrushchev and Mikoyan in the same fashion as does the entire CPSU. Whatever they may say today, the fact that they did not utter a single word against the Stalin regime in Russia all these decades, although their heads were relatively safe, only goes to prove to the hilt that they are morally cowards or intellectually duds or both. This is true not only of the Indian communists but also of communists in other parts of the world.

The fact that communists are by nature authoritarian and subservient to Moscow is evidenced by yet another phenomenon. Stalin was a Russian communist; he was criticised in the Russian party congress. Mikoyan declared it was an internal matter. Then why should each national communist party rush to declare its identity of views with those of the latest of the Russian party? But they all did. This only goes to show that a communist is not only intellectually but also emotionally rivetted with his father-image-Moscow.

Another question that is of crucial importance is: If Stalin was such a bad fellow, then why did the Russian leaders take such a long time as three years to declare him in those terms? Why didn't they do so almost immediately after his death? Their plea has been that they decided to do it "gradually." If that be so, then the Beria and the Malenkov episodes need not be explained. These episodes indicate that Stalin was not the only villain of the piece; there was struggle for power inside the party leadership even after

Stalin. Unless those skeletons from the cupboard are fully brought out and pieced together, you should not expect the world to believe that Stalin was a megalomaniac and his competent lieutenants were all chicken-hearted good souls, and that they were mere involuntary instruments in the hands of blood-thirsty Stalin in purging and liquidating their own comrades whom they loved so dearly. Stalin may well have been what they have now chosen him to describe, but these declaimers are no less guilty men.

The phenomena of Stalinist dictatorship riding roughshod over Russian history for the last three decades is too striking a fact to be missed or ignored. But it was not only a dictatorship over the Russian people but also over practically the entire world communist movement. To condemn only one man for it is itself too unmarxist an interpretation. There must have been some 'objective conditions' to promote this development. The entire Russian people may have been historically conditioned for centuries to need a dictatorship and may also have been forced by sheer terror to accept it. But how do we explain the voluntary acceptance of Stalin's unbridled authority by Indians, Italians, French, Germans, Englishmen, Americans etc. who are members of the communist parties? Communism is frankly a systematised authoritarian doctrine. As a world movement it became the organisational centre of attraction for all those persons in every country who were essentially authoritarian in character and needed such a doctrine and such a party for their spiritual support. The iron-willed Stalin, with the enormous totalitarian state and party behind him, suited the psychological need of such persons for a father-image. Thus the 'objective' factors were ripe in the various communist parties to accept the megalomaniac Stalin just as the German fascists accepted their Hitler.

Thus the "cult of personality" is not a mere Stalinist creation. It had the support of the communist ideology on the one hand and of the personality needs of the individual communists on the other. Will the communists now crusading against the cult dare question their own selves and their ideology?

Here one would notice a very interesting phenomenon. Condemnation of the Stalin cult of personality is going hand in hand with the resurrection of the so-called Leninist principles. It is significant to note that the present leaders could think of attacking "Great Stalin" only with the aid of exciting the sentimental emotions of the people about "Beloved Lenin." A simple intellectual presentation of the issues was considered insufficient to convince the ruled: it had to be buttressed by an equal, if not greater, sanction of emotional authority. In this emotional state of mind of the party members, is it possible to expect a sober and

critical appraisal of the larger issues involved in Stalin's condemnation? What is rather more likely to happen in the process is the transference of loyalty from Stalin to Comrade X, the "Great Pupil of Lenin."

A close study of Lenin's writings and actions would indicate how he shifted from a more or less liberal attitude towards freedom of criticism within the party in the earlier years of the revolution to an ultimate dictatorial attitude suppressing criticism altogether. Of course there still remained a substantial degree of difference between Lenin's form of dictatorship and Stalin's *personal* dictatorship. Dictatorship within the party was however a logical corollary to the theory of one-party dictatorship over the State.

It is of no substantial consequence if the party relies more on Lenin now than on Stalin; ideologically there is not much of a difference. Lenin's name is being utilised only to help those who would otherwise feel nervous and insecure in the absence of Stalin as a hero, to find themselves a little at ease and less shaken from within.

The big question remains however, as to why the CPSU leadership thought it proper to attack Stalin personally and at this particular time. Much of its answer is veiled in mystery. One can only guess. Possibly the series of purges initiated by Stalin had seriously thinned the party cadre. Possibly the reign of protracted terror and the consequent living on tenterhooks by most of the leading party members were eating into their nerves, and they seriously wanted to have conditions where they could ease their strained existence. The vile struggle for power launched immediately after Stalin's death saw no ending and this probably led each of the participants even of opposing camps to realise that the Stalinist heritage of ruthlessness in party strife must be ended for the sake of at least physical survival. Probably Stalin in his later days had become really intolerable and impossible even to his closest (!) associates, as Khrushchev has described, and yet they could not do anything because Stalin was already glorified to an unimaginable extent in the eyes of the people. The present leaders took time firstly to agree among themselves about the steps to be taken to deflate Stalin and then to plan this dramatic action over a long period of time, so that they could manage and control the resultant reactions which were bound to be of large dimensions and imponderable character.

Whatever may have been the motives of the leadership, single or diverse, the point to underscore is that while immediately the Party may be able to adjust itself to this new psychological situation, the relation of forces within the party and the emotional basis created by the totalitarian cult of communism are bound to generate conditions, in due course of time, for the rise of yet another dictator, benevolent or malevolent.

But the effect that will be created by this phenomenon on the minds of the Russian people, namely, a sense of intense shock and distrust, and consequently anxiety, will be difficult to erase. The line of their

reaction may be substantially simple. The closest associates and disciples of the National Hero and Saviour, Stalin, are now openly attacking their Guru and Master on grounds more or less personal, not during his life time but only after he has been safely cremated, and criticising him for actions in which each of them had fully participated. It is possible that today the Russian people will not be able to express their minds publicly. Because of this fact their anger and distrust for the regime will become more embittered. How this bitterness and tension will be expressed in the near future is difficult to guess at present.

However, we are more interested to know what effects this new turn in the CPSU will have in the communist parties outside Russia. Here is an opportunity for them individually as well as collectively to review their past and examine their ideal party and to consider if they will still follow the path blindly that Lenin and Stalin carved out for the Russian party in order to meet the situation that faced them and to fit the facts with their theory, or exert their own minds to consider if there is yet another way to communism. Or, will they even go farther and raise such questions as to whether communism, meaning the dictatorship of the party or the class, is at all a worthwhile ideal? They have begun to talk about the "different ways to socialism" already, because the CPSU has now "allowed" them to do so. But the question is whether they will do their own thinking and let the members have the freedom to do so, or they will still await for the Voice from Moscow. To the extent that a process of rethinking and revaluation takes place within the ranks of each communist party, to that extent the condemnation of the cult of personality will be worthwhile. It is not only a question of giving up Stalin as an idol but also of giving up Lenin and Marx as objects of worship; in truth it is a question of giving up idol-worship altogether and becoming self-respecting, thinking individuals.

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The Poznan Portent

by M. A. Venkata Rao

THE workers' revolt in Poznan on the 28th of June is a portent. It revealed as in a flash the lurid conditions under which the "sovereign working class" in the proletarian State of Poland live and the smouldering discontent that agitates their hearts. The fierce riots also reveal the classic reaction of totalitarian States to the demand for betterment on the part of citizens, (rather subjects more abject in condition than any serf under feudalism). The State is shocked that "Oliver" should have dared to ask for more. The riots broke out after a delegation to the Minister of Auto and Tractor Industry, Mr. Julian Tokarsky in Warsaw, returned disappointed after a week of negotiation for improvement in wages and other living conditions. The Minister has since been dismissed, but the revolting workers were ruthlessly suppressed through the usual argument of guns. The Government has since admitted that there were real grounds for the dissatisfaction of the workers. The *Tribuna Ludu* has analysed the situation and traced the trouble to the glaring gulf between "the words and deeds" of the Communist Party. The workers have been disillusioned by the bleak conditions of over-work, lower wages in the terms of purchasing power and the scarcity and high prices of essential consumer goods of daily use so characteristic of Soviet economy since the October Revolution. The last straw that broke the camel's back was bread famine. The slogans shouted and inscribed on posters and streamers related to bread and freedom. The Catholic Church adds that some strikers also added the word God on the streamers. Perhaps they did, but the prime mover was certainly the disappointment with the treatment accorded to the workers in the communist paradise.

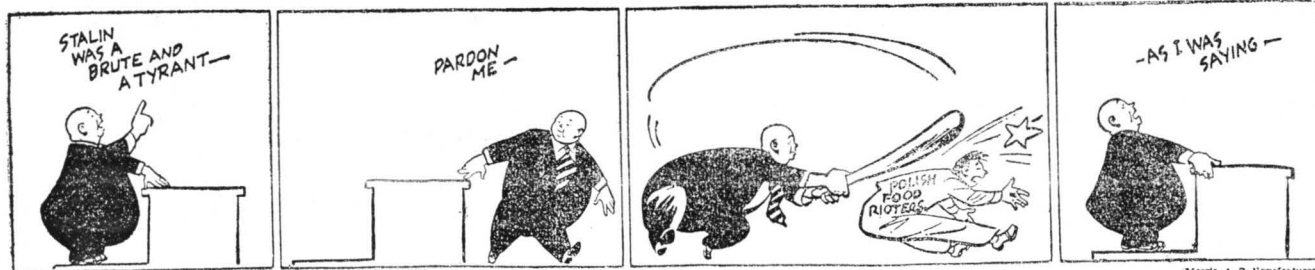
In addition to the economic factor the suppressed nationalism of the Poles has contributed its own effect to the general discontent. The Poles have always been a people with a strong national self-consciousness, owing to their checkered history, having been often maltreated by neighbouring Powers who divided the country several times among themselves. The present regime in Poland is completely under the heel of Soviet Russia which rules the Poles through a panel of puppets. The nationalist element has been curbed and "cabinined" mercilessly. The sore is

deepened by the retention to this day of around two million Poles in the labour camps of Soviet Russia. The dark deeds of massacring 10,000 Polish officers in Katyn Wood's and betraying the Warsaw rising with the relieving Red Army within reach are still feeding the fires of hatred and revenge in the national mind. To these war-time horrors is added the further barbarism perpetrated by the authorities of separating eight lakhs of children from their parents whose fate is still unknown to them.

This affords a general clue to the situation in Poland and in the satellites as well. The governing factor in it is the completeness of the economic integration between Poland and Soviet Russia which makes the Poles no better than hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Russian over-lords. This has destroyed the old balance of industry and agriculture in the land, one result of which has been the present famine. The Soviet Pattern of Planning with its overwhelming emphasis on heavy and armament industries, has had the inevitable result of starving the country of consumer goods. Essential goods of everyday use like clothing and shoes have become scarce and cost fantastic sums beyond the reach of workers and even of the new middle classes.

The regime is now facing a dilemma whether to liberalise and conciliate or dig its toes in and intensify the terror. There are signs that the authorities are having two minds about allowing the new freedom after Stalin's dethronement to go too far. But the new atmosphere has released forces making for a dissolution of the whole dictatorial regime. The people are fed up with rule by Moscow-supported puppets. None of the declared goals of socialism and communism, equality of income, equality in political and social standing, high and low, (considering each other as comrades and brothers) and the delectable state of affairs in which contributions will be accepted from all according to capacity and services will be rendered to all in accordance with needs has come true. In place of the promised heaven of a classless society the workers find themselves fettered to their factory and office with bonds as strong as those which bound the old serfs to the land. The trade unions can no longer champion the workers' cause. They have

'SLIGHT INTERRUPTION'



Morris A. P. Newsfeatures

Reactions To Poznan Riots

Famous European thinkers and writers issued the following statement on Poznan riots:

"When workers can no longer endure the conditions under which they live, they resort to the strike, and their right to strike is recognised in all free countries. It is the absence of this right in the Soviet Empire — the USSR and its satellites — which has brought about in Poznan the intervention of troops and tanks against protesting workers who are now accused as criminals liable to capital punishment.

The undersigned declare their complete solidarity with the victims of this bloody and terrible repression. They demand that no further executions take place and that there be public trials in the presence of witnesses who have the confidence of the democratic West. They protest against the transparent and contemptible manoeuvre by which workers demanding their right to live are represented as foreign agents.

They demand, moreover, that an international inquiry be organised so that the western world can be informed of the most pressing needs of the Polish working class and can bring relief to the workers as quickly as possible.

And, in particular, they urge democratic workers' organisations to make international arrangements for a vast collection of funds so that these organisations can demonstrate, with deeds as well as with words, their solidarity with the workers of Poland.

Albert Camus, Karl Jaspers, Jeanne Hersch, Arthur Koestler, Franco Mauriac, Jean Rounault, Andre Philip, Ignazio Silone, Stephen Spender, Manes Sperber, Alexandre Weissberg-Cybulski.

POZNAN PORTENT — (from page 8)

become whips in the hands of the rulers to goad them to work harder for lower wages for creating the distant heaven of socialism.

This is the condition of affairs in the Soviet empire after Five Year Plans, for the implementation of which the entire population was mobilised by unremitting State propaganda aided by the secret Police and the slave labour camps. The lands under the Soviet empire have been described as a "country of the blind (taking a suggestion from the social imagination of H. G. Wells) where people were taught not to notice things that the regime does not want them to see." But the word used by our Vice-President Radhakrishnan namely *nightmare* is more appropriate. Everyone is afraid of everyone else in this nightmare country or empire. Far from presenting a solid Front of impregnable defence, the Soviet sphere (*mandala*) is one of mutual distrust, want, fear and the consequent disunity.

The heroic revolt of the Poznan workers has thus highlighted the primacy of freedom as the principle of social and political organisation. That the principle of *Freedom First* and *Freedom all the*

The following is a statement on Poznan riots issued by some prominent Indian writers, public men, journalists and trade union leaders:

The tragic events which took place in the industrial city of Poznan have once again focussed attention on the denial of ordinary human rights in countries behind the Iron Curtain. Ordinarily, when workers are dissatisfied with their conditions of life and work they resort to strikes in order to express their protest and voice their demands. But when, as in communist-dominated countries, the right to strike is denied, the workers' protest readily takes the form of a revolt against the regime.

The revolt of the workers of Poznan has now been crushed with guns and tanks. Thousands of workers have been arrested and a few have been reported to be executed. Savage repression has been let loose against workers and their friends. It is now clear from the little information that is available that the workers of Poland were long dissatisfied with their conditions of life and work. And it is this dissatisfaction which found expression in the riots of Poznan.

Keenly interested as we are in the struggles of toiling masses for bread and freedom, we declare our solidarity with the workers of Poznan. We demand that the repression that has been started against the leaders of the workers be halted and that nobody be punished or otherwise dealt with except after a public judicial trial. We protest against the use of troops and tanks to put down what was originally an ordinary demonstration of workers. We demand justice and fair play for the workers of Poznan who have by their brave protest thrown some revealing light on the real conditions of workers in communist-dominated countries.

Sophia Wadia, Founder President, All India P.E.N. E. P. W. da Costa, Editor, *Eastern Economist*. M. R. Masani. J. B. H. Wadia, Proprietor, Wadia Films. Maniben Kara, Vice-President, Hind Mazdoor Sabha. D. P. Sethna, Solicitor. Laxman Shastri Joshi, Editor, *Hindu Dharma Kosh*. H. R. Pardiwala, Bar-at-Law. Philip Spratt, of *Mysindia*. B. R. Shenoy. George M. Fernandes, Secretary, Transport & General Workers' Union. Raman K. Desai. V. B. Karnik. P. Y. Deshpande, Marathi writer. Nissim Ezekiel, Editor, *Quest*. K. Krishna Menon, Secretary, Praja Socialist Party. K. K. Sinha, Editor, *Journal of River Valley Projects*. A. B. Shah. Adam Adil. Sudhir Hendre, Editor, *Ambassador*. Venkata Rao.

time cannot be evaded with impunity is borne out by the grim fact that after forty years of "Bread without Freedom", neither bread nor freedom, neither life nor honour, have been secured for the common man in the Soviet regime.

Truly the Poznan revolt is a portent to Sovietism but a beacon of hope to those under its cruel yoke.

THE INDICTMENT OF STALIN — (from page 2)

and he thinks 'it is not difficult to locate the base'. "To talk of historical necessity" he declares, "is to botch the moral issue." He asks: "Where is the calculus to determine the degree of necessity? Can there be any justification whatsoever for the murder of innocent men?"

If fellow-travelling intellectuals will raise these questions and press for their answers they will realise that there is no place for them in the communist party or within its periphery. Communism attracted them by its vigorous protest against the iniquities of capitalism and by its promise of a free and equal society. But on attaining power it established a totalitarian State and gave birth to the monstrosity of Stalinism. Through acts of faith they had so long closed their eyes to what was happening in Soviet Russia. That faith is no longer possible after the disclosures made by Khrushchev.

In the long speech that he delivered Khrushchev has not told the whole truth about Stalin and his condemnation of Stalin's methods is also half-hearted. He has not condemned or disapproved methods that Stalin adopted in the earlier part of his career to crush his opponents like Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamaney, Bukharin and others. He does not utter a word of protest against the brutal and violent methods that Stalin adopted for liquidating those opponents. What Khrushchev disapproves is only the treatment that Stalin met out in the latter part of his career to persons belonging to his own faction. His argument is that at that particular period of time and in that situation it was not necessary to use those methods against those persons. His objection is not to the methods of terror and violence but to the particular use of those methods made by Stalin. The conclusion obviously is that the methods as such are not discarded or disapproved by the new rulers of Soviet Russia. They will continue using them when they consider it necessary and, at the most, instead of one individual, a group of individuals will be the judge of the necessity.

It is clear from the speech that Khrushchev, at any rate, does not contemplate any break with the past. In his speech he has dilated at length on Leninism and how Stalin departed from its canons and declared in no uncertain terms his determination to revert to it. The Soviet rulers will thus go back to Leninism. But it is Leninism which gave birth to Stalin. It is Lenin who developed the theory of a party of professional revolutionaries, of the centralised leadership and iron discipline within the party, of the party as the directing authority of the State, of the State as the coercive machinery for the suppression of hostile elements and for the organisation of the new society and of the Party State as the totalitarian authority to regulate all social activities. He built up the apparatus of the party and the State which Stalin took over after his death and utilised in a manner which Khrushchev is now finding undesirable. The roots of all the crimes of Stalin are to be found in the theories and practices of Marx and Lenin and,

as long as the new rulers of Russia do not reject them, there can be no guarantee against the rise of a new Stalin.

In the course of his long speech Khrushchev has not bothered to raise and answer the essential question: How did all this happen and how did this brutal regime of terror and violence continue for twenty long years without a word of protest? Everybody is asking that question. A number of communist parties were also forced to raise it. They have been silenced now by the decree of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. The decree may satisfy those tools and agents of the Russian rulers, but it can satisfy none else.

The only explanation that Khrushchev and his colleagues have offered is the so-called cult of personality. According to them sometime in the early thirties the cult of personality arose, Stalin was glorified as a demi-god and then followed all his crimes and perversions. This is an explanation which cannot satisfy the meanest intelligence. Even Togliatti, the Italian communist leader, was forced to say: "At one time, all that was good was due to the superhuman, positive qualities of one man; now all that is bad is attributed to the equally exceptional and even staggering defects of the same man. The real problems escape notice, such as the method by which, and the reason why, Soviet society could and did stray so far from the democratic path and from the legality which it had traced out for itself, arriving as far degeneration". Adib has stated: "The denunciation of the cult of personality is only a decoy."

The causes for the rise of Stalin and the type of regime that he imposed must be found in the Soviet society. The social base out of which Stalinism grew is the huge bureaucratic State and party apparatus which developed out of the political and economic theories and practices of communism. The determining factor which nurtured its growth is the concentration of all political and economic power in the hands of one individual, the dictator of the party and the State. The social condition which sustained it is the total subservience of the individual to the State and the absence of all fundamental civil liberties and the rule of law. All these are the inevitable consequences of a social system based on Marxism or Leninism. Under Stalin there was, as Togliatti has pointed out, "an excessive increase in the weight of the bureaucratic apparatus of the economic life and political system." But this was not the handiwork of Stalin. It was the inevitable consequence of the social system. And that led to the "degeneration", gently hinted at by Togliatti.

It is this "degeneration" which has overtaken Soviet society. Stalin was merely the most malignant manifestation of that degeneration. In denouncing Stalin and the cult of personality the new rulers of Soviet Russia are merely dealing with one of the symptoms of the disease. As a matter of fact it may be that they are finding a scapegoat in Stalin. As a result of

the policies pursued under Stalin a vast amount of discontent and anger has developed in the country. There is a danger that it may burst at any time. By making a scapegoat of Stalin they may succeed in diverting the attention of the people from the system towards a dead individual. He, and not the system, is being represented as the real cause of all the misery and the evils and the people's wrath is being directed against him and diverted away from the system. Similarly, in the international field, Stalin's name had become very closely associated with aggression and subversion. By denouncing him the new Soviet rulers may be hoping to gain some respectability for themselves and some new friends for their country. When something goes wrong it is the usual practice in Soviet Russia to put the whole blame on some one and hold him responsible for all failures and evil consequences. It is likely that in their campaign against Stalin, Khrushchev and his colleagues are partly following this old Russian practice.

The campaign against Stalin has engendered the hope in some quarters that the Russian rulers are after all turning a new leaf. Some encouraging changes have taken place in Russia since the twentieth congress. Those changes should be welcomed. But it will be wrong at the same time to jump to the conclusion that the Soviet rulers have once for all turned their back on violence and totalitarianism and embarked on the path of democracy and peace. There may be optimism regarding the changes that are taking place, but it should be tempered by caution. It will be dangerous to forget that the rulers of Russia are still committed to the creed of Marxism and Leninism and that creed, as is wellknown, contains within it the seeds of absolute power, regimentation and police terror.

Since the initiation of the campaign against Stalin not one fundamental change has taken place in Soviet Russia. The communist party continues to be the sole ruler of the country and the party bosses continue to exercise the same control over the party. In a recent editorial *Pravda* declared that the Communist Party will be "the only master of the minds and thoughts of the people". There has been some talk about encouraging internal party democracy. There is no evidence yet of the talk having materialised into action. Besides democracy within the party will be a mockery as long as there is no democracy within the country which the large masses of the people can enjoy. There was a suggestion made by many foreign friends of the communist regime and by some Academicians in Russia that the formation of different political parties might be allowed. The suggestion has been contemptuously rejected. *Pravda* declared in a long editorial: "There is no social ground in Soviet society for the creation and existence of other parties in addition to the Communist Party." The Communist Party is to remain according to *Pravda* "the only spokesman, leader and organiser" of the Russian people.

One looks in vain, as Howard Fast has done, for the mention of the elementary civil rights of the

people and for a pledge to hold them inviolable in Khrushchev's speech and in the other proceedings of the twentieth congress. There is no mention of those rights because Khrushchev and his colleagues do not believe in them and naturally there could not be a pledge to secure them to the people. They are not democrats. They never were. They were the willing accomplices of Stalin in all his crimes. They were not mere silent spectators. They were the active helpmates of the dead tyrant. The explanation that they have given for not speaking out during the lifetime of the dictator is so pitiful that it makes their silence all the more revolting. They are such abject cowards that the dread of the dictator continued with them for over two years after he was dead and his body safely deposited in the Kremlin mausoleum. They continued singing his praises for over two years after his death. It will be difficult to find in history another example of such despicable subservience to the will of a tyrant. Khrushchev and his colleagues have not even repented for their sins. One looks in vain at the speech for a word of sorrow or repentance.

Who can rely on such persons to introduce in Russia the new values of freedom and democracy? But social forces are more powerful than the plans and intentions of the rulers. A new class of party organisers, managers, technicians and skilled workers has come into existence. That class is now demanding more amenities and a certain measure of security and quiet life. It has been also realised by experience that workers and peasants will not work harder and produce more unless they are offered some improvements in their conditions of life and work. It is factors like these and the international situation which are compelling the rulers to effect some changes. The changes effected so far are of a superficial character. But if the process continues it may pave the way for more fundamental changes.

The campaign against Stalin is a part of that process. The Soviet rulers may have started it with the limited object of ridding themselves of a bad legacy. Alarmed by the widespread repercussions of the campaign even amongst loyal communists, Khrushchev and his colleagues are now trying to restrict its scope and to prevent discussion of fundamental issues raised by the disclosures. They may succeed in doing that in Soviet Russia and other communist countries where they hold absolute or near-absolute power. But they cannot stop the discussion in other places. The issue has been joined all over the world. The vileness of Stalin is exposed. But was it the vileness of one individual or of the creed which holds one third of the world's population within its grip? Was not Stalin the necessary offspring of communism, of Marxism and of Leninism? The question is being asked even by devout communists. Even amongst them a searching of hearts has begun. The faith which sustained them so long has collapsed. Their own Khrushchev has destroyed their faith. And that is a distinct service that he and his colleagues have rendered to the cause of freedom and democracy.

With Many Voices

Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."

—Tennyson.

We swear by Gandhiji and Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa, but no university teaches about their philosophy.

—Mr. Munshi, *The Times of India*, July 16.

Tengku Abdul Rehman, the Chief Minister of Malaya, is willing to pay the fare to China of any communist terrorist who surrenders and will provide him with a living allowance for a year.

—*The Times of India*, July 17.

Uneasy lies the head that wears the Khaddar cap.

—Mr. Hanumanthaiya, *The Times of India*, July 13.

Nations hoping to out-manoeuvre the masters of communist imperialism by a policy of "friendly neutrality" are taking a fearful risk.

—Mr. Richard Nixon, *The Times of India*, July 5.

You cannot ask people who are starving to tighten their belts. In fact, they can afford no belts.

—Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Minister for Commerce & Industry, to the Central Advisory Council of Industries, on June 20.

Clearly the purpose of the present Soviet strategy is to lead the free world into a false sense of security From coexistence as between nations to a popular front as between parties inside a country will be posed as a logical process.

—Mr. Frank Moraes, *Encounter*, June 1956.

Planning in a democracy has got to give the highest priority to the daily needs of the mass of the people. Austerity is a luxury which only the prosperous can afford.

—Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Minister for Commerce & Industry, to the Central Advisory Council of Industries, on June 20

Greed, miserliness and yearning to hoard wealth were the "parents of theft."

—Acharya Vinoba Bhave, *The Times of India*, July 1.

Everyone wants my blood, but no one wants my job.

—Mr. Guy Mollet, *The Times of India*, June 10

Mr. Khrushchev is no longer talking like Stalin but not until Mr. Khrushchev and his followers quit acting like Stalin will he have any effect on the Far East.

—Mr. Richard Nixon, U. S. Vice-President at a Press Conference in Bangkok, July 9.

The caste system and a socialistic society go ill together.

—Mr. Jagjivan Ram, *The Times of India*, July 10.

Every attempt at fraternization with the present successors of the Red Czar is bound to add to the difficulties of their subjects.

—*Thought*, July 14.

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