

# RUSSIAN AND COMMUNIST IMPERIALISM IN ACTION

(Papers of the Slavic Institute of Marquette University)

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the tremendous loss of prestige which their party and ideology had suffered and the impossibility to make a headway with their party in the population on account of the strong resentments which the exploitative public policies, dictated by the Kremlin and executed by the Soviet-selected Hungarian servile administrators of these policies, instilled. They wanted to save the "honor of the Party" and the "honor and prestige of Socialism," as they stated it in their numerous communications. Their public behavior during the Rebellion certainly bears also the here discussed double characteristics of "national communism," according to both our "objective" and its "Soviet definition."

(4 and 5) The ideological mainstay of Soviet control over the other "socialist countries" includes the following two tenets. The first one is clothed in Marx's renown infra-structure—super-structure thought pattern and postulates. Interstate (international) relations among "socialist states," i.e., the Soviet Union and the people's democracies, are, and should be, determined by the nature of the relations which prevail, and should exist, between the Soviet Communist party and the Communist parties in the various people's democracies. The other tenet proclaims<sup>24</sup> the primacy "under certain conditions" of the interests of the unitary global Communist movement over the interests of a Communist party in any individual "socialist country." According to the Soviet definition of national communism, two of its several, already identified, criteria are the negation of these two tenets. In other words, according to the Soviet definition, in national communism the values expressed and supported by these tenets are *negative* social values. The "Soviet definition" in question is also in this respect correct. The rejection of the aforementioned two tenets is nothing but the logical consequence of the "national Communist" actors' shared and dominant orientedness primarily to their own people, conceived as

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<sup>24</sup> See the pertinent passage quoted from the leading Soviet Communist "theoretical" weekly, *Kommunist*, on p. 12.

a nation, the preter-empirical entity as the carrier of the apex values in their uncodified axionormative "system." This is recognized also by our hypothetical second (presumably objective) definition. Moreover, the affirmation of, and orientation to, the other core-value of this "system" (actually only an approximate of an ideological system), the independence of their people's (*i.e.*, nation's) State, which is the corollary of the freedom of their people (identified with their nation), entails also, and postulates, the rejection of the aforesaid Soviet tenets. Their rejection follows logically also from the orientation of "national Communists" to three of the *negative* social values incorporated in the axionormative "system" of their shared society. These are as follows: (a) exploitation by foreign actors (e.g., by the Soviet Union); (b) a heteronomous and heterocephalic political system of their social system; and (c) foreign monopolistic ideological control and foreign cultural traits' and patterns' massive penetration into, and corruption thereby of, the popular culture (forceful denationalization, cultural disintegration, and Russification of the domestic popular culture).

Hungarians alleged "national communists," prompted by their lasting and massive experiences with the sharp practices of their Russian "comrades," had to consider these here discussed two Soviet tenets in the context of the entire Soviet doctrine and in the light of the familiar ways of their authoritative Soviet interpretation and application. They had to realize that from the observation of the two other Soviet tenets—earlier discussed—of the same doctrine, *i.e.*, the postulated unity and unitary character of the global Communist movement and the leading ("the vanguard") role, that is, the supremacy, of the Soviet Communist party in this inclusive global movement, it necessarily follows that the acceptance of the tenet according to which the "superstructure," that is the *interstate* relations of the "socialist states," should be determined exclusively by the "infrastructure," the relations of the individual Communist-

parties in these States, would in the practical order mean nothing less than the recognition of the Soviet Union's right to govern all individual "socialist countries" as the Soviet Communist party actually governs (i.e., is "related" in a "superordination-subordination relationship" to) the individual Communist parties of the people's democracies. Moreover, from the acceptance of the thesis of the Soviet Union's vanguard, leadership role, and also of the other tenet, that in cases of conflicts between the interests of the global movement and that of the Communist party in a particular people's democracy, the latter's "special interests" should be sacrificed in favor of the general interest of the global movement, it follows logically that the leadership of the "Soviet party" (interlocked through a personal union with the government of the Soviet Union) is alone competent to arbitrate and decide of what does—in the case of any issue—the interest of the global movement consist and, consequently, in which respect(s), and to what an extent, should be in the life of a particular nation even the interest of the Communist party in that nation, disregarded, even more so, of course, the national interest of the people.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the meaningfully related tenets, forming the pertinent phase of the Soviet political doctrine, rationalize and justify Soviet governmental intervention indiscriminately in all domestic affairs of any "socialist country." They entitle — even burden with the responsibility — the Soviet government as such, and the same power holders as members of the Presidium of the Soviet Party's Central Committee, to interfere "in the interests of the world revolutionary workers' movement," to balk policies of Communist leaders in any "socialist country" which would earn them domestic popularity and power (rooted in public esteem and influence, and not

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<sup>25</sup> Stalin, for example, was ready to sacrifice through his deal with Hitler (August, 1939) the foreseeable interests of the Communist party in Germany and the life of many tested fellow-Communists for the sake of the long-range interests of the "global revolutionary movement of workers," or of the Soviet Union's, the vanguard's, though indirectly of the former.

in the Kremlin's highly "dynamic" favor), to make effective economic and other public policies—through the "local (national branch) Party" eventually detrimental to that country but—in the Kremlin's judgment—favorable to the Soviet Union. "What serves the Soviet Union strengthens the movement of the world-proletarian class" (Lenin).

The approval of practices in line with the discussed tenets and their endorsement is incompatible with orientations to one's own people (nation), conceived as a carrier of an apex value. But the latter Hungarian articulate "Communist rebels," *literati* and politicians, rejected *via facti* the Soviet tenets as conflicting with their manifest and dominant orientations.

In reference to the third alternative definition of national communism, the inquiry revealed that the articulate Hungarian Communist actors' rebellious public behavior, in general, bore all the bench marks of national communism, whether one applied and checked the "presence" of such "marks" (criteria) as these were specified in our presumably objective or in Soviet ideological terms. (The inquiry, by the way, revealed that as to the essential meaning of these criteria in terms of orientations to relevant power-relations, there is no significant difference between their "objective" and "Soviet" definition; the apparent difference is due to the ideological clothing in which the pertinent Soviet statements were published.)

Here and earlier, terms like national communism and national Communists were used, though consistently between quotation marks, and much more for their semantic usefulness, yielding rather to a crossnational convention reflecting certain experiences with Tito's "independent road in building socialism."

### *The anthropological definition*

IV. In the following the fourth, *the cultural anthropological hypothetical definition of national communism should*

be checked in the light of the available data. According to this national communism is *the social ideological product and behavioral manifestation of a dynamic balance reached through the acculturation of an imported and imposed foreign ideological pattern, Marxism-Leninism, to the traditional cultural system.*

Wherever an ideological system, developed and systematized in one or some foreign cultures, was introduced into a cultural system and there—for whatever reason(s)—became, and for a period of time remained, socialized (encultured) in a smaller or larger part of the population, a give and take process had started, a mutual assimilation of the two, the imported foreign new pattern and the domestic traditional, through the process of acculturation. The less congenial is the introduced normative ideological system to the domestic culture, the more intensive would be, at least, the defensive reaction of those in whose personality the ethos of the domestic traditional culture has been internalized to the intrusion of a non-congenial culture pattern. Even when the spread (socialization) of a normative ideological system is gradual and not sanctioned by power actions of alien and domestic representatives of a foreign government, the defensive mechanisms of the domestic social-cultural system, partly, tend to impede its behavioral socialization, partly, tend to transform that which, despite the cultural resistance mentioned, finds its way into some segment(s) of the population. There is an ongoing struggle between the invading normative patterns of thought and external social behavior, related to the former, on the one hand, and on the other, the domestic cultural system. This struggle brought forth in our case too, what Anatol France so wisely stated with a markedly *fin de siècle* spleen of his: “*Tout se transforme dans la lutte et après la victoire il ne leur reste que quelque symboles de leur foi perdue.*”<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Anatol France, *Sur la pierre blanche*, Paris.

No matter what a normative system of ideas becomes gradually incorporated in a total culture of a society (or in one of the sub-cultures, or in one of its segments or classes,) it does not only affect and change, more or less, that cultural system (subsystem) but it is bound also to suffer the effects of acculturation. Anthropologist Allen Spitzer, therefore, in order to discern clearly and study the various forms in which the incorporation of a particular religious belief system, in the given case, Roman Catholicism, by and in a traditional culture manifests itself, operates with a "continuum, implying *formal, nominal, cultural, and folk* Catholicism" with "two polarities, *formal and folk . . .*" In this frame ". . . *formal* Catholicism would be represented by the official Church, her hierarchy, and her statement of dogma and doctrine . . ." *Folk* Catholicism would then represent . . . the grass-roots, and ultimately upward, movement of the membership, including popular expressions of the faith, indigenous cults, possible admixtures of pagan elements, superstitions, and all folk efforts to come to terms with the already existing formal Church."<sup>27</sup> The *cultural* Catholicism . . . would represent "those aspects of the religious life of the Catholic which are *connected with, or admixed with, his national, artistic, aesthetic, and social life,*" in general. It is "an expression of (his) cultural milieu in the social anthropological sense."<sup>28</sup>

The history of Roman Catholicism, having suffered the Great and Western Schism, and Gallicanism, Josephinism, and Fabroism, to mention but the most conspicuous and far-reaching events, shows the tremendous strains that particular national social-cultural systems, and national basic personalities, shaped by historic processes and diversified natural and sociocultural

<sup>27</sup> Allen Spitzer, "The Culture Organization of Catholicism," Presidential Address, 19th Annual Convention of the American Catholic Sociological Society, Washington, D.C., 1957, in *The American Catholic Sociological Review*, XIX, No. 1 (March, 1958), 2-3; see also by the same author, "Aspects of Religious Life in Tepoztlan," *Anthropological Quarterly*, XXX, No. 1 (Jan., 1957), and "Notes on a Merida Parish," *Anthropological Quarterly*, XXXI, No. 1 (Jan., 1958).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

environments, put on a normative belief system which has become incorporated in a range of cultures.

The universal laws of social-cultural life are mightier indeed than even a semi-global political power holder. They are mightier than a political power holder who tries to enforce an over-all conformity with an objective belief-system, in this case with the communist "secular religion" (Monnerot), a conformity with all its postulates, as defined and interpreted exclusively by a single power center of the life of a range of nations, markedly differing in point of national character, culture, historic shared experiences as frames of their "collective memories" (Halbwachs). If the communist ideological system would gain in several countries social effectiveness, more or less, over a prolonged period of history, it would survive recurrent crises and endure in a range of societies because it had the chance to become assimilated through acculturation to the various national cultures, and, thus, turned into various national communisms, differing from country to country where at all it retained its normative significance. Recall, Marxism, in the lifetime of a single generation, following the establishment of the First International of Workingmen in London (1864), has become articulated into the conspicuously different variants of socialism of the European "Socialist Tetrarchy" (Werner Sombart), that is, into the "business socialism" of Britain, the "theory oriented socialism of German Party-orthodoxy," and into the "political socialism" of the Latin countries. This three-fold articulation rapidly developed around and after the turn of the century despite the historic fact that nowhere did socialist political groups have the chance to assume governmental responsibilities for the welfare of a people and the productivity of an "infrastructure," a national economy. Is not Marxism-Leninism, actually *Russian national Marxism*, Lenin's purposively directed and accelerated adaptation of Marx-Engels' German-brand Marxism to Russian basic personality and revolu-

tionary sub-cultural tradition? How much faster were bound to develop wider and wider discrepancies, nationally differing in quality and width, between the relative axionormative system of this Soviet official communist creed, on the one hand, and on the other, the also relative axionormative order manifested by the quasi-system of relevant actions of "articulate communist rebels" in some particular non-Russian society, since the Russian leadership has succeeded to expropriate and monopolize the government in their, at present so-called socialist, countries and tended to enforce the patterning of the political, economic, artistic, educational, religious, literary, scientific, and other phases of the social-cultural life of their differing nations in conformity with the patterns of the Soviet sociocultural and ideological system. Consequently, relative to all phases of the particular national cultures a full-fledged "culture struggle" has been waged between the conflicting values and norms of the Soviet official communist ideology, on the one hand, and on the other, those of the various particular traditional cultures, respectively, the human agents who lived by or were to sanction them. Thus, a growing faction of the Communist party of some "socialist" countries, while professing the former, well aware that in the public eye they are held also responsible for the welfare of the population, prompted by the interest of self-survival and encouraged by Soviet developments, they tended to gain and save the possible, and yield more or less, at least in speech reactions, to the postulates of the basic and hardest relative constants of the nation's existence, and detested those who disregarded these postulates. Non-purposively, probably even unaware of the ideological implications of their public comportment, they suffered their condemnation as national Communists.

In the above discussed sense, in terms of national communism's cultural anthropological meaning, they were national Communists as Lenin and Stalin were before them.

There were, no doubt about it, a great many "card carrying

Communists" who ostensibly rejected their party and its official ideology during the Rebellion, and the Party lost more than two-thirds of its membership. Among "articulate communist rebels," however, tergiversation was not in evidence. Imre Nagy never gave up his belief in "the great and noble concept of proletarian internationalism,"<sup>29</sup> and even in the "honeymoon" period of the Rebellion he encouraged his fellow-Communists: "Those who believe in the idea of communism should have faith in the future."<sup>30</sup> There are 127 value-orientations to socialism among the relevant radio and literary communications on record, out of which 16 claimed "socialist reconstruction in the spirit of Marx" and 13 urged a fresh start on a "Hungarian road to socialism." Premier Nagy in his first appeal pledged himself to "pursue a road consistent with Hungarian national peculiarities in building socialism."<sup>31</sup> Hungary's representative committed himself to the "Hungarian road to socialism" then in his new capacity, minister of popular education, also committed himself to the "Hungarian road to socialism" principle<sup>32</sup> and reemphasized his newly—in public—professed creed in the editorial of the Communist party's national daily: "Democratic freedom and the realization of popular self-government in all domains, these are the real foundations upon which we should find the Hungarian road to socialism and whereupon we shall apply the Hungarian way of realizing socialism in all fields of life."<sup>33</sup> The very same was emphasized by the open letter (Oct. 29) of the Intellectuals' Revolutionary Committee which was composed nearly exclusively of Communists and their permanent associates in the defunct Peasant-party. This Committee stated: "The factories and mines should really belong to the workers. Factory landholding we shall not give back to a

<sup>29</sup>Imre Nagy, *On Communism, etc., op. cit.*, p. 241.

<sup>30</sup>On October 31, 1956. Cf. Radio-communications, p. 211.

<sup>31</sup>Oct. 24, 12.10 hr., Radio-communications, p. 21.

<sup>32</sup>Oct. 28, 20.00 hr. Radio-communications, p. 84.

<sup>33</sup>*Szabad Nép* (Free People, Budapest) Oct. 28, 1956.

capitalist or landowner!" The emphatic talk about "Hungarian road to socialism"—in the case of the "articulate communist rebels"—did not usually mean the renouncement of Marxism or Marxism-Leninism, whichever was actually internalized in the individual communicants. But when one turns to the answers given to the questionnaires, especially of relatively young "rebels," one realizes the range of social conceptions and social wishes which were covered by their professed "faithfulness" to either Marxism or Leninism. Five "rebels," for example, qualified themselves as believers in "a Titoist kind of communism" only to declare later their preference for an exchange economy subjected to government control in favor of the common good. In consequence of the very fact that since Stalin's death even the Soviet leaders frequently emphasized that building socialism is the present generation's task, and "socialist systems" are built in the "socialist states" of the Soviet Block, the terms socialism and communism in common usage were indiscriminately used in some of the captive countries. The more so, since there have been no competing two parties left, the one standing for a democratic brand of "socialism" and the other for "communism." Consequently, in Hungary, as well as in Poland, in the popular parlance socialism and communism have been as interchangeably used as this was the Europe-wide usage intermittently for a century, before the victory of the Bolsheviks in Russia. This blurring of the demarcation line between present day "Communists" and "Socialists" was possibly deliberately cultivated by the Soviet new so-called "collective leadership," in 1954-1956, in order to soften Western socialist resistance against the Kremlin-led Communist movement and lure the most significant Socialist-parties in the West into the single fold of a joint world wide revolutionary labor movement.<sup>34</sup> The way of thinking of

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<sup>34</sup>The most significant steps in this direction were the Soviet leaders' state visit to England and their futile joint session with the Parliamentary Committee of the British Labour party in the Parliament Building, and Khrushchev and Mikoyan's talks at the Soviet party's 20th Congress.

# DEFINITION OF NATIONAL COMMUNISM

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**I**T IS the purpose of this paper to examine the nature and meaning of the term “national communism” first by discussing the official Communist interpretation as expressed in the Soviet ideological offensive against this phenomenon, and then by adding certain reflections respecting the most useful definition from a non-Communist point of view.

## I

National communism represents an unprecedented challenge to the long-standing domination of the Communist party of the Soviet Union over the world Communist movement. In the eyes of the Soviet leaders it must be defeated, and defeated ideologically as well as physically. Two Leninist principles of politics are relevant here. One principle is that correct (successful) strategy and tactics can only proceed from correct theory. The other is that any opposition to the ruling clique in the Communist movement not only must be defeated, by force if necessary, but must also be discredited on the level of ideology. One need only look at the record of Lenin's struggles with intra-Bolshevik and intra-Communist oppositional movements to perceive how fundamentally important to the Communist is the ideological victory. Confronted with the challenge of national communism, the C.P.S.U. is obliged to transcend practical means of struggle and seek to define and discredit national communism as an anti-Leninist heresy.

“Our strongest weapon is the ideological weapon. We must not allow the working class to be disarmed.” Thus spoke Nikita

the “articulate communist rebels” of Hungary might be best characterized with the words of a prominent Yugoslav national Communist, Rodoljub Colakovic: “The service that Lenin rendered consisted in the application of Marx’s theory to the special conditions of Russia . . . it is well known that the endorsement of the theory in itself matters but little. What matters, and is significant, it is to know, how should be the theory applied according to the quite special conditions which prevail in each country.”<sup>35</sup> The Communist party must understand “how to draw the widest non-proletarian masses to its own side, since only in this case can the Party become the political factor decisive to the nation’s destiny. In other words, the proletariat’s party should carry on a public policy which is formed both by class—and national considerations . . . national in the broadest sense of the word. It should give proof of its capabilities to lead the nation on a different road than it would be led by the bourgeoisie . . . but on a road the advancement thereupon means the assurance of national progress and bright future.”

These sentences supposedly perfectly express the way of thinking also of the Hungarian articulate “communist rebels.” In their cases, and in those of non-Hungarian national Communists, what actually happened was nothing else but the repetition of the effects of acculturation what all “borrowed” ideological systems, especially *imposed* foreign normative patterns, are bound to suffer, sooner or later, during the course of their socialization (enculturation) in a society (culture) culturally markedly different from the one where they were first socialized. The “Party of Communists in Hungary” founded with Lenin’s approval, by Soviet Party-Secretary Sverlov and Béla Kún (then P.W. in Russia) in the Hotel Dresda of Moscow, on November 4, 1918,<sup>36</sup> and brought into its first sudden blos-

<sup>35</sup> See Rodoljub Colakovic’s article in the *Kommunist*, the leading “official” ideological weekly, (Belgrade), January 1, 1958.

<sup>36</sup> Béla Kún, *Emlekezés Számuelly Tiborra* (Remembrance to T.SZ.) (Budapest: Kossúth Publishers, 1958).

soming by Lenin in 1919, and to its second efflorescence by the Red Army under Stalin's orders, was a strange structure, its ethos provocatively foreign to Hungary's society and culture. Moreover, the Party and its policy, neither in 1919 nor in 1947-1956, had any semblance whatever to the alluring communist ideological germs of "Marxian New Humanism," artificially inseminated into Magyar minds (alas, "*la plante ne ressemble pas au germe*"). The Magyar basic personality (we claim, that if "basic personality" remains at all in a more differentiated society empirically valid, there has been not one but at least two Magyar basic personalities: the cis-Danubean or Pannonian, and the Tiszaen, that of the Magyars of the oriental plains; this hypothesis, however, waits for empirical confirmation), a joint product of geography, inheritance, and social-cultural-political history reacted stronger against, in different ways to, the forcefully implanted Soviet "official" ideology and Communist party policies than the new Russian and Communist Hungarian rulers of the country expected. The Party's action-system, consisting also as "every human action . . . of interdependent changing values"<sup>37</sup> had—at least in the case of its most significant national faction—suffered marked changes in its imported "official" value system. In the course of the last fateful ten years, and under the influence of deprivational experiences, also in a great many party members' personal and family life, "every value included in it (in the "official" ideology—the writer) became factually connected with some other values; its empirical content and meaning became modified by these connections. What was done to any value did depend directly or indirectly on what was done to other values, and vice versa. The continuity of the action from its beginning to its completion presupposes a certain dynamic order of interdependence between specific changes which the values included in it undergo during the performance."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Florian Znaniecki, *Cultural Sciences* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952), p. 392.

<sup>38</sup> To accentuate the relevance of the quotation the text's original present tense was changed into the past. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

What in the minds of "articulate communist rebels" happened was that "exploitation," the "official ideology's" cardinal negative value "became factually connected with some other values" those of the "people" as the "Magyar people," this conceived as the "Hungarian nation," and this new symbolic linkage brought into a new perspective the Party's enduring and dominant political action system, it changed in their consciousness its "meaning" and worth, and induced the "definition of the problem solving form of action," that is, what course of action should the Party take, and what their faction should take for this purpose. In order to illustrate the typical relevant change in the value-system of the articulate communist rebels' personal ethos, the self-explanatory words of Zoltan Zelk, one of the prominent "communist rebels," a poet, will be cited: "No, and repeatedly no, I shall renounce not a bit of my principles, nothing at all from my convictions which once, in my youth, led me into the labor movement. By now I already know well enough that I did cast off these principles, the pure creed of my youth, just then when I became one of these who believed that a true cause [in his case: New Humanism through social revolution in Marxist-Leninist terms—the writer] may be served without humaneness, without attachment to moral standards, and with the exclusion of national values."<sup>39</sup> The quoted text clearly indicates the new symbolic linkage between the values of the social revolutionary ideology, the moral values of a secular (anthropocentric) humanitarianism, and "national values." The Rebellion dramatized the cultural opposition to the imposed and rigidly applied Soviet tenets, and accelerated the acculturative process.

The new kind of ethos which developed more or less gradually and slowly or rather rapidly in the depth of many person-

<sup>39</sup>From Zoltan Zelk's talk (transl. by the writer) held in the Congress of the Federation of Writers, Sept. 17, 1956. Mind, the Congress was held and, consequently, the cited sentences were uttered five weeks before the demonstrations of Octobr 23 with which the Rebellion got underway. T. Csicsery-Rónay, ed., *Anthology op. cit.*, p. 8.

ality systems found its symbolic expression. It has been the product of the conflict between the Hungarian culture and the foreign social ideological system, internalized in closely related personalities with an underlying Magyar basic personality, who had massive deprivational experiences with those who were to enact their political lead-and bureaucratic key-roles according to their common "official" ideological system in a rapidly changing cultural, in a critical social-political, and a highly dynamic affective situation. This "product" is *on the personal level* a state of mind, a dynamic compromise between earlier conflicting value-orientations related to conflicting roles and loyalties from the strain of which the person tried to escape. *In the realm of ideas*, this "product" might not be called national communism even if a reliable opinion research would reveal (what the writer strongly denies) that the "radically socialist" minded refugee rebels are Communists in terms of Marxism-Leninism. Some of them in speech reactions stuck to and would cling to this label, especially when they "suspect" that the interrogator favors "capitalism" and is an "anti-Communist." Some would do this in an *epatez les bourgeois* mood.

By an attempt to obtain a comprehensive view of all the pertinent data, the writer reached the more impressionistic than empirically substantiated conclusion that among the so-called Hungarian articulate "communist rebels" in 1957-58 abroad, there was *relatively most frequently* a non-systematized ideological perspective *distributed* in which a diffused love-attachment to the Magyar people, conceived as a nation, is integrated, partly, with the values of a non-ideological type of anthropocentric (secular) humanism, partly, with social conceptions and volitions strikingly similar to the mentality and social aims supposedly prevalent in the parliamentary representation of the British Labour Party. For this reason it would seem to be much more warranted to denote by national socialism, instead of national communism, the ideological perspective which was in

1956-1958 presumably dominant among Hungarian articulate "communist rebels." However, since "national socialism" in the "public mind" is still closely associated, even identified, with *Hitlerism*, the writer is reluctant to suggest such a change in its labeling. Moreover, several Hungarian "national Communists" would probably protest—at least in private—against their "disqualification" in their ideological status of a Communist, and by doing so, they would emphatically point out that theirs is "a communism conceived in its ideal purity," as a New Humanism, and they are in this sense Communists, and as such they are as well humanists as good Magyar patriots. They would add, what was repeatedly told to the writer, that their communism should not be confused with Bolshevism which, in their opinion, is a corrupted form of, and an abuse perpetrated with, "pure communism" for Russian imperialistic purposes.<sup>40</sup> Why are a significant number of "communist rebels" adamant in identifying themselves as Communists? Their reason probably differs in a number of individual instances; this might be even multiple

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<sup>40</sup>Such communist idealists fail to realize that the basic communist principle that social production geared too, and *harmonized* with, justified social consumption, planned and organized on the basis of public property of the means of production, necessarily leads to a totalitarian type of statism, and to the accumulation of social power in favor of a few. That this phenomenon, the oligarchization of communist leadership, manifests itself whenever a serious, persistent, and organized effort is made to put communistic conceptions into practice on national level. Consequently, democratic communism is *contradictio in adjecto*, since democracy means a wide distribution of political power while the realization in social practice of the social-economic conceptions of any communistic system proposed for modern industrialized societies implies, or, if not yet applied, when put into practice would necessarily entail, the concentration of political power on the top echelon on national or supernational level. The writer ventures to take here liberty to transcend the limitations of his role of a sociologist and make a meta-sociological remark: A system may be called humanistic when it objectively tends to promote the unfolding of human potentialities through making effective a human condition, called personal freedom, which according to the accumulated experience of man, seems to be most effectively conducive to the development of human faculties, also of the "governed." How could deserve the name of New Humanism a system which due to its economic and legal conceptions would in practice necessarily increase, then tend to perpetuate, the close dependency of the popular masses on the overall leadership of a few?

(e.g., unshattered idealistic belief in "communism"; heavy personal "investment" in the movement; reference group pressure; a compulsive non-conformity relative, or defiance against, a deprivational milieu in which anti-communism is paramount). A significant number among them, no doubt about it, did not conceal (especially in interviews in Canada and completing a questionnaire, when all safeguards of anonymity were given, as in the present case) their value-orientations, and clearly stated that they still believe in Marxism-Leninism (as in their "secular religion"). And, interviews and non-prearranged communications revealed that this belief had an established affective dimension in their personality system. The symbolic linkage between Marxist-Leninist and such eventually new cardinal values to them as "Hungarian people," "national independence," "sovereignty of the Hungarian state," whether this linkage has been for long present in their personal ethos, or it is of recent (of post-Stalinian) origin, by itself does not necessarily induce hard-boiled Communists to change their inveterate ideological commitment for something else. "Else," another ideological system, could rarely obtain an access to them. The Soviet ideology, if firmly internalized in their personality, blocked—all deeply interiorized ideologies do—any other ideology's way into the personality system. Moreover, the Party cared, more or less, effectively for keeping its active members inaccessible to the close, strong, and systematic influence of any other ideology. "Communist rebels," therefore, were acquainted with but one, the Marxist-Leninist ideological system. (Who were Socialists, on their level, could hardly identify essential difference between the old Socialist and the new Communist creed. After the two parties' merger in 1948, their ideological differences were not discussed.) They not only possessed one (what is normal), but knew only a single, frame of reference to which they could refer their social experiences. (Hence, what was already stated, they qualified in Marxist-Leninist terms even

their rejection of the pre-Rebellion Hungarian social reality, and the public policies of their party.) What would have meant to them, on account of their closely conditioned way of thinking and experience, if they had innerly and publicly rejected their Soviet ideological frame of reference? Nothing less would have followed than the sudden expansion of a frosty vacuum in their personality. Some of them, as the writer, experienced this, during and after the Rebellion, in the few cases of intimate friends, and of others in situations which make a man speak out his mind, in whose personality the "official ideology" broke down, lost its validity, and filling out its former place a painful inner frost, a mental vacuum made felt itself and tortured them (horror vacui). As a grave injury by frost is sensed as a burn, they felt as if it would consume their very self; they suffered the loss of their self-identity. (The writer experienced this psychical state in the case of a prominent intellectual "communist rebel" who completely lost his "secular religion" without developing a genuine belief in another creed.) Full of fear from the materialization of this well known danger to the psyche, the horrifying ideological vacuum, quite a number of "communist rebels" adamantly clung to their social myth and declined with a silent resolve to be identified as national Communists, i.e., heretics in terms of their "orthodoxy." In this respect, however, it seems to be warranted to discriminate between veteran "true believers" among our articulate "communist rebels" (e.g., Imre Nagy, playwright Gyula Háry, Prof. George Lukács, Stalin-prize-winner Tamás Aczél, authors Tibor Déry and Zoltán Zelk) who spent a half life span or even more in the movement, and had a tremendous "investment" therein, on the one side, and on the other, those "communist rebels" in whose personality communism was but skin deep encultured, and joined the Party when their homeland was already under massive Soviet occupation, and membership in the Party meant privilege, comfort, and not exposure to danger, persecution, as for the pioneers of yore.

Quantitative data in this respect (on the range of variation of "religiosity," based also on the very same objective "secular creed") are necessarily unreliable, and a veteran student of such phenomena has to draw more on his "feel," qualitative data, and experience than on the statistical aspect of his data. In the writer's *impressionistic judgment* "most" (vague expression, this is readily confessed) of the articulate "veteran Communists" among the "rebels" (*the first mentioned category*) defined themselves as "we Magyar Communists" ("mi Magyar Kommunisták), and by this self-identification they avoided the heretic national communist designation, though they bring discretely to the fore their membership in, and identification with, the Hungarian people as a nation. The accent, however, is on the second term: their belongingness to the communist camp is stressed, to the New Jerusalem in becoming, in which they intend to represent a clearly distinct popular color, the Magyar color. The "communist rebels" of the *second category* usually identify themselves as "we communist Magyars" (*mi kommunista magyarok*). The accent here is emphatically put on the second term, on membership in Magyardom, as persons they define themselves Magyars, and not Communists, as the former. They symbolize their intent to be identified as integral part of the Magyar people, equated with the Hungarian nation in the climate of opinion of 1956.

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This study has been confined to a plurality of meanings of national communism. Four were suggested, *and*, as their testing showed, two of them are supported by our data on the Hungarian Rebellion of 1956. Consequently, when the writer reaches here the conclusion that the manifest, probably, dominant typical social evaluative and normative conceptions of Hungarian articulate "communist rebels" were patently at odds with any kind of communism, endorsed as goal-state of official policies in the present phase of the industrial age, it should be stressed

that certain measure of accuracy of this judgment is claimed exclusively concerning the relevant Hungarian collective occurrence and dominant type of personal behavior. In other words, it is here not claimed to be empirically valid relative to "Titoism" or "Gomulkaism," if since 1960 one is entitled at all to use this, in 1956-1959 meaningful term, let alone concerning national communism in general, as a hypothetical social uniformity.

### *Annex*

#### *Sources of Data And Procedures of Their Procurement*

The researcher obtained the data here used from the following sources and through the procedures below outlined:

(a) all radio messages diffused in Hungary between Oct. 22 and Nov. 9, 1956—even incomplete sentences included—as monitored by any American agency of any Hungarian broadcasting station, established or temporary, stable or mobile;<sup>41</sup>

(b) listed demands, programs of student—and other—Hungarian groups, expressed and diffused through leaflets and placards, then some by short-lived press organs, and the similarly diffused programs some of the newly founded political groups. These were partly available in the Hungarian Archive at Munich and through Hungarian student organizations in the West;

(c) Hungarian weekly press and periodical material, accessible in the Library of Congress, from the second half of 1956;

(d) a complete anthology of highly relevant Hungarian poetry<sup>42</sup> containing all poems and some other communications

<sup>41</sup> *A Magyar Forradalom és Szabadságharc A Hazai Rádióadások Tükrében, 1956 Oktober 23-November 9* (The Hungarian Revolution and Battle for Freedom Mirrored by Radio-communications in the Homeland), Magyarországi Események (Hungarian Events Series), New York: Free Europe Press, Div. of Free Europe Committee, Ann. VIII, No. 10-11, (1957), in the following briefly: Radio-communications;

<sup>42</sup> T. Csicsery-Rómay, ed. *Költők Forradalma* (A Revolution of Poets) (Washington, D.C.: Officina, 1957).

of prominent writers with any significant social or political allusion which were published in 1956, before, during and right after the Rebellion. Collections of Hungarian poems written in prison have been—no matter how valuable—for obvious reasons left unconsidered:

(e) Imre Nagy's and other prominent "rebels" published communications.

Other sources of information utilized:

(a) Over 7,000 printed questionnaires of 16 pages with 125 questions, mostly with an open end, were distributed among the relevant refugees in America and Europe. 1,530 were sufficiently well completed by male respondents and returned to the writer.

(b) After a trial run with the first text of the questionnaire mentioned, and a trial "focused group interview" made with the technique described by Robert Merton and associates (Columbia University) together with freedom-fighter refugees at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in March, 1957, the researcher made a series of focussed group interviews and individual depth interviews with participants in the Hungarian rebellion in eight American cities (six of them in the East and Toronto, Ontario, Canada).

It is stressed that exclusively primary sources were utilized.

## 2 MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY SLAVIC INSTITUTE PAPERS

Khrushchev in February 1957 at a reception in Moscow given by the Bulgarian Embassy.<sup>1</sup> Once again the importance of ideology as a factor in modern politics was underscored by a Soviet leader. From Lenin's time down to the present, without exception, every leader of the world Communist movement has stressed the role of ideology in the Communist struggle for power and the expansion of that power. Often inadequately understood by non-Communist students of communism and Soviet reality, nonetheless the ideological weapon is a most powerful means of political struggle and a vitally necessary instrument in sustaining Communist control over approximately one-third of humanity today. If that ideological grip were to be weakened and if the Communist-dominated camp were indeed to become "ideologically disarmed," then a major weapon, albeit perhaps not the strongest, would have been wrested from the Communist arsenal. Precisely such a possibility has been created in recent years by the developments, practices, and ideas encompassed within the term "national communism."

Soviet Communists have always emphasized—and most intensively during the last two years—the necessity of unity, i.e., cooperation and discipline, within the Communist-dominated camp. By unity is meant not only ideological unity but also unity in policy and practice. Such unity is pictured as both a defensive and an offensive weapon against capitalism and imperialism. Two different and intrinsically antagonistic worlds exist, in the Communist outlook, and although it is proposed that these worlds—the socialist and the capitalist—can for the time being coexist peacefully, it is not at all permissible for Communists to reduce ideological barriers between the two systems or to compromise on matters of dogma. Consider Khrushchev's explanation of the term "peaceful coexistence" which he offered in his address to the Supreme Soviet on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the October Revolution.<sup>2</sup> Coexistence, the

<sup>1</sup> *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, IX, No. 8, 35 (*Pravda*, February 20, 1957).

<sup>2</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 45, 3-18, 20 (*Pravda*, November 7, 1957).



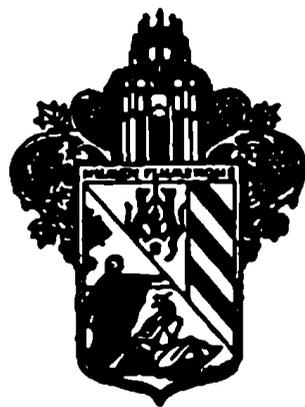
MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
SLAVIC INSTITUTE  
PAPERS

NO. 6

SHOULD COMMUNISM BE TAUGHT  
IN HIGH SCHOOL

BY  
JAMES T. MURPHY  
*Marquette University*

Delivered at the Slavic Institute Conference on  
"The Improvement of Teaching of Soviet Union and  
Slavic History in High Schools." March 5, 1960.



*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.



## SHOULD COMMUNISM BE TAUGHT IN HIGH SCHOOL\*

BY JAMES T. MURPHY, *Marquette University*

**T**HE title of this paper is "Should Communism be taught in High School?" Before trying to answer this question, let me indicate in what sense the words *communism* and *high school* will be used.

The word *communism* is used to designate that materialistic philosophy with roots principally in the philosophies of Hegel, Engels, and Marx, and further extended in the writings of Lenin and Stalin and their followers. *Communism* is used, then, to designate that baffling political philosophy that has been for the last forty years the guiding light of the 15 Soviet Republics in its avowed goal of world domination.

The word *high school* is used in the sense of any secondary educational institution supported by public funds, of whose graduates some at least expect to enter college. This distinguishes it from the denominational secondary school where some religious instruction, at least, is provided; and from the so-called "trade" or "vocational" school where not a great deal of stress is placed on literature, history, and the liberal arts.

Before proceeding, perhaps at this point it would be well to make a further distinction: the distinction between studying *theory* and studying the *effect of theory*. There is certainly a great difference between studying the principles and speculative conclusions of a philosophical system and the study of the overall effect of such a system through the penetrating lens of

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\* Paper given by James T. Murphy of the Marquette University Philosophy Department, at the Conference on the Improvement Of Teaching Soviet Union and Slavic History In High School at the Brooks Memorial Union of Marquette University on Saturday, March 5, 1960. The conference was sponsored by the Slavic Institute of Marquette University.

history. For example, there is a wide gap between investigating the intricate theories of atomic physics and investigating, through history, the effect that applying such theories to nuclear warfare have had on mankind since August of 1945. Knowing the effect, one is quite capable of appreciating the inherent dangers and the need for vigilant control without ever knowing the significance, say, of "critical mass" or "heavy water."

With these distinctions in mind, then, let us turn to the question at hand: should communism be taught in high school? My answer is no. But bear in mind that the word *communism* is used to designate an intricate philosophical system, not the historical effects of that system. I should like to advance two general arguments against teaching the philosophy of communism in high school.

The first of these arguments I owe for the most part to my colleague in the Philosophy Department here at Marquette, Dr. Richard Connell. At present he is lecturing on Dialectical Materialism in the undergraduate College of Liberal Arts. He has had considerable experience with the difficulties in teaching the philosophy of communism even to college undergraduates. The principal difficulty seems to reduce itself to this: the major proponents of the communist dialectic were shrewd, clever, and intellectually slippery; to refute their theories requires an intricate knowledge of logic, as well as infinite patience in tracking down and indicating the fallacies contained in all the points they have made. To neglect this part is to lose the battle, because if you overlook anything, the slightest detail, they win. The basic writings of the philosophy of communism, then, admit of no easy condensation or summarizing, no easy-to-digest explanations or refutations.

With this in mind, then, it should be obvious that on this level, at least, communism would be quite beyond the reach of the high school student. With practically no training in logic, he would be totally unprepared to understand the errors in-

volved; with little experience in the area of abstract ideas, he would be completely baffled by the simplest presentation of communist theory.

The second argument against teaching communism in high school is a bit more complex. It stems from the present general situation in our public high schools.

Let us assume that the philosophy of communism is to be taught at the secondary school level. We have already seen that it is quite difficult to teach communism in a condensed form; but this would be the only practical method of getting the ideas across. However, before any board of education would permit the introduction of communism into the curriculum of a high school, I am sure that we would all agree that the board would demand positive assurance that these teachings would be refuted, absolutely, positively, and with no lingering doubts in the minds of the students. And this is certainly reasonable, for parents would demand this assurance as well.

If communism is to be taught even in its most condensed form, there is no possible way of avoiding mention of the three so-called basic tenets of communism. The whole structure of communist philosophy rests upon these three principles. Without these fundamental tenets, then, communism has no meaning, no purpose. To omit these three foundations of communism in any explanation of communist philosophy would completely distort the true picture. They would have to be discussed. They would have to be discussed in considerable detail. And, let us not forget, they would have to be refuted. The three basic tenets of communism would have to be refuted, absolutely, positively, with no doubt lingering in the minds of the little ones.

And that is the crux of the problem. How can the refutation be effected? In the present set-up in public high schools, how can the fundamentals of communism be discussed with the positive guarantee that these pernicious errors will be exposed as error, shown to be completely contrary to the traditional

standards of morality? The answer is: the refutation cannot be effected; the guarantee to expose the errors as such cannot be given. Let us see why.

The procedure will be to examine the three basic tenets of communism briefly and separately, and then following each individual examination to show the inherent difficulties in refuting the particular error.

The first principle of the philosophy of communism is that there is no God. Communists are proudly, unashamedly atheistic both in theory and in practice. What happens when the communists deny God? They deny every virtue and every value that originates with God: they deny the function of faith, of hope, of charity; deny the necessity of prudence and justice; they scorn the basic rights of the family; hold in cold contempt the inviolable dignity of the human person. They substitute the State for God: the State becomes the end-all of life; man lives, exists, for the State; the State does not exist for man, it does not exist to ensure that man will attain his ultimate goal, secure in the knowledge that his rights are guaranteed, his liberty protected, his freedom assured. What next? There is no moral law; there are no absolute standards of truth and righteousness. An entire civilized code of moral and ethical values is destroyed so that the communists are free to erect in the place of these whatever new moral and ethical standards their vicious purposes demand.

Meanwhile back at the high school . . . How do you refute this fundamental principle of communism? Quite simply: you prove that God does exist; that faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, all have their function and value; that the basic rights of the family and the individual are unassailable. And how does a teacher do all of this? The direct approach is indicated—for proving the existence of God, why not the traditional Five Proofs: from motion, from the nature of efficient causality, from possibility and necessity, from the hierarchy of being, and from

the order of the universe? But reduced to their simplest elements these proofs to be appreciated require an elementary grasp of logic, philosophy of nature, and metaphysics. Going on to the area of virtue and the rights of man, the demonstrations here require a basic familiarity with the notion of the human soul, its faculties or powers, and man's natural quest for happiness. So you see, the problem multiplies.

But all of these obstacles could, in time, be overcome. We have learned about these things. There is nothing to suggest that, with sufficient background, high school students could not also learn them. The real problem goes well beyond this point. Remember I am speaking of public high schools. What happens when Carl, and Lester, and Shiela, and Irene, and Justin inform Mom and Dad that Miss Nagle and Mr. Vernon are teaching religion or theology or all about that God-stuff? I can see the headlines, hear the shrill vociferations of outraged stupidity now. Imagine the gathering of the vultures—all of the committees, the councils, the associations. Think of the editorials, the speeches, the resolutions, the petitions. Think of poor Miss Nagle, poor Mr. Vernon. The fact is that God has been effectively excluded from public high schools — and it is not our purpose here to discuss why — and any attempt to restore Him seems to be a violation of one's constitutional rights.

The second basic tenet of communism is that man is a material machine. To the Communist, man is merely matter in motion, nothing more. Man is a body, completely describable in terms of the laws of chemistry and physics. The important factor here is that man has no soul. There is no spiritual side to human nature. Man has no significant value as an individual. Man has no guarantee of continuity of life. When man dies, that's it. To speak of immortality is an absurdity, because this implies a spiritual principle within man that cannot corrupt. But man is not spiritual; he is just a lump of matter, a highly developed lump of matter, but only matter just the same.

How does one refute this principle of communist philosophy? By proving the existence of a spiritual soul through careful analysis of those activities of man that transcend the material. This would mean familiarizing high school students with the fundamentals of rational psychology: matter, form of life, vital activity, soul, powers. This would be time-consuming but not impossible.

Again the practical difficulty stems from good old Mom and Dad, the good old committees, councils, and associations, the good old editorials, speeches, resolutions, and petitions. You can hear the comments now. "What's all this soul stuff they're teaching?" "What do they mean immortality — I know that when I go, that's it — what are they telling my kids?" "I've been a surgeon for twenty-six years, and I've never seen a soul yet." "This is a violation of the First Amendment!" And so it would go. Not all would do this — certainly not. But a sufficiently noisy group would carry the banners far and wide. The predilection for forming societies which is to be met with among the degenerate and hysterical may assume different forms.

The third fundamental principle of communism is that man is determined economically. The individual qualities of human intelligence, personality, emotional, and religious life, merely reflect the economic environment in which he was raised. In the last analysis what we think, what we feel, what we believe, whom we love and whom or what we worship is merely an expression of our economically determined background. The environment is primarily concerned with and the result of economic forces, so in the final analysis man is a determined economic being.

The most significant conclusion of this error is the denial of man's free will. To refute the error one must have a sound appreciation of the metaphysics of the true and the good, and one must understand the functions and inter-relationship of

intellect and will. All of this is within the grasp of the average intelligence.

But again imagine the furor that this would cause — a discussion of the freedom of the will. And here even the voices of integrity, sincerity, virtue and good-will would be raised in shocked and wounded anger. Protestant, Catholic, Jew — yes, tell the children that their wills are free; but tell them the truth — not that Protestant clap-trap; not that Catholic nonsense; not that Jewish poppy-cock. Minister, priest, rabbi — all would be in the thick of the fray. The result? No free-will in high school.

In summary, then, I cannot think of these three fundamental principles of communist philosophy being properly refuted in a public high school. Consequently, I can see no way whereby they could be discussed on this level. And without them, of course, no adequate grasp of communist philosophy is possible.

But at this juncture an objection occurs. Why can't we assume that the average high school student is adequately trained at home. He believes in God, accepts the existence of an immortal soul, and admits to the freedom of his will. Upon this assumption we can refer to Aristotle and surely go along with what he has to say in Bk I, c. 3 of the *Nichomachean Ethics*:

Any one who is to listen intelligently to lectures about what is noble and just, and, generally, about the subjects of political science must be brought up in good habits. For the fact is the starting-point, and if this is sufficiently plain to him, he will not at the start need the reason as well; and the man who has been well brought up has or can easily get starting points.

With reference to this objection, however, let me ask: how many teachers in school could guarantee categorically that the students under his supervision believe in God, the immortality of the soul, and the freedom of the will? How many would want to act on the assumption that all of his students did, in fact,

Soviet Communist leader stated, does not mean that there were no contradictions between socialism (i.e., as practiced in the Communist bloc) and capitalism. Nor does coexistence mean that full harmony could ever be established between the Communist-dominated camp and the non-Communist. No true reconciliation would ever be possible: "The ideological differences are irreconcilable; they will exist." A few days after he gave this speech, Khrushchev answered in the *affirmative* the question posed by Henry Shapiro of the United Press as to whether peaceful coexistence was possible while ideological war was being waged on an international scale.<sup>3</sup> The Soviet image of contemporary international politics therefore remains one of unrelenting continuation of the cold war since compromise in the realm of ideology is unequivocally barred. Thus there can be no "peaceful coexistence of ideologies," as a *Kommunist* editorial once expressed it, for such would mean "ideological disarmament."<sup>4</sup>

The difficulty of imposing and maintaining unity within the Communist-dominated world has vastly increased since the closing years of the Second World War. The tasks confronting the Communist party of the Soviet Union in its drive to maintain hegemony over the international Communist movement have grown enormously. The expansion of the Communist world in the post-war years has been little short of tremendous. The era of "socialism in one country," the era of the "Soviet sixth" of the world has come to an end. No longer is the Soviet Union the only state putting into practice the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, as it was during the inter-war period (with, of course, the minor exceptions of Tannu Tuva, now incorporated within the U.S.S.R., and Outer Mongolia). The single isolated Communist-dominated country has been joined by a whole group of new Communist-dominated states, which now number thirteen in all. The following facts graphically drive home the great expansion of communism: before the war less than one-tenth of

<sup>3</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 46, 5 (*Pravda*, November 19, 1957).

<sup>4</sup> *Current Digest*, VIII, No. 32, 3-4, 31.

accept these truths, and that, therefore, it would be perfectly safe to expose these students to the attractions of communist philosophy? Best leave this to further discussion.

So much, then, for the two arguments against teaching the philosophy of communism in high school. But the matter cannot rest here. It is vitally important that high school youngsters become aware of the awful menace, the constant dangers, of this global disease. Then, and only then, will they begin to devote their own individual efforts to effecting a strong, patriotic stand against this hateful menace, whose only purpose is to destroy all that is noble in man.

If it is not practical, not feasible, to disclose the menace of communism to high school students through the labyrinth of speculative philosophy, what other avenue is there? Recall the distinction made between studying theory and studying the effects of applying theory. The answer is obviously through the eye of history—sociology, politics, and economics, as well—but principally history. Here the terrible effects of communism can be fully realized. From a most cursory glance at the history of communism, the high school students will soon realize in a very graphic manner the lies, the deceptions, the fraud; the torture, the maiming, the murder; the hatred, the avarice, the treachery of communism. All can be exposed as the characteristics, the hallmarks, of communism by the bright eye of history. The facts are irrefutable; the examples concretely to the point. It remains for those in positions of responsibility to seek the most efficient means of inaugurating suitable programs to fill this pressing need. That is why we are gathered here today. And in the spirit of this gathering, may we press forward effectively to attain this end, mindful of the words we read in the Prophet Isaias: "Watchman, what of the night; Watchman, what of the night."

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
SLAVIC INSTITUTE  
PAPERS

NO. 7

A SURVEY OF STUDENT KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE SOVIET UNION  
AND ITS HISTORY  
IN A WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL  
MAY, 1960

AUTHOR'S NAME WITHHELD



*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.



A SURVEY OF STUDENT KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE SOVIET UNION  
AND ITS HISTORY  
IN A WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL

(Author's Name Withheld)

Preface

**T**HE greatest treasure of every nation is its younger generation. Even the materially richest and wealthiest nation of the world, the American people have no greater and more *invaluable* possession than its children and youth.

Consequently, our chief concern should be the education of our youth, because that is the only way to preserve the intellectual, economical, political and moral stature of our nation amongst the nations of the world as a whole.

But it is a sad fact that the teachers who have to educate our youth are the worst paid profession in the United States of America lacking also the proper social status in society which is dominated by a rather materialistic system of values. It is no wonder that after World War II many European guest professors, especially also the D-P university professors, who were integrated into American education, paying proper respect for some of our achievements in education, voiced severe criticism and warnings regarding many shortcomings in this field.

As a matter of fact, only the sputnik seriously disquieted American professional and public opinion about our educational system and forced them to start some self-criticisms and systematic comparisons of American education with European continental education on one hand, and Soviet on the other. The

rather extensive literature, which appeared in the last couple of years, is the result of this public concern.\*

For a decade Marquette University's Slavic Institute has warned American public opinion about the existing crisis in American education. It cited research, especially American Slavistics, using this term in the broadest sense and including in it also the so-called "Russian and Soviet Studies." (c.f. *The Nationality Problem of the Soviet Union and Russian Communist Imperialism* [Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1952], pp XIV-XXI, 163-96, 339-418.) Our Slavic Institute manifested its deep concern regarding the education in our high schools by the organization of many public lectures. On February 14, 1959, Professor Smal-Stocki, spoke before nearly 200 Catholic teachers in lectures about how to teach Eastern European and Soviet History in the high schools. A special conference was arranged on the "Improvement of Teaching of Soviet Union and Slavic History in High Schools" (March 5, 1960), in which special papers were given by Professor Robert Byrnes, Indiana University, Professor Roman Smal-Stocki and Professor James F. Murphy, Marquette University. The following made considerable contributions as panelists: Sister M. Joel, O.S.F., Alverno College; Sister Mary Joseph, S.S.N.D., Mount Mary College; Sister M. Justine, O.S.F., Cardinal Stritch College; Professor Bela Kovrig, Marquette University; Professor Kermit McKenzie, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Professors Herbert Rice and David Willis, Marquette University.

In continuing our efforts to improve the teaching of East European history we decided to determine the present level of the knowledge about the Soviet Union (which parades presently as the Slavic empire and leader of Pan-Slavism) in the senior classes of a Wisconsin high school. A graduate student, who was a high school teacher, carried out a survey with the permission

\* We are sorry to say that very often the whole attention of the authors is concentrated mainly on the improvement of sciences, but not of liberal arts. cf. Dr. James B. Conant, *The American Highschool Today* (McGraw-Hill, 1959).

of his proper authorities. For obvious reasons, the name of the student, high school and its location are withheld. The results of this survey are published here as a "Paper of the Slavic Institute." This survey was executed on a small scale, but its results deserve very serious evaluation for the level of knowledge about the Soviet Union amongst seniors and some teachers in Wisconsin high schools; the conclusion and recommendations merit immediate consideration.

Not only are the simple statistics concerning the wrong answers shocking but the evaluation of the types of the wrong answers shows terrible negligence in our education, especially in geography.

The cases are not isolated. On a blind map of the Eurasian continent the following *seas* were mislocated: *White Sea* in the Caspian Sea; *Caspian Sea* in the Aral Lake, Indian Ocean, Aegean Sea, Baltic Sea; *Black Sea* in the Baikal Lake, the Aral Lake, Indian Ocean, Caspian Sea, North Sea, Mediterranean Sea; *Baltic Sea*, in the Mediterranean Sea, Norwegian Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Lake Balkash, Adriatic Sea, Red Sea; *White Sea*, in the Black Sea, Lake Balkash, Sea of Okhotsk.

Other geographical mislocations were: Rivers—*Ob* in the Amur; *Dnieper* in the Ural river; *Ural* river in the Ob, *Amur* in the Red Sea. Mountains—*Urals*, south of the Baikal Sea, in the Caucasus, in the Carpathians, Alps; *Caucasus* in the Himalayas, in the Alps, over China; *Himalayas*, around the Lake Baikal. Peninsulas—*Kamchatka* was located over Scandinavia, India, Korea, Kola Peninsula. Cities—*Moscow* was located in the Urals, in Mongolia, near Port Arthur; *Kiev*, in the Urals, in Mongolia; *Leningrad*, near Vladivostok, in Turkmenistan; *Vladivostok*, in the Urals, in China near Peking.

Some of the blind maps were returned without any locations marked at all.

Not only were students misinformed, but the faculty members were also to blame. Faculty test sheets were not satisfactory.

Some sheets were returned blank and some showed gross mislocations: Seas—*Caspian Sea* located in the Baltic, in the Black, in the Aral Sea; *Baltic Sea*, in the Black Sea; *Black Sea* in the Caspian Sea; *White Sea* in the Lakes Aral, Balkash, Baikal. Rivers—*Ural River* mixed up with the Don; *Volga* with the Don; *Don* with the Volga, the Ural river. Mountains—*Urals*, located in the Caucasus, in the Himalayas, Carpathians, west or south of the Baikal Sea; *Caucasus*, south of Lake Baikal; *Himalayas*, south of Lake Baikal. Peninsulas—*Kola*, over Scandinavia; *Kamchatka* over Taimyr Peninsula. Cities—*Kiev* in Turkmenistan, Odessa, on the Don, in Khabarovsk, near Vladivostok; *Vladivostok*, on the Don, at Khabarovsk, in the Urals, on the Lena near the Arctic Ocean; *Leningrad* on the Ob river near the Arctic Ocean in Siberia, near Moscow, in the Urals; *Moscow* in Mongolia.

This geographic vacuum is connected with the ethnographic in the answer to the question: "What nationalities proclaimed their independence during the Russian Revolution." Many of the students could not name a single nationality, but many included in the answer: Austria, Turkey, Germany, Serbs, Czechs, Czechoslovakia (sic!), Yugoslavia (sic!), Inina (?), Denmark, Yugoslavia, Russians, Venezuela (sic!), Yuoslavia (sic!). Very seldom were Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, or Lithuania, mentioned. The teachers answered this question only in a few cases, and confused two or three names like White Russians, Billa (sic!) Russian, Ukrainians, Georgians, Fins, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Moskovits, Mongolians.

We do not blame the teachers because they themselves are the victims of an American high school and university educational system which needs fundamental reforms regarding Eastern European, Slavic and Soviet matters. We do not blame them, because even a world newspaper of the rank of the *New York Times* brought on the first page the headline (on July 11, 1954) "Rising Danube Flood Hits Prague."

But nevertheless the necessity of teaching geography in the high schools is an absolute necessity for the teaching of Eastern European and Soviet History. After presenting a paper ("How to Teach Russian History on the College Level") at one of the last annual meetings of the American Historical Association in Washington, D.C., the speaker got a question from an American professor of a state university. "How can we teach history if students locate India in the north of Moscow?" Consequently, the facts contained in this paper, although gathered on a small scale in Wisconsin seem to actually reflect a national phenomenon.

Another sad fact is that even teachers can not give the proper name for "U.S.S.R." and answer "United States of Soviet Republic" (sic!), "United Soviet Socialist Republic"; many do not know what "N.E.P." means and interpret it as "National Economic Proletariat." It is no wonder that the answers of their students appear as: U.S.S.R. means "United States Soviet Russia," "Union Soviet Socialist Russia," "Universal Socialist Soviet of Russia," N.E.P. means "National Education Program" and N.K.V.D. means "Nikita Krushch (sic!) Victory Day."

Other questions were answered in a similar manner. The spellings of the names in question were terrible in the majority of cases.

We regard the privilege of educating and teaching our youth as a public trust which also has moral obligations. One of them is to alarm the proper authorities of our high schools, that the curriculum must be supplemented in the proper way.

We are not indulging here in "criticism for the sake of criticism," but intend to call the attention of our colleagues to the necessity of reforms. It is a very encouraging fact that our university students themselves are deeply convinced of this urgent necessity.

Roman Smal-Stocki  
Alfred J. Sokolnicki

## I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It was a rainy day in England in September of 1938. An umbrella-carrying statesman announced, hopefully, that there was to be "peace in our time." Little did this man realize that the umbrella he carried, and the conference he had attended at Munich were to become symbols of futile appeasement. With historical hindsight we may all discern the farce of granting Adolph Hitler the Sudetenland. Many of the historians and statesmen in 1938 thought that this pact would fulfill Hitler's desires in Europe. A few—including Winston Churchill who was to succeed Neville Chamberlin as the Prime Minister of Great Britain—had foresight enough to rebuke the prime minister for his actions. An objective study of the economic, military, and political structure of the Germany of 1938, along with a survey of *Mein Kampf*, had enabled these men to see beyond the shallow promises that Hitler made in swindling those who loved peace.

Today a similar situation exists. The Soviet Union crows for peace. Many of our leaders are hooked by the Communist party line—some are not.

But the real decisions of American foreign policy rest with the American people. The profound effect of public opinion in this country can divert or reverse the maneuvers of the leaders of our country, as they operate in the sphere of world diplomacy and international relations.

Since this is the case, the American public must be alerted to the true nature of international communism, its hopes, aspirations, and "modus operandi." To exert the right public pressure at the right time, the American people must further understand the Soviet Union and its connection with this Communistic movement.

If the foregoing statements are correct, then it is imperative that the American public be both alert and well informed on these matters. The question is—is it?

At a conference on the "Improvement of Teaching of Soviet Union and Slavic History in High School," the key speakers: Professor Robert Byrnes (Indiana University), Professor Roman Smal-Stocki (Marquette University), and Professor James F. Murphy (Marquette University)—all asserted that the American public was not well informed on these topics.<sup>1</sup> These scholars went further—they suggested that American citizenry was woefully unprepared to understand the intricacies of international economics and politics as related to the Soviet Union. The high school was unanimously recommended as the place for curriculum revision to incorporate studies that might improve this condition.

Public school administrators do not anxiously await word from the "towers of truth" that certain aspects of their present curriculum are worthless. Suggestions of radical changes to be instituted are met with even less joy. Often the best defense is to categorically deny the existence of the problem "in toto," since this is easier than attacking the structure of the problem created by college "eggheads," fact by fact.

If such ideas affecting the curriculum are annoyingly persistent enough to reach a school board, the response might be, "But we meet all of the North Central requirements"—or—"My children have already had more courses of history than I did"—or—"The space race needs our attention more than this new jim-jack that's been proposed."

For the above reasons the author felt that more substantial evidence should be provided for the administrators of our secondary schools. This evidence as to the lack of understanding on the part of our students as regards the Soviet Union and its present political philosophy might affect the complacency of the administrators. Thus a survey was conducted by the researcher on a limited scale to obtain such data and to serve as a sample

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<sup>1</sup> Conference held at Brooks Memorial Union, Marquette University, March 5, 1960.

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the world's population was ruled by Communists, today at least one-third is; before the war communism ruled one-sixth of the land surface of the world, today, one-fourth; before the war Communists in all countries numbered less than five millions, today they number thirty-three millions. This post-war expansion of world communism can partially be countered if the force of national communism continues to produce internal disaffection and schisms.

As is well known, the term "national communism" came into popular usage during 1956 to denote the opposition displayed in the satellite countries, especially in Poland and Hungary, to control wielded by the Communist party of the Soviet Union. The dramatic and painful developments of the year 1956 demonstrated that the Communist-dominated bloc was not at all monolithic, but rather contained significant rebellious forces whose courage, however, far exceeded their real capacity for armed resistance to the USSR. I shall not attempt here to trace the successive developments that led up to 1956. It is perhaps sufficient to be reminded of these highpoints: the ousting of Tito from the Cominform in 1948, and the creation of the first independent Communist state after the USSR; the death of Stalin in 1953, and the resulting partial thaw and relaxation; the Soviet rapprochement with Tito in 1955, and the Soviet acceptance of the concept of "different paths to socialism"; and the de-Stalinization speech delivered by Khrushchev in early 1956, which was followed by an attack in each satellite upon the so-called "cult of the individual" and upon so-called "Stalinist" practices. The cumulative effect of these developments coupled with widespread nationalist and anti-Communist sentiment in the satellite countries was to make possible the dramatic revolts of 1956. National communism was the term applied to the varieties of resistance to the hegemony of the C.P.S.U. in the affairs of these countries.

project for school systems that might desire to carry on such a study on a "system-wide basis."

The application of the survey instrument to a group of teachers was also considered desirable. It could determine the extent of understanding of the Soviet Union today among faculty members, and further, might ascertain the availability of teacher personnel to conduct courses on the Soviet Union should they be incorporated into the curriculum.

## II. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

A close scrutiny of the list of hundreds of articles in *Readers Guide to Periodical Literature* under the topic of "Russia"<sup>2</sup> disclosed only one study that surveyed the extent of knowledge of the Soviet Union by the general American public. This survey was conducted by A. S. Bennett-Cy Chaikin, Inc., 65 East 55th Street, New York, New York, for *McCall's Magazine*.

This research and polling firm used a stratified sample of one thousand people to obtain its data. Five hundred men and five hundred women were interviewed in this coast-to-coast project.

Here are some samples of the questions asked and typical responses:

Question: Do you think American children should be taught facts about communism in school?

Answer: Yes—70%                      No—27%  
(College graduates support Yes, 6-1)

Question: What percent of the Russian people belong to the Communist party?

(*McCall's* figures: 7,200,000 members; approximately 3%)

Answer: One-third of those polled believed 50% were Communist party members; (more than one-fourth thought that every-

<sup>2</sup>No articles were listed under the heading of "Soviet Union"—only a referral to "Russia."

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one belonged.) Only 66% of those polled said membership was 5% or less.

**Question:** About how long has Russia been a Communist country?

**Answer:** 10 years—2%    25 years—13%    40 years—40%  
20 years—11%    30 years—25%    More than 40 years—5%

**Question:** What is the capital of Russia?

**Answer:** Moscow—71%    Stalingrad—5%    Leningrad—4%  
(Others named Warsaw, St. Petersburg, Petrograd, and one person said Budapest. One out of five college graduates didn't know; 46% of those who hadn't been to high school didn't know.)

**Question:** Give the name of the first Russian composer that comes to your mind.

**Answer:** Tschaikovsky—16%    Shostakovich—2%  
Rimski-Korsakov—4%    Rachmaninoff—2%

“More than 7 out of 10 frankly admitted they didn't know any.”

**Question:** Does the government own all industry in Russia?

**Answer:** Over one-half were not aware that the answer was *Yes*.

**Question:** Are there free public schools in Russia?

**Answer:** Yes—39%    No—50%

**Question:** Do Russians favor their system of government?

**Answer:** Yes—28%    No—68%    Don't know—4%

**Question:** Does Russia fear we will attack her?

**Answer:** Yes—29%    No—34%

**Question:** Is Russia a member of the United Nations?

**Answer:** Yes—88%    No—9%

**Question:** If Russia attacked France or Great Britain, should the United States fight?

**Answer:** Yes—62%    No—34%

Question: Name three countries behind the "Iron Curtain."

Answer: 11% could not name any; two-thirds of those quizzed named Czechoslovakia. (Few could suggest any other country.)

Question: Do you think the American Democratic system and the Russian Communist system can ever exist together peacefully in this world?

Answer: Yes—29%                      No—69%

Question: (True or false)

1. Russia has more coal than the United States.
2. Russian oil production is rising faster than ours.
3. Russia makes as much steel as the United States.
4. Russia makes her own automobiles and locomotives.

Answer: All of these are true except the third—about steel production. But a majority of us believe that we have more coal than Russia, and that our oil production is rising faster. A large majority (one-third of those polled in the South) does not know that Russia manufactures automobiles or locomotives. Almost a quarter of us believe that Russia makes as much steel as we do. (Actual production is about 40% the United States total.)

*Other Findings:*

(a) 68% could not name Russian authors.

(b) More than one-half of those polled could not name the head of Soviet government.

(c) 17% thought United States the same size or larger.

American men and women who don't know whether Russia produces more or less steel than the United States—who don't know whether Russia is bigger or smaller than the United States—who can't name three countries behind the Iron Curtain, confidentially declare that we need not fear war with Russia, or insist that the Russians do not support their own government.

We Americans do not realize how big the Soviet Union is. We can't name a Russian author or composer. We assume free love is encouraged by the Soviets.

The facts emerge as the result of a nationwide survey made by *McCall's* among varying age groups with different educational background. It reveals what we really know about Russia and what we think

of the Soviet menace. It gives a clue as to how well we are equipped to understand the greatest issue of the twentieth century—the struggle between freedom and totalitarianism. The survey, furthermore, affords dramatic backing to President Eisenhower's proposal that our schools teach the facts about communism, so that young Americans can discriminate between our way of life and that of Russia.

How well equipped are we to judge the seriousness of the Soviet threat if our information about Russia is wrong?'

### III. METHOD OF RESEARCH

The most apparent way to ascertain the knowledge of a given student on a given topic is to test the student on the topic.

The surveying instrument to be used for this study (see below), therefore, was a test. The questions were developed by the author with the assistance of Professor Roman Smal-Stocki's seminar class in "Problems of Soviet Union History" at Marquette University's Slavic Institute.

The questionnaire was administered to thirty-three high school students from various high schools. The questionnaire was further completed by fourteen teachers.

The administration of these tests was personally carried out by the author in a test-type situation. Likewise all scoring and tabulations as explained in the section that follows were personally completed by the author after the administration of all tests was completed.

#### QUESTIONNAIRE ON KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF SOVIET UNION

(Instructions: Please answer in the space provided, and use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

1. What royal family controlled Russia until World War I?

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<sup>3</sup>"What Americans Don't Know About Russia," *McCall's*, LXXXIV (June, 1957) 40-41 ff.

2. Who was the "father of communism"? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who was the Revolutionary leader who successfully established communism in Russia? . . . . .
4. When was communism officially established and the Soviet Union brought into existence? . . . . .
5. What nationalities proclaimed their independence during the Russian Revolution? (Name as many as you can.)  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What were the names applied to the two key forces during the Civil War that followed the Russian Revolution?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is meant by the initials "U.S.S.R."? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What was the N.E.P.? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who was the second leader of the Soviet Union? \_\_\_\_\_  
(This man succeeded the man you have named in question 3 above.)
10. What were the five-year plans? . . . . .  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Who is the President of the Soviet Union today? . . . . .
12. What is the approximate population of the Soviet Union today? . . .  
a.) 305,000,000            b.) 210,000,000  
c.) 180,000,000            d.) 150,000,000
13. What is the approximate number of Communist party members in the Soviet Union today?  
a.) 50,000            b.) 5,000,000  
c.) 150,000,000            d.) 50,000,000
14. What was the N.K.V.D.? . . . . .

15. What is the official religion of the Soviet Union today?  
- - - - -
16. What is meant by the word "Kolkhoz"?
17. The Soviet Union's industry may be considered as well developed as which of the following countries?  
a.) Ghana b.) India c.) China d.) England  
e.) U.S. of America

### MAP QUESTIONS

(Instructions: Place the answers to these questions on the map provided; see more specific instructions below.)

1. Seas: (Label by name on your map.)  
a) Black b) Baltic c) White d) Caspian
2. Rivers: (Place the letter for each river in the triangle which identifies the corresponding river on your map.)  
a) Volga R. b) Dnieper R. c) Don R. d) Ural R.  
e) Dvina R. f) Ob R. g) Amur R.
3. Mountains: (Label by name on your map.)  
a) Urals b) Caucasus c) Himalyas
4. Peninsulas: (Label by name on your map.)  
a) Kola b) Kamchatka
5. Cities: a) Moscow b) Leningrad c) Kiev d) Vladivostok

### IV. PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH DATA

The scoring of the forty-seven tests was completed, using the same standards for both pupil and teacher test papers. When this aspect of the project had been completed, the important job of making the right and wrong answers meaningful was undertaken.

Separate tabulations were kept on each test item for both pupil and faculty papers. In this manner each test item could

be analyzed most effectively. *The most striking aspect of the entire job was the statistical revelation of the general lack of knowledge of the Soviet Union on the part of both teachers and students who participated in the project.* In only three of the thirty-six test items were more correct than incorrect answers given. The teachers with a broader academic background did fare better than their student counterparts. Nevertheless, in only nine cases out of thirty-six test items did more teachers have correct answers than those who had incorrect answers.

All told, there were 260 correct answers submitted by students. At the same time, these same students either failed to answer correctly or failed to answer at all 828 times. :

The teachers submitted 300 correct answers. In 310 incidences the teachers submitted either incorrect answers or failed to answer the question at all.

Some of the answers that were submitted by the students are so bizzare that they could be classified as humorous were it not for the seriousness of the topic under investigation. Here are some samples:

*Question:* When was communism officially established and the Soviet Union brought into existence?

*Answers:* "About five years after World War II." "About one-hundred years ago."

*Question:* Who was the "Father of communism"?

*Answers:* 1) "Menncolf"; 2) "Kruschief"; 3) "Staline"; 4) "Hitler"

*Question:* Who was the second leader of the Soviet Union?

*Answers:* 1) "Mussileni"; 2) "Hitler"; 3) "Mousillie"; 4) "Molentov"

Statistical breakdowns for the individual items on the questionnaire can be made by the reader by referring to Table I, Student Questionnaire Results, and to Table II, Teacher Questionnaire Results on the pages that follow.

TABLE I  
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Written Test Question No.	No Answer	Incorrect Answer	Correct Answer
1	17	16	
2	6	14	13
3	8	14	11
4	9	18	
5	22	10 )* 1½)	
6	20	2 )** 6½)	5
7	3	17	13
8	28	5	
9	10	6	17
10	22	2	9
11	6	27	
12		22	11
13	1	22	10
14	31	1	1
15	9	4	20
16	31	2	
17		4	29

Map Question No.	Number of Mistakes						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1		5	5	9	14		
2	1		1	2	5	5	19
3	2	7	12	12			
4	1	3	29				
5			4	1	28		

\* Ten students had completely incorrect answers.

One student had one-half of the answer incorrect.

\*\* Two students had completely incorrect answers.

Six students had one-half of the answer incorrect.

TABLE II  
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Written Test Question No.	No Answer	Incorrect Answer	Correct Answer
1	3	6	5
2		1	13
3	1	3	10
4	3	1	10
5	5	4 )*	1
		4 <sup>1/2</sup> )	
6	4	1 )	4
		5 <sup>1/2</sup> )**	
7		7	7
8	9	4	1
9	3	3	8
10	1		13
11	3	11	
12	2	9	3
13	2	5	7
14	1	1	12
15		2	12
16	12	2	
17		3	11

Map Question No.	Number of Mistakes						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1	3	3	1	6		
2			1	3	1	4	5
3	1	4	5	4			
4		2	12				
5	1	1	3	3	6		

\* Four teachers had completely incorrect answers.  
Four teachers had one-half of the answer incorrect.  
\*\* One teacher had a completely incorrect answer.  
Five teachers had one-half of the answer incorrect.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the inadequacy of the sample<sup>4</sup> used in the investigation, the author feels that the study was worthwhile. It did serve to point out certain trends:

1. The eleventh grade students of today's high schools are not well versed insofar as knowledge of the Soviet Union is concerned. Since this testing was completed at the end of the junior year, it may be assumed that all courses that might encompass such material have already been completed by the students involved. With the further consideration that high school represents terminal education for the greater proportion of these students, the case becomes even more critical—these are America's future citizens. *Additional training in this area is an obvious necessity.*

2. Should administrators become "all act," and attempt to initiate courses that would give a true picture of the Soviet Union and Communist ideology, they would find their faculties unprepared (in general) to teach such a course. This suggests the need for inexpensive "in-service" courses to familiarize the teachers with a rudimentary knowledge of the subject matter. Whatever the case on course offerings, our teachers should be better informed.

3. This study merely suggests serious problems inherent in our present educational system. Certainly studies of greater depth should and must be conducted by our school systems.

The United States is being seriously challenged and possibly surpassed by a force identified as the U.S.S.R. When only thirteen of thirty-three students queried can successfully explain these initials, the question must arise: "What are we going to do about it?"

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<sup>4</sup> (In terms of true scholarly endeavor)

## II

The discussion of national communism in the authoritative Soviet sources, such as Khrushchev's speeches and editorials in *Pravda* and *Kommunist*, centers upon three cardinal themes. These are: (1) national communism as Marxist-Leninist heresy, threatening the unity of the theory of Marxism-Leninism; (2) national communism as the antithesis of "proletarian internationalism," threatening the unity of action of the Communist world movement, and (3) national communism as the rejection of Soviet Communist hegemony over the other Communist countries, threatening the unity of control that the C.P.S.U. desires to exert. These themes in the Soviet treatment of national communism will be discussed in turn.

To begin with, in the judgment of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, national communism constitutes a harmful doctrine, un-Marxist, un-Leninist, and therefore heretical. The party has taken an unreservedly negative attitude toward this term, and top Party leaders have explicitly condemned it in speeches on important occasions. In the Soviet press the term is always placed within quotation marks to denote its essential falsity.<sup>2</sup>

There are two broad categories of heresy recognized by Communists to condemn the wicked and the backsliding. One is revisionism, the other is dogmatism. The error of revisionism according to the C.P.S.U., lies in an excessive adaption or alteration of theory to suit actual situations to the point that essential elements in theory are distorted or abandoned. Applied revisionism is right-wing opportunism. National communism as a revisionist or right-wing heresy exaggerates the importance of the *specific* features in a country's historical development and minimizes the importance of the "universal" Marxist-Leninist laws

<sup>2</sup>It may be noted that no Communist party has adopted for itself the label "national communism," which apparently suggests for all Communists too much of a contradiction in terms, denying the basically "international" or "universal" character of communism.



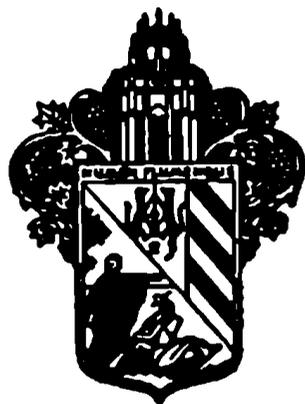
MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
SLAVIC INSTITUTE  
PAPERS

NO. 8

THE PROBLEMS OF TEACHING  
SOVIET UNION AND SLAVIC HISTORY

BY  
ROMAN SMAL-STOCKI  
*Marquette University*

Delivered at the Slavic Institute Conference on  
"The Improvement of Teaching of Soviet Union and  
Slavic History in High Schools," March 5, 1960.



*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.



# THE PROBLEMS OF TEACHING SOVIET UNION AND SLAVIC HISTORY

By ROMAN SMAL-STOCKI, *Marquette University*

A Paper delivered at the Slavic Institute Conference on the  
"Improvement of Teaching of Soviet Union and Slavic  
History in High Schools," March 5, 1960.

**A**LL American universities and colleges are faced with the fact that our high schools send them a youth illiterate of all elementary facts about the Soviet Union. Into this vacuum of fundamentals also belongs the whole Slavic world. This Slavic world, partly with the exception of Yugoslavia, is dominated by the Soviet Union, which poses as a *Slavic* empire for the outside world and is represented in the UN by three Slavic Union Republics: the Russians, the Ukrainians, and the Belorussians (Beloruthenians).

I am one of the European professional university professors who since 1947 has been teaching Slavic and Soviet Union history in an American university with the hope of educating the youth of my adopted country. Every year I am faced with the same problems. Many of my students are already teachers in high schools or colleges. I have had ample opportunity to discuss these questions and problems with them. I select from them the most important problems as a basis for our discussion.

(1) The first problem I wish to present is geography. At the annual meeting of the A.H.A. in Washington, D.C. in 1958 an American colleague outlined the problem succinctly. Even seniors in the university, he said, make the mistake of locating the Carpathians in the Caucasus, or mix it with the Urals; the Caucasus is located in the Himalayas; the Dnieper is a river flowing out of the Baltic Sea, the Danube flows out of the Black

Sea into the Rhein; Odessa is located in Vladivostok and India in the north of Moscow. And thus do American students try to "change the world."

I could add many other examples. After reading this headline on the front page of the *New York Times*, of July 11, 1954, "Rising Danube Flood Hits Prague," I no longer criticize my students so severely. But I now dedicate at least two or three classes of my courses to the establishment of a proper geographical background.

In my opinion the high schools must give our youth a proper knowledge of elementary facts about the geography of our planet. It is absolutely necessary that these students are taught by quizzes on blind maps the exact locations of the Baltic, Black, Caspian, Barents, Bering, and the Okhotsk Seas, of the Arctic and Pacific Oceans, and of the important rivers and mountains of east central Europe, the Balkans, and of the Asiatic Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup>

(2) The second problem centers around the ethnic composition of first, the Soviet Union, and, second, the Slavic World. First, what knowledge do students bring to college from the high schools about the Slavic peoples and countries in Europe? I start my classes with an anonymous quiz, and this is one of the questions I ask: List the Slavic nationalities or peoples in

<sup>1</sup> How disturbing the illiteracy in geography is, cf. *New York Times*, February 28, 1960. Classroom and Campus: *Geography Neglected*. College educators are expressing concern over evidence that *high school students get inadequate preparation in geography*. Robert W. Ehrich, of Brooklyn College, writing in *School and Society*, reports that students in his sociology-anthropology course lack basic geographical information. On outline maps of the United States, they were unable to identify the states, locate major cities, and place major river systems and mountain ranges.

Charles M. Davis, chairman of the geography department at the University of Michigan, writing in the same publication, attributed the decline in interest in geography to the packaging of the subject, along with history, economics, and sociology, in the form of "social studies."

In an effort to readjust the balance in the area of social studies, New York City, apparently concerned with the same problem, has made a concerted effort during the current school year to make teachers aware of the importance of increased study of geography. (Italics added.)

Europe. The usual answer runs like this: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Rumania, Albania, Turkey, Austria, Russians, Bavarians, Bolsheviks, "Lower Slobovia" (Li'l Abner's contribution) and "Carpathia" (Marilyn Monroe's contribution from the movie, "The Prince and the Showgirl"). Also added at times are Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia.

There again the high school should convey to students facts about the three branches of the Slavic nationalities: the *Eastern* including the Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians and Cossacks; the *Western*, including the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks; and the *Southern*, which encompasses the Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, Macedonians and Bulgarians.

There is also the necessity to clarify the difference between the terms nation (which means citizenship) and *nationality*. According to American-English terminology there exists a Czechoslovak nation (citizenship), a Yugoslav nation (citizenship), but no Czechoslovak or Yugoslav nationality, language or literature.

What knowledge does the high school give regarding the nationalities of the Soviet Union and their republics? The lack of proper knowledge is simply fantastic, and all too often countries like Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Persia, China, Egypt, or the "Orient" are "annexed" into the Soviet Union.

Again it should be the task of the high schools to establish a clear understanding regarding the ethnic composition of the Soviet Union. For example, the high school student should be taught that the Soviet Union is not, from the point of view of nationality, language and culture, a homogeneous country like France, Germany or Italy, but a multi-national union of states. This same youthful mind should be taught that the Soviet Union consists of 15 Union republics: the Russian, Belorussian, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Kazakh, Georgian, Azerbaijan, Lithuanian, Moldavian, Latvian, Kirghiz, Tajik, Armenian, Turkmen, and Estonian Socialist Soviet Republics. All other nationalities have

their autonomous republics or regions. In my opinion it is worthwhile that the students in the high schools hear at least a couple of times the names of the Union republics and learn to locate them.

The third problem is connected with the relationship of the English language (better to say, of all Teutonic languages) and the Slavic languages. I am rather surprised that this relationship is not mentioned, even stressed, in the high schools, especially in classes of Russian or Polish. The term "Foreign Language" scares the teenagers, and the clear conception of the relationship of their English mother tongue with the Slavic would stimulate the study of Slavic languages.

Consequently, I think it would be very useful to make known the conception of the Indo-European family of languages, of the Indo-European parent language which was spoken by the Indo-European parent people in the parent home some eight to ten thousand years B.C. From the groups of languages belonging to this family are very closely related the Teutonic, the Slavic and the Baltic. My students are fascinated to learn that the Russian Gen. *mater-i* is the English word *mother*, or that the Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Czech (as in all Slavic languages) *brat* is *brother* in English; that the Russian, Ukrainian and Czech word *sestra* is the English word *sister*; that the Russian, Ukrainian and Polish *syn* is the English *son*; that in other Slavic tongues *nos* is *nose*; that the Russian, Ukrainian and Polish *mysh* is *mouse*; that *gus* in Russian is *goose* in English, and that the Russian *svinia* has its counterpart in the word *swine*, and so on.

Such comparisons help demonstrate to the students from their own English vocabulary, the best files of history, the close relationship of Teutonic-English and Slavic and it also encourages them to study foreign languages by giving them often ready connotations with English.

I must now call your attention, as to the fourth problem,

to some terminological problems involved in teaching Slavic and Soviet Union matters not only on the high school but especially on the university level. It is a matter of fact that the English-American terminology for East European history is in a state of chaos. It is, first of all, an obstacle for the teaching of East European history in universities and, secondly, an obstacle to objective historical research. In addition, it has created complete confusion about the real facts and ethnic divisions of Eastern Europe in American public opinion, including the terminology of high school texts, a confusion which extends into the American press, radio and TV. Usually, scholars, especially the university professors, are responsible for the elaboration of a clear terminology for scientific purposes. It is our duty, as university professors, to eliminate all semantical ambiguity from scholarly terms, applied in a certain discipline. We must also introduce this terminology into general use for the discipline in question, and finally, into general use for school textbooks, of public opinion and for the means of mass communication.

I have already discussed these terminological problems in a special publication<sup>2</sup> and thus I shall limit myself here only to some basic questions.

(a) To the equalization of the term: Soviet Union or Union of the Socialist Soviet Republics with the term *Russia* and of the term Soviet Union citizens with *Russian*. Let me begin by stressing the fact that these terms are not synonymous. These terms *Russia* and *Russian* are responsible for the creation, in fact, of a completely *false image* of the Soviet Union, in our schools and in public opinion.

These terms are so-called "umbrella words," (another example being "Latin America") and serve only to put a smoke screen before facts and confuse them.

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<sup>2</sup> Roman Smal-Stocki, *Terminological Problems of Eastern European History*, Slavic Institute, Marquette University, 1956.

A very healthy reaction against this terminological chaos is noteworthy among American geographers, among them Professor Eugene Van Cleef, of Ohio State University, who has published a remarkable article, "Russia or the U.S.S.R.?"<sup>3</sup> in which he writes:

It may be well enough for the "man on the street" to use the term "Russia" when he means the U.S.S.R., but when a geographer does so the sin seems unpardonable. Would anyone in our country use the terms "New York," "Illinois" or "California" as synonymous with the U.S.A.?

What is this thing we presently call Russia? Russia now is the Russian Federated Socialist Soviet Republic, one of the fifteen Union Republics. The use of this term by scholars in the pre-World War I imperial meaning of "Russia" for the whole of the present Soviet Union and to make it synonymous or to use it in such an imperialistic meaning in high school and college textbooks is an amazing fact in light of the anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism our nation professes even for African peoples.

The United States Board of Geographic Names insists on editing materials for accuracy and consistency of geographic names and limits the use of the term "Russia" to references to pre-World War I Russia. This recognition of the Board ought to serve as a sufficiently authoritative basis to employ the term "Russia" correctly, but our textbooks of East European history and political sciences and our press simply ignore this opinion. Thus also does our *Milwaukee Journal* label everybody in the Soviet Union a Russian and Russia as synonymous to U.S.S.R. after nearly forty years of its existence.

Against the false image of another term I should like to warn you; that is "White Russia" or "White Russian." It is usually used as a term for Belorussia or Belorussians, the official name of this nation in the UN. This term creates a confusion among the students, because simultaneously existing in

<sup>3</sup>Eugene Van Cleef, "Russia or the U.S.S.R.?" *The Journal of Geography*, LIV (Nov., 1955), 413-15.

English is the term, "Red Russia" or "Red Russians." Thus the term "White Russia" is understood as the political antithesis to "Red Russia," and thus disappears a separate Slavic nation from the knowledge of the students.

The fifth problem is communism which cannot be omitted from the presentation of history even in the high schools. This problem has two aspects: (a) our general attitude toward communism, and (b) the identification of communism.

Thus regarding the attitude toward communism, it is possible to present it as a regular political party like the Democratic or Republican parties, and that is often done. But if we analyze the meaning of the term "party," in the Communist upside-down language, we know that the Communist party is not a party in our sense, but a conspiracy, an ideological army of a foreign power in civilian clothes which has the aim of overthrowing the legal government by use of force and to include our country into the World Soviet Union. Consequently, I ask "Should not Junior and Senior high school students be learning some true facts about communism?" Should they not be taught that communism is an evil and that this evil cannot claim freedom of action, but that it must be fought if the United States is to survive?

It is of the greatest importance that high school students become aware of the values of the American nation and of the hierarchy of these values so clearly expressed in the Declaration of Independence: God, the Creator, under His Fatherhood the citizens with their inalienable rights and on the bottom the government and state for the pursuit of happiness—all under the moral law. Of fundamental importance is the need to make them aware that the Soviet World has a different hierarchy of values; supreme is the state whose owner is the mono-party atheistic dictatorship, which does not recognize human dignity or any inalienable rights or what we call human rights and which, in fact, puts the citizenry into a new serfdom to the state

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of historical development. For example, regarding the task of building a socialist society, the national Communist is unduly impressed by particular differences in the development of his country and by special and unique features of his country's economy, geography, class structure, etc. He forgets that there are certain "universally" applicable laws of Marxism governing the transition from capitalism to socialism. He distorts what is *primary* and *universal* by giving too much weight to the role of *secondary* and *particular* factors.<sup>6</sup>

Take the opposite case of the heresy of dogmatism, often referred to as sectarianism. The error here lies in a mechanical, pedantic application of theory *without* proper consideration of changing "concrete-historical" conditions. Applied dogmatism ignores or underestimates the special features in the particular historical development of a country.

The "social roots" of the revisionist heresy of national communism lie, according to Soviet Communists, in the class designated as the petty bourgeoisie. In fact, all forms of revisionism are manifestations of the penetration of petty-bourgeois ideology into the ranks of the working class. What are these petty-bourgeois ideologies? Among others, they include social-democratic thought, Trotskyism, syndicalism, and, of course, bourgeois nationalism. Mrs. Furtseva, a member of the Presidium of the C.P.S.U., has referred to national communism as "the newest variety of the old ideology of nationalism, which reflects the pressure of petty-bourgeois elements infected with nationalistic prejudices."<sup>7</sup> Thus any independent Communist re-thinking of Marxist-Leninism, apart from the wishes and permission of the C.P.S.U., receives the discrediting label of petty-bourgeois deviationism.

If national communism is a revisionist heresy that underestimates or distorts or ignores the universally applicable laws

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<sup>6</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 52, 24 (*Izvestia*, December 28, 1956).

<sup>7</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 15, 8 (*Pravda*, April 23, 1957).

for a dynamic idea: to create the new Soviet man and the new Soviet civilization.

I think that students should leave high school with a well-grounded understanding in the comparison of the two value systems. As a matter of fact, any English, Italian, French, or German high school student is deeply aware of his ideological heritage and of its "holy ideas." But American students often simply can only answer the question: Why do you consider yourself an American? with "I was born here," "We have a high living standard, with bathrooms and refrigerators" or "We have social security." The ideological content of what we call "American way of life" is simply absent. :

Well, the question of the identification of communism is also a delicate matter. What is communism? It is usually regarded as an international political movement with Marx and Engels as founding fathers. As it originated in Western Europe, the Western European nations are often blamed for Russian communism and the Russians are presented as "victims" of this Western European movement. Now, I do not challenge the right of my colleagues to give such an interpretation to the youth, but I do challenge as unfair the silencing of other interpretations, especially of a convincing Russian interpretation. This Western European-Socialist interpretation is only one side of the medal,—the international socialist, but there also exists another side which cannot be disregarded because already Marx and Engels were forced to a showdown with the Russian Bakunin, the real founding father of Russian communism. To put you into the picture about the other side of the medal I quote from the *Origin of Russian Communism* by Nicholas Berdyaev:<sup>4</sup>

Lenin insisted upon the original and distinctly national character of the Russian revolution . . . . Lenin was an imperialist . . . his whole thought was imperialistic, despotic . . . .<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Nicholas Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism* (London: Gregory Bles, 1948).

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 114-15.

Lenin himself was a typical Russian . . . . In Lenin's character there were typical Russian traits, and those not especially of the intelligentsia, but of the Russian people: simplicity, boorishness, thought of a practical kind, a disposition to nihilist cynicism on moral grounds . . . . In him characteristics of Russian sectarian intelligentsia existed side by side with characteristics of the Russians who made and shaped the Russian empire.<sup>6</sup>

This is indeed the dictatorship of a general outlook for which Lenin has prepared. He was able to do this only because he combined in himself two traditions: the tradition of the revolutionary intelligentsia in its most Maximalist tendency and the tradition of Russian government in its most despotic aspect. However paradoxical it may sound, still bolshevism is the third appearance of Russian autocratic imperialism, its first appearance being the Muscovite Tsardom, and the second, the Petrine Empire.<sup>7</sup>

We cannot disregard these opinions of the greatest Russian Christian philosopher Nicholas Berdyaev; they deserve also a proper consideration.

The sixth problem is connected with the contribution of the Slavs to American culture and civilization. The Slavs for long decades were in fact put on the very bottom of the scale of American descent, and were popular objects of a kind of Lower Slobovia, Count Putzi or Sergeant Bilko creations. I appreciate this humor but where is the information about the Slavic contributions to American liberty, sciences, liberal arts and art? It is really sad that college students answer a question such as: "Identify and give the historical significance of Kosciuszko" with "He had something to do with cattle breeding in Wisconsin." Pulaski is completely unknown.

In closing my paper, I should like to ask my American native fellow-colleagues to please not regard my criticism as a criticism for the sake of criticism. I am also well aware of some positive achievements of the American schools. My criticism is

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<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 116-17.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 120.

only motivated by the anxiety, by the concern for the future of our next generation and of our country.

Perhaps we former Europeans who were university professors and who since 1920 were compelled to defend our academic freedom against Communism can better evaluate the terrible danger which will confront America in the next decade. Russian Communism plans without a hot war to take over the United States by psychological cold war and skillful propaganda. Well, Soviet Moscow knows that in the United States there are at least some 14 million Americans of Slavic descent. They are the prime object of a systematic ideological offensive with the aim of turning them toward the Soviet Union, the great Slavic Empire, by a methodically propagandized Neo-Panslavism. It is a matter of fact that in the United States there exists a Communist press in all Slavic languages, besides Communist organizations of all Slavic nationalities. The academic youth have recently been under a heavy ideological barrage of Soviet guest professors and Soviet exchange students, specializing in ideological discussions. The Sputnik and Lunik successes have also had their repercussions.

The defense against this ideological offensive must start in the high school with the presentation of facts to the youth. In addition, all Americans of Slavic descent must get the feeling that their Slavic heritage is respected and cultivated by our educational institutions. If we, the universities and high schools, will not do it, the Soviet Union propaganda and Soviet cultural exchange programs will do it in the United States. But Americans are unaware of this danger, which in Canada is even more real.

We former European professors compare also what is being done regarding the Slavs and the Soviet Union in the high schools of Europe, in France, especially in Germany. Also from this point of view, my criticism is justified.

Thus our high school education demands in the first line an

improvement in teaching of history, and that can be achieved only through our colleagues, the teachers. As citizens, they also have the responsibility for the ideological defense of our country. Many teachers, especially in the East, do not evaluate communism as an evil; instead they practice moral relativism or neutralism toward it, even regarding it as a "progressive movement" which "gave land to the peasants." And if the children of the displaced persons, of the former farmers protest, they are properly "enlightened" about the Communist revolution.



MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
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NO. 9

THE SCHEME OF SOVIET EDUCATION

BY

MICHAEL S. PAP

*John Carroll University*

April, 1961



*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.



# THE SCHEME OF SOVIET EDUCATION

BY MICHAEL S. PAP, *John Carroll University*

**S**TALIN told the British writer H. G. Wells in 1934 that education is a weapon the effect of which depends upon the one who holds it in his hands and the one who is struck down by it.

Since the launching of the first Russian sputnik on October 4, 1957, many individuals in the West, particularly the educators, have turned their attention to the study of the Soviet educational system in search of a clue to the Bolshevik success. No one denies that without adequate education and research, the Soviet Union could not have progressed so rapidly in the vital fields of technology and sciences. This success becomes even more phenomenal if one considers the fact that 76 per cent of the total population of the Russian Empire in 1917 was illiterate.

To understand properly the Soviet educational goals, one must also study and comprehend the whole Bolshevik program. At this juncture of our history which is overshadowed by the ideological warfare, by a life and death struggle between the concepts of freedom and slavery, individualism and collectivism, democracy and totalitarianism, faith and atheism, there is no more vital, far-reaching, rapidly developing, and baffling subject than that of education and its impact upon the survival of human freedom. While a careful study of all aspects of Soviet life should be regarded as an all-important necessity, and should be encouraged by all means, we must be on guard against the appearance of the so-called "three-weeks" or "three months" experts on Soviet affairs who suddenly discovered that it is profitable to write sensational articles or even books on these subjects, especially on education in the USSR, which often offer fantastic solutions to our own problems. Let me stress,

rather emphatically, that the Soviet educational system cannot and should not serve as an example to be followed. Indeed it would be a black day for our country if we were to look upon Soviet education as a guide. We certainly and most assuredly must reject the notion of revising our educational pattern simply because the Soviet might be "ahead of us" in certain fields. We must emphatically reject a system which relies on terror, mass destruction of human lives, fear, concentration camps, and numerous other devices in order to sustain its domination. We deplore the fact that in the Soviet Union doctoral dissertations even in biology had been written on the sole basis of Stalin's works as substantiating reference of documentary evidence and proof. We hope that decent persons in the Soviet Union likewise deplore this practice.

This, of course, does not mean that we should not take a long, hard, critical look at our own educational deficiencies. Failure to do so would make us unequal to the challenge which confronts us. What we should do, if I may suggest, is to adjust our needs to the requirements of the twentieth century; and this century demands the re-examination of our traditional approach to learning. We are destined to play the role of a leader of free man—we must grow up to this responsibility if we are to preserve liberty and sustain this leadership.

With this rather lengthy, and, perhaps unnecessary introduction, let us examine the Soviet educational pattern. Communist party leaders repeatedly state that the Soviet schools cannot be satisfied to rear merely educated persons. Instead, they must concentrate upon indoctrinating the minds of the young generation with the Communist ideology. More than that, the teachers are constantly reminded that the Party makes them responsible for a proper presentation of the superiority of the Soviet system. Pupils must unquestionably accept the inevitable doom of the capitalist world. By the time they leave school, they must be well prepared toward becoming leaders in the struggle

for a “brave new world” under communism with all its trimmings. It is quite obvious that under these circumstances there is no room for objectivity, reason, respect for individual taste, decency, and integrity.

It is a well-known fact that the Kremlin precisely defines what it wants from its educational system:

It is in the school, at the desk in the first class, that the foundations for a Communist outlook are laid in future Soviet citizens. The nation (meaning of course the leaders of the Communist party) entrusts the school with its most treasured possession, its children, and no one should be allowed to indulge in the slightest deviation from the principles of the Communist materialistic upbringing of the new generation.<sup>1</sup>

The Communists stress that the school is the mightiest weapon in the hands of the Party in the struggle for world domination. The schools are commanded to teach the students to obey the Party orders, to learn to spy on their parents, to defy God—all this for the alleged good of the “socialist motherland.” Despite Khrushchev’s “new policy of co-existence,” his “peaceful” mission to the United States in 1959, his declarations of his love for humanity, the instruction of school children is still based on the principles laid down by Stalin who often stressed that it would be impossible to conquer an enemy without having learned to hate him with all the might of one’s soul.

### *Organizational setup of the soviet school system*

The organization of the Soviet educational system differs very little in form from other European schools. But it surely differs in content and method. With the decree by the All Russian Executive Committee in 1918, unified labor schools as the basis of the Soviet education system were established. This decree called for free, universal, secular, coeducational and

<sup>1</sup>*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, September 3, 1949.

of Marxism-Leninism, it may be asked whether any satisfactory description of these laws has been recently attempted. Has the C.P.S.U., confronted with post-war developments which have tended to disintegrate the unity of theory, sought to provide a common core of doctrine that must be accepted by all Communists if they are to call themselves orthodox? Such an attempt was made in November 1957 in Moscow, when twelve of the ruling Communist Parties (all excepting the Communist League of Yugoslavia) signed a statement known as the Declaration of the Conference of Representatives of the Communist and Workers Parties of the Socialist Countries.<sup>2</sup> This important document was an effort to identify the irreducible minimum of Marxist-Leninist theory that is to be binding upon all Communist parties. It sought to provide a common denominator of beliefs that would serve to unify the Communist movement. The Declaration discussed both types of heresies, but labelled the revisionist heresy as the more dangerous for the world Communist movement. As for the universally applicable laws of proletarian revolution and the transition from capitalism to socialism, these were simply listed as follows: leadership of the toiling masses by the working class headed by the Communist party in the carrying out of a proletarian revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat; alliance of the working class with the basic mass of the peasantry and with other toilers; liquidation of capitalist property and establishment of socialist property; gradual socialist transformation of agriculture; overall planning of the national economy, directed toward the building of socialism and communism; carrying out of a socialist revolution in the fields of ideology and culture; liquidation of national oppression and establishment of equal rights and friendship among peoples; defense of the conquests of socialism from internal and external enemies; and solidarity of the working class of all countries, i.e., proletarian

<sup>2</sup> *Dokumenty soreshchaniia predstavitelei kommunisticheskikh i rabochikh partii* (Moscow, 1958). For an English version, see *Current Digest*, IX, No. 47, 1-7.

polytechnical group education to be carried on in the native language.

A new law passed in 1930 specified the obligatory nature in the primary (four class) and incomplete secondary (five to seven class) schools. The student who wished to continue his education upon completion of the seven year school could pursue either his secondary education in the ten year school or transfer to one of the polytechnical schools for training in a technical speciality. Both of these schools were free until 1940 when Stalin introduced a tuition fee of 150-200 rubles a year. This was a heavy blow to the children of workers and farmers whose income was very low and consequently could not afford the luxury of sending their children to these schools. This, of course, did not affect the high ranking party members who could afford to advance the education of their children. Furthermore, rural children were under legal obligation to work upon reaching the age of twelve and were obliged to fulfill from one-third to one-half of the adult norm. The city children, on the other hand, came under the labor obligation only at the age of sixteen.

In addition, Special Labor Reserve Schools were created by a decree of October 2, 1940. There are three types of such schools:

1. Two-year trade schools in which metal-workers, chemists, miners, and workers in the oil industry, water transport, and communications are trained.
2. Two-year railroad schools training machinists' assistants, repairmen, road workers, traffic-control workers, and railroad office workers.
3. Six-month factory-plant training schools.

Students guilty of repeated violations of discipline or of leaving school without official permission are subject to a penalty of a year's confinement in a labor colony. Graduates must serve for four consecutive years at job locations determined by the Main Administration of Labor Reserve attached to the Council

of Ministers of the USSR. The Labor Reserve School was instituted to teach those

. . . who wrongly understand the right to choose their own place of employment, disregarding the interests and needs of the State."

The objective of the 1940 decree had been to force a large number of farm youth into industry and prevent them from taking advantage of the theoretical right of equality in education. These arrangements are still in force. By 1956, approximately 14,000,000 students were involved and the Party leaders indicated that the number must increase by 44 per cent within two years. The segregation of the workers' and peasants' children in the Socialist motherland was also evident when in 1942 exclusive Suvorov's schools were erected for children of high ranking officers of the Red Army, Party members and the Communist partisans.

In 1956 the Soviet press, radio, television, and other media of communication was given a signal to initiate a widespread discussion on the Soviet educational system. The tone was set by Nikita Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress in February of the same year. The rise of hooliganism and disobedience was blamed on schools. *Zaria Vostoka* reported on March 24, 1956, for example, that in 1955, 959 students graduated from Tbilisi University but only 266 of them went to work as directed by the Party; the remaining, or 693, young specialists disregarded the Party directives and sought lucrative positions on their own. The new interpreter of communism demanded drastic reforms to teach students respect for manual labor. In his speech at the All Union Conference of Young Builders on April 11, 1956, Khrushchev stated:

Incorrect views about labor in our Soviet society have recently begun to appear within a certain section of youth. The following instances are examples: Some young men and women say when they have finished the ten-year course, "It isn't suitable for us, now that we are educated, to work in a factory, at a construction site, at a state farm or

a collective farm." It is apparently not only the young people who think this way; some members of the older generation are also to blame. It is no secret, after all, that some parents reason thus: "But my daughter had completed the ten-year course—she cannot milk cows!" She can drink milk, but she considers it beneath her dignity to milk cows.<sup>1</sup>

In response to this criticism, many schools launched programs of work-study, introduced courses in industrial and agricultural processes and set up work-shop experimental farm plots. Khrushchev continued to offer his advice to resolve this problem. In his speech to the Thirteenth Komsomol Congress on April 18, 1958, he said:

There are cases when it is not those who are well prepared who get into the university, but those who have an influential father or mother who can help to push their children into universities. Such a situation is in contradiction with the very essence of our socialist system.<sup>2</sup>

In Moscow's higher educational establishment for instance, only 30 per cent of the students are children of workers and collective farmers; and it must be remembered that the workers and farmers still comprise 85 per cent of the Soviet population. The situation is becoming worse; in his memorandum on education, Khrushchev further declared:

Both in town and in the countryside as well as at workers' settlements, all children finishing school should go to work in production. No one must evade this stage. First, this will be democratic because equal conditions will be created for all children. Neither the position of the parents nor their influence will free anyone from productive work. Second, this will be an excellent way to inculcate in all young people the heroic traditions of the working class and working peasantry. Thus the only possible and essential method to overcome the shortcomings in our schools is for all boys and girls during their school years to be prepared to take part in physical labor at plants, factories, collective and state farms, in any labor which is useful for society.<sup>3</sup>

Actually the discussion narrowed down to the crucial prob-

<sup>1</sup>*Pravda*, April 13, 1956.

<sup>2</sup>*Pravda*, April 19, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>*Pravda*, September 21, 1958.

lem of too many educated persons in the USSR and the search for ways to curb this trend. The criticisms, discussions, results of experiments, and suggestions were embodied in a series of concrete proposals presented by Premier Khrushchev to the Central Committee of the Communist party of the Soviet Union on November 12, 1958. These proposals, known as the Theses, were a part of the seven-year plan for the overall development of the Soviet Union. They were published in *Pravda*, November 16, 1958 and designed to change entirely the organizational pattern of Soviet education. The decree of November, 1958, represents not simply a reform but a new system to serve more efficiently the Communist cause. Khrushchev's criticism and proposals touched on many aspects of Soviet education. He felt that up until 1958, the Soviet school system served an undesirable end—that of creating in the Socialist Society a cleavage between school and life and ultimately paved the way toward more rigid class distinction. Consequently, a complete polytechnization of the entire school curriculum was ordered which eliminates elements of pure academism. On these bases, the well-established seven-year, as well as the ten-year, secondary schools were replaced by an eight-year universal compulsory, general and polytechnical school in which the last year's activity is focused on the problem of inculcating habits of useful work and enhancing special skills of the students.

To accommodate the children of the privileged class in the Soviet Union, the November Theses also mention schools for the gifted and also boarding schools, institutions open to those students who are in a position to pay tuition. It is reported that by now, 350,000 students are enrolled in boarding schools.<sup>6</sup> The transition from seven to eight years of compulsory education is to be completed by 1964. Under the new program, teachers are expected to lessen the amount of homework in order to facilitate time for more "socially useful" work. Great emphasis

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<sup>6</sup>*Sovetskaya Pedagogika* #5, May, 1960.

is placed on the spoken language, correct pronunciation and clarity of expression. All children, from the first grade on, must learn about the manifold accomplishments of the Communist party and the *Vozhd.* The school year commences on September 1 and continues for 35 weeks for the I-IV grades, 38 weeks for V-VII from which two weeks are allotted to the so-called "physical work practice," and 39 weeks for VIII grade. Of these 39 weeks, the eighth graders must spend two weeks in physical work practice and two weeks for examinations.

### *Content of courses*

Training in physical labor is considered as an integral part of the new educational program. In the I-IV grades, a child must spend two hours weekly doing manual labor while the V-VIII grades require three hours a week. By the time the child is graduated from the eighth grade, he will have spent 1.315 hours in work practice—certainly a unique way to secure free labor.<sup>7</sup>

The study in humanities (Russian language and literature, history, constitution of the USSR, and foreign language) consumes 39.5 per cent of the total hours of which 25.3 per cent is given to the Russian language. The remaining school hours are utilized as follows: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and geography—32.5 per cent; work and practical study of labor problems—15.3 per cent; drawing, music and singing—6.2 per cent, and physical culture—6.5 per cent.

The reading material for the first through third grades depicts the superiority of the Soviet system and glorifies the historic achievements of its leaders. The fourth graders are required to know the basic facts of Soviet Russian history and revolutionary traditions of the nation. Even the study of the Russian language for the fifth through eighth grades embodies a political and ideological spirit. Literature renders Communist

<sup>7</sup> *Sovetskaya Pedagogika* #6, June, 1960.

indoctrination; 60 per cent of all reading is devoted to the Soviet works; 30 per cent to "better" foreign literary works, and only 10 per cent to the prerevolutionary literature. The teaching of foreign languages is emphasized and strongly encouraged. Practical knowledge is also urged. Sixty per cent of the history courses is devoted to the Soviet period. Particular importance is given to the study of Lenin's Communist party.<sup>8</sup>

Science is dominant in the order of importance: six years of biology, five years of physics, four years of chemistry and one year of astronomy in the ten-year secondary school course. The new program for the eight-year school calls for the following distribution of the school hours:

Humanities and social sciences . . . . .	1,662	hours
Natural science-mathematics . . . . .	1,750	"
The arts . . . . .	245	"
Physical culture . . . . .	280	"
Labor and practical activities . . . . .	560	"

The Russian language and mathematics are scheduled to be studied for eight years.<sup>9</sup>

Higher education also was subjected to a series of changes. Basically, two types of training are now predominant:

1. Training for scientific research and teaching at the secondary level.
2. Training in applied technology.

Higher educational institutions (VUZ) and higher technical educational institutions (VTUZ) are obliged to link classroom lectures with the operations performed at productive enterprises. In other words, accumulation of knowledge for its own sake must be regarded as alien to the very spirit of socialism. There are forty universities in operation in the USSR and some 750 institutes which produce skilled specialists for a particular branch of the economy or a particular profession. The course

<sup>8</sup> *Sovetskaya Pedagogika* #6, June, 1960.

<sup>9</sup> *Sovetskaya Pedagogika* #8, August, 1960.

requirement in both universities and institutes is five years except for medical schools and the Moscow Architectural Institute which call for six years. In 1960, approximately 2,000,000 students were enrolled in these 790 schools of advanced education and, of these almost 900,000 studied by correspondence.

Needless to say, the programs are prepared and approved by the Ministry of Higher and Special High School Education of the USSR. All administrative officers are carefully screened and appointed by the Ministry. To be appointed, one must be a Party member of high standing. There is no tenure for professors in the Western sense; should he fail to comply with the Party dictates, he is readily dismissed. However, the faculty members of the schools of advanced education enjoy great prestige in the Soviet Union — greater than any other professional group. Theoretically, education in higher schools is free since 80 per cent of the student body receives scholarship. However, the graduates are obliged to work for three years at nominal pay in any part of the USSR the Party may choose to send them.

The curricula of all institutions of higher learning, universities and institutes, have certain features in common; the study of one foreign language is required for the first four years in order to perfect linguistic knowledge obtained in the secondary schools. This continued foreign language study is geared to help students master the art of translating. Physical training is compulsory for the first two years. History of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, political economy, dialectical and historical materialism are obligatory courses. The work is conducted through lectures and seminars; attendance is compulsory.

The various stages of Soviet Russian life and accomplishments in the university curriculum is accentuated and absorbs more than 45 per cent of the students' time; social science and humanities absorb 15 per cent, general scientific subjects 30 per

cent and the educational subjects 10 per cent. A marked deterrent was placed on the already weak social science and humanities program by a 1958 law which stipulates that the departments of journalism, law, literature, philosophy, and political economy admit only the applicants with at least two years' practical work and experience. This stipulation will gradually encompass a number of other departments as well.

Evening departments at many advanced educational institutions are well established. They deal primarily with Marxism-Leninism. The Moscow University alone takes care of about 20,000 students. There are two types of graduate degrees:

1. Candidate in Science—includes all fields of learning.
2. The Doctorate which is awarded by a National Commission and confirmed by the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

Specialized institutes include pedagogical schools, medical schools, schools of agriculture, forestry, commerce and transportation, art schools and merchant marine academies. Engineers in one or another of the many branches of the profession are trained in the polytechnical schools. An important center for the training of the local and the foreign Communist leaders is the Marx-Engels Lenin Institute. Thousands of carefully scrutinized party members are being instructed here to become the vanguards of the so-called proletarian cause. This Institute has divisions embracing all corners of the world. Dialectical materialism, Soviet strategy and tactics are among the subjects studied.

To promote "a better understanding of the Soviet desires and the humanitarianism of the Communists," the Soviet government decreed a Special University of Friendship among Nations. This University is open to foreign students from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. So much importance is attached to this training, that the Soviet government pays all the students' expenses including his transportation from his native country.

The announcement of this University was made by Nikita Khrushchev while visiting Indonesia in February, 1960.<sup>10</sup> The University was inaugurated on November 17, 1960. According to an official statement, 43,500 persons, representing fifty-nine nations, applied for admission.<sup>11</sup> However, the *Pravda* editorial of the same day states that not all the 500 students selected from Africa, Asia, and Latin America arrived. The editorial angrily reports that some of the countries refused to issue visas (this included India) to the selected few because of the students' Communistic leanings. No doubt, these countries recognized the great propaganda potential of this University and did not wish to be subjected to its effects. *Pravda* also states that the Western powers try desperately to dissuade its youth from going to Moscow.

But the youth knows where the sun of wisdom rises and marches to Moscow, the capital of the first socialist state which solemnly declares its principle of friendship and peace among nations.<sup>12</sup>

To mark the great significance of this event, Premier N. Khrushchev delivered a lengthy speech at the inaugural ceremony on November 17. He promised that the Soviet government would not try to indoctrinate the students with Communist ideas.

Of course we will not be angry if some of you will come to the conclusion that Communist ideology is closest to your heart. I repeat, if some of you, as they say, will get affected by the contemporary sickness of Communism, please do not blame us.<sup>13</sup>

According to the University regulations, some Soviet students will be allowed to matriculate and to study together with these foreigners. The reason for this arrangement is obvious — first, to maintain an effective control over this youth, and second, to reassure them that segregation in the Soviet Union is nonexistent. One hundred and twenty specialists under the

<sup>10</sup> *Pravda*, February 24, 1960.

<sup>11</sup> *Pravda*, November 17, 1960.

<sup>12</sup> *Pravda*, November 17, 1960.

<sup>13</sup> *Pravda*, November 18, 1960.

rectorship of Professor C. V. Rumiantzev supervise the study. The first academic year was devoted exclusively to the study of the Russian language as the tool and the answer to all learning. The current enrollment of 500 is expected to increase to 5,000 within the next few years. In addition to these, there are 12,000 foreign students studying at various other universities and institutes in the Soviet Union.

### *Some basic problems*

Even Soviet educators know that it is much easier to issue a decree, to pass a law than to implement these into practical reality. One is justifiably puzzled by the official criticism of the existing form and standards of Soviet education as if the latter had thus far served the interests of some foreign ideology. The reform of 1958 was prompted not by shortcomings of the educational system as such but primarily by the ideological crisis in which the Communist party found itself, particularly since Stalin's death. Furthermore, Khrushchev had to follow up his anti-Stalin campaign by purging the school textbooks — all of which were filled with glorifications of Stalin as a genius. Only through a change could he accomplish this task. Naturally, they face serious difficulties in preparing an adequate number of such works in all fields in so short a time — a fact which even the Soviet educators regard as an impossible task.

To add to the frustration, one must recognize that a new generation of educators would be needed to fulfill the strain of the change. For twenty-five years, that is from 1934-1959, only seventy-nine doctoral dissertations in the entire Soviet Union were defended in all fields of pedagogical science. Academician I. A. Kairov complains about the narrow-mindedness and one-sidedness of even these few dissertations.<sup>14</sup> Lack of good textbooks is blamed on the low standard of study in

<sup>14</sup>I. A. Kairov, (*Perspektivy Razvitiya Pedagogicheskoi Nauky I KOordinaciya Raboty Anademii I Kafedr Pedagogiky Pedagogicheskikh Institutov.*) *Sovetskaya Pedagogika* #2 February, 1960 p. 21.

internationalism.<sup>9</sup> It may be noted that although a proletarian revolution was regarded as inevitable and necessary, such a revolution might be either peaceful or violent in nature, depending on circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

The Declaration warned that Marxism-Leninism demanded the "creative" application of these nine general principles of "socialist revolution and socialist construction," i.e., the careful consideration of the concrete historical conditions of each country. On the other hand, it cautioned repeatedly against exaggeration of the role of national peculiarities, (against national communism).

These nine formulae, however, are incapable of precise evaluation. What is the permissible range for the "creative" application of the general principles of Marxism-Leninism? At what point does "creative" application become so creative that it becomes national communism? How much innovation, how much divergence is possible within the framework of the so-called universally applicable pattern of development from capitalism to socialism? As in many other similar cases, there is broad discretion here for the judges that be, who may freely draw the line of heresy and national communism at any point they please. The laws are briefly stated, and almost any content can be given them. Wide variations are certainly possible in the implementation of such a law as the liquidation of capitalist property, e.g., with or without compensation, immediate or gradual, full scale or restricted. The laws, to be meaningful, require further elucidation by the proper authorities. To some extent this has been given in the past year in the severe campaign directed by Moscow against Yugoslav revisionism as contained in the new Program of the Communist League of Yugoslavia. The fact remains that the identification of certain laws hardly improves the situation, for an interpreter of the correct meaning of these vague laws now becomes necessary. Who shall

<sup>9</sup>*Dokumenty*, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 19.

pedagogical institutions. The situation changed very little since 1953 when it was reported that:

In many schools (Uzbek SSR), the teachers lack theoretical knowledge and methodical habits. It also happens that the teacher does not know his subject. During an exam, it took the mathematics teacher five hours to solve the problem given his pupils for one hour. In the first class of the primary school in Karl Marx Kolkhoz, 14 out of 20 pupils failed to learn the Russian alphabet because the teacher himself, Sakhanov, was almost illiterate.<sup>15</sup>

I had earlier mentioned that according to the Communist convictions, no subject, be it history, mathematics or even zoology, can be divorced from political implications. In practice, this means that the teaching of every subject must conform to the Communist ideology. No objectivity is permitted. Only one truth may be taught — that which is determined by the Communist party. No alternative views are given nor is discussion or dissenting opinion allowed with the result that the student in the Soviet Union is given no opportunity to think for himself or to question the established line. This denial of free inquiry has all but wrecked a number of fields of knowledge. Fear to express an opinion, fear to ask for explanation led to absurdity. Some of the hopeful among American educators believe that the reforms of 1958 will finally produce a new generation capable of thinking for themselves: a generation which might promote ideas which could change the system itself. Many people would like to think, and I hope they are right, that the present leaders in the Soviet Union have at long last realized that the uniform, strict, tightly controlled educational system of the USSR was not serving even the goal of the socialist society because it created the cleavage between school and life as Khrushchev put it, paving the road to diversity rather than uniformity.

As far as I can judge, these changes in the school system cannot be interpreted in terms of deviation from Leninist

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<sup>15</sup> *Pravda Vostoka*, February 8, 1953.

principles. The direction of the schools by the Party remains the same. The soviet educational system must always be related to a basic problem of the Communist dictatorship. Should Soviet leaders decide it needs one-hundred thousand engineers in 1964-65, it can produce them. How well they will be trained is another matter. These engineers might even find themselves working in coal mines or doing some socially useful work on farms if shortly before their graduation the plans are changed.

Let me stress once again that the Soviet philosophy distinguishes its educational process from that of any other in a free society. Our problem is to find a way to cope with the totalitarian ideology without giving up our natural rights as free citizens. The intellectuals in the Soviet Union have nothing to say, but must adjust themselves to the new conditions and provide "scientific" explanations for the "wisdom" of the current leaders' approach.

Let us take for example the position of a historian in the Soviet Union today. For twenty-five years he was forced to glorify Stalin's greatness and his accomplishments, otherwise he could not have survived the purges. Now comes Khrushchev, who bluntly labels Stalin as the "enemy of the people." What should the historian do? Is he given an alternative to be at least silent? By no means! He must now gather new testimony to reverse his position. On the basis of his new findings, he must produce proof that he himself was misled and that his writings during Stalin's life were motivated by fear for his life. Now that he is "free" again and is in a position to write "objectively," he endorses enthusiastically the wisdom and the policy of Khrushchev. This is but one sample of the degradation of man's intellect and the dehumanization process which is going on in the Soviet Empire.

This constant humiliation of individuals who are in charge of the engineering of human souls and the total imposition of Party control creates an unhealthy, suffocating atmosphere for

the development of the intellect — an atmosphere which creates vulnerability and a great possibility for human explosion against the oppressive system. The educational process in the Soviet Union merely succeeded in promoting a dual personality in every Soviet citizen: one, loyal, official, loudly and endlessly praising Soviet victories; and the other, the individual himself who longs for a chance to defy the system itself.

Visitors to the Soviet Union — people who know something about the Russian character and mentality — recognize very quickly that the people in the Soviet Union nurture the same desires, hopes, and yearning for freedom that we do. These are, of course, the afore-mentioned experts who, upon their return from a guided tour, insist that the Soviet government has found solutions to all problems. Their opinion is based on artificial impressions. They see buildings going up in Moscow — this is to them a sign of great progress. They see children playing and laughing — this is a sure sign that there is no oppression. They see people going to churches — hence they insist there is no religious persecution. If they are lucky enough to meet Khrushchev, and if he happens to be in a jovial mood, it means that he desires our friendship; if he sneezes, they immediately declare that Khrushchev is not at all willing to give up the cold war. These are not the “experts” who are being referred to. There are in America many people who are willing to study the history of the Empire, look at the record and then recognize the difference between Soviet theory and promises and the bold reality.

### *The challenge*

In a sense, Soviet education already may have proved a challenge to the Soviet system itself rather than to the democratic ideals. This does not mean that there is nothing for us to do. It is up to us to prove the superiority of our ideals over

the concept of slavery. We should offer a helping hand to the

millions of victims of Communist tyranny in the oppressed nations, and reaffirm and demonstrate how unshaken is our faith in the indestructibility of our belief in freedom and, above all, in God, the basis of all strength and courage. We should not minimize but show admiration for the courage of those under the cloak of oppression. We should learn more and more about their desires, about their cultures, and about their true aspirations. We should prove to them that our belief in the indivisibility of liberty is real and that we understand their helplessness in not being able to show their appreciation of our concern for their unfortunate lot. Most of all, we should make clear to them that we make a great distinction between them and their government which they never endorsed. We should answer the Communist hate campaign with our passionate love of and concern for humanity. Basically, all men share like aspirations. We all take pride in the great strides our country has made in certain fields of endeavor. We all desire freedom from want — and more important, freedom from fear. But a man cannot be considered whole without faith in God, the ultimate of all man's pursuits; and we should not be lulled into passivity so long as there is a man in the world who is denied his God-given rights.

We should realize, too, that it is rather easy to be in favor of democratic ideals and Christian virtues in a free society. But it takes a great man to defy death in order to serve God under Communist rule — and now and then rise above all mankind, and in open defiance of the totalitarian system to unveil the truth and warn the non-Russian world what it can expect from Communist promises. We should know also that though Stalin is no more, the system which is responsible for Stalin's crimes is still the same. The demand of total subordination is the same. The degradation of human dignity is the same. The Soviet Empire is still a prison of nations. It is still dark there.

As Pasternak's Dr. Zhivago tells us shortly before he dies of a heart attack:

The great majority of us are required to live a life of constant, systematic duplicity. Your health is bound to be affected if, day after day, you say the opposite of what you feel, if you grovel before what you dislike and rejoice at what brings you nothing but misfortune. Our nervous system isn't just a fiction, it's part of our physical body; and our soul exists in space and is inside of us, like the teeth in our mouth. It can't be forever violated with impunity.<sup>16</sup>

The Communist system has an inherent weakness which is camouflaged by the boastful declarations about the alleged unity between the ruler and the ruled. Soviet education might produce in the long run, the element of surprise. In the words of the American educator, Dr. Norman P. Auburn: "A nation of free people cannot endure without education; a nation of slaves cannot long continue with education."

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<sup>16</sup>Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago* (New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1958), p. 483.

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INTO SOUTH AMERICA

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BY  
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*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.



# THE DIPLOMATIC PENETRATION OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA INTO SOUTH AMERICA

BY TERRENCE J. BARRAGY

**D**URING the period 1939-1940 an order went forth from the Central Committee of the Communist party of the USSR for the publication of certain previously secret documents. These documents concerned relations between Catherine the Great, Czarina of Russia (1762-1796), and Francisco de Miranda, a Venezuelan dedicated to the liberation of his people through the destruction of the Spanish Empire in South America. The Communist party chose to expose a plan between Catherine II and Francisco de Miranda for Russian penetration into South America in order to display to the world the long history of its "humanitarian" interest in the peoples of South America. Such a plan predating the historic proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine could well serve them as a precedent for present day Communist penetration into Central and South America.

Only one problem faced the Central Committee in its proposed project: Catherine the Great possessed imperialistic, but little, if any, humanitarian interest in South America. The problem was solved by appointing a Soviet historian, V. Miroshchinskii, to study the official Russian documents, alter their meaning along party lines, and then publish their contents for propaganda purposes. In 1940, Miroshchinskii made a speech on the subject before the State University in Moscow. In the same year, an article, "Catherine the Second and Francisco Miranda," by Miroshchinskii, was published in the Soviet magazine, *Historian-Marxist*.

For the first time certain historians became aware of this important step in the history of Russian imperialism, which hitherto had been unknown. The publication of Miroshevskii's article rendered all existing works on Russian imperialism incomplete. The work revealed that rather than extending to mere countries, Russian imperialism during the reign of Catherine II extended over entire continents. However, since it was published only in the Russian language, the historical fact of a plan for Russian imperial penetration into South America during the year 1787 has remained almost completely unknown in America.

With world attention focused on Communist activities in Cuba and throughout Central and South America, it becomes increasingly important to understand the earliest beginnings of Russian penetration into these areas. The primary purpose of my paper is to make known for the first time in this country the true facts concerning the Russian plan for penetration into South America in 1787. The subject treated here in only a limited manner will be elaborated upon in later publications.

## I

Born in Caracas on April 5, 1750, Francisco de Miranda lived to become one of the most colorful, outstanding and talented figures of his age. He first grew to importance at 31 years of age while serving as a lieutenant colonel in the Spanish Army. Fighting in alliance with the Americans against the British in the Revolutionary War, he obtained necessary supplies and money which enabled the French fleet to blockade the English Army at Yorktown. Since he despised Spanish tyranny in South America, he soon turned against Spain to become the precursor of South American liberty. He began traveling throughout the world in search of someone to aid him

in his plans for the liberation of South America. During these travels he became acquainted with almost every great personage of his age. The list of his acquaintances, some his lifelong friends, and others his sworn enemies, includes such names as: Simón Bolívar, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Paine, James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, the Marquis de Lafayette, Robespierre, Pétion, Napoleon Bonaparte, William Pitt, the Iron Duke, Frederick Wilhelm I, Potemkin, and Catherine II.

It was during his world travels that he arrived in Russia in 1786 and there formulated plans with Catherine II for the Russian invasion of South America to be carried out in 1787. When these plans were postponed by the declaration of war upon Russia by Turkey and Sweden, he continued his travels throughout Europe. In 1792, he joined the French Revolution and fought in various important battles as a general in the French forces. He later became an important political rival of Napoleon Bonaparte and was banished from France. In his later years he served for a time as generalissimo of the newly-formed Republic of Venezuela. After being defeated by Spanish forces, he was betrayed by an officer under his command, the later famous Simón Bolívar, and thrown in prison. He died in a Spanish prison at Cádiz in the year 1816.

In view of the Communist party's purpose in releasing information on the Russian plan for penetration into South America in 1787, it is necessary to briefly examine Catherine's so-called humanitarian sentiments. There are definite grounds for arguing in support of her humanitarianism, for her voluminous correspondence with such men as Voltaire, Diderot, Grimm, and d'Alembert displays her support of liberal ideas. She speaks in glowing terms of humanitarianism, the rights of man and democracy. There is also a great deal of information showing her interest in bettering the lot of the Russian peasants;

that interpreter be? The Declaration gives no clear answer.

One law that has been given a good deal of attention is the law of proletarian internationalism,<sup>11</sup> which leads us to our second major element in the Soviet definition—national communism as the antithesis of proletarian internationalism, threatening the unity of action of the Communist movement.

The Soviet Communists charge that national communism means disunity of action in the Communist world, that the national Communist, so to speak, “goes it alone” without considering the fundamental loyalty of all Communists and true Socialists since the time of Marx, loyalty to the international working class movement. The national Communist, according to Mrs. Furtseva, “opposes incorrectly understood national interests of one country to the common socialist interests of the working people in all countries.”<sup>12</sup> He, in short, forgets or ignores the obligations encompassed in the term “proletarian internationalism.”

The old concept of proletarian internationalism is used by Soviet Communists as the corrective to national communism. It signifies the proper relationship that is to exist among the Communist parties of the world. This relationship is one of regular and intimate collaboration and mutual aid, directed outwardly against the common enemy, capitalism, and inwardly toward the common goal, socialism and communism. It is often claimed by Soviet Communists that the achievement of these goals is dependent upon the existence of such unity and mutual aid. It is also insisted that proletarian internationalism signifies a relationship much more intimate than does the term “coexistence.” The Soviet press has expressed feelings of horror at the use, in the new Yugoslav Program, of the term “coexistence” to denote the nature of the proper relationship among Communist-con-

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, I. Pomelov, “Razvitie sotsializma i proletarskii internatsionalizm” (The Development of Socialism and Proletarian Internationalism), *Kommunist*, XXXIII, No. 1 (January 1957), 15-30.

<sup>12</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 15, 8 (*Pravda*, April 23, 1957).

yet the fact remains that she was a true democrat only within the confines of her royal palace. She spoke quite freely of "democracy and the rights of man" but never took effective steps to apply such ideas for the betterment of mankind. When she spoke of the expansion of the Russian Empire, on the other hand, (and this she did quite often), her words were not the expression of abstract ideals, but concrete plans of action. A good example of this is shown in a letter of Catherine's to Dyershavin written several years before her death:

If I could live to be a hundred I should wish to unite the whole of Europe under the sceptre of Russia. But I have no intention of dying before I have driven the Turks out of Constantinople, broken the pride of the Chinese and established trade relations with India.<sup>1</sup> ∴

The ideas expressed by such words are not those of a person primarily interested in humanitarianism, but of a person dedicated to the cause of imperial expansion. The above letter, rather than being considered a rare expression of Catherine's attitude, must be considered as typical of an attitude that was looked upon with trepidation throughout Europe. The French ambassador, the Count de Ségur, comments upon Catherine's attitude in 1787 at the time of her trip to the Crimea:

At one and the same time she wished to . . . annihilate the Tartars, invade Persia, continue her conquests over the Turks, shackle Poland and extend her influence over the whole of Europe.<sup>2</sup>

It is in keeping with Catherine's character that she would display an interest in liberal ideas to Miranda, and even discuss them at great length, as she was fond of doing.<sup>3</sup> Such an expression would have made the concealment of her true interest in South America all the easier.

<sup>1</sup> Gina Kaus, *Catherine: The Portrait of an Empress* (New York: The Viking Press, 1935), p. 366.

<sup>2</sup> *The Memoirs and Anecdotes of the Count De Ségur*, Translated by Gerard Shelley (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> See Kaus, p. 292.

Reading the many biographies of Miranda, of his travels in Russia, and of his more than cordial reception and later contacts with Catherine II, one wonders whether Catherine was attracted to Miranda simply because of his being a man of manner and charm, or because of some other more important motive. Miroshevskii comes directly to the point in his work on the subject:

What was the actual reason for the extraordinary benevolence of the Russian Empress to the Venezuelan conspirator? In the biographical literature dedicated to Miranda this question is not sufficiently elucidated . . . .

But a series of circumstances make it possible to state with assuredness that the protection which was granted to Miranda by the Russian Empress was not her attraction to him, but that it was motivated by ideas fully practical in kind which were linked above all with the problem of the Russian expansion into America.<sup>4</sup>

This quotation is rather significant for it shows that Catherine was not only interested in spreading Russian influence over South America, but over all America. Her strategy seems to have been the familiar pincers movement, the pincers being on the one hand Russian occupation of Alaska and California and on the other hand the occupation of Central and South America. Thus the new American Republic would be gripped from two sides.

Miroshevskii gives three reasons for Catherine's great interest in Miranda. First, she felt that if her imperialistic ventures concerning the Turkish Empire should bring about a conflict with Spain, she could use Miranda to fan the flames of revolt in Spain's colonial empire in South America, thus hitting the Spanish in their most vulnerable area.<sup>5</sup> Second, with the powerful countries of Turkey, England, Prussia, Spain, and

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<sup>4</sup>V. Miroshevskii. "Catherine the Second and Francisco Miranda," *Historian-Marxist* (Bk. No. 2-78, Moscow, 1940), p. 128. Privately Translated. Later studies will be based on Miroshevskii's book on the same subject, which was published in 1946.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 129.

France in a state of serious unrest owing to the imperialistic gestures of Russia and her ally Austria toward Turkey, the possibility of a general European war was very great. Thus Miranda's value in the eyes of Catherine was doubled, as he could be used against Spain and her allies if such a war should break out.<sup>6</sup> Finally, Catherine was interested in Miranda because she had been informed by her ambassador in Madrid, S. S. Zinoviev, that the people in Spain's colonial empire in America were highly excited and embittered and completely ready to revolt.<sup>7</sup>

Having shown why Catherine II was interested in Francisco de Miranda, it is now necessary to show why Miranda was interested in Catherine. The answer is simple: Miranda saw in Catherine a possible ally in his plan to liberate South America. However, if we consider Miranda's liberation plans, which forbade any permanent penetration of a foreign power into South America, and Catherine's imperialistic plans and activities, we are faced with an apparent conflict. If Miranda was sincere and determined (this will later be proven) in his plans for the liberation of South America, how could he have been willing to accept the imperialistic aid of Catherine II? There is but one answer to this problem. Miranda willingly accepted the aid offered by Catherine II because he was deceived by her and did not realize her imperialistic intentions. Miranda's intelligence was such that it seems impossible that he could have been ignorant of something so seemingly obvious as the imperialistic intentions of Catherine. But there are two reasons why Catherine was able to deceive Miranda: his lack of ability as a judge of character, and Catherine's mastery at deceit. Miranda's inability to correctly measure a person's character

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, footnote, p. 129.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, footnote, p. 130. Catherine received this information from S. S. Zinoviev in a letter dated June 20 (2 July, N.S.), 1787.

is made evident by viewing the important occasions during his life when this inability brought him misfortune. One such instance was when he selected Louis Dupéron to be his clerk; Dupéron later betrayed him. Joseph F. Thorning states that this incident stamped Miranda "as a poor judge of character."<sup>8</sup> Another was his selection of Pedro José Caro as one of his personal agents in his plans for the liberation of South America; Caro also betrayed him. Thorning also comments upon this incident:

His [Caro's] name survives in history as a sad commentary on the Precursor's inability to sift the wheat from the chaff."

Miranda's selection of Casa León as an envoy to negotiate with the Royalist Forces in 1812 is perhaps the best instance of his poor character judgment. Subsequent actions of Casa León revealed him as the worst possible choice as an envoy to the Royalist Forces. Thorning states:

The gravest fault of Miranda in his whole career was to have misjudged the personality of his aristocratic host [Casa León].<sup>10</sup>

Catherine's ability in the field of deception and her willingness to use this ability are well-described by Bernard Pares:

Her métier, as she herself said, was administration and affairs, but the side of administration in which she excelled was diplomacy. Those who enjoy watching the adjustment of policy to the situation with which it has to deal, will rate Catherine as a political genius.<sup>11</sup>

Her letters are written in a free and lively style, discursive and with much natural charm. In them Catherine shows throughout the very high faculty of seizing the exact opportunities of the moment and shading to them her own aims. All the transitions in her friendships—and she was always ready to change her friends according to circumstances—were gradual almost to the point of being unnoticable.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Joseph F. Thorning, *Miranda: World Citizen*, (Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1952), p. 144.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 252.

<sup>11</sup>Bernard Pares, *A History Of Russia*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944), p. 234.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 256.

There is a great deal of information supporting Bernard Pares' views on Catherine's ability to deceive others.<sup>13</sup>

It is of great interest to note that in discussing his personal estimation of Catherine II, Miranda mentions, among other things, her humanity and noble sentiments. In his diarial entry for February 22, 1787, after describing at some length his conversation with Catherine, Miranda states that the conversa-

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<sup>13</sup>Gina Kaus discusses this subject on page 191 of her rather extensive biography of Catherine II:

In most other respects Catherine had her equals, but she remained unrivalled in her capacity for using other people to carry out her unspoken and even strenuously denied designs.

The lifelong friend, and closest female companion of Catherine, Princess Daschkaw, makes an interesting statement on Catherine's amazing ability to impress and sway people in her book, *Memoirs of the Princess Daschkaw*, Mrs. W. Bradford, ed. (2 vols.; London: Henry Colburn, Publisher, 1840), I, 14:

. . . the graces of her manner were absolutely irresistible to all whom she chose to please . . . .

The Princess continues by commenting upon the occasion of her first meeting with Catherine:

Throughout this memorable evening, the grand duchess addressed herself almost exclusively to me, and enchanted me by her conversation. The elevation of sentiment, and the information she displayed, seemed to point out a being privileged by nature above all others, and even such as my most exalted ideas of perfection had hitherto fallen short of.

Some will argue that Princess Daschkaw, who became known as the "little Catherine," was quite over-enthusiastic in her estimation of Catherine. While in general this may be a true criticism, in the point under consideration there are too many writers in complete agreement with the Princess to make it an effective argument. In her comparison of Catherine and the Empress Elizabeth, Gina Kaus, on page 152 of her book, describes Catherine's charms in glowing terms:

. . . [Catherine] outshone her rival in the possession of a far more dazzling wit, a gay, even, and sparkling temperament, and above all an unparalleled gift for handling her fellow-creatures. Everyone who met her fell a victim to the charm of her personality.

As proof of Catherine's ability to win over even the greatest personages, it is an established fact that through the force of her personality she was able to induce Emperor Joseph II of Austria to join with her in an alliance against the Turks, even though such an enterprise was much to his distaste. An excellent account of this incident in Catherine's life is found in Gladys Scott-Thomson, *Catherine The Great And The Expansion Of Russia*, (London: English Universities Press Ltd., 1917), pp. 191-92.

tion displayed to him "her goodness of heart, humanity, intelligence, and noble sentiments."<sup>14</sup>

Thus we see why Catherine II was able to deceive Miranda in regard to her true intentions concerning Russian penetration into South America.

In mentioning the apparent conflict between the plans of Miranda and the plans of Catherine II in regard to South America, the assumption was made that Miranda was sincere and determined in regard to his original plans for the liberation of South America. His sincerity and determination in this regard are shown by his life, which was dedicated to this one purpose. He traveled throughout the world seeking someone to aid him in his plan for the liberation of South America. In the French Revolution he willingly risked all, including his life, to aid a people in their fight for liberty. When offered the chance to lead a French imperial expedition into South America, he quickly refused. In his many relations with England, he always made it quite clear that in return for her aid, England was to gain no rights to the actual occupation of South America. Finally, his sincerity and determination in regard to his original plans for the liberation of South America are shown by his various invasion attempts of South America and by his later activities while fighting with the South American people in their bid for independence.

The following has now been established: (1) the reasons why Catherine II desired contact with Francisco de Miranda, (2) the reason why Miranda desired contact with Catherine, (3) the explanation of the apparent conflict between the plans of Miranda and the plans of Catherine in regard to penetration into South America. The next step is to consider the earliest beginnings of Russian interest in South America.

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<sup>14</sup> A. Grisanti, *Miranda Y La Emperatriz Catalina La Grande*, (Caracas: Empresa Gutenberg, 1928), p. 19. Privately Translated.

## II

Miroshevskii traces the course of Russian imperialism, starting with the reign of Peter the Great. He gives evidence of a plan for Russian penetration into South America even at this early date:

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, there was submitted to Peter the Great a project aiming at the conquest by Russian troops of a considerable part of South America. The author of this document was apparently a Dutchman; his name and the date of the submitting of the project are unknown but it can be guessed that the document pertains to the last years of Peter's rule.<sup>15</sup>

Miroshevskii even states the actual plan:

The project planned the transport into South America of ten Russian warships with 12,000 soldiers; these forces according to the opinion of the promoting Dutchman were sufficient to conquer a vast territory in the New World "not occupying either Spanish or Portugese possessions whose border lines were in the vicinity."<sup>16</sup>

This plan was rejected by Peter the Great because he favored penetration into North America. It is of importance to this study because it shows that even as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, Russian leaders had discussed definite plans regarding penetration into South America.

Catherine was greatly interested in Russian eastward expansion and so took active steps to assure Russian imperial success in this area. In 1785, more than a year before the arrival of Miranda in Russia, Catherine ordered the start of an expedition under the command of an Englishman named Billings. This expedition, launched on a grand scale by Catherine on August 8, 1785, was designed as a geographical and astronomical expedition to explore the northeastern parts of Russia. After seven years of work it accomplished little or nothing of scientific value. On December 22, 1786, Catherine signed an edict reinforcing the Billings expedition with five

<sup>15</sup>Miroshevskii, p. 128.

<sup>16</sup>"The Project of the Conquest of America Submitted to Peter the Great," *Moskvitianin*, (1851, No. 1, pp. 121-24), as quoted in Miroshevskii, p. 128.

ships under the command of Captain G. I. Mulovsky. On April 2, 1787 Catherine approved the plans of Lieutenant James Trevenen for the sending of still more ships, to be under his command, in order to shift the balance of power in the Pacific in favor of Russia. The expeditions of Mulovsky and Trevenen were later assigned by Catherine to the invasion of South America.

The only significant accomplishment of the Billings expedition was its aid to the ambitious plans of an Alaskan fur trader named Shelikhov who desired a monopoly over the Russian fur trading rights in Alaska. Hearing from Billings about the evils practiced by unscrupulous Russian traders in Alaska, Catherine determined the best solution to these evils was the granting of a fur trade monopoly to the Shelikhov-Golikov Company. Thus we see that Catherine's exploration plans for Alaska and the North Pacific ended with few positive results. Her later plans with Shelikhov, spurred on by information from the Billings expedition, were to result in great imperialistic gains in North America for the Russian Empire. Russian settlements were soon to spread from California to Alaska.

Having made arrangements for the expeditions of Billings and G. I. Mulovsky, Catherine's plans for penetration into America seemed quite complete until her meeting with the fiery South American patriot in Kiev in February of 1787.

In her famous tour of the Crimea, Catherine II arrived in Kiev on February 9, 1787. Miranda was escorted to the city and introduced to the Czarina by Prince Potemkin on February 14 (25 Feb. N.S.). The Miranda biographers relate that the Czarina became enchanted by the visitor's stories of his native land.<sup>17</sup>

W. S. Robertson states that it seems that Miranda informed Catherine of his revolutionary ideas concerning South America. Robertson quotes an article which Miranda helped to prepare

<sup>17</sup>Thorning, p. 51.

for the press many years after his departure from Russia. In the article Miranda states that he disclosed his views concerning South America to Catherine, who "manifested the strongest interest in the accomplishment of his scheme, and assured him, in case of his success, she would be the foremost to support the independence of South America."<sup>18</sup>

In his diary Miranda specifically mentions three occasions in the month of February during which he discussed South America with the Czarina. It seems probable that this topic was discussed on at least two other occasions during February. The diary clearly reveals Catherine's growing interest in the South American. On February 22, several persons in the court informed Miranda of Catherine's great interest in him. The French ambassador, the Count de Ségur, informed Miranda that he had succeeded in making Catherine interested in himself while many others had failed to do so.<sup>19</sup>

While in Kiev during the month of February, Catherine also made her first contact with an English seaman named James Trevenen. Having been unemployed for a number of years, Trevenen drew up a plan for supplying the Russian settlements in the Kamchatka area by sea rather than by the costly overland route which was in practice at that time. He proposed to the Empress the opening of a supply route by sea between Kamchatka and Japan and northern China and "for keeping in those seas a naval force sufficient to make themselves respected."<sup>20</sup> It is stated that when this plan was laid before Catherine it was "so well approved of by her, that she imme-

<sup>18</sup> *The Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal*, XIII, 287, "Emancipation of Spanish America." Edinburgh, 1809. As quoted in W. S. Robertson, *The Life Of Miranda*, (2 vols.; Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1929), I, 75.

<sup>19</sup> *Archivo Del General Miranda*, Vicente Dávila, ed. (15 vols.; Caracas: Editorial Sur-America, 1929), II, 267.

<sup>20</sup> William Tooke, *The Life Of Catherine II, Empress Of Russia*, (4th ed.; 3 vols.; London: Printed by John Nichols, Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street, For T. N. Longman and O. Rees, Paternoster-Row, 1800), III, footnote, 261.





trolled states.<sup>13</sup> Coexistence, for the Soviet Communist, can only refer to the relationship between two antagonistic systems—world capitalism and world communism—a relationship of many-sided competition and ideological warfare. The national Communist is accused of rejecting cooperation as well as ignoring the experience of the international Communist movement, and especially the experience of the U.S.S.R. If, after all, the Communist parties are striving toward the same goal—communism—the sharing of experience will lead them more swiftly toward that goal.

The repudiation of proletarian internationalism leads on the other hand to isolation, and to divergent rather than convergent lines of development in the world Communist movement. According to Khrushchev, the advocates of national communism “propose advancing to socialism singly, so to speak, floundering about separately. . . . If this view were adopted, there would probably be so many ‘paths’ that people would lose their ways as in a forest and would not know how to reach their great goal.”<sup>14</sup>

Our third major element in the Soviet criticism of national communism concerns the rejection by national Communists of Soviet Communist hegemony or preëminence in the world movement. In their attack upon national communism, Soviet Communists have been careful not to insist too explicitly upon this hegemony, but, of course, it remains a most vital issue. The C.P.S.U. can obviously never return to the position of hegemony it enjoyed during the years of “socialism in one country”—the inter-war years—but it does seek to retain leadership over the Communist bloc and fights against national communism as the challenge to that leadership.

In the basic document we have already mentioned, the

<sup>13</sup>For the English version of the Introduction and first three chapters of the new Yugoslav Program, see *Review of International Affairs*, IX, No. 196 (June 1, 1958), 3-25. For the complete text, see *Program Saveza komunista Jugoslavije* (Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (Belgrade, 1958).

<sup>14</sup>*Current Digest*, Vol. IX, No. 45, p. 16 (*Pravda*, November 7, 1957).

Moscow Declaration of November 1957, an explicit reference is indeed made to the preëminence of the Soviet Union (but not the C.P.S.U.) in the world Communist movement by its use of the phrase, "camp of socialist countries, headed by the Soviet Union."<sup>15</sup> Emphasis, however, is placed on the idea of a commonwealth (*sodruzhestvo*) of equal and independent socialist states united by the common goal of socialism, the common class essence of their systems, the need of mutual aid, the threat of imperialism, and their common ideology of Marxism-Leninism.<sup>16</sup> The relationship is defined as one of equality and independence of all. But one reference to the C.P.S.U. suggests what is not spelled out—the maintenance of Soviet leadership in the Communist bloc. The Declaration describes the decisions of the Twentieth Party Congress (1956) of the C.P.S.U. as constituting the foundation of an entirely new stage in the development of the world Communist movement. Soviet Communist preëminence was in this fashion reaffirmed.

Much evidence exists that the C.P.S.U. is highly sensitive to national communism as a repudiation of Soviet Communist experience and the usefulness of that experience for other countries. It is charged that national communism belittles the historical significance of the October Revolution in Russia. The national Communists "try to counterpose the national features of different countries to that which is of general importance—*which was given by the October Revolution and which is necessary for all who are fighting for socialism*" (my italics).<sup>17</sup> It is also charged that national communism employs the "artificial expression 'Stalinism'" to discredit the entire Soviet experience.<sup>18</sup> The Soviet press voices indignation that national communism regards the Soviet experience as a specifically Russian

<sup>15</sup> *Dokumenty*, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 4, 11 (*Sovetskaia Rossiia*, February 3, 1957, pp. 2-3).

<sup>18</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 12, 8 (*Pravda*, March 11, 1957).

<sup>19</sup> *Current Digest*, IX, No. 4, 11 (*Sovetskaia Rossiia*, February 3, 1957).

phenomenon, outmoded and inapplicable to more economically advanced societies.<sup>19</sup>

The great desire of the Soviet Communists to preserve the doctrine of the universal applicability of the Bolshevik-Communist experience in Russia is quite evident. The political implications of such a doctrine are also obvious. Given unity in the international Communist movement, given the exchange of experience among the parties, the C.P.S.U. stands to gain much, for its experience of forty-odd years as a ruling party far outstrips that of any other country. Once the national Communists have reduced the Bolshevik Russian experience from universal to national dimensions, the hegemony of the C.P.S.U. will be deprived of one of its major supports.

The leading roles of the C.P.S.U. and the U.S.S.R. in the camp of socialism have recently received unmistakable recognition in *Kommunist*, the theoretical Journal of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. Marxism-Leninism, it asserted, "does not refute the possibility of one or another Communist Party of a socialist country playing the leading role during a definite historical period."<sup>20</sup> Such a role depends not on subjective desires but on "objective conditions." In the middle of the nineteenth century Germany played such a role, according to *Kommunist*: at the close of that century Russia inherited this role and its leadership has existed ever since. But such a role has nothing in common with dictatorial "hegemonism." Rather, it is claimed, only with the fraternal aid of the U.S.S.R. and through a close alliance of all the new people's democracies have the latter been able to survive the attack of imperialism.<sup>21</sup>

To summarize the Soviet Communist viewpoint, national communism is a modern heresy, a revisionist, opportunist, right-wing deviation from orthodox Marxism-Leninism. It is characterized by an incorrect overevaluation of local peculiarities and a corresponding underestimation of the broad laws governing

<sup>19</sup> *East Europe*, VII, No. 6 (June 1958), 53.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

socialist development everywhere. It is characterized also by a misguided will to build socialism in isolation, apart from other socialist countries and without the benefit of the valuable experience of these countries. National communism leads to disunity in theory and in action, which spells disaster for the country that pursues national Communist practices.

### III

The Soviet Communist definition of national communism is for obvious reasons unacceptable to the non-Communist student of that phenomenon. He will seek a more satisfactory meaning for the term, one that is unencumbered by the Marxist-Leninist world view. To be sure, no one denies the value of knowing the Soviet Communist definition of this and other significant phenomena. The importance of any part of Marxism-Leninist theory has never been primarily in proportion to its approximation to truth but rather in proportion to the force and directness with which that element of theory is being translated into reality.

There still remains the question of an objective definition of national communism. What can be offered as a reasonable and useful definition by which the essence of national communism can be expressed? Is, for example, national communism merely the same thing as nationalism in the Communist movement? Are any and all manifestations of nationalism in the Communist movement since 1918 both within and outside Soviet Russia to be embraced by this term? Is it useful to call Lenin and Stalin national Communists, as well as Earl Browder, while applying the same label to Gomulka and Tito? Is it helpful to make a distinction between "national Communists" who are members of a ruling Communist party, i.e., of a party actually in power, and those "national Communists" whose party is not yet in power?

One recent definition deserving serious attention maintains

that a national Communist is a Communist who (1) places the interests of his country above the interests of any other country and (2) believes that Marxism can and should be adapted to the particular conditions of his country.<sup>22</sup> This definition has the great merit of emphasizing that Lenin and Stalin were in a certain sense national Communists. The Russian Bolsheviks themselves can thus be seen as the originators of national communism. The Bolshevik who favored acceptance of the German peace terms offered at Brest-Litovsk in 1918 on the grounds that the preservation of the new Soviet state overrode all other considerations was clearly a kind of national Communist. The Bolshevik who favored risking the existence of Soviet Russia in a prolonged war that might result in a Soviet Central Europe in addition to a Soviet Russia was a kind of internationalist Communist. During and after the Russian Civil War the successful subordination of the national minorities of the U.S.S.R. to a highly centralized apparatus of power based on Moscow had the effects of checking and liquidating national Communist aspirations within the Soviet Union. Outside the Soviet Union, domination by the C.P.S.U. was early achieved over other young Communist parties through the apparatus of the Communist International by the use of a variety of instruments and techniques, e.g., "bolshevization," terror, slander, etc., which were applied against supporters of any degree of national autonomy within the world movement.

The above indicates that nationalist strivings have been evident in the Communist movement from its inception, and not merely since 1948 or 1956. These nationalist aspirations had and may have as goals independence, equality, or hegemony of one national entity (party, state, people, etc.) vis-à-vis other national entities. In recognition of the persistent manifestations of nationalism, it would seem logical enough to define national communism as any and all indications of nationalist posture on

<sup>22</sup> See the very useful article by Thomas T. Hammond, "The Origins of National Communism," *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, XXXIV, No. 2 (Spring 1958), 277-91.

the part of a Communist or group of Communists since the beginnings of the movement in 1917.

Yet such a generalized and vague definition obscures the primary content acquired by the term when it came into usage. It may be argued that an historically meaningful explanation of the term should properly take into account those special conditions under which it arose during the years following World War II. Those conditions were essentially as follows: (1) a heritage of roughly three decades of harsh domination exercised successfully over the international movement by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which, it must be conceded, had in fact launched the world movement, established the Comintern and Cominform, and placed in power by means of its armed forces several Communist parties; and (2) the expanded post-war Communist camp, containing not one but (at present) thirteen *ruling* Communist parties, which for the first time have the possibility of utilizing national power and pride, as well as intra-camp rivalries, in their struggle for lessening of foreign Communist control. The national Communist of today, when compared with his similarly inclined predecessors both within and outside the U.S.S.R. during the early years of the movement, labors under vastly different conditions. Although he is burdened with a long-accepted tradition of Soviet hegemony, he has at his disposal hitherto lacking national resources. Given a combination of favorable domestic and international circumstances, he can hope for the attainment of a measure of autonomy or even full independence.

These considerations suggest that it may be useful to distinguish among the various manifestations of nationalism in the history of the world Communist movement and to regard national communism as that special instance of nationalism which arose in the post-war world when the so-called Communist camp became a multi-state system. Indeed, a new, qualitatively different phase has begun in the history of communism. If one were to

construct a tentative periodization of this history, one might well demarcate three broad phases. First, a stage of consolidation of the initial leadership and prestige of the Russian Bolsheviki. In this stage of consolidation, non-Russians such as the Georgian Stalin and the Ukrainian Manuilsky collaborated with Russians to establish highly centralized and Russified mechanisms for the promotion of Communist power at home and abroad. Second, a stage of monolithism, extending roughly from the late 1920's into the 1940's, during which no other Communist party came to power. In this period the traditions of Bolshevism, interpreted by Stalin and transmitted through the Comintern were deeply imbedded into the thinking of Communists of all nations.

The present third period was publicly and dramatically opened in 1948 with the expulsion of Tito and the Yugoslav Party from the Cominform. Disintegration of the prolonged hegemony of the C.P.S.U. began, at least outside the Soviet Union. National communism arose as the effort by a ruling Communist party to reduce or terminate the hegemony of the Communist party of the Soviet Union. By implication, national communism means resistance to the attempted hegemony of any other Communist party in the world movement. The focus upon this resistance, in the arena of a multi-state Communist camp, gets to the heart of the problem: can Soviet Russian hegemony survive the national Communist aspirations of ruling Communist parties?

National communism is an unsatiated and insatiable demand within the Communist camp. One concession by the C.P.S.U. will be followed by pressure for further concessions, for each Communist party desires to attain the enviable status of the Communist League of Yugoslavia. The pressure will continue tomorrow, whether checked today or not, for the force of nationalism does not appear to have been significantly lessened by the propagation for more than a century of the idea of proletarian internationalism.

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NO. 2

THE ORIGIN OF NATIONAL COMMUNISM

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*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.



# THE ORIGINS OF NATIONAL COMMUNISM

BY ROMAN SMAL-STOCKI, *Marquette University*

## I

**T**HE ESTABLISHED thesis that Tito originated "national communism" as a heresy in orthodox Marxism-Leninism exists among most American scholars and political publicists. It is believed that this "national" aspect is his brand of communism, which provoked his split with Stalin in 1948. This split spawned a rather extensive American literature of books and articles on the topic of "national communism," often with a kind of hero-worship for Tito qualifying him for American aid and with the pious wish that he would pass through an evolution and join the camp of democratic European socialism. In such fashion this year did *The New Leader*, the leading American journal fostering that political ideology, mark the tenth anniversary of Tito's "national communism" in a special article.<sup>1</sup>

The writer challenged the thesis that Tito started the first conflict between a non-Russian Communist party and the Russian and the Russian Communist dictatorship inside Marxism-Leninism and that he inaugurated the so-called national communism in the writer's book, *The Nationality Problem of the Soviet Union and Russian Communist Imperialism* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1951). The following is a summary of his criticism of this thesis, which is based either on disregard of historical facts or on ignorance about the causes of the Revolution in the Russian Empire.

To understand "national communism" it must be kept in

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. A. V. Sherman, "Ten Years of National Communism," *The New Leader*, (June 16, 1958).

**The views expressed in the Papers of the Slavic Institute of Marquette University, are those of their authors, and are not to be construed as representing the points of view of the Slavic Institute**

mind that one of the most important causes of this Revolution was the nationalism of the non-Russian nations, annexed into the Empire through the course of centuries by Russian imperialism. Prior to 1914 these non-Russian nations had a population majority of 57.3 per cent. Before coming to power Lenin first appealed to these non-Russian nations with his formula for the solution of their nationality problems in the old Russian Empire: "self-determination including separation." Shortly after the establishment of the Russian Communist dictatorship in Petrograd on November 7, 1917, sixteen non-Russian nations proclaimed themselves independent national republics. The most important of them (from an economic and geo-political point of view), Ukraine, was the first state which concluded the peace treaty in Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers on February 9, 1918. But after coming to power Lenin shelved his old self-determination slogan, used only for tactical purposes, and, after the collapse of Germany, he inaugurated the drive toward the realization of the Marxist-Leninist world revolutionary program. Opposing the League of Nations by the organization of the Comintern (1919), he also started to attack Soviet Russia's democratic neighbor republics with their democratic Socialist or left wing governments, which had previously caused the disintegration of the old Russian Empire, and then applied for membership in the League of Nations at Geneva. This war of Russian communism (officially still professing "self-determination including separation") against the national independent republics must be taken as a starting point for any objective investigation regarding the origin of "national communism."

In direct opposition to the Tito-thesis are the following counter theses:

(1) The Russian Communist meaning of the term "*national* communism," often presently used by Russian communism for brainwashing purposes (a fact which the free world

still does not grasp). implies the logical conclusion that a pure *international* communism as an antithesis also exists and is represented, of course, by Moscow's Marxism-Leninism and, less recently, by Stalinism. The present Communist meaning of this term has only one aim: "to confuse the enemies." The original meaning of the term, coined by non-Russian Communists, had a different meaning, which shall be subsequently elaborated upon.

(2) Russian communism-Leninism, in fact, was not an international movement, respecting the rights and equality of other nations. It was virtually *Russian national* communism and was identified by the great Russian philosopher, Nicholas Berdyaev, as "the third appearance of *Russian autocratic imperialism*, its first being the Muscovite Czardom and its second, the Petrine Empire."<sup>2</sup> Thus (using the term "national communism" in the meaning of the free world, implying that in such a kind of communism are manifested some true *national* aspects of the nation in question) we must state that Russian communism is the *first* appearance of so-called national communism and that it was merged with the highest potency of Russian nationalism, with aggressive Russian imperialism. The non-Communist part of the Russians, especially on non-Russian territories, gave it their fullest support as Russian patriots.

Consequently, to understand the historical consequences of Russian communism's coming into power, one must qualify it as *Russian national communism-imperialism in aggression*, decorated with socialist-internationalist slogans. It is, regarding *origin*, the primary national communism; regarding its *character*, it is *aggressive* national communism, which, according to Berdyaev, is a *continuation* of the old Russian imperialism and colonialism.

(3) That which is presently called "national communism," in the meaning of the free world, represented and repre-

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *The Origin of Russian Communism* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1949), p. 118.

sents only the *reactions*, the *opposition* and *resistance* of the *non-Russian* Communists, and partly non-Communists, *against that Russian national communism-imperialism* acting in the disguise of the infallible self-appointed leader of the Communist world revolution. It is, regarding *origin*, the *secondary* national communism; regarding its *character*, it is the defensive national communism which is, in fact, a *continuation* of the old national movements as social and political liberating forces pitted against the old Russian imperialism and colonialism.

This opposition and resistance of the non-Russian Communists included the *basic demand for equality* with the Russians, involving: (a) the right to form their own Communist parties, (b) the right to rule as dictators over their own states and nations, (c) in all relations with the Russians (which the non-Russian Communists regard as their *foreign* affairs), the elimination of the Russian dictatorship, respect for their equality with the Russians by the preserving of democratic procedure in these relations and their equal participation in all decisions inside the Communist movement as a whole.

From the *Communist* non-Russian point of view, "national communism" is a struggle for the *democratic* majority principle in *Communist* interrelations, based on "national communist parties" against the *Russian Communist imperialism* in the present form of the Russian dictatorship inside the Communist movement, which the non-Russians regard as Russian political, economic and cultural imperialism.

From the *democratic* non-Russian point of view, the non-Russian Communist state organizations are only "customers," puppets of Russian national Communist imperialism. This Russian imperialism, by terror and force, put these state organizations into power over the non-Russian nations, and without the backing of the military forces of contemporary Russian imperialism they could not survive a week because of the

enmity of the masses. Moscow is sensitively aware of this complete dependency of the non-Russian Communist puppet regimes upon the forces of Russian imperialism and as tribute for this support over the decades Moscow demands the deepening of the cultural, economic and linguistic Russification of the non-Russian Soviet Republics. But the non-Russian Communist regimes are also well aware that Russian communism is, in fact, aiming at the old ideal of the Russian "Black Hundreds," namely, complete Russification; consequently, they use latent national forces to defend their own existence by underscoring *the very nationality problems* in Communist ideology which it pretends to have solved.

Thus the non-Russian Communists are in a fatal dilemma. The very existence of their regimes is impossible without the backing of Russian Communist imperialism on the one hand, while on the other, their existence with the backing of these Russian terror forces in the long run means their own annihilation and that of their nations by gradual Russification. Thus, the appearance of "national communisms" in these non-Russian nations is and always has been merely a proof of the continuous national resistance of the non-Russian nations against Russian imperialism and of the continuation of their struggle for freedom.

(4) Thus so-called national communism, as a defensive reaction and resistance of the non-Russian nations, *originated immediately* after the aggressive Russian national communism-imperialism came to power in Petrograd and attempted to again subjugate the previous victims of Russian Czarism for the re-establishment of the Russian Empire. This national communism of the non-Russian nations is, in fact, proof of the existence of a new edition of the old nationality problem of the Czarist Russian Empire in the present sphere of dominion and influence of Russian national Communist imperialism. It is also a proof for the existence of the new edition of the old disintegration

of pre-World War I Socialism' in the Russian Empire along national lines--at least below the surface also in contemporary Communism in the Soviet Union.

## II

The facts supporting the counter theses are these: When was the term "national communism" first used and who coined it? Research traced this term to a book by two Communists in Ukraine which appeared in 1918 under the title, *To This Moment. What is going on in Ukraine and with Ukraine*. The authors were Vasyl Shakh-ray, a leading Ukrainian Communist, in collaboration with Serhiy Mazlakh, another prominent Ukrainian Communist of Jewish extraction.

There did not exist in Ukraine a single homogenous Communist party. At this time there were three. The first was the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine (CPbU). The co-founders of this party were Shakh-ray and Mazlakh, who in their book accused Lenin of violating the proclaimed principles of Bolshevik policy regarding the non-Russian nations and demanded the recognition of (a) a Ukrainian independent state, (b) an independent separate Ukrainian Communist party, and (c) the equality of both with the Russian Communist party and Soviet Russia. Both authors formerly were members of the Russian Communist party (Bolshevik), which they left in order to organize this separate Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine.

The second Communist party evolved from the left wing of the Ukrainian Party of Socialist Revolutionaries (UPSR), the *Borotbists* (so called after their paper, *Borotba — The Struggle*) who merged with the left wing groups of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Workers' party (USDRP) to form a

<sup>3</sup>The history of Socialism in the Russian Empire and its role during the revolution as presented by Anatol Shub in his pamphlet, "Labor in the Soviet Orbit," *The New Leader* (Dec. 24-31, 1956) is contrary to historical facts with a complete disregard of the history of Socialism among the non-Russian nations.

separate Ukrainian Communist Party of *Borotbists* (UKPb). Finally, the third was the Ukrainian Communist party.

All three of these Communist parties originally maintained the principle of complete Ukrainian national independence but did not exclude cooperation with Soviet Russia on equal terms. By infiltration, "engineering," merger, Russian communism later managed to transform into the Communist monoparty in Ukraine the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine (CPbU), as the official tool of Moscow; the Ukrainian Communist Party-*Borotbists* was merged with it in 1920, while the Ukrainian Communist party (UKP) was dissolved by the Comintern in 1925.

The ideology of the *Borotbists*, as expressed in a quotation from an article by H. Ovcharov: "On the Occasion of Light Shed on the Problem of *Borotbism*," follows:

. . . *Borotbism*, a petty-bourgeois trend in community and political life, appeared in Ukraine in the period between early 1918 and March 1920. During the nearly two years of its existence, *Borotbism* developed its ideological and political platform which crystallized itself into a fine-woven, specifically *borotbist* platform of Ukrainian nationalism, similar in many respects to modern "national-communism." The so-called party of *Borotbists* was the spokesman and leader of this ideological platform . . . .

The main direction and content of the *Borotbists* activities was struggle against the Communist Party and the wresting from it of political hegemony in Ukraine, seizure of power and change according to principles of *Borotbist*-nationalist "independence . . ."

In their development of these "national-communist" tenets, the *Borotbists* maintained that the socialist revolution in Ukraine should develop along "its own" particular road, as a "national" revolution, completely "separate" and different from the revolution in Russia, as a "Ukrainian socialist revolution."

Desirous of driving a wedge into the war alliance between the Ukrainian and Russian Soviet Republics, the *Borotbists* spread the slogan, "establishment of Ukraine as a separate Soviet republic and independent member of the incipient federation of Soviet republics." At the same time, the sincere and brotherly aid extended by the workers

of Russia to Soviet Ukraine in the fight against the common enemy, the Borotbists insidiously qualified as "protection" and outside "interference" in Ukrainian domestic affairs.

The Borotbists, being rabid petty-bourgeois nationalists, used all means to slander the victorious socialist revolution in Ukraine, describing it as the "drawing of Ukraine into the orbit of the communist revolution by means of occupation." In this connection, provocative charges were made against the Russian strata of the proletariat of Ukraine, alleging that they were the backbone of colonizing designs upon Ukraine and that the CPbU was an alien institution . . . .

The Borotbists conducted a wide-scale and systematic agitation aimed at wrecking the alliance and friendship between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples. They were opposed to close military and economic unity, the centralization of forces in Soviet construction, and the struggle against counter-revolution and interventionists, i.e., they attempted to undermine all that constituted a guarantee of permanency and strength to the government of workers . . . .

In their fight against Bolshevism the Borotbists even attempted to enter upon the world stage and make contact with opportunistic trends in the international communist movement. In this way they used the same maneuvers of deceit that are now used by "national-communism," maneuvers calculated to undermine the prestige and influence of the Soviet state and to minimize the importance of Bolshevism's historical experience. In an article with the pretentious title, "Italian Borotbism," published in the borotbist newspaper *Krasnoye Znamya (Red Banner)* on February 17, 1920, we find the following: "The experience of socialist construction of the Russian Republic appears to be inadequate and requires an honest reappraisal."

Attempting to seize political hegemony in Ukraine, the Borotbists demanded admission to the Communism International. They demanded that the Executive Committee of the Comintern recognize them as a communist party, a party expressing and representing the interests of Ukrainian workers. These impudent claims were made by them in August, 1919, and again early in 1920 . . . .

As a political force, Borotbism finally disappeared from the historical scene. Nevertheless, its nationalist ideology proved to be quite lively . . . .

In November, 1920, one of the former Borotbist leaders, V. Blakytny, published a discussion article in the press "The Communist Party of Ukraine and Ways to Strengthen It (a conspective outline)."

Subsequently, he raised the basic theses of this article as an opposition paper at the 5th All-Ukrainian Conference of the CPbU. Both were directed against friendship between the Russian and Ukrainian peoples, saturated with a desire to discredit Russian party ranks and Russian workers who at one time had taken direct part in the struggle for the establishment of Soviet Rule in Ukraine, and were now helping in the rebuilding of the economy . . . .

The former Borotbists made another attack of vengeance which is known as "Shumskyism-Khvylovyism." This nationalist sortie was also directed at wrecking the friendship and unity of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples, of opposing Russian and Ukrainian culture and at cleavage. The Communists of Ukraine uncovered the nationalist essence of Shumskyism-Khvylovyism and dispersed it ideologically and politically . . . .

Our historical literature has recently been enriched by works of authors who stand on Communist Party and Leninist positions and illustrate Borotbism as a totally petty-bourgeois, counter-revolutionary and nationalist trend . . . .

Nevertheless some historians and literary experts, in raising the problem of Borotbism, unfortunately committed some serious omissions which are part of the plan of idealizing this opponent of the Communist Party. These omissions are peculiar to some works of M. Suprunenko and S. Kryzhanivsky and of other works written in recent times. They found reflection even on the pages of such important publications as volume II of the *History of the Ukrainian SSR* and volume II of the *History of Ukrainian Literature* . . . .

In *History of the Ukrainian SSR*, for example, the Party of Borotbists is mentioned as though of itself it had never been the carrier of nationalism, and its active motive power is ignored. We read merely that at one period, at the beginning of its existence (in 1918), "it remained" under the influence of Ukrainian nationalism (p. 120) . . . .

L. Novychenko went even farther in his narrowing and softening of accusations of Borotbists in nationalism. In his work, *Poetry and Revolution*, published in 1956, he makes this accusation not against the entire party of Borotbists, but merely against part (admittedly a majority) of its members, and even in this part he sees only "remnants of S-R-nationalist views" (p. 69).

The question of the nationalist essence of Borotbism was not satisfactorily explained in the comment about Borotbists published in

the collection "Soviet Construction in Ukraine during the Civil War Years (1919-1920)" (chief editor: M. Rubach) . . . .

S. Kryzhanivsky even paints the party of Borotbists as an internationalist party . . . .<sup>4</sup>

The crisis between the Ukrainian Communists and Russian communism soon deepened. On the one hand, it extended into the Socialist and Communist camp in Western Europe outside the sphere of Russian communism's dominion. On the other hand, Ukrainian Communist opposition spread inside the Russian Communist sphere among the Communists and their sympathizers of the other non-Russian nations of the old Czarist Empire.

(1) In the winter of 1919-1920, the Ukrainian Communists persuaded one of the former leaders of the Ukrainian national government, Volodymyr Vinnichenko (1880-1952), an old Socialist and a distinguished writer, to "return home." He was even appointed vice chairman of the Communist government of Ukraine. But after six months he re-emigrated. In fact, as he personally told the writer, he was given the mission of returning into exile from the Ukrainian Communists to bring the truth about the situation in Ukraine to the emigration and to the European Socialist parties. On October 23, 1920, he published a public protest in the Socialist journal *Nova Doba* (*New Age*) which illustrates what happened to all non-Russian nations under Russian Communist control.

The policy of Russia towards the non-Russian nations of the former Czarist Empire, especially in regard to Ukraine, is the policy of the old "one and indivisible (Czarist) Russia." Never has a government more cynically fooled public opinion by lies than the government of Soviet Russia. In words are proclaimed "self-determination rights for nations," and a solemn proclamation is made outside the frontiers of Ukraine on the "Independent Ukrainian *Rada* Republic," etc.; but in deeds another policy is pursued, namely, the re-enslavement of all non-Russian countries, the rebuilding of the "one indivisible" by a brutal

<sup>4</sup> *Komunist Ukrainy*, No. 2 (February, 1958), pp. 36-42, cf. *Digest of the Soviet Ukrainian Press*, published by "Prolog" Research and Publishing Association, Inc., New York, Vol. II, No. 7, (May, 1958).

Muscovite centralization, exploitation and plundering of all borderlands by the center. And that is done under the slogan of communism.

(2) The events in Ukraine had far-reaching repercussions amongst the Communists and Communist sympathizers of the other non-Russian nations who also had to face Russian communism, "the third appearance of Russian autocratic imperialism."

Thus before the establishment of the USSR in the years 1922-1924, there was a widespread national opposition amongst the Communists of the non-Russian nations directed against the dictatorship of the Russian Communists and against any centralization in Moscow.

A prominent Tatar Communist, Sultan-Galiev, a high official of the Russian Commissariat of Nationality Affairs, as early as 1919 lost faith that Russian Communism could improve the lot of old Russia's non-Russian colonial nations because the dictatorship of the Russian industrial proletariat was interested in continuing the exploitation of the colonial peoples, and not in liberating them. Sultan-Galiev advanced the conception that the former colonial nations, not only of Russia but of the whole world, could achieve their liberty towards a social transformation of humanity only by establishing their own dictatorship over the metropolises, since their real war is not against the bourgeoisie, but against the imperialism of industrialized societies. Thus he propagated the idea that only by the establishment of a dictatorship of the previous non-Russian colonies of the old Russian Empire over the once ruling Russian nation could they gain real freedom. Hence he also propagated the organization of a "Colonial International," comprising a common front of all victims of colonialism, as a counterbalance to the "Third International," dominated by the representatives of the Western industrial working class. Sultan-Galiev, who had extensive personal relations with all Moslems and Turko-Tatars, opposed Moscow's *divide et impera* policy regarding them and propa-

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gated the formation of a united Soviet Moslem or Turkic Republic with a Moslem Communist party (which was liquidated in 1918 by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist party). Soon Sultan-Galiev was in contact with the Tatar Communist, Vakhitov, and the Basmachis in Turkestan who were in open revolt against Moscow. He was arrested by Stalin in 1923 (and subsequently liquidated); his case was discussed at a special conference in Moscow to which were invited representatives of the non-Russian Communists. At this conference the Ukrainian Communist, Skrypnyk, blamed Great Russian chauvinism in the Russian Communist party and its unwillingness to honestly carry out its national program for Sultan-Galiev's opposition.

Another center of opposition against Russian communism developed in the Caucasus among Georgian Communists, who previously had disregarded the nationality problem. After experiencing the Russian methods, however, they developed a vociferous force under the leadership of Filip Makharadze and Budu Mdivani. The climax came in October, 1922, with the resignation of the entire central committee of the Georgian Communist party.

Similar tensions also grew among Communists of the other non-Russian nations, and the *Communist movement* and the *Russian Communist party* became simply identified with the *new phase of Russian imperialism and colonialism among the non-Russian nations*. Therefore the Tenth Congress (1921), to quiet the opposition, even passed a strong condemnation of "the dictatorship of Russian communism over the non-Russian tries, while the stricken Lenin himself, in his three letters on the national question (December 30, 31, 1922), attempted to curb the tendency toward Russian-dominated centralism and to preserve self-rule for the non-Russian nations under the leadership of their Communist parties. But Stalin, who realized that the growth of Russian nationalism and imperialism would advance

his personal power, already dominated the party; and, on July 6, 1923, the Central Executive Committee of the USSR approved the constitution, which, through ratification, became law on January 31, 1924, and united the independent national republics of Byelorussia, Ukraine, the Trans-Caucasian Federation, and the Russian Federated Socialist Republic into the Soviet Union. Thus was established, in fact, as the expression of the contemporary form of Russian imperialism and colonialism, the dictatorship of Russian Communism over the non-Russian Communists, their nations and countries with a centralized economy, police control and single centralized party.

Since the occupation of the non-Russian republics by the Russian Red Army after 1920 and the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1922-24 up to the present day, Russian Communist imperialism has waged a continuous war against the so-called national communism of the non-Russian nations. The real content of the history of the Soviet Union and of Russian communism is the continuation of the Russification of the non-Russian nations and their transformation into a single Russian Soviet nation. The non-Russian nations are forced to forget their past, which is rewritten by Russian or Russified Communists, to forget their national aspirations, cultural traditions, and "voluntarily" to Russify their languages and cultures, which are degraded to provincial or parochial peculiarities. The real content of the history of the non-Russian nations in the Soviet Union is a continuation of their old struggle against Czarist Russification; one element in the struggle of these nations is found in the nature of their "national communism" movements, in which are manifest their nationalism in the given Soviet-Union realities. Thus non-Russian national communism in the Soviet Republics has a two-fold content; first, it is the resistance of the non-Russian Communists against Russian communism, and, secondly, it is the manifestation of nationalism by the non-Communists.

The second phase of defensive "national communism" against this many-sided Russian imperialism was inaugurated by the Lebed theory.<sup>5</sup> This theory maintained that the Russian culture represented with its language a higher type than the cultures and languages of the non-Russian nations, especially of the Ukrainians, and therefore it would inevitably succeed in Russifying the non-Russian countries. Lebed, secretary of the Central Committee of the CPbU, was supported by Zinoviev, chairman of the Central Committee of the Comintern, Larin and Kvirring, who coined the slogan, "The struggle of two cultures." The Ukrainian Communists and the Ukrainian intelligentsia took up this challenge and soon created (based on the People's Commissariat of Education, the Ukrainian State Publishing House and numerous cultural institutions) a powerful cultural revival, which came to be known as the "Ukrainian Renaissance of the Twentieth Century." A member of the CPbU, the noted author Mykola Khvylovy, elaborated its ideology, which had lively repercussions in other non-Russian Soviet Republics and climaxed in such ideas as the following:

In our literature we have imbedded the theory of Communist independence. Is Russia an independent state? Of course! And we too are independent! We face the question: From which world literature should our literature take its cue? By no means and never from Moscow! That is definite and without reservation. From Russian literature, from its styles, Ukrainian poetry must flee as fast as it can.<sup>6</sup>

Against this second phase of the "national communism" of the non-Russian nations annexed into the Soviet Union, Russian communism, in 1929, started a systematically planned general *pogrom* of the non-Russian nations in their own "national republics" by all terroristic means of the Soviet Russian police state: mass purges of the non-Russians from the Communist

<sup>5</sup> Jurij Lawrynenko, *Ukrainian Communism and Soviet Russian Policy Toward the Ukraine—An Annotated Bibliography, 1917-1953* (Research Program on the USSR, 1953), p. 237.

<sup>6</sup> Mykola Khvylovy, *Thoughts Against the Current* (Kiev: 1926); cf. also: George S. N. Luckyj, *Literary Politics in the Soviet Ukraine, 1917-34* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954).

party and the national governments, mass liquidation of scholars, writers, journalists, enforcing of the Marr linguistic theory on all non-Russian languages, rewriting of the histories of the non-Russian nations, subordination of all non-Russian Academies of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Moscow, and the promulgation of the Stalin Constitution in 1936, in which the rights of the non-Russian republics were again reduced and the federal ties strengthened. Against Ukraine, the center of "national Communist" resistance, the Russian Communists used as a political weapon an artificially created famine (1932) which weakened the peasantry by five to six million victims.

The non-Russian nations gave their answer to this Russian terror in World War II after Hitler attacked the Soviet Union with the mass surrender of the mobilized non-Russian soldiers. Only on Russian ethnographic territory could Hitler's advance be stopped, partly because of the terrible and early winter. Fighting with the German armies against Moscow later were 220,000 Ukrainians, 110,000 Turkestanians, 110,000 Caucasians, 35,000 Tatars, 82,000 Cossacks, 32,000 Kalmyks and 20,000 Byelorussians. These facts compelled Russian communism to such concessions as the signing of the Atlantic Charter, the introduction of Ukraine and Byelorussia into the UN, the granting to the non-Russian republics of their own coats of arms, flags, anthems, their own decorations in part and, finally, the revocation of Marr's linguistic theory by Stalin himself.

Russian communism is so frightened of this latent nationalism of the non-Russian nations in the Soviet Union and of their national communisms, that after Stalin's death many of the liquidated national Communists' party members, writers and journalists were "rehabilitated" on the one hand, while on the other it attempted to establish between them and the Western world a denationalized *cordon sanitaire* of Communist puppet

governments in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Yugoslavia.

It was, in fact, the third phase of national communism which developed in these countries among the Communists of

In summary we may say that Tito's split with Russian communist imperialism. Tito gets partly undeserved credit because his split was originally not the consequence of any "national spirit of independence." After the war the Yugoslav Communists were aiming at the incorporation of Yugoslavia as a national Union republic into the Soviet Union but Moscow itself opposed this idea and insisted on the window dressing of her sovereignty and independence. Moscow also applied the same policy toward Bulgaria. In the writer's opinion, the Russian Communists feared to increase the number of the non-Russian nations inside the Soviet Union because of the disloyalty of those nations to Moscow during the war; they feared to lower the percentage of the Russian population in the Soviet Union to around 40 per cent because it would deepen the resistance of the non-Russian nations to Russification.

In summary we may say that Tito's split with Russian communism assumed a "national" motivation only later in the heat of the fray and became "national communism" in order to get the backing of the intelligentsia and masses; thus it became an off-shoot of the original "national communism" in the Soviet Union, which has a history of forty years and originated amongst the victims of the new Russian imperialism in Communist form.

### III

We have traced Tito's "national communism" and the outbursts of "national communism" in the other captive nations (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary) to its real cause, present-day Russian imperialism, and to the previous

phases of "national communism" inside the sphere of domination of Russian Communist imperialism.

But its roots can be traced further back into the pre-World War I period and even to the very beginning of Russian Socialism.

The present conflict inside Marxism-Leninism between the Russian and the non-Russian national interests is a second edition of the conflict inside socialism which existed before World War I. At the basis of the conflict was the attitude toward "the nation." Two different attitudes to the nation as a social organization confronted each other which included far-reaching consequences for the organization of Socialist parties and their planning for the future.

One was the Austrian school of R. Springer, O. Bauer and K. Renner which recognized nations as culturally and politically valuable and lasting social organizations, and placed these living nations at the foundation of the future world structure of Socialism as a community of peoples-nations not as a future union of states. Internationalism was regarded by this school not as something against or above nations or nationality. Rather, nations and nationality were regarded as natural organs of mankind—of the future Socialist humanity. This attitude of the Austrian school to the living nations consequently expressed a moral respect for life itself, a respect which is the foundation of any culture. For the solution of the nationality problem in Austria, the Austrian school therefore envisaged either a territorial or an extra-territorial national cultural autonomy with self-rule in all cultural and linguistic matters which led to federalism in the structure of the Socialist party of the state.<sup>7</sup>

The other point of view on the nation, partly elaborated by Marx and Engels and later on by Stalin, regards nations and

<sup>7</sup> In 1917 the Ukrainian National Republic realized the ideas of the Austrian school by granting the Poles and Jews national cultural autonomy. Cf. Henryk Jablonowski, *Poliska Autonomia Narodowa na Ukraine 1917-1918* (Warszawa: 1948). This fact also contributed as a cause to the subsequent aggression of Russian communism against Ukraine.

nationalism as characteristics of the capitalist era which, in the socialist era of internationalism, would disappear. This view also maintained that capitalism was preparing this new era by its assimilation of nations and formation of large states. A good socialist-internationalist should speed up the assimilation or disappearance of nations for the advance of "internationalism," proponents said.

These Austrian ideas penetrated into the Russian Empire after the Bruenn Congress of the Austrian Socialists in 1899. Not only did the Russian Socialist Revolutionary party (the competitor of the Russian Socialist Democratic Labor party) declare itself in favor of national-cultural autonomy and federalism in 1905, but, in the first line, also the non-Russian Socialists, the Jewish *Bund* and the Jewish Socialist Labor party, the Armenian *Dashnaksutiun*, the Byelorussian Socialist *Hromada*, the Georgian Socialist Federalist party, and the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries.

Lenin's attitude to the non-Russian nations inside the Russian Empire is objectively summed up by Richard Pipes:

Lenin like most Marxists desired the eventual transformation of the Russian Empire into a national state, in which the minorities (the non-Russian nations, which constituted the majority of the population!) would assimilate and adopt the Russian tongue.<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, it is plain that Lenin immediately understood the far-reaching consequences of the Austrian ideas for the Russian Empire. If the non-Russian nations were granted national autonomy, Lenin realized, the same principle had to be recognized for the structure of the Party. Should that happen, he reasoned further, the Party and particularly the Party's Central Committee would not be a centralized but a federated body. In that form, the Committee would have to apply democratic parliamentary procedures, thereby excluding any Russian dictatorship or domination. Finally, Lenin also realized

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 45.

that a "post-revolutionary Russia" would not be a centralized republic but a federated republic with a tendency to disintegration along national lines should the Russians attempt to dominate it. Lenin, whose mind was under the influence of von Clausewitz, concentrated always on the problem of power—how to seize it, to keep and expand it. He felt (a) the danger of Russian Socialism being limited to its Russian ethnographic territory and being banned from the non-Russian territories and (b) the danger for the integrity of the Russian Empire, to be saved only by a centralized Party. The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the situation in Austria-Hungary, Germany and the Russian Empire—all combined to put the nationality problem on the agenda as a problem of imperialism, and Lenin soon was forced to act. On the one hand, he eliminated Democratic procedures in the still united Russian Socialistic Democratic party (by the Prague Conference of 1912), the so-called "Sixth Congress," and established in the self-proclaimed Central Committee his personal dictatorship. On the other hand, he sent Stalin to Vienna with his notes to write a pamphlet against the Austrian school, which challenged Russian socialism in its political, cultural and linguistic aspects.

In spite of the fact that since 1903 the party program of the Russian Social Democrats included "the right of all nations in the state to self-determination," the party regarded this point not as programmatic but as "declarative" election oratory calculated especially to gain prestige among Western European Socialists. Therefore not only the Bolsheviks but especially the Mensheviks opposed the Austrian ideas because they regarded federalism, respect for the rights of non-Russian nations, as "reactionary" and as delaying "political and economic unification." But it was Lenin himself who developed the technique of outsmarting the Austrian school and the non-Russian nations in the approaching events. In the competition of slogans and catchwords he bested the Austrian school by offering the non-Russian

nations "more" than "autonomy"; he offered them "self-determination including separation that meant independence." The non-Russian Socialists and Communists in the first phase of the revolution considered Lenin as the only honest Russian Socialist politician with respect to the nationality problem and even sympathized with his coming to power. Only later did they learn that "self-determination including separation" semantically meant "self-liquidation including Russification," enforced by terror and concentration camps.

Russian Socialists always believed that Russian Czarism was forming the largest empire for their future inheritance of it. Not only for Russian Monarchists but also for the Russian Socialists, "Russia, the one and indivisible" was a dogma.

This conflict of Russian socialism with the Austrian school has even a deeper root and can be traced directly to the founding father of Russian socialism, George Plekhanov (1857-1918) and his Russian chauvinistic and imperialistic attitude toward the non-Russian socialists in his Swiss exile. For the attitude of Plekhanov there is a reliable Russian witness, L. Tikhomirov.<sup>9</sup>

He (Plekhanov) literally hated any separatism (of the non-Russian nations). He treated Ukrainophilism with contempt and hostility. The Russian unifier and leveler was deeply rooted in him. A revolutionary and an emigre, Plekhanov could not openly oppose the Poles, who were a revolutionary force, but he did not like the Poles and did not respect or trust them. He stated this openly in friendly conversations . . . . With Dragomanov<sup>10</sup> he was in openly hostile relations . . . . He treated Shevchenko<sup>11</sup> and the Ukrainophiles with decidedly greater hatred than even, for instance, Katkov.<sup>12</sup>

The early Ukrainian Socialists already fought against this

<sup>9</sup>Cf. L. Tikhomirov, *Vospominaniya* (1927) pp. 90-92. See also: N. S. Rusanov, *V Emigratsii* (Moscow: 1929) pp. 36-37.

<sup>10</sup>Michael Dragomanov (1841-95), Ukrainian historian, ethnologist, socialist, emissary of the Ukrainian underground in Russia to Western Europe, emigre, Professor of the University in Sofia (Bulgaria).

<sup>11</sup>Taras Shevchenko (1814-61), national bard of Ukraine, an enthusiast of the American Revolution and George Washington.

<sup>12</sup>Michael Katkov (1818-87), Russian reactionary, university professor, hater of all non-Russian nations submerged by Russian Czarism, and their fanatic

Russian socialist imperialism and published in their journal, *Hromada* (Geneva, 1881) a history of the Irish fight against England, presenting it as an example to Ukrainians of how to fight Russian imperialism. Thus, from this period on, Ukrainian socialism became a vehicle of Ukrainian nationalism, because, according to the opinion of the early Ukrainian Socialists, without national liberation from Russian colonial status, no solution of economic and social problems could be considered in Ukraine. This fundamental thesis is the root of the present-day "national communism" which denies to Soviet Moscow the authority to enforce upon non-Russian Communist countries the status of Soviet Russian colonies.

Not only is the present-day Russian bolshevism communism a continuation of this original Russian Socialist imperialism, but also Russian socialism-menshevism. Their patriarch and leader, Raphael Abramavich, in exile in the USA, wrote in his article, "The Enumeration of Enemies": "They (the Bolsheviks) are despots and tyrants; they are dictators and fire-spreaders; they are guilty of all crimes against the people save one: they did not dismember Russia."<sup>1</sup> The meaning is obvious.

Russian socialism-bolshevism and menshevism, so far as the non-Russian nations and their natural rights are concerned, represent a continuation of the old Russian imperialism.

"National communism" is the defense of the non-Russian nations against Russian socialism-bolshevism as "national socialism" (the national Democratic Socialist parties of the non-Russian nations in exile) is their defense against Russian socialism-menshevism, which by its American-English publication, decisively has and continues to influence American foreign policy in the direction of upholding the "unity and indivisibility" of the new Russian Empire, of the Soviet Union, and of the colonial status of the non-Russian nations inside this new "prison of nations."

<sup>1</sup> *Socialisticheski Vestnik*, 1-2, 1950.

## *Preface*

The Marquette University concept of Continuing Education identifies this University's effort to extend its distinguished teaching and significant research into the mainstream of the community. The Marquette program in area studies personifies that ideal of Continuing Education by fostering instruction, sponsoring research, and conducting a comprehensive program of public-affairs education through conferences, lectures, seminars, and special events. The Slavic Institute at Marquette University exemplifies these ideals. It meets these exacting criteria of scholarship and public service.

The Slavic Institute was established at Marquette University in 1919. The Slavic Institute fosters the study of Slavic history, culture, and civilization: serves to preserve the cultural and political heritage of American citizens of Slavic descent; and contributes to Slavic cultural relations by organized contributions to American scholarship. Through graduate, undergraduate, and non-credit university studies research, publication, and original contributions to scholarship, the Slavic Institute develops an appreciation for and assists appreciably in the preservation of both the Slavic cultural and political heritage. These efforts serve to strengthen American-Slavic relations.

Courses in the graduate program of the University, an undergraduate major in Slavic Affairs, and non-credit university courses in Slavic culture and Soviet political topics all illustrate the distinguished teaching undertaken by the faculty of the Slavic Institute. The scholarly volumes of the Marquette Slavic Series and the various Papers of the Slavic Institute have been recognized as a significant contribution to the specialized field of Slavistics. The teaching and research activities of the Institute have been addressed to both the general public as well as to citizens of Slavic descent, thereby fulfilling the ideal of Continuing Education. The public mission of the Slavic Institute has always been to provide evidences of scholarship, research, and distinguished teaching to the community. An impressive history of the Slavic Institute as an academic and research center at Marquette University and describing this aspect of the University program in Continuing Education was published last year.



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TITOISM

BY

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*University of Wisconsin, Madison*

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*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

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# TITOISM

BY MICHAEL B. PETROVICH. *University of Wisconsin*

## I

**I**N 1945, while a member of the Independent American Military Mission to Marshall Tito, I had a private interview with Edvard Kardelj, who then, like now, was second only to Tito in the Yugoslav government and Communist party. Vice-Premier Kardelj stated on that occasion that it was his fervent hope that the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia would become the seventeenth republic of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In 1947 I was all prepared to write, on the basis of no little evidence, a book which was to show that Yugoslavia was the most loyal and most subservient of all of Russia's East European satellites.

One year later, in June, 1948, Stalin ordered Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform as the first step toward the extermination of Tito and his supporters; Tito's end seemed imminent.

Today, not only is Tito alive, but he is flourishing. He has outlived Stalin. In May, 1955 he experienced the delectable pleasure of serving crow to Stalin's successors Khrushchev and Bulganin in Belgrade itself. Tito stands today as an example of a Communist who has rebelled against Moscow and who has not only lived to tell about it, but has prospered.

What factors account for Tito's success?

Undoubtedly the nature of the International situation had much to do with Tito's ability to escape Soviet retribution. Given the tension between East and West, Stalin was probably not willing to risk violence in a region where an eruption could

release the pent-up hatred of the oppressed millions in the satellite states. Besides, he probably believed that Tito could not withstand a general boycott by the Soviet Union and its satellite governments, especially if the West continued to be against Tito. But Tito did withstand one of the most vicious campaigns, short of war, ever to be inflicted on a nation. Tito was not one of those satellite leaders who first heard about the liberation of his homeland on a Soviet radio and was then flown to Warsaw, Prague, or Sofia in a Soviet plane. Tito came to power at the head of his own army, while fighting against the German and Italian occupiers of Yugoslavia.<sup>1</sup> Behind him was an *esprit de corps* forged in battle.

Another factor of immense importance in Tito's success in withstanding Soviet pressure was aid from the United States. While giving aid to any kind of Communist dictator, even when he is at odds with Moscow, has disturbed many Americans, the fact is that few of our American investments abroad have paid as well. To be sure we did not convert Tito from communism. As a matter of fact, our government astutely tied no strings to our help. Tito has expressed public gratitude for this. In his recent address before the Seventh Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in May, 1958, Tito remarked,

Our relations with the U.S.A. are founded on mutual respect, cooperation on an equal basis, and noninterference in internal affairs. . . . We received economic and military aid from America at a time when we were in most urgent need of it, i.e., in a period of Stalin's political, economic, and propaganda pressure on our country. This helped us a great deal in overcoming the tremendous difficulties we were in then . . . . Some peoples in the East wanted to take advantage of this for propaganda purposes, expressing the doubt that the aid was given without any political or other concessions. But facts are facts:

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<sup>1</sup>Note, for example, two Yugoslav works aimed against Soviet contentions that Yugoslavia owed its liberation solely to Soviet help during the war: See Mosha Piyade, *About the Legend that the Yugoslav Uprising Owed Its Existence to Soviet Assistance* (London: 1950) and Colonel General Kocha Popovich, Chief of Staff of the Yugoslav Army, *On The Question of the Liberation War in Yugoslavia* (Belgrade: 1949).

we did not make any concessions of that kind, nor did anyone put such conditions at the time.<sup>2</sup>

Even if at some future time Tito should turn against us, historians may still record that this aid was one of the best investments our foreign aid program ever made. Its effects can be as destructive to the Soviet might in the world as anything the United States has accomplished to counter the Soviet threat.

Certainly another reason for Tito's success was that his defiance of Moscow rallied about him even those millions in Yugoslavia who had no love for Communism but who shared a national pride. This support within Yugoslavia grew steadily as Tito relaxed some of the severity of his regime and increased relations with the non-Communist world.

When Stalin died in 1953, it must have become obvious to his successors that it was fruitless for them to perpetuate one of their master's greatest errors. Yet though Krushchev and Bulganin publicly humiliated themselves by their famous trip to Belgrade, we find today that the breach between Tito and Moscow is still far from mended. Why has there not been a complete reconciliation? What is the obstacle? The answer is: Titoism.

What is Titoism?

Before attempting to answer, even in the short time allotted, we should point out some general observations.

First, in view of the fact that this conference has been called to appraise a phenomenon known as national communism it is necessary to observe that, in an important sense, Tito was not the first "national Communist." Lenin was, and Stalin after him. According to Marxist theory, economically backward peasant Russia was not ripe for a Communist revolution in 1917. But Lenin saw the chance for a Bolshevik victory,

<sup>2</sup>Josip Broz Tito, "The Tasks of the League of Communists in World Affairs and in the Development of Socialism in Yugoslavia," Report to the 17th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, Part I, *Yugoslav Facts & Views*, No. 50, May 5, 1958.

took it, and then made the theory conform to the *Russian* situation. Stalin only followed this line by proclaiming "socialism in one country" as his program for Russia, and then converted the Communist International into a national instrument of the Soviet state.<sup>3</sup> National communism did not begin in Yugoslavia, but in Soviet Russia.

This leads me to a second general point: Tito had no wish to be a heretic, or even a schismatic, for that matter. He merely sought the same privilege that Lenin and Stalin had taken, of applying Marxism to suit a particular national environment. It is useless to seek in the Soviet charges against Tito the real reason for their rift. The unpardonable sin of which the Yugoslav Communists were held guilty was that they insisted on doing as Stalin had done what Stalin wanted them to do. Titoism did not begin as a conscious heresy. Indeed, it is somewhat pathetic to recall today with what earnestness, in the first days of their ex-communication, the Yugoslav Communist ideologists cited not only Marx, but Lenin and Stalin himself, to demonstrate their own orthodoxy. Only when this proved to be of no avail, and under the provocation of a barrage of vituperation from Moscow and its satellites, did the Yugoslav Communists proclaim that they were the real Marxists and that Stalinism was but a gross perversion of Marxism-Leninism.

Third, even if one accepts the appellation of "national Communist" for Tito, this in no way signifies that he has broken with the idea of an ever-expanding international communism with a world mission. It is astonishing how many people today conceive of Tito as a national hero who broke with Moscow and the Cominform; he was thrown out. It was bitter necessity and not volition that turned Tito into a "national Communist." Even today Tito's Communists, though outcasts, still hope in the world-wide triumph of communism and, far

<sup>3</sup>For an illuminating article on this subject, see Thomas T. Hammond, "The Origins of National Communism," *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, XXXIV, No. 2 (Spring, 1958), 277-91.

from having retired from this task, they have been making every effort to exert their influence on the international Communist movement.

## II

Titoism as a theory did not spring full-blown from the head of Tito. Indeed, Titoism did not start as an *ism* at all. Rather the theory evolved piecemeal as the result of day-to-day necessity. In a sense, Titoism as a theory may be defined, in dialectical terms, as the bruised and battered synthesis which crawled away out of the conflict between the Marxist thesis and the antithesis of the specific reality in Yugoslavia. As we examine its basic tenets, then, we must constantly recall that behind each there lies some bitter contradiction between Marxist theory and the world as it is in reality.

Titoism emanates from a basic problem in Marxism; namely, Karl Marx never specified what should take place in the transitional period when the working class had overthrown the capitalist regime but had not yet achieved communism. This is an especially acute problem when it is remembered that thus far Communist revolutions have been foisted on countries that were far behind the stage of advanced capitalist development that Marx held was a prerequisite for a Communist revolution. I myself can witness that for several years following their rise to power, the Yugoslav Communists tried with might and main, in violation of all common sense, to follow the Soviet model explicitly. But even if the Soviet example had been a shining one, which assuredly it was not, there was still the incontrovertible fact the Yugoslavia was simply not Russia. Its cultural heritage, historic institutions, ethnic composition, economic problems, and all the rest were quite different from Russia's. One drastic failure after another forced the Yugoslav Communist leaders to a realization that they had to cut their own cloth to suit themselves and not to fit a Soviet pattern.

Now it is in just such difficult moments, when theory and reality clash, that Marxists, at least those who dare, start saying that Marxism is not, after all, an inflexible dogma but simply a guide to action. In fact, this is precisely what Tito told the Fifth Congress of the Yugoslav Communist party in 1948 just after the break with Moscow became public.<sup>4</sup> From this it is but one step, and so fatal to many Communists before Tito, to declare that there are many paths to socialism, and that the working class of each country where capitalism has been overthrown must apply Marxism to the specific conditions obtaining in that country. To quote Tito:

Until the announcement of the infamous Cominform Resolution, (our Party) had too many illusions and was too uncritical in taking and replanting here everything that was being done in the Soviet Union, even those things which were not in harmony with our specific conditions, or in the spirit of the science of Marxism-Leninism. It was ready-made recipes that were wanted and that were imposed on us, or that we ourselves went after . . . But today, we ourselves are building socialism in our country. We are not using any kind of stereotype but are rather being governed by the science of Marxism and are going our own way, minding the specific conditions which exist in our country.<sup>5</sup>

Once this led to an open schism in which the Yugoslav Communist party was forced to endure the most vicious *odium theologicum*, it hurled back the counter-charge that Stalinism was the total negation of Marxism-Leninism. The Soviet state, Yugoslav Communist ideologists proclaimed, was but the worst form of capitalism, in which the state owned everything and in which a self-perpetuating bureaucracy, responsible to no one, simply replaced the old capitalist class in abusing and exploiting the workers. Indeed, these Yugoslav theoreticians undertook, by the end of 1949, a full-scale penetrating criticism of the Soviet system under Stalin which has hardly been equalled,

<sup>4</sup>V. Kongress Komunističke Partije Jugoslavije; izveštaji i referati (Belgrade: 1948), p. 156.

<sup>5</sup>Josip Broz Tito, *Workers Manage Factories in Yugoslavia* (Belgrade: 1950), pp. 10-11.

either in thoroughness or bitterness, by the capitalist or democratic critics of Soviet communism.<sup>6</sup>

Once having committed themselves to this approach, the Yugoslav Communists found themselves, for many reasons, unable to justify in their own regime the very abuses they condemned in Stalin's Russia. Necessity forced them to a reappraisal of their own system.

With respect to the role of the state, Titoism and Stalinism are agreed that, in the first stages of the revolutionary struggle, Communists need a strong centralized state to fight the remnants of capitalism. However, Stalin repeatedly declared that the "withering away" of the state which Marx predicted was not a gradual process but would come about suddenly, when the last enemy of communism had disappeared. Stalin buttressed his argument for the need of a dictatorial state in the Soviet Union even after the triumph of socialism had been declared by saying that the "capitalist encirclement" made this necessary.<sup>7</sup> Titoists have nothing but scorn for this doctrine. Once the forces of socialism are firmly in control, they say, there is no excuse for not encouraging the withering away of the state and its power, gradually but actively. Besides, they observe, if the USSR was once encircled by capitalist countries, that is hardly the case today. "The proletariat must free itself from the superstition," Kardelj wrote, "that all common affairs concerning the total society can only be handled by the state. As a result, the functions of the state must gradually wither away immediately following the triumph of the revolution."<sup>8</sup> Tito

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<sup>6</sup> For an incisive summary of the Yugoslav Communist critique of Stalinism, see especially the speech delivered just before the March, 1950 elections for the federal parliament by Milovan Djilas while he was still in power: *On New Roads of Socialism* (Belgrade: 1950), pp. 10 ff. See also Edvard Kardelj, *Socialist Democracy* (Belgrade: 1952), pp. 10 ff.

<sup>7</sup> For a summary of Stalin's position see R.N. Carew-Hunt, *The Theory and Practice of Communism* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), pp. 182-83.

<sup>8</sup> Cited by Charles P. McVicker, *Titoism: Pattern for International Communism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1957), p. 254.

The present volume represents the first ten Slavic Institute Papers. This book provides a good example of pertinent presentations of background material and ideas related to contemporary issues of historical and political significance. Public interest in these Papers of the Slavic Institute prompts us to reprint them in this useful compendium. Topics range from the philosophical in which national communism is defined and explained; to international politics with discussion of Titoism and Gomulka-ism; to education, considering both the problem of Soviet education and the problem of educating our youth about communism; together with two sociological and historical essays. The range of topics presented in this volume suggests an interdisciplinary approach covering the educational, historical, philosophical, political, and sociological aspects of communism and Russian nationalism. The range is a compliment to the versatility of Dr. Roman Smal-Stocki, Director, and the diligence of Prof. Alfred Sokolnicki, Executive Secretary of the Slavic Institute.

These Papers are now reprinted in the belief that they provide basic information on communism and the Russian nation so desperately needed for greater public understanding. In presenting them, the Slavic Institute once again demonstrates its determination to make its lectures and research ever more widely available to the public. The Slavic Institute offers this collection of Papers as its contribution to the battle of ideas which plays so important a part in our war against communism.

**BROTHER LEO V. RYAN, C.S.V.**  
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went even further in declaring that the state would eventually disappear entirely and all that would remain would be "the conscience of the people, so that they consider the existence of the community as a necessity and do not become anarchists."<sup>9</sup> It will be noted that this theory brings into a dialectical relationship two basic elements: state and society. Titoism insists that state must give way to society until, to use a classic phrase, the government over people is replaced by an administration over things.

It is, of course, well known that in a Communist-governed country the focus of power is neither in the government, much less in society, but in the Communist party which controls everything. Even here Titoism has been theoretically consistent in claiming openly that the Communist party too must eventually disappear. It was at the Sixth Congress of the Yugoslav Communist party, held in November, 1952, that Tito proclaimed that "the role of the CPY today does not lie in commanding, or interfering in everything and with everybody as a kind of supreme arbiter and judge who passes irrevocable and infallible judgement in all the various problems of our social life—scientific, economic, and other . . ." Rather, he insisted, while not relinquishing leadership, the Party had to learn to educate and to persuade others, now that the strength of the old propertied classes had been broken.<sup>10</sup>

Since Titoism arose as a response to a break in the relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR with its satellites, out of this emerged another doctrine: the independence and equality of all nations, especially those belonging to the camp of socialism. Specifically this comes down to the proposition that, despite its preeminent position as the first and most powerful socialist state, the Soviet Union has no right to interfere in the internal

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<sup>9</sup>*President Tito Interviews the Sherwood Eddy Seminar* (New York: Yugoslav Information Center, July, 1955), p. 13.

<sup>10</sup>Josip Broz Tito, "Borba Komunističke Partije Jugoslavije za socijalističku demokratiju, 'VI Kongress Komunističke Partije Jugoslavije" (Belgrade, n.d.), p. 76.

affairs of other socialist states, and that it certainly has no right to exploit them economically.<sup>11</sup> This assertion, of course, strikes at the very foundation of the Soviet Empire. The tenacity with which the Yugoslav Communist leaders have adhered to this stand is impressive to all, and particularly troublesome to the Soviet leaders. Krushchev's humiliating trip to Belgrade to make peace with Tito did nothing to change the Yugoslavs' minds on this point of their faith.

### III

Here, then, in brief, are the cardinal tenets of Titoism as a theory. How has this been translated into practice? Again the theory is more impressive than the reality. Yet certain developments have begun to take hold in Yugoslavia which are bound to have deep repercussions throughout the Communist world.

In the political sphere, at the end of 1949 and in early 1950 the Yugoslav authorities undertook a program of decentralization by transferring, often in pellmell fashion, many of the functions of the central ministries to the governments of the six constituent republics of Yugoslavia. At the same time, on April 1, 1952, there was enacted a Law on People's Committee which reorganized the entire system of local self-government to bring it into line with the decentralization trend on top. The explanation of this move sounds somewhat like President Eisenhower's repeated stand on the relationship between the states and the federal government. "What we are seeking actually narrows down to two demands," Kardelj declared in a statement before the National Assembly on April 1, 1952. "first, that the central organs, be they Republican or Federal, should actually perform only those functions that the basic organs of authority are unable to perform; and second, that in the administration of centralized functions we must see that such

<sup>11</sup> See for example, Milovan Djilas, *Lenin on Relations between Socialist States* (New York: 1949), p. 56; also Milentije Popovic, *On Economic Relations Among Socialist States* (London: 1950), p. 72.

centralism is democratic, . . .”<sup>12</sup> These and other political changes in the direction of decentralization culminated in the adoption of a new Constitution in January, 1953.

Even more basic was the decentralization in the economic sphere. On June 6, 1950, the Yugoslav Federal Assembly passed what is beyond a doubt the most revolutionary reform in Tito's Yugoslav, the so-called “Basic Law on Management of State Economic Enterprises and Higher Economic Associations by the Workers' Collectives.”<sup>13</sup> The intent of this law, according to Tito, was to transfer the ownership of the means of production in Yugoslavia from the state to the workers themselves, that is, to society. How this is to be done is explained in Article 1 of the law, namely: “The factories, mines, communications, transport, trade, agricultural, forestry, municipal and other state economic enterprises, as national property, are to be managed by the scope of the state economic plan.”<sup>14</sup> The law, in effect, gives to workers' councils the task of supervising and directing the management of every economic enterprise.

As for the peasants, the best the Yugoslav Communists could do with this vexing problem was to admit that their attempts at agricultural collectivization were a dismal failure. Now they are encouraging individual farmers to produce for the market in the hope that the farmers themselves can be persuaded to organize themselves into co-ops. The government hopes to accomplish this by providing certain incentives at the market level—in other words, since the stick had failed, try the carrot.<sup>15</sup>

All these attempts at democratization, in the Yugoslav Communist sense of that word, produced certain changes within

<sup>12</sup>Edvard Kardelj, *Socialist Democracy* (Belgrade: 1952), p. 35.

<sup>13</sup>For the main provisions of the law in convenient English translation, see the appendix to Marshall Tito, *Workers Manage Factories in Yugoslavia* (Belgrade: 1950) pp. 47-55.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>15</sup>For a recent description of the agricultural program in Yugoslavia, see especially McVicker, *op. cit.*, p. 131 and *passim*.

the Yugoslav Communist party itself as well as the broader mass organization, the People's Front. At its Sixth Congress, held on November 2-7, 1952, the Yugoslav Communist party formally adopted new statutes and changed its name to the "League of Communists of Yugoslavia." A leading spokesman of the Party, Aleksander Rankovic, explained to the Congress that there were two reasons for proposing a reorganization of the Party: first, to emphasize the transition to a new stage in which the Party would no longer coerce but educate and persuade the masses; and second, "to develop further internal democracy, the struggle against all manifestations and trends of bureaucratism, the struggle against privileges" within the Party itself." In order to implement these aims, the new Party statutes did away with the Communist cells that previously existed in each economic, social, and government organization as well as in every village. This was done to put an end to the interference of the cells in the self-management of these non-Party units. It is obvious that the Yugoslav leaders intend to make the Communist party a secondary power in their state. Indeed, there has taken place such an amalgamation between the Party and the State administration that primary loyalty to the State rather than to the Party is becoming one of the specific characteristics of the Titoist brand of Communism.

And while the Communist party was having its teeth pulled and its privileges curtailed, the so-called People's Front became broadened in 1953 into something called the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia. The result of the whole process has been such a drop in morale within the Communist party that there has been a struggle ever since to keep up Party discipline.

All these attempts at reform on the political and economic

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<sup>16</sup> Aleksander Rankovic, "O predlogu novog statuta Komunisticke Partije Jugoslavije i nekim organizacinnim pitanjima partije," in *VI Kongress Komunisticke Partije Jugoslavije (Saveze Komunista Jugoslavije)* (Belgrade: n.d.), pp. 337-38.

level have been accompanied by a host of social and legal reforms, all of which have their avowed purpose to increase the self-management and well-being of the basic units of society—the individual, the family, and the productive unit.

For those who remember, as I do, the ruthless methods of the Yugoslav Communist-dominated police in the first years of the Tito regime, the legal reforms are of special interest. It is somewhat astonishing to learn that it was none other than Aleksander Rankovic, the Beria of Yugoslavia, who first brought into the open, in frank facts and figures, the abuses of the police and judiciary system in Yugoslavia, in June, 1951, and who suggested reforms.<sup>17</sup> The general trend has been ever since to curb the power of the police and to increase the power of the courts. One of the most revolutionary results has been the right of the citizen to appeal to the courts against the arbitrary actions of government officials. Out of this has come a steady rise in respect for the law in Yugoslavia.

As for the dread secret police, KNOJ, which was patterned after the Soviet NKVD, Rankovic openly admitted that of the total number of arrests made by this organization in 1949, 47% had been illegal, and 23% involved minor crimes that should have been handled by the regular local police. The result was a campaign to decrease the power and to alter the functions of the security police. How far this has gone is difficult to judge. It is a good sign, however, that the number of stories about police abuses in Yugoslavia has fallen sharply in the past few years.<sup>18</sup> Another such trend has been to curtail the powers of the once dread and all-powerful Public Prosecutor. For example, the Public Prosecutor can no longer conduct criminal investigations but must relinquish this duty to the judges of the appropriate court or the local police. He can no longer imprison people during other investigations; this

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<sup>17</sup> McVicker, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

is left up to the discretion of the judge. He cannot interfere any longer in proceedings dealing solely with private charges. Finally, he cannot appear in court as the representative of "society" but simply as a contending party. "Thus, by 1955, the Titoist public prosecutor, once the all-powerful protector of the regime's arbitrary whims, had been largely transformed into a government attorney practicing in criminal, economic, and administrative courts."<sup>19</sup> He is no longer above the court or above the law.

#### IV

How effective really are these and similar reforms in Tito's Yugoslavia? It must be stated clearly that, despite their best intent, each of these reforms is nullified in varying degree by the absence of real political democracy in Tito's Yugoslavia. Each one is self-defeating in some crucial way.

For example, how can the political reforms embodied in the new Constitution mean anything when it is perfectly obvious to any honest person that power is still located at the top of the pyramid? Since, from the standpoint of the Communists, the popular masses still do not possess sufficient consciousness to accept the philosophy and tenets of communism, it is impossible for the Communists to relinquish power to those masses for that would, in their opinion, be the end of communism. To be sure, Milovan Djilas argued before his downfall that the masses were already converted to socialism and would never again revert to the old regime; therefore, he contended, the victory of communism in Yugoslavia was not only assured, but would take place despite the terrible bungling of the Communist party. "Communism is not the product of geniuses or of noble wishes and purposes," Djilas declared, "but of social necessity. And something that is necessary is . . . spontaneous, revolutionary and evolutionary, at any rate

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 216.

inevitable, like all other objective processes in history." This faith led Djilas eventually to call upon the Communist party in Yugoslavia to liquidate itself entirely or at least to introduce a multi-party system in Yugoslavia. Today Djilas is in jail.

In the lowest political units in the country, the people's committee, the elections for members are so rigged that no one without the regime's approval has the slightest chance of winning. In the supposedly highest level of the government, the national Assembly, matters are so arranged that open discussion with the aim of defeating legislation desired by the government leaders is impossible. The new cabinet of Yugoslavia, the so-called Federal Executive Council, does not execute the will of the Assembly but imposes its own will on the Assembly. And in between this lowest and highest rung on the political ladder, the vagaries of procedure can nullify the democratic content of any law.

In the field of economic reform, the much vaunted workers' councils are restricted in many ways. The most obvious is the fact that most workers are not prepared in Yugoslavia, either by temperament or by training, to manage their own factories. And should they try to do so in a way contrary to the wishes of the administration, there are a thousand and one ways to keep them in check—through local political agencies, fiscal control, the labor unions, and so on. As for economic decentralization and transfer of functions to the six republics, this has undoubtedly produced a more efficient system which has given Yugoslav state planning a sounder basis. But greater efficiency does not mean more democracy. On the contrary, the new system has simply made it easier for the central government to supervise the economic activity of the entire country. Instead of withering away, the state has become more effective.

True, the Communist party has been weakened. But the net result has not been more democracy for the people as much as more uncontested power for the state bureaucrat who no

longer has to contend with Party control. The leaders must have the backing of some powerful, disciplined organization. If it is not going to be the Party, then it is going to be the government bureaucracy—the New Class of which Djilas writes so incisively.

And yet, despite these obvious drawbacks, Tito's Yugoslavia today has more political democracy, private enterprise, economic prosperity, and especially individual freedom than any other Communist country in Eastern Europe. Thanks in considerable measure to American aid, the Yugoslav standard of living — low as it is — is the envy of Yugoslavia's Communist neighbors. The Yugoslav system of worker's councils in a decentralized economy is a real challenge to the more centralized dictatorships of the satellite states. Though limited, the extent of free expression in Yugoslavia is approached only by Gomulka's Poland, and even there the screws are tightening again. Besides, Yugoslavia's independent position gives it a maneuverability in foreign policy which permits its government to make the most of playing off the West against Soviet Russia while seeking friends among the neutral nations.

Despite its advances toward increased human freedom and individual dignity, there is one thing Tito's system cannot do — give up power. Tito's Communists can try to do many things for their people, but they can never set them free. That the Yugoslav people prefer Titoism to Stalinism cannot be doubted. That they prefer the Tito of today to the Tito of ten years ago is also beyond dispute. But that the people of Yugoslavia would like best of all to be free is the greatest certainty of all.



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NO. 4

GOMULKA - ISM

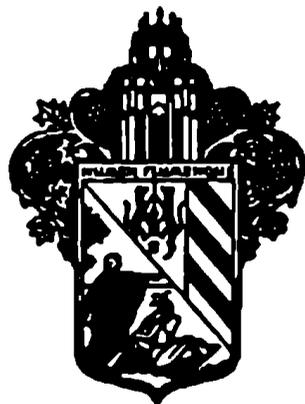
BY

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*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

MILWAUKEE, WIS.

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## GOMULKA - ISM

BY EDMUND ZAWACKI, *University of Wisconsin*

**I**N OCTOBER of 1956, Poland was visibly heaving with political unrest. It requires no great perspicacity today to see that the Poznan riots in June of that year, which raised a very loud cry for bread and freedom, were open symptoms of serious anti-Communist fever in the whole nation. Some kind of therapy by the Communist regime, which would be sincerely addressed to the basic problem of bread and freedom, was necessary. It seems to me, therefore, that the fever in the non-Communist national body of Poland in October, 1956, was the ultimate end and at the same time, direct cause of the convulsion inside the Polish Communist party that attended the emergence of the Gomulka regime.<sup>1</sup> By the same token, the Gomulka regime was a defense mechanism set up by the Party leadership to cope with hostile nation-wide pressures from below. In Poland, the Communist party is officially called the Polish United Workers' Party—in Polish. Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (PZPR).

My assessment of the origin of the Gomulka regime quite naturally accounts for the dim view I take of "national Communism" as a "Polish road to socialism," or a Polish road at all. The problem of bread and freedom appears to be a complex one—at least, bread without freedom is in the long run neither salutary nor satisfying to any body politic. Nor can the cry raised at Poznan be satisfactorily answered in Poland

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<sup>1</sup> For an extended analysis supporting this view, see Stanislaw Strzetelski, "The True Force Behind the Polish October Revolution," *The Polish Review*, II, No. 2-3, (1957), 19-31.

by a factitious separation of the Communist party apparatus from the administration of the national economy or the national culture. Malignancy requires surgery, not hypnotism.

To be sure, the PZPR organ, *Trybuna Ludu*, as early as June 5, 1956, i.e., before the Poznan riots, had reprinted from the Moscow *Pravda* an article by the Yugoslav, Edward Kardelj, in which the need for a separation of the Party apparatus from the economic administration was argued. Gomulka, however, in his report to the Ninth Plenum of the Central Committee of the PZPR in May, 1957, quite cogently pointed out that any real separation would lead to far swifter 'withering away' of Communist organs of government than is acceptable to any Communist regime. His actual words were unequivocal: "The government cannot be a supreme authority for social organizations such as workers' councils. The alternative, therefore, would be to create a new body through either direct or indirect elections. And thus we realize that this concept leads us astray. It appears that the government must cease to concern itself with the national economy and it then becomes unnecessary because there is another central body."<sup>2</sup>

For the quite simple reason given by Gomulka, every so-called national-Communist regime—whether it be Tito's, Gomulka's, Kadar's or Mao Tse-tung's—must remain a closed Leninist system encasing an extremely uncomfortable body politic in the rigid tights of a totalitarian organization of power. In the theater of ancient Rome, comic characters of low station used to be costumed in a garment describable with tongue in cheek as "loose tights." As an ideological concept, "national-Communism" reminds me of "loose tights." In ancient Rome at least, tights remained pretty tight; they could not change their form or function into an enfranchised citizen's toga by

<sup>2</sup>*Nowe Drogi*, 1957, No. 6, p. 11—cited by Kazimierz Grzybowski in his article "Workers' Self-Government in Poland a Year After," *The Polish Review*, III, No. 1-2, (1957), 132.

virtue of an adjective. This plain truth, however, is sometimes overlooked.'

I have used the word *Leninist* in a meaning not often ascribed to it in this country, while the word *totalitarian* has so many meanings that it would be well to clarify both words. By *totalitarian* I mean "as total as possible." In describing national-Communist regimes as closed *Leninist* systems, I mean that they are as totally closed as possible, and I submit that Lenin's fundamental contribution to Marxism-Leninism was not ideological and theoretical but organizational and practical. After all, in the Russian Social Democratic movement the crucial difference between Lenin's Bolsheviks and Martov's Menshovich's (both equally Marxist) was the difference in their respective concepts of what the Party organization should be. Lenin's conspiratorial concept with its overwhelming emphasis on Party discipline and Party hegemony was the one eventually imposed, and Lenin's formulation of the paragraph on Party membership in the Ustav Partii (Party Charter) has remained a rigid constant in Party organization ever since.<sup>4</sup> Both by necessity and sheer endurance it has become more stable and more truly the mark of a Communist regime than any single item of doctrine.<sup>5</sup>

The current Communist campaign against "Revisionism" is against revisions in the Party's organization of power; the Party's doctrine is proudly described as dynamic and adapt-

<sup>3</sup> On the panel discussion that followed the CBS interview with Tito on June 20, 1957, the view was presented by Mrs. Clare Booth Luce, among others, that the changes made in Yugoslav communism might indicate progress toward a return to capitalism. Cf. Harry Schwartz, "Tito's Communism," *New York Times*, July 1, 1957.

<sup>4</sup> See the summaries of the first eighteen Party Congresses in *Politicheskii Slovar*, Moscow, 1940. The 19th Congress (1952) did not alter Lenin's formulation. The 20th Congress (1956) did not consider the Party Charter at all.

<sup>5</sup> In the *Ugolovny Kodeks RSFSR* (RSFSR Criminal Code), 1956 ed., p. 2, the first item under GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF RSFSR CRIMINAL POLICY reads: "Considered to constitute a social danger shall be *any act or omission that is directed against the Soviet system* or that violates the legal order established by the Worker-Peasant Regime during the period of transition to a Communist system." (Italics mine—F.Z.)

able to changing conditions. For example, although in the global social organism the idea of coexistence between the Communist and non-Communist camps is a tactical doctrine acceptable to all Communist parties until further notice, coexistence between the Communist party and a non-Marxist party in social organisms on a national scale, i.e., in Communist-organized countries, is intolerable and has always been so. When facts collide with Marxist doctrine in Iron Curtain countries, all that is required, of course, is a re-interpretation of the facts, not a change in doctrine. Tampering with the Party's totalitarian organization of power, however, is heresy.

By this definition of what constitutes heresy, Gomułka is no heretic. If the organization of agriculture and of industry in Poland has not been brought into symmetry with that of the USSR, the reason is not Gomułka's heresy but the resistance of the non-Communist, Polish, farm and factory people. To real workmen and peasants, as opposed to abstract Marxist figments of the proletariat, a personal proprietary interest in Party-controlled factories and farms turns out to be pretty hard to induce. How many of us, for example, swell with pride of ownership at the idea that we personally as individuals own our public parks even if we have to keep off the grass?

The dilemma and the weakness of every Communist system established on the Leninist organizational principle is that any real separation of the Party apparatus from its control of any area at all of the national life would be tantamount to a real rip in the Leninist organization tights. It would mark the real beginning-of-the-end of the monoparty system in the given state organism. Not even literary fiction, music, or the plastic arts can be permitted to be free of Party tutelage and control.

\* \* \* \* \*

If my argument up to this point makes good sense, we now have the means, it would seem, to distinguish the significant from the insignificant in the situation in Poland brought

about by the Gomulka regime. Two sets of phenomena need to come under scrutiny: 1) the tensions inside the Polish United Worker's Party itself; 2) the tensions between the Party and the people. The significant tensions, of course, would be those capable of precipitating the peaceful disintegration of the Leninist monoparty system; such tensions exist in every Iron Curtain country, including the USSR. The means of acerbating them by peaceful United States diplomatic moves also exist, or can be devised, but a discussion of this aspect of the problem would take us beyond Gomulka-ism. I shall limit myself as much as possible to the dynamics of the situation inside the Polish United Workers' Party from 1956 to the present, i.e., to Gomulka-ism as it took shape and exists today.

Between July 18 and 27, 1956, the Central Committee of the PZPR, meeting in its Seventh Plenum, recalled Wladyslaw Gomulka from his eight year arrest and re-admitted him into the Party. On October 21 of that year, after a number of secret consultations, the Central Committee at its Eighth Plenum raised Gomulka to the Party leadership by electing him First Secretary. Simultaneously, the Central Committee itself and, in particular, its Politburo accomplished certain other changes in personnel, the most drastic of which was the exclusion from the Politburo of the late Stalin's emissary, Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky.

For some notion of the tense international atmosphere attending these actions, one might recall that a Soviet team from Moscow consisting of Khrushchev, Kaganovich, Mikoyan and Molotov—apparently on an urgent mission—flew to Warsaw on October 19 and departed again for Moscow within 24 hours. Also, Soviet troops stationed in Poland were in movement in the vicinity of the capital.

Facts of such political weight would indicate a genuine convulsion inside the Polish United Workers' Party, especially since the change in leadership at the top was swiftly reflected in

quite massive personnel changes at all levels of the Party organization below. Nor was the convulsion limited geographically to Warsaw. In Krakow, the entire Voyevodeship committee (2nd level from the top in the Party organizational pyramid) resigned under fire on October 26 and was replaced by Gomulka supporters; similar developments occurred in an equally short space of time in Bydgoszcz, Gdansk and Olsztyn.

In the other two hierarchies of the system, parallel and interlocked with that of the Party, viz., in the Trade Union organization and the Government Administration, resignations were extensive and swift. In the Trade Union organization the Chairman of its Central committee, Wiktor Klosiewicz, together with other members of the presidium resigned on November 16 amid acrid criticism of their previous activities.

In the Government Administration, the most significant "resignation" was perhaps that of Marshal Rokossovsky as Minister of National Defense, which was announced on November 13 along with a number of other high-level changes in various Ministries and in the Council of State. Rokossovsky was officially thanked for his services to Poland and was replaced by the Polish General, Marian Spychalski (rehabilitated together with Gomulka in July, 1956).<sup>6</sup>

On November 2, the entire Central Committee of the Union of Polish Youth, the equivalent in Poland of the Komsomol in the USSR (in Polish, Związek Młodzieży Polskiej—ZMP), resigned in confusion, and the whole nation-wide youth organization itself fell apart within a fortnight.

At first sight it would appear that the whole Party apparatus in Poland was ripping at the seams. Actually, however, the only item in this sequence that went beyond re-distribution of Party personnel was the behavior of the Polish Komsomol

<sup>6</sup>Source for these and other details of fact and chronology: Franciszek Proch, "Poland in 1956, Chronicle of Events," *The Polish Review*, II, No. 1, (1957), 104-109. This chronicle is a regular feature of *The Polish Review*. See "Chronicle of Events" for 1955, 1957, 1958 in the corresponding issues.

(ZMP). The confusion in the youth organization was spontaneous and complete, and it was certainly a warning to the Party elders about the future. The youth organization has since been reconstituted as two organizations—one embracing urban youth (ZMS), and other, rural youth (ZMW); in Polish, *Zwiazek Mlodziezy Socjalistycznej* and *Zwiazek Mlodziezy Wiejskiej*.

Psychologically, the most significant item was the risky but resolute “de-Polonization,” so to speak, of Marshal Rokossovsky and his removal from Poland. Outside the Party it helped win for Gomulka personally the active, sincere, and even enthusiastic adulation of the Polish people, and, by the same token, it helped to diminish the nation-wide anti-Communist fever to controllable bounds. The calm support of Gomulka in this crisis by Cardinal Wyszynski, who resumed his pastoral duties on October 29 after his release from prison, was certainly not a mark of moral approval; in his capacity as a man of God Cardinal Wyszynski had to stop the stampede of his flock toward a terrible blood bath. The stampede was stopped. Rokossovsky, the hated symbol of Soviet control in Poland, was thus toppled by Gomulka, the enthusiastically welcomed symbol of — what?

Wladyslaw Gomulka (born in 1905) had never been trained in the USSR, but he had taken part in Communist activities in Poland from the age of sixteen; he is a native Polish Communist-by-conviction. At the time of his fall in 1948, he was General Secretary of the Polish Communist party (PPR), Deputy Premier, and Minister for the Recovered Territories. His record in the separate Communist underground in Poland during the German occupation was good even by Polish standards. After the war, his objections to Soviet stripping of the Recovered Territories of which he was in charge and his views about a “Polish road to socialism,” quickly made him a number of enemies in the Party at home, especially since he had, by 1948, either incurred the displeasure of Stalin or, at

least, outshined his tactical usefulness. When set upon in the summer of 1948 (at the time Tito was, too) for rightist and nationalist deviations in his leadership of the PPR, Gomulka did not recant. As a non-Party visitor from Poland expressed it to me recently, "Gomulka had the courage to spit in their faces and go to prison."

Gomulka's career is both too slim and too oblique to symbolize Polish political aspirations, but what is evident in this thumbnail sketch is behavior of a kind that the Polish people can respect. Poles are partial to men of principle. In the turmoil and tension of the Polish October—as subsequent events in Hungary amply proved—Poland was indeed running grave risk of direct Soviet military intervention and a blood bath. What principles Gomulka stood for were temporarily forgotten, and a wave of psychologically compulsive popularity engulfed him. Temporarily, his Leninist tights were at least "loose tights," and by contrast with the preceding ten years they may well have looked like the toga of incipient civil liberties. But they were tights.

Three months later, on January 19, 1957, Gomulka warned his countrymen in connection with the approaching elections to the Diet that "crossing out candidates of our Party is tantamount to . . . obliterating Poland from the map of European states."<sup>7</sup> A year after that, in April, 1958, speaking to the Trade Union Congress in Warsaw, he wiped out the last vestige of authority temporarily enjoyed by the workers' councils in the management of factories.<sup>8</sup> Two weeks ago, at the Twelfth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party (October 15-17, 1958), the people of Poland were informed through a Party spokesman, Professor Adam Schaff, that the degree of freedom of expression permissible to them is to be judged only in terms

<sup>7</sup> Franciszek Proch, "Poland in 1957, Chronicle of Events," *The Polish Review*, II, No. 2-3, (1957), 160.

<sup>8</sup> For a full account of workers' councils in Gomulka's Poland, See Grzybowski, *The Polish Review*, III, No. 1-2, 129-46.

of the effect that it has on the maintenance of Communist power in Poland, that the Party alone is to be the judge of that, and that it is time for a pullback."

These three items, significant for the political, economic, and cultural life of Poland, would seem to indicate that Gomulka is not moving toward separation of the Party apparatus from any area at all of the national life. The defense mechanism of 1956 is now apparently on the offensive. Today Gomulka is no longer greeted with cheers. Indeed, some of the respect for him is pricked with scorn. The cry has been heard in the streets of Warsaw: "Precz z Gomulka, dajcie ser!" (Away with the little chunk, give us the whole cheese!) In Polish, a "gomulka" means a small chunk of cheese. Hence in the analogies I have been using, the students protesting on October 3, 1957, the shut-down of the periodical *Po Prostu*, were actually shouting: "Away with the tights, give us the toga."

Acknowledging the nation-wide magnitude and intensity of the revolutionary movement that was seizing the Polish people in October, 1956, and acknowledging the genuine internal convulsion suffered by the Party, it is not proper to call what actually happened a revolution. What took place both inside and outside the Party in Poland was an "almost-revolution," a demonstration of brinkmanship by a master of the art. The master strategist, however, was not Gomulka but whoever it was who first took steps to release him from prison after the eight-year-long arrest. By gambling on transforming the Communist Gomulka into a Polish national hero, even if only a temporary one, the strategist had succeeded, with Cardinal Wyszynski's help, in stemming an incipient, nation-wide, revolutionary stampede toward a blood bath and had saved the Party, too, from disintegration, bringing it safely out of its convulsion without damage to its hegemony. Who was the strategist?

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<sup>9</sup>*New York Times*, Oct. 19, 1958 (special dispatch from Warsaw Correspondent, unsigned).



Judging by the placid course of the Twelfth Plenum of the Central Committee of the PZPR two weeks ago, there would seem to be some kind of a balance inside the Central Committee today. So far as can be made out, it is a balance of three orientations. At the extremes are old-line "Natolin" group of "dogmatists" and the post-1956 so-called "revisionists." In the middle between them—and apparently wielding the balance—is the new "Pulawska" group<sup>10</sup> led by Edward Ochab, Jozef Cyrankiewicz and Aleksander Zawadzki. Apparently this group has been able to inhibit any excessive zeal on the part of the extremes. The master strategist of 1956 was probably one of these. Ochab would be a good guess. :

How does Gomulka fit into this intra-Party line-up? The events of October, 1956, made him the acclaimed and obvious leader of the revisionist extreme. But, like the resolute Communist that he is, he has consistently abjured revisionism both in word and deed. As a resolute guardian of the Leninist principle, he could find a place in the "Natolin" wing. But there are too many personal scores to settle there. The only place left is the pivotal "Pulawska" group. The Party strategists of October, 1956, are still at work, and Gomulka is apparently still their instrument.

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<sup>10</sup> So-called from Pulawska Street in Warsaw, where the PZPR headquarters are located.

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## FOUR MEANINGS OF "NATIONAL COMMUNISM"

BY BELA KOVRIG, *Marquette University*

**T**HE official Soviet definition of "national communism" and the writer's three hypothetical definitions will be here presented, analyzed, and tested. Their testing will be executed with the help of data which the researcher accumulated on the social upheaval in Hungary in 1956 and on related events.

First. Tito's "independent road" led to the introduction of "national communism" into the political vocabulary. The Polish and Hungarian "October" brought to the student of these events, an awareness that national communism, provided this is a proper term to denote the Post-Marxist-Leninist ideological orientation pattern, if any, of Communists who discarded the "official ideology" (or only its "official" interpretation?) has, besides its political meaning, a sociological and anthropological meaning. It seems justified to say that at present the three differing intellectual approaches to an alleged national communism brought into view the power (political), the sociological, and the cultural, and anthropological aspects of what the Soviet leadership claimed at first to be national communism. No doubt, as every object of thought, potentially "national communism" has also innumerable aspects. Its actual aspects (or dimensions), however, are only those which were actuated by the intellectual approaches directed to them. It is, therefore, most probable that the global acceleration of interstate and inner-societal changes and the growing scope and frequency of cross-national exchange of information and intellectual interstimulation would tend to bring forth changes in communist

ideology and historical situations which would instill newer intellectual approaches to the new ideological variants. All this would probably lead to the identification of significant novel aspects (dimensions) of national communism and not merely widen the *range* of "national communism" in terms of some of its essential characteristics.

Imre Nagy, who with the formal approval of the emissaries of the Soviet Union's Communist-party, Mikoyan and Suslov, in Budapest on October 24, 1956, became the Prime Minister during the Rebellion, and was in 1958 executed. The Soviet authorities' statements qualified him and his political and intellectual associates as national Communists, projecting their Soviet-made image in 1958 through a much more intensive propaganda campaign than they did for the same purpose right after the defeat of the Rebellion, onto the screen of the entire political world in order to counterbalance the alarming impact of Nagy's execution on Communists, especially on intellectuals among them in the West. These were the facts of "national socialism," then, related with this, his own hypothetically objective definition of the same, and, finally, to test whether Imre Nagy and his "Communist rebels" were national Communists.

*"Communist rebels" in focus*

Not the Rebellion will be here qualified but only the behavior of articulate Communist rebels (in the following "Communist rebels"), primarily of politicians—as Imre Nagy, Losonczi, Kádár (!), both members in Nagy's "Octobriseur" cabinet, the elite of Communist writers, and many Communist members of revolutionary workers' councils," who publicly did not renounce their allegiance to the Communist-party during the Rebellion but revolted reportedly against the *status quo*, the "Stalinist system," and its representatives, the "Stalinists" (as they were called by their fellow-Communist opponents). These

rebelled against the "Stalinists," again in ascendancy in Hungary in 1954-56, with the effective help of the Soviet government when there were dramatic changes in the Soviet Union, when the new idol of all Communist "true believers" in the Soviet World pointed in just the opposite direction. One should clearly distinguish between the controversial attributes of their rebellious behavior, that is, of those who were brand-marked as "national Communists," on the one hand, and, on the other, the attributes of the total Rebellion of which the former was but a phase, though, at its incipient stage, of crucial significance. The more so, since the frequent consecutive reconstructions of Imre Nagy's government,<sup>1</sup> the secession of the socialist (Marxist) democrats (October 30) from the (since the Communist and Socialist parties' merger in 1948) unitary Hungarian Toilers' Party,<sup>2</sup> and the testimony of an editorial leader of the Party's national daily, besides Kádár's official statement also of October 30, conclusively prove that the Party (speedily renamed the Hungarian Socialist Worker-Party) under Imre Nagy's formal leadership continued to lose rapidly its membership (Communists of any hue) and political significance, and the new Communist leadership made no secret about it.<sup>3</sup>

Beforehand, it should be stressed that in reference to the Rebellion's key-values there was no manifest difference between Communist and non-Communist articulate "rebels" since Oct. 27. The relevant radio and press communications of leading Communists (Nagy, Kádár, Münnich, Losonczi) were as unam-

<sup>1</sup> Nagy's first government consisted exclusively of Communist-party members (Oct. 24); his second government (since Oct. 27) out of 25 cabinet members still number 21 Communists; his last government (Nov. 3) of 12 members included but three Communists.

<sup>2</sup> Party First Secretary János Kádár announced it (Nov. 1), Radio-communications, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup> "We shall be not any more a Party of million members, we shall work in a rather modest frame with more modest opportunities than we possessed earlier." From editorial "Megtisztultan," ("Purified"), *Népszabadság* (People's Freedom,) (Budapest), Nov. 3, 1956; the statement of János Kádár (since October 28, 1956, the head of the Party's new Presidium.) See: Radio-communications, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-75.

biguous as those of the anti-Communists. The data concerning the relevant rebels, yielded by our research, were referred to the four alternative definitions out of which a frame of reference, construed for the checking of the national Communistic character of the studied actors' behavior, consists. The results of this we are going to present.

### *Ideological definition*

I. "*National communism*" is an informal, *crecive* (non-systematic) social ideology, *sui generis*; it is not merely a variant of the Communist (bolshevik) "official" ideology, "*Marxism-Leninism*."

If this is empirically validated, the ideology of national communism would be as different from Marxism-Leninism, understood according to any of its Soviet "official" interpretation, as the ideologies of guild socialism and Sorel's syndicalism, and of the British Labor Party's and German Social Democratic Party's present informal, *crecive* ideologies basically differ from "orthodox Marxism."

The Rebellion was not intellectually "initiated." There was no intellectual group which would have motivated active orientations toward ideologically defined social, markedly deviant, goals. To use Norman R. F. Maier's terms, the Rebellion and the "Communist rebels" behavior was rather a *frustration-instigated, and not an ideologically defined goal-motivated, mass movement*. The Writers' revolt (of nearly exclusively Communist writers) effectively contributed to the formulation, then to the symbolic (verbalized) expression of "feelings," earlier covert orientations to justice, socialistic justice, truth, veracity, humaneness. Many of them were coached in Marxian terms and nothing was repudiated or postulated what was not earlier initiated in public in the Soviet Union. There was not even a partial ideology somewhat behaviorally socialized as a counter-ideology against the official ideology, Marxism-Leninism, in

either of the strategic social segments (university student bodies and factory peoples of large industrial aggregates and miners) which were deeply involved in the incipient rebellious situation, and not even when this moved to its termination. The Writers' Appeal, frequently quoted, was the first attempt to systematize at least the common value-standards of the rebellious, mostly Communist and, even in Stalin's life, "fellow traveller" writers. This was accomplished when (December 28, 1956) the last significant fighting phase of the Rebellion was over and this continued but in forms of sporadic partisan skirmishes in some mountainous, forest covered areas of the countryside, and — what was more significant — in massive and enduring strikes of factory people and miners. But even this Writers' Appeal, then a heroic deed, was far from a social ideological system conceived as basis for national reconstruction, in a broad sense, and was more a symbolic expression of the role assumed by, and of the avocation and ethos of, the rebel writers. Besides this, the "questionnaire material" and interview answers reveal that practically all relevant rebels became involved in the struggle without any personal ideological commitment. No doubt, there were elements perhaps of a future ideology evolving and spreading.

Does not—may we ask—perhaps the top human symbol of the Rebellion, its premier, Imre Nagy, bespeak clearly of his national Communistic ideology and qualify its nature? His symbolic quality, in retrospect recognized, partly at least, is the result of his personal tragedy which culminated in his execution in 1958. It has been the combined function of his martyrdom and earlier formal leadership role in the State. Actually, however, he was but a rather reluctant leader, not of the functional but of the expressive type. He performed a symbolizing role by approximating his image, created by his following, impressed first upon him, then (during the summer of 1956) spread in the popular masses through the effective

propaganda of anti-Stalinist fellow-Communists, the Losonczy group, struggling for leadership in the Party, and its associates, the elite of Communist writers who — encouraged by relevant changes in the Soviet Union — tried to emancipate themselves from bureaucratic Party-controls and expand the “Thaw,” as the Kremlin’s most favored literary pundit, Ilja Ehrenburg called and hailed these changes. This Imre Nagy image, widely publicized, pictured him as a loving, at least would be-protector of the Magyar people and all its authentic values. He eventually closely reproduced the image of his reference group of him which became his self-image, and remained faithful to his new social self unto death. But Imre Nagy, even in his last work (written in late 1955 or early 1956; undated) refuted not only Hungarian revisionism,<sup>4</sup> but all nationalism in general. He was adamant in proclaiming “proletarian internationalism” to which he gave a humanistic interpretation and labeled his creed “humanistic and patriotic communism.” “a communism rooted in its very sources,” “this genuine patriotism . . .” He was an upright, conscientious, and clever Magyar burgher who joined as a young P. W. in Russia the Communist-party, already in 1917, and since then, except during Kun’s dictatorship (1919) in Hungary, when he was an incumbent of a minor post in the extended cabinet, he lived and worked on Party-errands and received intensive training in agrarian affairs continuously in the Soviet Union until December, 1944, when as Soviet appointed minister of agriculture the Soviet Red Army brought him back to Hungary. Imre Nagy in face of the sea of misery wherein his Magyar people submerged, and (since 1954) having suffered personally the recklessness of Soviet rule over his country, *wanted communism* (he was a hard boiled Communist) *but to an extent, and applied in a way, that does not hurt but helps his people.* For this his name stands as a symbol. “Humanistic

<sup>4</sup>Imre Nagy, *On Communism, In Defense of the New Course* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1957), p. 241.

communism!" "New Humanism!" This is the appeal what Soviet communism addresses to the intellectuals of Europe and America since the last war. Certain earlier unpublished writings of the young Karl Marx, collected and edited by the Marx-Engles-Lenin Institute, and in several languages published by the Foreign Language Publishers, both in Moscow, and spread world wide primarily through the active cooperation of Western intellectuals (Togliatti and Aragon played the lead role in this respect) the New Humanism image of Marxism and, through a selective presentation and "official" interpretation, that of Marxism-Leninism. Imre Nagy's "humanistic and patriotic communism," quoted above, was in conformity with Stalin's ideological orthodoxy, with his conception of "proletarian patriotism" or "Soviet patriotism." Did he not name the Red Army's campaigns in 1941-1945 the "Great Patriotic War?"<sup>5</sup> Imre Nagy by invoking a "humanistic and patriotic communism" reproduced the — for intellectual consumption — much

<sup>5</sup>*Vide* some authoritative statements on Soviet patriotism: "National haughtiness and arrogance are alien to Soviet people"—declared A. Vosnesensky, S. U. Minister of Education,\*\* and praised the toiling masses whose "patriotism is of a pure and lofty nature; it inspires the people in the struggle for the greatness, liberty, and glory of their country."\*\* But one wonders whether it is really so "pure and lofty", this patriotism, and whether it is patriotism at all (and not nationalism) what Soviet leaders and press have continuously impressed upon Russian minds. Russian people were told: "Soviet patriotism and national pride is based . . . on the great and unequalled superiority of Soviet culture, ideology, science, and morals over that of the bourgeoisie.\*\*\* The same was heralded by Minister of Education Vosnesensky. Ciechanowsky quotes Stalin in his book, *Defeat and Victory*: "The best and bravest airmen are the Slavs. Their reflexes are very rapid because they belong to a young race which has not yet been worn out.\*\*\*\* This is rank racism. Stalin: ". . . to the health of the Russian people because it is the most outstanding nation of all the nations forming part of the Soviet Union.†" This *Russian primacy* thesis has been a frequently reproduced Russian thought pattern. For example: "The Russian nationality is the most outstanding of all the equal socialist nationalities which compose the Soviet Union."‡ Russian over-all superiority is claimed in every cultural field."

\*\* "Soviet Patriotism," *Soviet News*, London: U.S.S.R. Embassy, Press Dept. August 24, 1948, No. 2004.

\*\*\* "Soviet Patriotism," *Bolshevik* (Moscow) No. 18, 1947, p. 38.

\*\*\*\* New York: Doubleday and Co., 1947, p. 74.

† "Kremlin Banquet for Red Army Commanders," *Pravda* (May 25, 1945).

‡ From the editorial of the *Radyanska Ukraina* (May 24, 1953).

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NO. 1

DEFINITION OF NATIONAL COMMUNISM

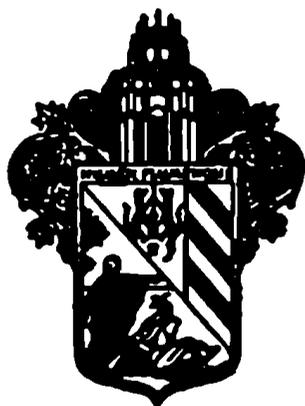
BY

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*"The Pursuit of Truth to Make Men Free"*

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publicized image of communism. He, and his political and literary associates, *had not initiated a heterodox Communist, or even an informal ideology.*

The findings do not bear out the first definition.

*The Soviet definition of "national communism"*

II. The Soviet government having been itself an active participant both in the Hungarian rebellion and the enduring global historical conflict ("cold war") situation in which it raised the national communism issue itself and formulated the criteria in terms of which it condemned as "national Communists" certain prominent Communists, in a time when its direct involvement in the same issue was still a hotly debated question of international politics, the pertinent Soviet definition, in sociological terms, should be qualified as a *subjective definition*. (Florian Znaniecki) The ideologically most precise as well as *authoritative Soviet-definition of national communism* and that of its orthodox alternative, "proletarian internationalism," was published in the periodical, *Kommunist* (April, 1958), the herald of the up-to-date official interpretation of Soviet ideological tenets. Essentially the same was broadcast in English by Radio Moscow (April 20). According to the latter:

"National communism . . . lays emphasis on the special national features in the building of socialism and rejects that which is most important and universally significant that has been revealed by the experience of all socialist countries."<sup>6</sup> The "essence of the difference" between national communism and proletarian internationalism lies in the fact that in national communism proletarian internationalism is reduced exclusively to the principles of equality and noninterference in internal affairs, and that the necessity for strengthening the unity and cooperation of the socialistic countries and the Marxist-Leninist

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<sup>6</sup>"Texts and Documents," *East Europe* monthly, New York: Free Europe Press, VII, No. 6 (June, 1958), 52.

parties is buried in oblivion. Proletarian internationalism today . . . finds its expression in the support of the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic, and the other socialist countries by the workers' movement in the capitalist world, and in the support of this movement by *the working people of the socialist countries in the unity and consolidation of the Communist parties of all countries* (italicized by the writer here as well as later), and in solidarity with the peoples fighting for their national independence and against imperialism.' "The . . . proletarian internationalism of our time shows that while it retains all the significance of the principle of the international workers' movement, *it constitutes at the same time the basis for the relations among the countries . . . building a socialist society.*"<sup>7</sup> "Under certain conditions, proletarian internationalism demands the subordination of the interests of the *proletarian struggle in one country to the interests of the struggle on a world-wide scale.*"<sup>8</sup> (This, of course, is nothing of recent origin. It is word by word the reiteration of one of the tenets promulgated in the *Theses and Statutes of the Second Congress of the Communist International of 1920.*)<sup>9</sup> "A Party (Communist) which defends National communism and uses terms 'ideological monopolism' and 'political hegemonism,' as the League of Communists of Yugoslavia does, of course, against Soviet-Russian '*great-power-chauvinism*' " (the term was used against the Kremlin by Mao Tzetung) is "against the general principles, the general laws governing socialist revolution and socialist construction, and, consequently, [it is] against the ideological and political unity of the international Communist movement."<sup>10</sup> Leninism does not exclude the possibility that one or another Socialistic country's Communist party plays a lead-

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>8</sup>*Loc. cit.*

<sup>9</sup>A term already used by Stalin in his "Report on National Factors in Party and State," (1923) *Marxism and National Question*. New York: International Publishers, 1942, p. 142.

<sup>10</sup>"Texts and Documents," *op. cit.*, p. 52.

ing role during a definite historic period. "The participants in the meeting of representatives of Communist and Workers' parties of Socialist countries which was held [in Moscow—the writer] in November, 1957, noted in the adopted declaration that the invincible camp of Socialist States is headed by the Soviet Union. . . . The Soviet Union is the first country of the victorious dictatorship of the proletariat; it is the country which blazed the trail to Socialism. . . . The fulfillment of the role of the leading force of the camp of Socialism, the vanguard of the entire world revolutionary movement, has nothing in common with 'hegemonism'."<sup>11</sup> Lenin warned: "Bend every effort to rebuff all nationalism, the crude, coercive Black Hundred [a monarchist group—the writer] as well as the most refined, advocating equality of nations, along with the breaking up of the workers' cause, workers' organizations, and the workers' movement according to nationality."<sup>12</sup> National communism has been brandmarked in the Communist press from Pankov to Peiping as "a miserable idea," "an anti-Marx idea," "a weapon of international imperialism, used to subvert the solidarity of the Socialist camp, and a new attempt to revise the Marxist-Leninist teaching, a subtle form of bourgeois nationalism in 'Communist' clothing."<sup>13</sup> ". . . Whoever displays a onesided approach . . ., over-emphasizes and exaggerates the nationalistic features and sets them above the common characteristics of all countries that have entered the path of socialism, actually . . . helps our enemies."<sup>14</sup>

From Soviet authoritative statements we distilled the *Soviet criteria* of "national communism," what their supreme power holder(s) consider(s) to be one, at present the most dangerous, kind of "right wing deviation." Tersely these criteria are as

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>12</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> T. Timofey's article, *Sovetskaya Rossia* (Moscow), February 3, 1957, pp. 2-3 (tr., "Digest," IX, No. 4, 10, 12.)

<sup>14</sup> N. Vasilyev's article, *Izvestia* (Moscow), March 9, 1957, pp. 3-4 quotation on p. 4 (tr., "Digest," IX, No. 12, 6.)

follows: (1) cardinal values are those of the nation and not of the global revolutionary workers' movement; (2) negation of the Soviet Union's "vanguard" role in this movement; (3) negation that there is but a single Communist movement, global, international, in which — in this era of mankind — the Soviet Communist party is entitled to leadership and supremacy over a Communist party of any other country, thus, also over the Party in one's own homeland; (4) negation of the official Soviet thesis that interstate relations (as a kind of superstructure) are, and should be, determined by the relations of the individual Communist-parties (as a kind of infrastructure) as national divisions of the unitary global Communist movement; (5) negation of the Soviet party's thesis that "under certain conditions" the interests of the Communist-party in one country should be subordinated to the interests of the global revolutionary workers' movement<sup>15</sup> and the decision on which are the interests of this global movement falls exclusively into the competency of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, realistically, the Party's Presidium (formerly called Politburo) of the Central Committee.<sup>16</sup>

### *An "objective" definition*

III. In order to develop an objective definition of the political behavior of articulate Communists who rebelled against the *status quo* sanctioned, or expected to be sustained, in their country, in the last resort actually by the Soviet Union, we abstracted the uniformities of their positive and negative key value-orientations from the relevant forms of reported behaviors of Yugoslav, Polish, and Hungarian key Communists who enduringly or intermittently revolted against the Soviet-imposed *status quo*. Thus, we built a constructed type (Howard Becker) of national Communist political behavior. On account of the

<sup>15</sup> *Kommunist*, leading Party periodical on ideological and important political issues, Moscow, April, 1958, pp. 8-10.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.* See p. 12.

empirical "validity" of our type we call the following, the third, a hypothetically objective definition: *"National communism is an ideological rationalization of the striving of any Communist group (party, movement) beyond the Soviet Union in order to emancipate itself from under the controlling hold of the Soviet Communist party (or to defend its autonomy) and also to serve (or defend) thereby the liberation (liberty) of its own State from under (or against menacing) Soviet governmental control. The attainment (or preservation) of this double independence (of the domestic Party as well as of the nation) as ruling goals, serves usually the following triple secondary purpose: to terminate or forstall (1) the country's (including its people's) economic exploitation by the Soviet Union; (2) a heteronomous and heterocephalic domestic political system; (3) a monopolistic Soviet ideological penetration and control, and Russification of the national culture.*

This definition (presumably an objective one) — as we came to realize only at a later stage of our research — is essentially concordant (in terms of repudiated power relations) with the Soviet official (originally presumed to be "necessarily subjective") definition of national communism. It is though devoid of any ideological clothing.

The Soviet "official" interpreters qualified in the afore-indicated terms the politically relevant behavior of the Hungarian "Communist rebels" as national communism.

This qualification will be checked in the following by referring the relevant data to the criteria both of our, the third, presumably objective definition of national communism and of the Soviet, allegedly subjective, definition of the same. (At the end of the procedure would the reader perhaps approve the combined application of the two sets of criteria?)

(1) According to the "Soviet" authoritative statements, repeated by the Communist press in Budapest, "Communist rebels" were guilty in "bourgeois nationalism" since "class

interests vanished from their social perspective." and, consequently, "the belongingness to the nation was more important" to them "than the class interests of the proletariat."<sup>17</sup> Such statements imply the contention that the carrier of apex values in the "Communistic rebels'" perspective was the nation and not the global revolutionary workers' (proletariat's) movement. The primary criterion of national communism, according to our hypothetical definition essentially squares with its aforementioned "Soviet" criterion: the primacy of the "people's freedom" ("the people" equated with the nation) to be served by a free Party, i.e., emancipated from under the Soviet party. All relevant data—248 value-orientations to "our people," "the people" and 100 to the nation (in radio and literary communications)—validate the primacy of rebellious orientations of articulate "Communist rebels," by no means less than those of others, to the freedom of the people, the latter coherently equated with the nation.<sup>18</sup> Sporadically there were some very few orientations articulate to "the revolution of the proletariat" in statements of two workers' councils in the countryside. This however, figured conspicuously as a postfix, symbolizing a measure of loyalty to the "old ideology," but never (among the recorded articulate orientations) formulated as a cardinal-value of the entire communication message. The Soviet favorite verbal symbol of their "official" ideology's cardinal value, "the world revolutionary workers' movement," does not figure at all among the numerous recorded orientations of "Communist rebels" of any echelon.

All the following Soviet criteria of "national communism"

<sup>17</sup> The Hungarian leading Party-daily, *Népszabadság* (People's Freedom) Budapest, in its several numbers elaborated this theme in January and February, 1958.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Premier Imre Nagy's statements of Oct. 28 and 30, his "Appeal" of Nov. 1; Party-Presidium Chairman János Kádár's radio talk of Oct. 30 and Nov. 1; Interior Minister (later Premier) Dr. Ferenc Münich's instructions, broadcast on Oct. 28; Minister of State Géza Losonczi's statement for the press, Nov. 3, Radio-communications, *op. cit.*, pp. (Nagy's) 101-102, 172, 270; (Kádár's) 174, 277; (Münich's) 137; (Losonczi's) 137.

do not refer to one or more positive values, but they point to negative values.

(2 and 3) The "Soviet definition" claims that two of national communism's several negative values (against which it is directed), conceived also as its meaningfully interrelated criteria, are the unitary quality, the *indivisibiliter ac inseparabiliter* principles, of the global Communist-movement,<sup>11</sup> and the "vanguard," the "leading force," role of the Soviet Party in this global movement. These criteria again correspond with two criteria of our hypothetical definition: one of them is a positive cardinal value of "national communistic" manifest behavior. It is the freedom of the Communist party of one's nation from the Soviet Party. The other criterion is one of its negative cardinal values, foreign political hegemony (whether over the country or the Party in the non-Soviet country, or over both). The history of the Communist parties beyond the Soviet Union made it clear to the Communist leaders in Yugoslavia and Hungary whom the Soviet leadership brandmarked as "national-Communists" that, while their party is considered by the Soviet Party and remained actually in Yugoslavia until 1948, nothing else but a national division of the "world revolutionary workers' movement" led by the Soviet party, that is, the Russian Bolshevik leadership, they are at the mercy of the latter, and it is only a matter of time that they fall in the disgrace of the Russian power holders and suffer a kind of "liquidation." Tito knew well in 1948 that it is the only way open to him to stay at the helm (and probably also in life) to find escape in "national communism" and emancipate the Yugoslav party, and thereby his country, from under the Soviet party's, that is, Stalin's control. And when he, in 1957, realized that Khrushchev entertains the ambition to use him, he had to repeat his

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<sup>11</sup> With present Soviet "official" euphemism this is called "the World revolutionary workers' movement." In Soviet communications formulated in English for Anglo-Saxon consumption intermittently even the revolutionary adjective is omitted.

earlier political move to forestall the Soviet premier's encroachment and eventually his sharing of Malenkov's fate. Hungary's Imre Nagy learned from his long personal experiences that the Kremlin handles the Hungarian Communist leading structure as a management of one of its "locals," branch offices, consequently, whoever have been appointed to run for a while that "local," his political existence, to say the least, depended exclusively on the whim of the Soviet party leadership. Was not Rákosi selected and made by Stalin the master, the Soviet proconsul of Hungary, in 1945, had he not been kept by the Kremlin nearly for a decade in that exalted power position despite all his shortcomings, errors and mistakes, and lack of popularity even among fellow-Communists? Was not he (Nagy) himself hand-picked in 1945 by the Soviet Party to act as a minister of agriculture in a country which he left 26 years ago and where practically nobody knew him? Was not he the one who reported at the end of 1955 or early 1956 in an undated "memorandum" to the Central Committee of his Party that Malenkov, Molotov, and Khrushchev together selected and made him Hungarian Prime Minister in 1953?<sup>20</sup> And no matter how popular he became, Khrushchev fired him, the Prime Minister of Hungary, when the new Russian ruler, the Soviet Party's First Secretary, eliminated his partners in "collective leadership," and (rightly) considered that Imre Nagy grew in Hungary into a kind of Malenkov. Did not Nagy defend himself in the very same "memorandum" of 1955 or 1956 against accusations of being guilty in "rightist deviation" with the argument that they were just the Soviet leaders who instructed him in Moscow to liberalize communist policies which then he, in conformity with their directives,<sup>21</sup> inaugurated by initiating and assuring the adoption of the famous "June Resolutions" of the Party's Central Committee (1953), the basis in communist party-politics of his

<sup>20</sup> Imre Nagy, *On Communism, In Defense of the New Course*, op. cit., p. 252.

<sup>21</sup> Especially significant are the pertinent statement of Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Molotov, and Kaganovich, *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 106-107, 143, 153-54.

“New Course” (*i.e.*, New Deal), that earned him nationwide esteem and popularity, but also the hate of the Hungarian “Stalinists”? Did he not experience how the Soviet leaders shoved him aside when in the wake of Moscow’s de-Stalinization drive, and encouraged by the events of the Soviet Party’s Twentieth Congress, practically all Communists in Hungary who had some following in the country urged Rákosi’s release and Nagy’s return to the helm? Was he not rejected by the Russians when the Kremlin intervened (July, 1956) and its, formally the Soviet party’s, emissaries, Mikoyan and Suslov, appeared in Budapest at the Kremlin’s, as well as the Soviet party’s, Hungarian “branch office,” the headquarters of the Party in Hungary, duly fired Rákosi? When they unexpectedly appointed his political alterego, in 1955-1956, even by the Communists the hardly tolerated Gerö to be his successor, and massively frustrated thereby the ambitions of Imre Nagy and his followers, the “anti-Stalinists,” including practically all intellectuals, the men of the “Thaw” in the Party, and all the peasants in public life. Imre Nagy and his cohort had also to experience that during the fateful night when the Rebellion exploded (October 23-24, 1956). Khrushchev’s trouble shooter, the very same Anastas I. Mikoyan, member of the Soviet Party-Presidium, again accompanied by the very same Suslov, who only in July pushed aside Nagy and his political associates, the Losonczy-group of the Party, flew to Budapest and *permitted* the Hungarian Party’s Central Committee to raise Imre Nagy to the position of a prime minister (Oct. 24) in order to acquiesce the rebellious nation and gain time. But, at the same time they politically paralyzed effectively Imre Nagy by remaining adamant in keeping “Stalinist” Gerö at the helm of the Party as a first secretary and approving only such a composition of Nagy’s first cabinet (Oct. 24) that in its overwhelming majority consists of Rákosi and Gerö followers, “diehard Stalinists,” as they were in the Party identified, personal opponents of Imre Nagy. And, when Mikoyan and Suslov

two days later (Oct. 26) flew again to Budapest and, impressed by the mounting waves of the Rebellion, eventually dropped Gerö and replaced him by János Kádár in the position of the Party's first secretary. Mikoyan ordered a kind of "complete reorganization" of the Party's leadership which assured Nagy's complete isolation therein: He, the Communist prime minister, became but only one of the five plain members of the Party's new Presidium (Oct. 28), to the President of which Mikoyan actually appointed Kádár. Imre Nagy at the height of his national popularity, the symbolic leader of the Rebellion during its short-lived honeymoon period, was effectively isolated in his own Party's new leadership since he was unable to assure a position in the new Presidium for his strongest, most capable, and experienced political aid, Communist Deputy Geza Losonczy. But members of the Presidium became (at the time of the Rebellion's apparent victory!) just those whom the Kremlin appointed to the helm (Kádár and Münich) after the Rebellion's bloody end.<sup>22</sup> Finally, Imre Nagy and the "Communist rebels" of consequence had to know very well that Mikoyan and Suslov reappeared in Budapest<sup>23</sup> (October 30-31) and, using Party-leader Kádár's office for their headquarters, made a final attempt to sidetrack the Rebellion.

With all these experiences of their Party's utter subordination to the Soviet party and State leadership in mind, Nagy and the "Communist rebels," and the politicians and writers associated with him, wanted to have an autonomous Hungarian Communist party dedicated to the service of the Hungarian people which they also equated with the nation. They resented Moscow's remote control over Hungarian affairs and realized

<sup>22</sup>The Central Committee transferred its whole jurisdiction upon the new Presidium of the Party on October 28, 1956, and elected at the same time János Kádár for its president, and for members Antal Apró, Károly Kiss, Dr. Ferenc Münnich (later premier), Imre Nagy, and Zoltan Szánthó.

<sup>23</sup>A journalist reported in the *Igazság* (The Truth), then a new daily in Budapest, November 1, 1956, his meeting with Mikoyan and Suslov when they left Kádár's office.