

TODAY ABROAD

by Joseph Clark

The Latest Shakeup In the Soviet Union

FOUR YEARS and four months ago I stood in Moscow's Red Square and watched a group of short, stocky men ascend the marble tomb freshly engraved—LENIN-STALIN. Nikita Khrushchev then introduced the three speakers at Stalin's funeral meeting. They were Georgi Malenkov, Lavrenti Beria and Vyacheslav Molotov.

These three had been closest to Stalin. All have been swept aside. Beria went by way of execution after a secret trial. Malenkov and Molotov were removed in the latest shakeup of the Soviet Communist Party's leadership. Ousted with them was Stalin's old co-worker, Lazar Kaganovich.

The direction in which Soviet society must move was already indicated by the speeches of Malenkov and Beria at Stalin's funeral. This basic trend was more clearly illuminated by the recent Soviet Party changes. It would be unfortunate if that basic trend were obscured by the methods being used by the Soviet leaders to fight against Stalinism.

AT ISSUE in the inner-party struggle, according to the Central Committee's resolution, were the following points:

1. Relaxing international ten-

sions and opposition to the policy of "tightening the screws" in East-West relations.

2. Democratization and eliminating the miscarriages of law and justice.

3. Drastically improving living standards, consumer goods production and housing.

4. Decentralizing economic and political controls and enhancing the rights of the various national republics in opposition to the violations of national equality.

As noted before, the essence of these issues was also stressed in the Malenkov and Beria funeral orations when Stalin died. Aside from what this may show about the inner-party conflicts the main lesson of the post-Stalin era seems to be that democracy, equality and rising living standards, along with peaceful co-existence, are the only conditions under which a socialist economy can develop. Stalinism was death to socialism on all four counts above.

EVEN SO conservative a foe of socialism as Winston Churchill has discerned the major direction of Soviet policy—toward achieving lasting peace. Therefore it would be most unfortunate if the special demonology which says Malenkov was a foe

of peaceful coexistence would hide the vital conflict over foreign policy which went on ever since Stalin died. And it would be too bad if one had to accept the conclusion that Kaganovich never did know how to run a railroad in order to understand the conflict over the relationship of heavy industry, agriculture and living standards.

There was unquestionably an issue of policy behind every conflict in the Soviet party leadership. But this doesn't mean there wasn't also jockeying for leadership and power. The account published in the Italian Communist newspaper *l'Unita* showed what a close struggle (six to five) there was in the presidium. The lack of basic democratic procedure in the Soviet Communist Party, which still persists, makes it possible to hurl accusations while the people don't hear both sides of the argument.

For example, Malenkov is accused of joining Molotov, to oppose coexistence policies and the improvement of Soviet living conditions. Maybe so. But Malenkov as premier sponsored moves which greatly eased world tensions, and he was the author of the program emphasizing consumer goods production. In fact,

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he was fired as premier in 1955 for that emphasis.

PERHAPS LATER Malenkov changed his views and adopted Molotov's. That's always possible. Indeed he had changed in the few days since Stalin died, from supporting Stalinism to his later statement of post-Stalin policies.

But if he was guilty as charged by the recent resolution the Soviet people were entitled to evidence and a statement from both sides. They were never given the benefit of public debate. The struggle was bottled up in the presidium and in the Party's Central Committee. If anything, the methods used in the struggle against Stalinism shows that it will still take considerable time before democratic controls and procedures and direct working class rule in all phases of Soviet life are established. But the statement of the issues shows the trend. And the fact that the Central Committee debated the issue is a far cry from the days when Stalin alone made decisions.

In this regard the studies of Isaac Deutscher on the Soviet Union have received startling confirmation once again. As far back as 11 years ago, in his biography of Stalin, Deutscher showed that the forces unleashed by the industrialization of Russia under Stalin would ultimately lead to the downfall of Stalinism.

VERY FEW of the top figures who worked directly with Stalin are left in Soviet leadership. Most are out. It is fatuous to think that those ousted were not responsible for some of the achievements during the Stalin era as well as for the crimes. It would be just as fatuous to think that Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Bulganin and Voroshilov, remaining collaborators of Stalin, were also not responsible for the Lenin-grad frame-up and the repressions of the 30's, for which they now blame Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich. Meanwhile, it is progress that the worst aspect of Stalinism is not being repeated—those defeated in political struggle have not been executed or exiled.

Meanwhile, slowly but inexorably, by zig-zags if not straight,

unanimous resolutions calling for expulsion of the "anti-party" group. A speaker in the city of Soroki at a similar meeting said there was "no room in the party for such base factionalists."

At Kyshinev, a speaker said he thought expulsion was insufficient punishment.

The Government organ Izvestia, in a signed commentary paraphrased the points made in the Communist Party organ Pravda July 3.

It noted, as Pravda had, that Lenin indicated the party "cannot tolerate those who do not carry out the will of the majority and who do not place the interest of the party first, who try to divide its ranks and strike at its unity."

Izvestia also cited the powers given the central committee at the 10th Party Congress, allowing it to exercise disciplinary measures, "even, in extreme cases, expulsion from the party."

President Tito of Yugoslavia has recalled his ambassador from Moscow for consultations on the Soviet reshuffle, informed sources said today.

The sources said Ambassador Veljko Micunovic flew to Belgrade a few hours after he conferred last Friday with Khrushchev.

LONDON, July 9—Moscow Radio tonight termed the ouster of V. M. Molotov and his colleagues an "internal affair" and attacked "rumors of imminent changes in other Socialist countries."

Radio Moscow, broadcasting in Hungarian to eastern Europe, accused the U.S. State Department of the "ignoble step" of "spreading rumors of imminent changes in the other Socialist countries."

by fits and starts if not steadily, Soviet society moves toward democratization, which is the guarantee of socialist progress. The four policy issues—peace, democracy, living standards, national equality—have a powerful logic and strength. Their source of strength is invincible—the needs, desires and demands of the people.

In Loving Memory
of My Wife

A N N A

Who Died July 10, 1952

—LOU.

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