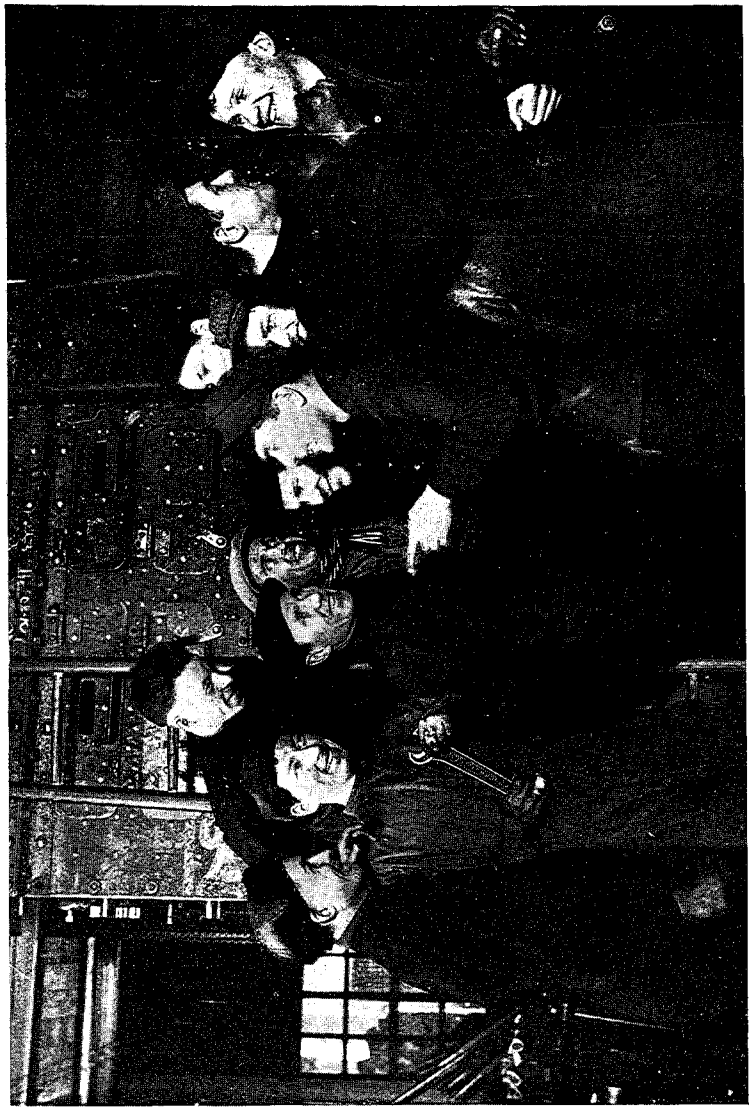

A Group of "Communist Youths" in a Machine Factory

SOVIET RUSSIA

A LIVING RECORD AND A HISTORY

By

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

With Illustrations

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TO MY PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

SOVIET RUSSIA to-day is a tempting and difficult field for the foreign observer. The new Soviet social order, with its multiplicity of changes, political and economic, intellectual and moral, fairly challenges interpretation and analysis. At the same time, Russia's past isolation from many main currents of European historical and cultural development, the novel and unprecedented characteristics of the Soviet state, the new standards and values which the Revolution has brought, are all formidable obstacles in the way of formulating an unbiased and realistic judgment of the country's present condition and future prospects of development.

In preparing this book, which is the product of seven years' residence in Russia in the capacity of a journalist, I have tried to combine an impartial analysis of what has happened in Russia with an attitude of open-minded curiosity as to what may lie in the future. The French philosopher Remy de Gourmont once recommended the ideal of "seeing the six sides of the cube." Probably the cube represented by the Russian Revolution has more than six sides, and I am far from confident that I have seen all of them in accurate perspective. But I think I may maintain that such mistakes as time will doubtless reveal in my interpretation of the Soviet Union are without bias aforethought and are not the result of some preconceived dogmatic view of a movement which is still too young and too fluid to fit into any hard-and-fast classification.

I can hardly expect that my book will satisfy those extreme partisans in opposed controversial camps who regard Bolshevism as either the greatest calamity or the greatest blessing which ever befell mankind. I hope, however, that it may be of some service to those people who feel that an honest effort

at understanding is a more useful form of approach to the complicated problem of the Russian Revolution than are rhetorical exercises in eulogy and denunciation.

While most of my stay in the Soviet Union has been spent in Moscow, I have also traveled extensively in the country, visiting almost all the large cities of European Russia, making one trip through the Soviet Republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia, and several times striking off the main-traveled roads and living for weeks at a time in the peasant villages of Central Russia, Ukraina, and the North Caucasus. The bibliography contains my main sources of reference material, which have been supplemented by travel and personal observation, interviews with officials, and talks with Russians of all classes and views.

While the book was, in the main, written independently of my journalistic work, I desire to express appreciation of the kindness of the editors of the *Christian Science Monitor* in permitting me to incorporate occasional excerpts from my correspondence, which originally appeared in that newspaper. Some chapters and parts of chapters have been published as magazine articles in the American periodicals, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Foreign Affairs*, and the *Yale Review*, and in the *Manchester Guardian Commercial*.

I am glad to acknowledge the courtesy of the Press Department of the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and of the Supreme Economic Council and the Commissariats for Agriculture and Trade in facilitating my investigations and supplying me with some special data, unobtainable in the Soviet daily and periodical press.

My greatest appreciation is due to my Russian-born wife, Sofia Mikhailovna, without whose devoted collaboration this work could never have come into being.

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

Moscow, *September 15, 1929.*

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

I

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

MANY of the roots of the Bolshevist Revolution are to be found in the remote past of Russian history. True, the Marxian economic teachings that constitute the theoretical basis of Russian Communism are less than a century old; and the first congress of Russian Social Democrats was held in 1897. But the course of the Russian Revolution and the forms of the Soviet state are unmistakably moulded by factors which point far back into the Russian Middle Ages. The Tartar Conquest has left its imprint on Russian politics and Russian culture. The agrarian side of the Russian Revolution would be difficult to understand without some knowledge of Stenka Razin and Pugachev, of Russian serfdom and the Russian mir, or primitive peasant community. And the nationality problems and policies of the Soviet Union grow very directly out of the fact that the pre-revolutionary Russian state, over a period of four centuries of conquest and expansion, crushed without assimilating a host of non-Russian peoples.

The Slav race, to which the Russians belong, apparently settled originally in the river valleys of the Pripet, the Dniester, the Vistula, the Bug, and the Dnieper. The most important early Slavonic state centres were in the cities of Novgorod, in the northwest, and Kiev, in the southwest, of the future Russian Empire. Both these states in the ninth century A.D. fell under the domination of Norse mercenary captains, who entered the country through the chain of rivers in the northwest. The flotillas of the Kiev state alternately carried troops for war and goods for trade with the Byzantine Empire; and Princess Olga of Kiev was converted to Christianity and baptized in Constantinople in 957. One of her successors, Saint

Vladimir, extended the process of conversion to include his people.

Kiev flourished as a cultural and religious centre during the eleventh century, but began to decline in the twelfth as a result of frequent dynastic feuds among the princes of the ruling house and the constant pressure of the wild pagan nomadic tribes from the east. It was involved in the general ruin that overtook all the Russian principalities when innumerable hordes of Tartar horsemen, led by the successors of Genghiz Khan, poured over the country in a devastating and irresistible flood in the first half of the thirteenth century.

For more than a century the Tartar rule was absolute and unchallenged; the Russian princes held office only as vassals of the Tartar khans, to whom they were obliged to pay tribute and make periodic visits of homage and obeisance. This period of Tartar domination had several important effects on the future development of the Russian people. It cut them off to a large extent from the influence of Western Europe and introduced an oriental element that never since has been altogether lacking in Russian life. It destroyed much of the rather thin veneer of imported Byzantine art and learning and appreciably retarded Russia's cultural development, as compared with that of the Western European countries which escaped the Tartar scourge. It favored the growth of two distinctive features of the future Russian Empire: autocracy and serfdom. There was little opportunity for the development of even the most embryonic free institutions under the Tartar yoke; and after the devastation wrought by the alien invaders, the peasants fell into increasing dependence upon the boyars, or nobles, since the latter offered them some security and aid in farming.

The principality of Moscow took the lead in shaking off the Tartar yoke. Lying somewhat off the main route of the invasions, the Moscow princes bided their time, bowed their heads to the storm, and profited by the misfortunes of neighboring principalities, which they gradually absorbed. The establishment of the patriarchate, the headship of the Russian Church, in Moscow and the observance of the law of primogeniture in the succession to the dynasty, which averted the process of subdivision that weakened many other Russian states, were additional factors in promoting the growth of Muscovite power and prestige.

The liberation of Russia from the Tartar rule was a gradual development, conditioned quite as much by the growing weakness and disunion of the Tartars as by the military prowess of the Russians. Signs of successful resistance were offered in the latter part of the fourteenth century; but it was 1476 before Tsar Ivan III, by refusing to obey a summons to go to the Tartar court, definitely broke the last link in the chain of dependence.

In the sixteenth century the rôles of the Russians and the Tartars were reversed. Tsar Ivan IV, known in history as the Terrible, because of the countless executions, tortures, and cruelties associated with his reign, captured the Tartar strongholds of Kazan, on the middle Volga, and of Astrakhan, at the mouth of the river, in 1566. In 1581 the adventurous Cossack or free-lance soldier Yermak began to occupy Siberia in the name of the Russian Tsar.

As a personality Ivan was clearly a psychopathic case, comparable with the bloodiest tyrants of the Roman Empire. He alternated between excesses of sadistic cruelty and fits of periodic remorse. His own son died under his hands. However, his reign was not a mere orgy of senseless brutality, but an important period of Russian historical development. Ivan's methods of government greatly strengthened the autocratic basis of the Muscovite state. By his institution of the so-called *oprichniki*, a body of hired retainers who roved over the country, killing and plundering the property of any noble whom the Tsar suspected of disloyalty, he nipped in the bud any tendency toward the development of an independent baronial class and reduced his subjects, from the oldest boyar, or noble, to the lowliest serf, to the common status of slaves of the Tsar, dependent in life and property upon the autocrat's slightest whim. He also ruthlessly destroyed the traditional liberties of Novgorod and Pskov, two towns of northwestern Russia which belonged

to the Hanseatic League and for a time maintained a position similar to that of the great city-states of mediæval Europe.

The expansionist tendencies of the future Russian Empire were also more or less clearly defined under Ivan the Terrible. Russia commenced its steady eastward march of conquest and colonization, a march which was unchecked until the disastrous clash with Japan in 1905. In the west Russia came into hostile contact with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey.

Ivan the Terrible was succeeded by a weak son, Fyodor, who was dominated by his brother-in-law, the crafty, strong-willed, and ambitious boyar, Boris Godunov. Fyodor's young son, Dmitry, was murdered, most probably with the connivance of Boris; and the latter succeeded in obtaining his own election as Tsar by the Zemsky Sobor, or loose popular assembly, with representatives of all classes except the serfs, which was convened after the death of the heartbroken Tsar Fyodor in 1598.

The accession of Boris Godunov ushered in the period of anarchical, political, and social convulsions known in Russian history as the Troubled Times. A pretender to the throne arose in the person of an impostor who gave himself out as the murdered Dmitry, married a Polish noblewoman, and invaded Russia with the support of a Polish army. The death of Boris in 1605 marked the lapse of the country into complete chaos. The Pretender with his Polish army entered Moscow, but was soon murdered, whereupon another "false Dmitry" came up in his place. Russia was ravaged by the invading Poles, by marauding bands of Don Cossacks, by serf uprisings. The slender bonds of social order snapped over a period of some years.

A movement of awakening national consciousness, led by Prince Pozharsky and the patriotic Nizhni Novgorod butcher, Kuzma Minin, put an end to this epoch of turbulent disorders. In 1612 the Poles, after a stubborn siege, were driven from Moscow's historic fortress-palace, the Kremlin. In the following year a Zemsky Sobor elected as Tsar Michael Romanov, the first ruler of a dynasty which was destined to hold power

for more than three centuries, until it was swept away by a revolution greater than that of the Troubled Times.

Throughout the seventeenth century the chains of serfdom were more and more firmly riveted on the Russian peasants. In earlier times they had been attached to the lands of the Crown and of the boyars, which they were forbidden to leave. They were obligated to pay feudal dues and taxes to the state and to perform labor services for the owner of the estate on which they were located. In 1646 serfdom was made general and hereditary. In 1675 the status of the Russian peasant-serf was made practically equivalent to that of a slave, since a law issued in that year permitted the sale of the serf apart from the land.

The treatment of the peasants under this system was extremely cruel. The landowner had practically power of life and death over his serfs, and merciless flogging with whips or rods was a common punishment. Sharper and sharper decrees were issued against the peasants who fled from this intolerable condition of servitude and sought a refuge among the turbulent free Cossacks of the lower Dnieper or in the eternal No Man's Land of the southeastern frontier districts.

This oppression naturally produced *jacqueries* more savage and more extensive than those which took place in Europe in the Middle Ages. Unrest among the serfs was one of many factors that contributed to the chaos of the Troubled Times. From 1667 until 1671 the valley of the Volga was the scene of a great peasant uprising, led by the picturesque Cossack bandit and adventurer, Stenka Razin, one of the most popular figures in Russian song and legend. Razin captured Astrakhan and had the governor thrown from the church tower; wherever his wild bands went they massacred gentry and officials and called on the peasants to join them. At its high-water mark the rebellion touched provinces quite close to Moscow, such as Tambov, Penza, and Nizhni Novgorod; but in the end the central government was strong enough to suppress the movement, and Razin was executed in 1676. But his spirit lived in many subsequent tumults and disorders; the peasantry was

the first of the ultimate revolutionary forces to appear on the Russian historical scene.

The reign of Peter the Great (1682–1721) was a distinct landmark in Russian history. A man of prodigious mental and physical energy, unconquerable will, and ungovernable passions (like Ivan the Terrible, he killed his own son), Peter was dominated by the desire to Westernize Russia, to turn the country definitely away from Asia and toward Europe. A prolonged war with Sweden ended in the Russian annexation of the Swedish Baltic provinces and gave Russia a closer route of communication with Europe. The Tsar traveled in Western Europe, worked in the shipyards incognito, brought into Russia a host of foreign experts, military and civilian. To emphasize his break with the Russian past Peter built a new capital, St. Petersburg, on the marshes of the river Neva beside the sea to which he had conquered an outlet. He started factories, shaved off the beards of his courtiers, abolished the office of Patriarch and made himself head of the Russian Church, whose ceremonies he ridiculed and parodied in his drunken orgies, extended greatly the practice of printing, decreed the establishment of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and erected an enormous Admiralty building as a sign of his faith in the future destiny of Russia on the seas.

Peter was probably the greatest energizing and individual factor in the history of the Russian Empire. Yet his modernizing and Westernizing changes, impressive and sweeping as they seem at first glance, proved in many respects to be little more than skin deep. The part of the people that benefited by the imported European culture was extremely small, much smaller in proportion to the population than the educated classes in Western countries. Peter could give his officials titles borrowed from Germany and other European countries; but he could not abolish their habits of oriental corruption. The basic factor in keeping Russia a poor and backward country, the holding of the masses in a state of bondage, remained unchanged.

The next important sovereign after Peter was Catherine II,

who has also gone into history with the title of the Great. By origin a princess of a petty German state, Catherine quickly pushed aside her feeble-minded husband, Peter III, and, with the aid of her own clever and unscrupulous diplomacy and the victories of her generals and lovers, Orlov and Potyemkin, she extended the boundaries of her adopted country very considerably to the south and east. The rich southern provinces inhabited by the Ukrainians, or Little Russians, were brought into submission; the last vestige of Tartar power in Russia vanished with the conquest of the Crimea; and Russia received the lion's share in the three partitions of Poland.

Catherine prided herself on being a philosophic ruler; in her extensive correspondence with Frederick the Great, Voltaire, Herder, Grimm, and other eminent men of the time she often expressed liberal ideas. Her reign was marked by the last of the great Russian *jacqueries*, the peasant revolt headed by Emilian Pugachev in 1773. Besides rousing the peasants to kill the gentry, rob the manor houses, and seize the land, Pugachev drew to his standard Tartars, Mordvians, Votyaks, and other small nationalities and tribes of the Volga Valley which had been robbed of their best lands and subjected to racial oppression by the Russians. This was an echo of what happened at the time of the earlier disturbances associated with the Troubled Times and with the rebellion of Stenka Razin, and foreshadowed another of the permanent disintegrating elements in the Tsarist Empire: the chronic discontent of its numerous non-Russian peoples. For a time the tide of Pugachev's revolt swelled high; like Stenka Razin, he moved up the Volga, carrying everything before him; but his movement was too wild and undisciplined to achieve the overthrow of the existing social order. He was finally defeated by Catherine's troops and executed in 1775.

Russia's prestige as a European power was very considerably enhanced under Catherine the Great's grandson, Alexander I. The stubbornness of the Russian army, the impossibly bad condition of the Russian roads, and the rigors of the Russian winter combined to destroy Napoleon's army in 1812 and

thereby created the basis for the coalition which finally broke the Bonapartist domination of Europe. Tsar Alexander played a leading rôle in this coalition and in the subsequent Peace Congress at Vienna.

If Russian armies at this time helped to mould the development of Europe, Western ideas affected even more profoundly the development of Russia. The French Revolution had little direct and immediate repercussion in Russia; but French revolutionary ideals of liberty and democracy were brought back by Russian officers who served in the Napoleonic Wars, and their ferment led to the uprising of the Dekabristi in 1825.

At first the young officers and aristocrats who shared the new and forbidden European ideas were content to band themselves together in small groups and societies for study and discussion. However, there soon was a natural tendency to proceed from theory to action; and the confusion about the succession after the death of Alexander I in 1825 gave the conspirators an excellent opportunity to strike. Alexander had no son, and his brother Constantine, the legal heir, renounced his claim in favor of a younger brother, Nicholas.

Constantine's abdication was not very clearly expressed or generally known, and it was comparatively an easy matter for the revolutionary officers, subsequently called Dekabristi because their uprising occurred in *Dekaber*, the Russian word for December, to stir up a mutiny among some of the Guard regiments in St. Petersburg under the pretext of vindicating the rights of Constantine. The slogan of the revolt was *Konstantin i konstitutsia* ("Constantine and a constitution"), and an anecdote, which symbolized quite well the gulf between the revolutionary theorists and the Russian masses, soon became current to the effect that the Guard soldiers were firmly convinced that "Konstitutsia" was Constantine's wife.

At first the chances of the coup seemed excellent; one of Nicholas's chief officials was shot dead, and the Guard regiments, whose support had decided many previous palace revolutions, seemed to be solidly on the side of the conspirators. But irresolution, indecision, and lack of a clearly thought out

plan proved fatal to the success of the plot; as soon as Nicholas recovered from his initial panic he dispersed the mutinous regiments with a few salvos of artillery fire. A simultaneous revolt in southern Russia by another branch of the revolutionary organization was quickly crushed. Five of the chief leaders of the movement were hanged, and many of its participants were banished to the wilds of Siberia for long periods of time.

The objectives of the Dekabristi were not very clearly formulated, even in their own minds. Judging from their own sketches of their plans, the substitution of a constitutional monarchy or republic for the autocracy and the abolition of serfdom were two of their outstanding ideas. Some of them also cherished mystical religious aspirations and Pan-Slavic theories about the creation of a great federal union of all the Slav peoples, centring about Russia.

Previous upheavals in Russian history were elemental slave revolts of the oppressed and poverty-stricken masses. The rising of the Dekabristi signalizes the appearance on the scene of a new revolutionary force, the radical intelligentsia, driven to revolt not by material need, but by moral and intellectual disgust with the Asiatic despotism of the Russian state. Throughout the nineteenth century the intelligentsia plays the leading rôle in the Russian revolutionary movement.

The reign of Nicholas I (1825–1855) was a period of most uncompromising reaction. He attempted so far as possible to shut Russia off from what he regarded as the contaminating influence of European ideas. Russians were forbidden to travel abroad. Nicholas referred to the Moscow University as a "den of wolves," and restricted the number of students at that institution to three hundred. The censorship of Nicholas I has become proverbial even in a country which, except for extremely short intervals, has never been able to dispense with that institution. Such expressions as "forces of nature" and "movement of minds" fell under the censorial prohibition. Nicholas himself was enraged at finding the word "progress" used in a ministerial report and demanded its deletion from all future official documents. Under the régime of Nicholas,

Fyodor Dostoevsky, the great master of the Russian psychological novel, was condemned to death for belonging to a discussion club, the sentence being commuted, just on the eve of execution, to penal servitude in Siberia. The Ukrainian national poet, Taras Shevchenko, convicted of membership in a Ukrainian nationalist society, the Union of Cyril and Methodius, was sentenced to serve many years in a military disciplinary battalion in a remote part of the Empire, where he was denied the use of writing materials.

Not content with maintaining a régime of iron reaction at home, Nicholas intervened actively on behalf of the maintenance of the status quo in Europe, his most noteworthy effort in this direction being the despatch of Russian troops to help the Austrian Emperor suppress the Hungarian revolt of 1848. It was under his reign that Russia earned and acquired the nickname, "the policeman of Europe."

It is one of the striking paradoxes of Russian history that the rule of Nicholas I, which might have been expected to stifle every impulse in the direction of creative thought, coincided with the birth and development of the rich Russian literary culture of the nineteenth century. The romantic poetry of Pushkin and Lermontov, the salty, exuberant comedies of Gogol, the first works of Tolstoy and Turgeniev, all date from the period of Nicholas. One finds other names, perhaps less known abroad, but famous in the history of Russian literature: Ostrovsky, Griboyedov, Goncharov, Nekrasov. The Russian revolutionary publicist, Herzen, began to thunder against the abuses of autocracy in his magazine, the *Bell*, published in England and smuggled into Russia. The critic Byelinsky even managed to utter some daring thoughts under Nicholas's censorship; to be sure, he was saved from arrest only by his premature death. Russia under Nicholas I, so far as its intellectual life was concerned, justified Herzen's characterization as "the land of outward slavery and inner freedom."

An external factor, Russia's defeat at the hands of France, England, and Piedmont, acting in alliance with Turkey, in the Crimean War of 1854–1855, helped to end the era of extreme

repression associated with Nicholas I. The failure of the Russian armies to resist successfully the much smaller invading force of the Allies, a failure traceable in large part to incompetent supply and transport arrangements, faulty administration, and the use of antiquated and ineffective weapons, is supposed to have convinced the despotic Tsar himself that some progressive administrative changes were necessary.

Nicholas died too soon to realize any reforms; but his successor, Alexander II, besides relaxing the restrictions on foreign travel and study, immediately set about devising a project to abolish serfdom. The more reactionary nobles opposed this reform; but Alexander told them that "it would be better to abolish serfdom from above than to wait until it will begin to liberate itself from below," and after much preliminary discussion and effort to adjust the change to the varying conditions existing in different parts of the country the decree of liberation was promulgated on February 19, 1861. By this stroke of the imperial pen almost eleven million serfs belonging to the state and to the imperial family and about an equal number belonging to private owners were set free.

It was a striking and prophetic fact that the promulgation of this decree, which had been anticipated for several years, was marked in some parts of the country by an outburst of peasant disorders, which required the efforts of troops to subdue. This was because the peasants were disappointed with the regulations governing the future distribution of the land. Under serfdom the peasant had worked as a rule three days a week on his own land and three days on the land of the *pomyeschik*, or estate owner. Under the decree of liberation the peasants received about half the cultivated land; the remainder continued in the possession of 140,000 estate owners, the Church, and the Crown. At best the peasants obtained only their own allotments, on which they had formerly worked only half the time and which were generally too small, under the existing primitive methods of cultivation, to yield a living.

Moreover, the peasants were compelled to pay for these inadequate allotments over a long term of years (the last of these

redemption payments were only canceled after the 1905 Revolution, in order to repay the state for the financial compensation which it granted to the landowners for the loss of their serfs. The peasants also had to bear the largest share of the direct taxation levied by the state. Of 208,000,000 rubles collected in direct taxes in one year of the reign of Alexander II all but 13,000,000 came from the peasants.

Inasmuch as it abolished the legal state of bondage in which the majority of the Russian people lived, the liberation of the serfs must be reckoned as a great social and humanitarian reform. But coming, in the Tsar's words, "from above," and framed with an eye to the protests of the landed nobility, the former owners of the serfs, the act of liberation did not abolish the economic dependence of the peasants upon the landlords. Starting on their career as freed men with little or no capital, burdened with taxes and redemption payments, provided with inadequate land allotments which they could expand only by renting land from the landlords, often on very hard terms, the masses of the Russian peasants remained pitifully poor, as was proved by the recurring famines in bad harvest years during the latter part of the century. The peasantry remained one of the main potential forces of discontent and revolution.

The early years of the reign of Alexander II were marked by a number of other reforms. He introduced zemstvos, organs of local administration for the country districts to which three classes, the nobility, the propertied townsmen, and the peasants, sent representatives. The activities of these organizations were jealously circumscribed by the Tsarist officials, and they never were permitted to develop into full-fledged democratic organs of self-government; but they performed useful functions in gradually building up a network of schools and hospitals which, while certainly far from adequate, marked a distinct advance in the cultural level of the Russian villages. The Tsar made the courts independent of the executive power and thereby raised their standard of impartiality and integrity; his progressive War Minister, General Milyutin, shortened the terms and improved the conditions of military service.

However, Alexander's reforms did not keep pace with the expectations and demands of the radical wing of the educated classes, which plunged into a ferment of new ideas after the iron hand of Nicholas I was removed. The Tsar never made up his mind to complete his reforms by the grant of a constitution; and after the revolutionist Karakozov made an unsuccessful attempt on his life in 1866 his policy was distinctly modified in a reactionary direction. A conservative Minister of Education, Count Dmitry Tolstoy, introduced a régime of strict repression in the schools and universities. The censorship of printed works was strengthened, and political cases were withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts.

Meanwhile the revolutionary spirit among the educated classes steadily grew. In 1861 a number of radical students were expelled from the universities; and the émigré publicist Herzen, in his *Bell*, gave them the slogan of *V narod* ("To the People"). As a result of this incident the revolutionists of that time were generally known as Narodniki, or Populists. Among their intellectual leaders were Lavrov, who emphasized the moral obligation of every educated man "not only to conserve civilization, but also to move it forward," and the fiery international anarchist, Bakunin, who was impatient with the more peaceful methods advocated by Lavrov and urged the creation of secret societies with a view to the violent overthrow of the autocracy.

Returned Russian students who had discussed and developed revolutionary ideas while studying at the University of Zurich took the lead in a movement to apply literally the slogan "To the People" in 1874. A considerable number of these students, together with sympathizers whom they found in Russia, went into the peasant villages and tried to carry on propaganda and agitation for their ideas. This idealistic but somewhat naïve experiment failed to bring practical results; the peasants received them distrustfully and in some cases denounced them to the police. Almost eight hundred of these Narodniki were arrested over a period of two or three months. Representatives of all social classes took part in the movement, self-

educated workers and peasants participating along with Sofia Perovskaya, who was a colonel's daughter and Prince Kropotkin, the intellectual leader and outstanding personality of Russian anarchism.

The Narodniki who escaped arrest and imprisonment formed the society, *Zemyla i Volya* (Land and Liberty); and out of this developed the Terrorist group, *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Liberty), which set as its main goal the assassination of the Tsar. These early Russian revolutionists developed an extraordinary technique of underground conspiracy, of making and laying bombs, which finally enabled them to carry out their purpose in spite of all the vigilance of the secret police.

No fugitive serf was ever hunted down more systematically and ruthlessly than the Russian autocrat, Alexander II, in the last years of his reign. A scheme to blow up his train and another plan to blow him up in the dining room of the Winter Palace failed through the merest accidents. Finally, on March 1, 1881, as the Tsar was driving in the streets of St. Petersburg, a bomb hurled by Rysakov, one of the Narodnaya Volya group of conspirators, burst near his carriage, wounding some of his guards. "Thank God, I am unharmed," cried Alexander, replying to the inquiries of his suite, whereupon another Terrorist, Grinevitzky, shouting, "It is too soon to thank God," hurled a second bomb, which exploded and inflicted a fatal wound upon the Tsar, also killing Grinevitzky himself.

This regicide was the crowning achievement of the Narodnaya Volya. It did not lead to a popular uprising or to any change in the existing system. On the contrary, the next Tsar, Alexander III, was an uncompromising reactionary, and his reign (1881–1894) was marked by a lull in the revolutionary movement. Five of the leaders of the Narodnaya Volya, Sofia Perovskaya, Kibalchich, Rysakov, Mikhailov, and Zhelyabov, were captured and executed for participation in the murder of Alexander II, and the whole organization of the secret society was discovered by the police and broken up.

The régime of Alexander III, who was very much under the influence of his chief ecclesiastical official, Pobyedonostzev, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, was distinguished by harsh repressive measures against the non-Russian nationalities of the Empire and also against heretics who dissented from the Orthodox Church. The Jews were especially singled out for persecution; and Pobyedonostzev is reported to have predicted that his policy would drive one third of the Jews to starvation, one third to emigration, and the other third to conversion. The restricted area in which the Jews were permitted to reside was further cut down; the percentage of Jewish children admitted to the higher schools was limited to a very small figure; Jews were forbidden to live outside the cities and small towns; pogroms, or mob outbreaks against the Jews, accompanied by loss of life and property, took place with little serious opposition from the authorities. The policy of Alexander III, which was continued by his successor, Nicholas II, led to a mass emigration of Jews from Russia to foreign countries, especially to America.

At the very time when reaction seemed securely enthroned in the person of Alexander III a process of economic transformation was going on which in the end proved more fatal to the stability of the old order than all the weapons of the romantic Terrorists. This was the industrialization of Russia, with its inevitable accompaniment, the growth in numbers and significance of the class of factory workers. The following table indicates the development of Russian industry, with its especially rapid strides in the latter half of the nineteenth century:

Year	Number of Industrial Establishments	Number of Workers	Value of Production (in Rubles)
1765	262	38,000	5,000,000
1801	2423	95,000	25,000,000
1825	5261	202,000	46,000,000
1854	9944	460,000	160,000,000
1881	31,173	770,000	998,000,000
1893	32,483	1,400,000	1,760,000,000
1896	38,401	1,742,000	2,745,000,000

There was a correspondingly rapid development in the field of railroad transportation. The mileage of the Russian railroads in versts (a verst is about two thirds of a mile) was as follows: (1860) 1488; (1870) 10,202; (1880) 21,155; (1890) 27,229; (1900) 41,714.

A marked feature of the development of Russian capitalism was the concentration of the workers in large factories. As early as 1890, 46 per cent of the industrial workers were in factories employing more than one thousand men. A factor which doubtless contributed to this tendency was the marked inflow of British, French, German, Belgian, and other foreign capital into the rapidly growing Russian industries. The total sum of foreign capital invested in Russian industry before the Revolution has been computed at 2,200,000,000 rubles, besides 5,400,000,000 rubles in state and municipal loans.[1] The proportion of foreign capital invested in individual industries has been estimated as follows: for iron mining, 85 per cent; for metallurgy, 90 per cent; for the Donetz coal mines, 46 per cent; for the oil industry, 87 per cent.[2]

A certain amount of friction between labor and capital has been an inevitable result of the introduction of the modern industrial system in every country. But this friction, which has been merely an element of unrest in healthy and progressive societies, proved ultimately to be one of the decisive subversive revolutionary factors in reactionary, semi-feudal Tsarist Russia. The influences that have helped to keep the class struggle within more or less peaceful bounds in Western Europe and America — freedom of trade-union organization, recognition of labor's right to strike, social protective legislation — were either altogether absent or quite inadequate in Russia. With every effort at labor organization suppressed by the ever watchful police, with strikes habitually crushed by the free use of the police and the Cossacks, it was natural that wages, as a general rule, were low, that hours were long, and the general

[1] Pasvolsky and H. G. Moulton, *Russian Debts and Russian Reconstruction*, pp. 175–184.

[2] Margaret Miller, *The Economic Development of Russia, 1905–1914*, pp. 255, 259, 266.

living conditions of the workers bad. At the same time it was obviously easier for the revolutionary agitators to reach the workers in their large factories than it was to reach the peasants in their remote and isolated villages.

The industrialization of Russia had an important effect on the ideology of the revolutionary movement. The Narodniki believed that Russia would escape the evils of industrialism and reach some kind of ideal agrarian communist society, built around the traditional mir, or Russian village community. With the growth of the factory system and of an industrial working class the disciples of Karl Marx, the Social Democrats, acquired more influence.

The first Social Democratic demonstration in Russia took the form of a protest gathering in front of the Kazan Cathedral, in St. Petersburg, on December 6, 1876. George Plekhanov, later one of the most renowned theoreticians of Russian socialism, as a young man participated in this meeting, which, of course, was dispersed by the police. More than twenty years elapsed before the various Social Democratic groups and circles, which sprang up in conspirative fashion among students and workers, were able to hold their first illegal national convention. This first Social Democratic convention was held in 1897 in the city of Minsk, in Western Russia. Despite the secrecy which attended its convocation, it was discovered by the police, and most of its participants were soon afterwards arrested. In 1903, largely as a result of the initiative taken by the Social Democratic journal, *Iskra* ("The Spark"), which was edited abroad with the collaboration of Plekhanov, Lenin, Trotzky, Martov, Axelrod, and other outstanding figures in the Social Democratic movement, a second congress was held in Brussels, which was obliged to transfer its later sessions to London as a result of the pressure which Tsarist diplomacy exercised upon the Belgian government.

This second congress was an important event in Russian revolutionary history because it signalized the emergence of the so-called Bolshevik and Menshevik wings of the Social Democratic party and the appearance of Vladimir Ilyitch

Lenin as the recognized and uncompromising leader of the Bolsheviks. The names were more or less accidental, being derived from the Russian words *bolshinstvo*, meaning "majority," and *menshinstvo*, meaning "minority." Lenin and his followers had a small majority at this congress; but at later congresses the Menshevik delegates were sometimes in the majority; and the actual numerical strength of the two factions, in view of the necessarily illegal and conspirative nature of their political activity, was always difficult to establish precisely.

The chief points of difference at the Brussels Congress were in the field of organization. Lenin then, as always, advocated a centralized, strongly disciplined party, headed by an organ, the central committee, which should possess absolute authority over the political activities of its members. He emphasized the importance of quality as opposed to numbers in the make-up of a revolutionary party and insisted that only persons who were willing to take the risks involved in formally joining the party should be regarded as members; whereas the Mensheviks favored a milder and looser formula, which would have accepted as members persons who did some work under the control of the Party organization.

The Brussels Congress also revealed the germs of what was later to prove one of the most important differences between the Bolshevik and Menshevik wings of the Russian Social Democracy: the question of what attitude should be taken toward the liberal middle-class elements which were striving for political democracy. The Bolsheviks, under Lenin's guidance, were profoundly distrustful of liberalism as a revolutionary force in Russia and favored, instead of coöperation with the middle-class democrats, an understanding with the peasants, offering to the latter the bait of the expropriation of the large estates. The Mensheviks, on the other hand, held to the viewpoint that, since Russia was insufficiently industrialized to undertake a socialist revolution, a preliminary period of democratic capitalism was necessary and that a certain measure of coöperation with middle-class liberalism was permissible in struggling against the obstacles which the autocracy interposed in the way of the introduction of such a period.

In general it may be said that Bolshevism represented the extreme revolutionary interpretation of Marxian socialism, emphasizing the necessity for the violent overthrow of the capitalist-state order and the substitution of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or industrial working class. Menshevism tended to approximate to the more moderate interpretation of Marxism which prevails among the Socialists of Western Europe, although the Russian Mensheviks, being denied any possibility of constructive political activity under the conditions of Tsarist Russia, always retained a greater amount of theoretical doctrinaire radicalism than one is apt to find among the Social Democrats of France, Germany, or England.

The chief competitor of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks for leadership in the Russian revolutionary movement was the Party of Social Revolutionists, which to a large extent may be considered the spiritual and intellectual heir of the Narodniki of the seventies and eighties. Whereas the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, disagreeing about almost everything else, both regarded the political and economic organization of the industrial working class as the most pressing problem of the revolutionary movement, the Social Revolutionists concentrated their attention upon the peasants and looked forward to the establishment of a coöperative peasant society, freed from the yoke of the landlords. The Social Revolutionists, unlike the Social Democrats of both Bolshevik and Menshevik wings, advocated and practised individual terrorism as a weapon of revolutionary struggle; and the bombs and bullets of the so-called Fighting Organization of the Social Revolutionists caused the death of many Tsarist ministers and officials. Not having any recognized theoretical authority, such as Marx and Engels constituted for the Social Democrats, the ideology of the Social Revolutionists was loose and vague; and the party, although probably the largest numerically of the three leading revolutionary organizations, was quite unable to main-

tain unity of programme and action after the overthrow of Tsarism.

The first decade of the reign of Nicholas II (1894–1917) was marked by an increasing number of strikes, student demonstrations, agrarian disorders, political assassinations, and other symptoms of popular discontent. At the very outset of his reign the new Tsar placed himself clearly on the side of reaction, roughly rejecting as "senseless dreams" the suggestions of one of the more liberal zemstvos that Russia might now obtain constitutional institutions. But the forces of dissatisfaction were too strong to be held in check by mere repression. The year 1905 marked a crisis in the very existence of the Tsarist state.

Russia's policy of aggressive expansion in the Far East precipitated a war with Japan in 1904; and the hardships of this conflict, combined with the continual defeats of the Russian armies, acted as a further stimulus to outbursts of internal dissatisfaction. On January 22, 1905, a day remembered in Russian history as "Bloody Sunday," a great throng of St. Petersburg workers, under the leadership of a priest, Father Gapon, who had tried to organize trade-unions along religious and national lines, marched to the Tsar's palace with ikons and religious banners to ask the Tsar for relief in their difficult conditions. The Tsar was absent from the capital; but troops, acting under the orders of the government, poured volleys of rifle fire on the demonstration, killing or wounding 1500 persons. The order to fire was delivered by the Grand Duke Vladimir, uncle of the Tsar.

This provoked explosions of indignation all over the country. The government for a time seemed helpless in the face of the widespread movement of revolt, which assumed here the form of a strike, there of a naval mutiny, to the constant accompaniment of peasant attacks on landlords and seizures of land. The institution of the workers' Soviet, revived with such important consequences in 1917, first came into existence in St. Petersburg in 1905. The word *soviet* in Russian means simply council; and the St. Petersburg Soviet was a council of delegates elected from factories and trade-unions and led by a

sprinkling of intellectuals from the various revolutionary parties. A certain Khrustaliov, who fell into obscurity after 1905, was the first president of the Soviet, while Leon Trotzky played a prominent rôle in its sessions. It assumed general leadership of the labor movement throughout the country and in the autumn successfully organized a general strike of very wide dimensions. The general strike marked the high-water stage of the 1905 revolutionary movement, and brought the Tsar to issue a decree conceding a Duma, or parliament, to be elected by the people, although by a rather complicated and indirect balloting procedure.

Following the decree of October 30, establishing the Duma, the revolutionary wave began to subside, partly because the various elements participating in the movement were by no means agreed among themselves as to a definite policy, partly because the government, finding that the army as a whole had not succumbed to revolutionary propaganda, began to take the offensive against the revolutionists.

A wave of bloody pogroms in southern Russia in the autumn of 1905 showed that the Russian masses were still responsive to the familiar governmental demagogic device of stirring up anti-Semitic outbursts as an antidote to revolution. The St. Petersburg Soviet failed in its effort to organize new general strikes for the achievement of further revolutionary objectives; and in December the government felt strong enough to dissolve the Soviet and arrest its members. An armed uprising in Moscow in the last weeks of December in a district inhabited by textile workers was crushed with the aid of an artillery bombardment; and after this the government was master of the situation. Punitive military expeditions inflicted ruthless punishment upon the peasant districts which had shown most signs of unrest. Peter Stolypin, the Tsarist Premier in the period of reaction which followed the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, established throughout the country a régime of courts-martial, which between 1906 and 1913 are said to have executed more than three thousand persons.

When the Duma, the first Russian parliament, met in the

spring of 1906 the revolutionary movement which had brought it into being was already crushed. Stolypin put up with two Dumas, elected on a more or less popular basis, in which the liberal and revolutionary parties had by far the greatest number of delegates. Then, in the summer of 1907, he dissolved the second Duma on the pretext of an imaginary Social Democratic plot, simultaneously issuing a new electoral law which completely destroyed the character of the Duma as a popular representative body. Under the new electoral law the manual workers were almost disfranchised, being permitted to elect only six representatives in a general body of more than four hundred. The representation of the peasants and non-Russian nationalities was drastically curtailed, while that of the landed nobility and of the wealthy classes in the cities was artificially increased. Under these conditions the Third and Fourth Dumas (the latter was in session at the time of the 1917 Revolution) were very conservative bodies, actually representative only of a small propertied minority in the population.

Another important measure adopted by Stolypin was the Agrarian Law of November 9, 1906, which gave a strong impetus to the break-up of the old Russian mir, or village community. Next to the long survival of serfdom, perhaps the factor of greatest importance in Russian agrarian history was the comparatively slight spread of full private proprietorship in land among the Russian peasantry. Both before and after the emancipation of the serfs the land in the possession of the peasants, for the most part, belonged not to individuals, but to the whole village community, which assigned land to its members in accordance with the size of their families and often carried out periodic redistributions of land. This system was fatal to the development of progressive individualistic farming, because the peasant who put improvements on his land had no assurance that it would not be taken away from him in the course of some redistribution. At the same time it gave the poorest peasants some security against complete pauperization by assuring them a share of land.

The Tsarist Government supported the mir as a conservative

institution, and also because it was liable for arrears of taxes contracted by any of its members. However, the agrarian disorders of 1905, when whole village communities moved to seize the land of the neighboring estate owners, convinced the government that the mir was no safeguard against explosions of peasant discontent, and Stolypin hit upon the idea of building up a support for the government in the villages by giving the more ambitious and capable peasants the opportunity to develop as independent farmers, free from the restrictions imposed by the mir. Under the Agrarian Law of 1906 any peasant had the right to demand his share of land in the form of a permanent homestead, free from re-allocation. The effect of this law was to hasten the process of declassification in the Russian village. The richer peasants, freed from the restraints of the mir, increased their land holdings and their general level of prosperity. Many of the poorer peasants, on the other hand, were unable to maintain their holdings under a more individualistic system and sold them to their richer neighbors, becoming agricultural laborers themselves or going into the cities in search of work. As the experience of 1917 demonstrated, Stolypin's measure did not improve the well-being of the masses of the peasantry sufficiently to transform them from a revolutionary into a conservative class.

On the eve of the World War, which was destined to be the decisive factor in bringing about the long-threatened Russian Revolution, a keen observer could scarcely fail to have been impressed by the striking contrasts and contradictions in the political, economic, and social structure of the Russian Empire. The original Muscovite state had swelled to gigantic proportions over a long period of conquest and colonization; it occupied almost a sixth of the surface of the globe, with a population estimated at 180,000,000. But it was so backward in technical development and methods of administration that it repeatedly suffered defeat in wars with countries much smaller in area and population.

Two hundred thousand landlords, owning something over a quarter of the arable land in European Russia, were an object

of sullen envy and hatred on the part of the vast majority of the sixteen million peasant households, which lived in a state of dire poverty. Against the rapid pace of industrial development in Russia, the growth of production, and the enrichment of individual manufacturers had to be set the profound dissatisfaction of the two and a half million Russian industrial workers, all the more potentially dangerous as a class because they were denied any means of legal expression. The Tsarist policy of oppression and discrimination against the non-Russian nationalities which constituted more than half the population of the Empire fed the flames of centrifugal nationalism and made it certain that Poles and Letts, Finns and Ukrainians, Jews and Caucasians, would play an active part in any movement tending toward the disintegration of the Empire.

Culturally as well as materially the contrasts in pre-revolutionary Russia were extraordinarily sharp. The Russian intelligentsia was second to none in the world in range and breadth of intellectual interests, in warmth and subtlety of artistic appreciation. There was no field of art or science in which Russia could not point to great names; one thinks instinctively of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgeniev, Moussorgsky Tchaikovsky, Repin, Bechterev, Metchnikov, and Pavlov. But these brilliant achievements of the educated minority were the full property of only a very small percentage of the Russian population; with an illiteracy figure of over sixty per cent Russia could not possess a broad popular culture like that of England, France, or Germany.

As the wiser conservatives among the Tsar's counselors had foreseen,[1] the Tsarist system, which had been severely shaken by the minor shock of the Japanese War, succumbed completely to the infinitely greater strain of the World War. At the outset the almost unanimous support of the Duma created at least an illusion of national unity on behalf of the War. But the tremendous problems involved in the conduct of the War proved quite beyond the capacity of the corrupt and incompetent civilian and military bureaucracy. The casualty lists mounted higher and higher, and the Russian armies went from defeat to defeat, partly as a result of bad leadership and general inferiority of preparation as compared with the German troops against which they were pitted, partly as a result of the inadequate supply of shells and other munitions.

[1] See the extraordinarily farsighted and prophetic memorandum of P. N. Durnovo, reprinted in *Documents of Russian History*, by Frank A. Golden, pp. 3–23.

The internal situation of the country deteriorated rapidly; the harvest fields were denuded of working hands as a result of the constant mobilizations; the transportation system broke down under the strain of military requirements; the bread lines in the cities grew longer and longer. A personal factor that discredited the monarchy in the eyes of its most loyal supporters and probably hastened the inevitable crash was the extraordinary influence at court of the dissolute and ignorant but cunning Siberian peasant monk, Gregory Rasputin, a man possessed of unusual hypnotic powers. He acquired almost unbounded influence over the Empress, whose hysterical temperament made her peculiarly susceptible to Rasputin's psychical fascination; and the Empress, in turn, dominated the weak-willed Tsar. A word from Rasputin was sufficient to displace a minister or a general; and his mumbled fortune-telling counsels were even seriously recommended by the Empress to the Tsar for consideration in planning battles and campaigns.

An unplanned and unorganized popular tumult in the streets of Petrograd, growing out of the shortage of bread and a labor dispute at the big Putilov factory, was all that was necessary to bring down the rotting structure of the monarchy in March 1917. A few regiments of disciplined soldiers could have dispersed the rioters, who lacked both arms and organized leadership; but the turning point of the whole movement came on March 12, when regiment after regiment refused to obey orders to fire and went over to the insurgents. From that moment the cause of the monarchy was lost.

The provisional government which was hastily patched up on the ruins of the autocracy was the outcome of a compromise between the only two organized political forces which appeared

on the scene: a committee elected by the Duma and the new Petrograd Soviet, consisting of representatives elected by the factories, the revolutionary political parties, and the units of the Petrograd garrison. The first Cabinet consisted entirely of non-Socialists, except for the Minister of Justice, A. F. Kerensky, a member of the Social Revolutionary Party. Later, under the pressure of the turbulent masses, the more conservative figures were eliminated and Kerensky became the outstanding leader of a series of unstable and short-lived ministerial combinations.

The history of the period from the fall of the autocracy in March to the triumph of Bolshevism in November is a record of the vain efforts of the Liberals and moderate Socialists in the Provisional Government, equally devoid of support in tradition, in broad popular sympathy, and in reliable armed force, to check and deflect by eloquence and parliamentary manœuvring a tremendous fourfold revolutionary process which had set in motion tens of millions of people.

The first of the four aspects of this process was the disintegration of the Russian army, the greatest mutiny in history. The prestige and authority of the officers were fatally shaken by the removal of the iron restraint which had been associated with the old régime and by the fact that insurgent soldiers had made the revolution in Petrograd. The decay of discipline, which was first most pronounced in the war-weary peasant soldiers of the infantry, gradually penetrated to other branches of the service; the sole serious offensive undertaken by the Russian armies in July ended in a fiasco and panic-stricken flight of the demoralized Russian troops before greatly inferior German and Austrian forces; by autumn no officer's life was safe in the trenches, and even the regimental and army committees, largely made up of moderate Socialists, had lost influence on the soldiers, who listened eagerly to the Bolshevik slogan of immediate peace.

The second element in the revolutionary process was the seizure of land by the peasants, who quickly realized the absence of any governmental restraint and began to drive the landlords

from their estates. Sometimes the peasant land-seizures were peaceful; sometimes they were accompanied by violence and murder; but in any event the actual transfer of land to the peasantry, to a large extent, preceded the Bolshevik Revolution and the promulgation of the decree nationalizing the land.

Side by side with the mutiny of the army and the agrarian upheaval in the countryside went the workers' revolt in the cities. Starting with demands for the eight-hour working day and for wage increases, the labor movement became increasingly radical as the Bolsheviks captured the leadership in the factories and most of the trade-unions from the Mensheviks, and by October and November the workers were filling the ranks of the Red Guard, or insurgent armed force, and demanding complete control over production, in some cases driving owners and foremen out of the factories.

Finally, as the fourth element in the process of old Russia's disintegration, must be noted the demands for separation, or at least for very broad autonomy, which emanated from all but the most backward of the non-Russian nationalities. The separatist movement was especially strong in Ukraina and Finland, and added materially to the difficulties of the Provisional Government.

All these manifestations had their root in Russian history; they were far too sweeping and elemental to be ascribed to the handiwork of any group of agitators or conspirators, however active and energetic. But the Bolshevik Party unquestionably furnished an indispensable leaven of unifying leadership for all these elements of popular revolt. Under the leadership of Lenin, who returned from his exile in Switzerland across Germany in a sealed train about a month after the March Revolution, the Bolsheviks proclaimed a thoroughgoing revolutionary programme. They demanded immediate peace negotiations, transfer of political power to the Soviets, confiscation of all the lands of the estate owners for the benefit of the peasants, and fullest freedom for the non-Russian nationalities. The upward curve of revolution was temporarily halted in July, when the Bolshevik Party, against its will, became in-

volved in a disorderly outburst of the Petrograd workers and some regiments of the garrison, so planless and unorganized that even the weak Provisional Government was able to suppress it. But the ground lost in July was made up ten times over again in September, when the Commander-in-Chief of the army, General Kornilov, apparently instigated by some of the conservative Duma leaders, who saw in a military dictatorship the only alternative to anarchy, and laboring under the mistaken impression that Premier Kerensky sympathized with his project, attempted to proclaim himself the supreme authority in the land. This unsuccessful attempted coup was followed by a great swing to the left throughout the country; the Soviets, which had hitherto been under the control of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists, began to pass over to the Bolsheviks in the biggest industrial centres.

On October 23 the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, under ceaseless prodding from Lenin, who had been in hiding since the July outbreak, resolved on an armed uprising; and on November 6 and 7 the Bolsheviks, supported by armed workers, sailors, and sympathetic units of the garrison, seized Petrograd and presented a *fait accompli* to the Second Congress of Soviets, which was meeting just at that time, with a majority of Bolshevik delegates. The coup in Petrograd was gradually extended over the country, with some resistance in Moscow and other provincial centres, but in general with relatively little bloodshed. The new government, which called itself a Council of People's Commissars, hastened to consolidate its position by issuing three decrees, ratifying the triumph of the revolutionary movement: a decree proposing immediate peace to all the warring countries; a second declaring landlord property in land abolished forever and pronouncing the land the property of the state, to be used by the peasants on a basis of personal labor; and a third establishing the control of workers' committees over industrial plants.

Limitations of space make it impracticable to go beyond a very brief review and characterization of the main elements in the struggle which the Soviet Government was obliged to maintain against foreign and domestic enemies before its position was firmly stabilized. From the beginning it was an Ishmael among the governments of the world; Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders were firmly convinced that the Russian Bolshevik revolution was only the beginning of a world socialist revolution, which, according to their theory, had to develop out of the economic ruin and physical suffering caused by the War. Russia's withdrawal from the War and the conclusion of a separate peace with the Central Powers at Brest-Litovsk were bitterly resented in the Allied countries; and another cause of friction was provided by the Soviet decrees repudiating Russia's pre-war and war debts and nationalizing foreign industrial enterprises. At first the absorption of the Allied powers in the World War prevented them from undertaking any hostilities against the new Soviet state; but in the spring and summer of 1918 there were interventionist descents of Allied troops upon the Russian ports of Archangel, Vladivostok, and Baku; and throughout the civil war the Allied governments, especially England and France, supported the Whites (as the anti-Bolshevik forces came to be known) with munitions and technical aid, simultaneously enforcing a strict blockade against Soviet Russia.

The issue of this civil war, which occasionally seemed likely to assume an international character, wavered greatly from time to time. In the summer of 1918 the territory under Soviet control shrank to a few starving provinces around Petrograd and Moscow; and only the most desperate display of revolutionary energy staved off what seemed to be an inevitable collapse. The breakdown of the Central Powers, which coincided with the development into an effective fighting force of the Red Army created by the Soviet Government, brought a dramatic reversal of the situation; Ukraina, which had been under German occupation, was rapidly overrun by the Bolshevik forces; in the spring and summer of 1919 there were Soviet republics in Bavaria and Hungary, and the existence of the new non-Bolshevik states in Eastern Europe was, to say the least, precarious.

In the autumn of 1919 the fortunes of the Russian civil war again took an unfavorable turn for the Soviet forces; the White army of General Denikin reached a point less than two hundred miles distant from Moscow, and another White general, Yudenitch, was barely beaten off from the very gates of Petrograd. The White armies were decisively defeated in the autumn and winter of 1919; and in the summer of 1920 the Red Army, after routing the Poles, who invaded Ukraina, penetrated almost to Warsaw; and the spectre of the spread of Bolshevism over Eastern Europe again loomed up. The defeat of the Red Army before Warsaw, which was soon offset by the smashing of the last of the White armies, that of General Wrangel, determined, at least for the time being, the fate and limitations of the Bolshevik Revolution: it triumphed in Russia, but stopped at Russia's frontiers.

The civil war in Russia was fought along class rather than territorial lines, the Bolsheviks finding their chief support in the industrial workers, while the motive power in the White movement was furnished by the former propertied and official classes, which had suffered most in the revolutionary upheaval. The peasantry, which constituted the majority of the population, wavered uncertainly in its attitude, now raising insurrections against the ruthless grain requisitions which the Bolsheviks employed to feed the starving cities, now turning sharply against the Whites when they saw that the victory of the latter threatened the return of the hated landlords. If one may judge from the intensity and scope of the insurrections, the peasants regarded the Bolsheviks as the lesser of the two evils, perhaps because they felt that some day the requisitions would cease, whereas the return of the landlords would mean the permanent loss of the land which they had seized in the first period of the Revolution.

The struggle was fought on both sides with a fierceness commensurate with the great social issues at stake, and with the grim traditions of Russian history. The cellars in which the Chekha, the dreaded secret police established by the Soviet Government to combat counter-revolution, executed its victims

acquired a notoriety as terrible as that of the guillotine in the French Revolution.

The most eminent victims of the Red Terror, which struck pitilessly at all the classes most closely bound up with the old régime, aristocrats and officers, landlords and big merchants, priests and higher ecclesiastics, were the members of the imperial family. Every revolution of the scope of the Bolshevik upheaval demands the head of the former ruling monarch; and the execution of the Tsar would most probably have occurred even if events had taken a more quiet course. Preparations were on foot to hold a big public trial, with Trotzky as the state's accuser; and there could have been only one verdict after such a trial.

But the exigencies of civil war settled the fate of the Tsar and his family in bloodier and more casual fashion. In the summer of 1918 the Tsar, the Tsarina, their son and four daughters, were confined in the Ural town of Ekaterinburg. The Soviet power had been overthrown in Siberia and was tottering in the Urals; the combined forces of the Czechs and White Russians were approaching Ekaterinburg, which was actually taken on July 28. Under these conditions the local Soviet authorities decided to take no chances on a rescue; and on the night of July 17 the Tsar, the Tsarina, their children, and a few personal attendants were taken into a cellar and mowed down with bullet fire.

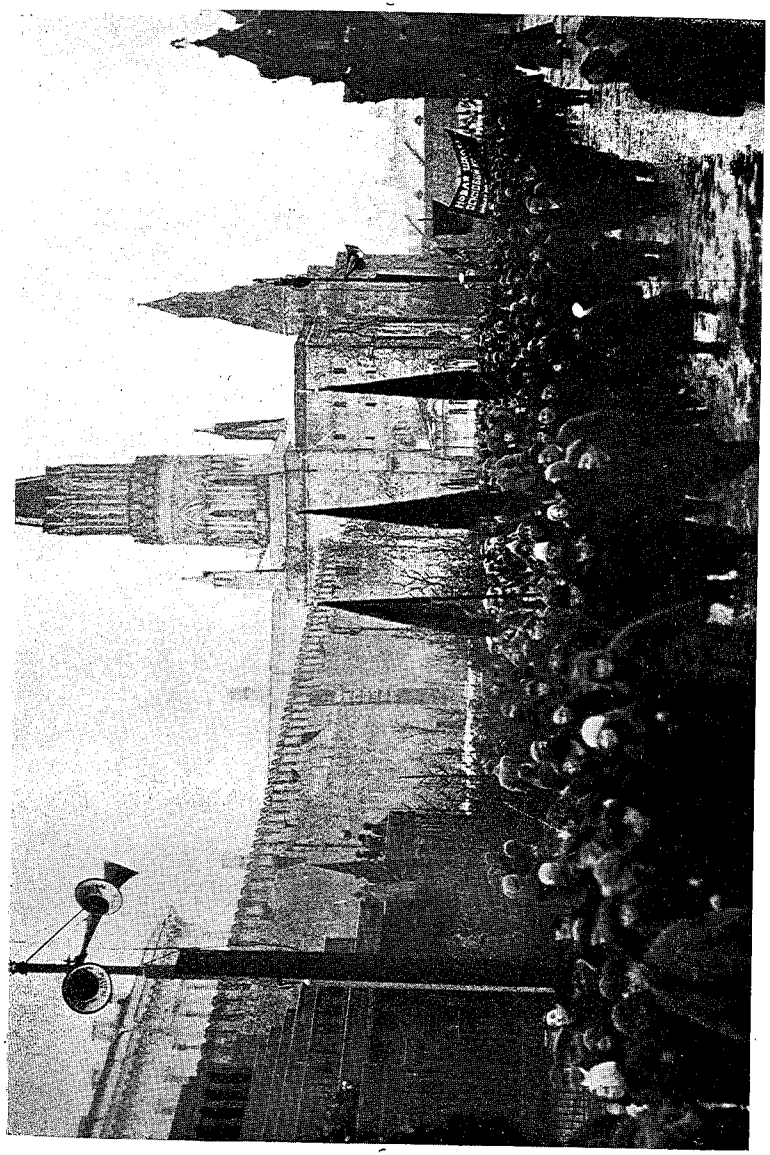
Whenever the Whites temporarily occupied a stretch of territory they wreaked on all persons suspected of Bolshevik sympathies the cruel vengeance that invariably marks the return of an ousted privileged class. Anti-Semitism was a psychological trump card of nearly all the White leaders; and the progress of the army of General Denikin and of the Ukrainian nationalist leader Petlura (subsequently assassinated by a Jew in Paris) through Ukraina was marked by terrific pogroms in which tens of thousands of people lost their lives.

Not the least of the factors in the final victory of the Bolsheviks (or, as they began to call themselves in 1918, the Communists) was their Party organization, in which every member

was at the disposition of the Central Committee. If a section of the front wavered, a picked group of Communists, prepared neither to ask nor to expect quarter, was rushed to strengthen it. If a city or a district had to be evacuated, a little band of Communists was always left behind for the dangerous work of carrying on underground propaganda and stirring up revolt in the White rear. The anti-Bolsheviks never were able to create in their own ranks any organization comparable with the Communist Party as an agency for unity, discipline, and the organization of victory.

Moreover, with all due allowance for the presence in the anti-Bolshevik camp of people of varying political and social views, the predominant ideology in the most important White governments, those of Admiral Kolchak in Siberia and that of General Denikin in South Russia, may fairly be described as restorationist. The chief posts in these governments were held by military and civilian officials of the old régime, who saw in the whole Revolution of 1917 nothing but a detestable and monstrous outburst of mob violence and anarchy, which had to be broken up as thoroughly and completely as possible. Consequently, while some lip service was paid to democratic ideals in official pronouncements, the actual administrative practice of the White régimes usually strengthened the Communist propaganda to the effect that the civil war was a struggle of the poor against the rich, of workers and peasants against capitalists and landowners. "We shall make this a struggle of the hungry against the well fed," wrote a contributor to one of the Communist journals in 1918. Needless to say, there were far more hungry than well-fed people in Russia during the period of civil war.

Despite their victories on the military fronts, the Communists found themselves in a very difficult position in the winter of 1920–1921. The World War had placed a severe strain upon industry and transport; and the disastrous consequences of the civil war, with its accompaniment of blockade, flight and sabotage of many members of the administrative and technical personnel of the factories, physical destruction as a result of



THE MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION PASSING LENIN'S TOMB

military operations, and severance of the industrial centres of northern and central Russia from the sources of food and raw material in the south and east, can scarcely be overstated. Industrial production had sunk to 15 or 20 per cent of the pre-war level; large numbers of workers had fled from the cities to the country as a result of the lack of food; the productivity of agriculture had fallen catastrophically, and in more than one province the peasants were in armed revolt against the requisitions, which still did not yield enough to feed the hungry cities.

It was against this background of economic collapse that Lenin formulated the emergency programme that acquired the name of New Economic Policy, generally shortened in Russia to Nep. The basic feature of the Nep, which was promulgated at the Tenth Communist Party Congress in March 1921, and gradually went into effect during succeeding months, was the substitution of taxation for the former system of requisitioning all the peasant's surplus grain. Permission to sell his surplus in the market revived the peasant's interest in sowing and harvesting larger crops; and the rise of agriculture in turn constituted the necessary prerequisite for the revival of the depopulated cities and the stagnant industries. Under the New Economic Policy the state management and operation of the country's industries and transport remained; but the previous system, under which the industries turned over their products to the state and received, or were supposed to receive, their supplies of food for the workers and raw materials for the plants through a highly bureaucratized and inefficient distributive apparatus, was reorganized in a manner calculated to give the individual industrial units more initiative and more responsibility. Money and banking and other elements of capitalist technique, which had been discarded or had largely lost significance during the so-called war communism of the preceding period, again found a place under the Nep.

A fearful drought, coming immediately on the heels of the ruin and devastation wrought by seven years of war, inflicted on Russia the worst famine of its history in the autumn and winter of 1921–1922. The famine was most extended in the

Volga, but also affected southern Ukraina and the Crimea. There is no accurate record of the number of people who perished in this great natural catastrophe, but it probably ranged from one to two millions. Help rendered by the American Relief Administration and other foreign organizations averted an even greater loss of life.

However, despite the shadow which the famine cast over the first year of its working, the New Economic Policy marked a turning point in the history of the Russian Revolution. Its adoption, which coincided with the stoppage of attacks from without and the gradual restoration of peace and order within the country, marks the dividing line between the destruction of the old and the building up of the new Russian social order, which will be described in the following chapters.

II

THE FACE OF THE RUSSIAN LAND

THE most obvious physical feature of the Soviet Union is its size. Spread out over half Europe and a third of Asia, its area of 21,342,872 square kilometres represents between a seventh and a sixth of the surface of the globe. This fact, on which Soviet orators are inclined to dwell at festival occasions, loses something of its impressiveness when one reflects that a substantial part of Russian territory, both in Europe and in Asia, consists of frozen Arctic wastes, sparsely inhabited by primitive tribes and of little apparent value except as a source of furs.

However, even the settled portion of the Soviet Union conveys an impression of vast, almost unlimited extent. From the Polish border to the frontier of Manchuria is a journey of eight days on an express train which makes few and short stops, except for a stay of a few hours in Moscow. One may float for a week down the navigable part of the placid stream of the mighty Volga, which flows to a length of almost twenty-five hundred miles through the very heart of European Russia, until it loses itself in a huge delta and meets the Caspian Sea at Astrakhan, an old stronghold of the Tartar khans which is now an unsavory but rich fish mart, supplying large quantities of the famous Russian caviare.

The impression of Russia's sheer geographical bulk is heightened by the character of the country. The comparatively low ranges of the Ural Mountains lie along the shadowy frontier between Russian Europe and Russian Asia. Far to the southeast, between the Black and Caspian Seas, rise the magnificent peaks of the Caucasus, higher and incomparably wilder than the Alps. Still loftier are the Altai Mountains, on the frontier between Siberia and China, and the ranges in the neighborhood

of the high bare Pamir Plateau, where a thin strip of Afghan territory barely separates Russia from India. But most of the European part of the Soviet Union, together with the western half of Siberia, is an enormous plain, seldom broken by even the lowest of hills. So the traveler from Moscow, whether he go north, east, south, or west, has before him for whole days wide vistas of field or forest or uncultivated steppe land, as the case may be, with only the distant horizon as a boundary for the landscape.

Fifty thousand miles of railroad line do something to bring within manageable compass the immense distances of the Soviet Union, and the airplane is becoming an increasingly valuable auxiliary in the field of transport. The air routes now functioning in the Soviet Union cover almost eight thousand miles, and, if ambitious plans for development and extension are carried out, this figure will increase to twenty-eight thousand miles by 1933.

The present Russian air lines are divided into three groups. The two routes which connect Russia with the West, the Moscow–Riga–Konigsberg–Berlin and the Leningrad–Reval–Riga lines, are under the direction of the joint stock company Deruluft, capital investment and profits being shared between the Soviet Government and the German Luft-Hansa Company. A Ukrainian state aviation company operates the longest single air line in the Soviet Union, the two-thousand-mile stretch from Moscow to the Persian port Pehlevi, via Kharkov, Rostov, Mineralni Vodi, and Baku.

The third and largest group of lines, under the management of the Soviet state company, Dobrolet, is located in Central Asia and the Far East. It is in these regions of deserts, steppes, and mountains that the airplane achieves the most striking economies in time. It was and is a long, difficult, and sometimes dangerous undertaking to travel by horse or caravan from the Russian frontier to the Afghan capital, Kabul. Now Russian and Afghan diplomats fly across the lofty Hindu Kush range, making the trip from Kabul to Tashkent, the centre of Russian Central Asia, in a few hours.

In the Far East, Irkutsk, on the Trans-Siberia Railroad, is connected by airplane with Yakutsk, capital of a vast and sparsely populated Siberian territory, rich in furs and gold. From Verkhne-Udinsk, on the same railroad, an aviation service is maintained to Ulan Bator, capital of Outer Mongolia, and the Luft-Hansa Company is making tentative efforts to establish an air route across Russia to China and Japan.

Next to size, perhaps the strongest external impression which one obtains from the Soviet Union to-day is that of isolation. Russia's contacts with the outside world are distinctly slight. Except on special occasions, such as the arrival or departure of a delegation, few foreigners travel on the daily trains between Moscow and Riga and Moscow and Warsaw. When I went from Moscow to China on the Trans-Siberian Express, for the last two days of the journey up to the Manchurian frontier I was alone in the car, except for the two *provodniks*, who share a compartment at the end of each car and combine the functions of conductors, porters, and tea-purveyors.

Not that there is any element of special discomfort, still less of danger, in traveling on Russian railroads. Whatever else in Russia may be late in starting (and concerts, meetings, and appointments usually are), the trains depart on scheduled time, without even a moment's leeway, and arrive at their destinations with a very good average of punctuality, if one takes into account the liability of the country to floods in spring and blizzards in winter. The Russian *wagon-lits* are roomier than those of Europe, because of the wider gauge used on the Russian railroads; the *myagki*, or "soft" second-class cars, so called in distinction from the "hard" third-class, are somewhat stuffier, but leave no cause for serious complaint on the score of cleanliness or comfort.

The third-class car, made up of compartments for six with upper and upmost berths in the shape of wooden projections, is apt to be rather odorous, crowded, and heavily encumbered with the goods of the passengers, because Russians, for some reason, are much given to traveling by this cheaper conveyance and usually take with them a vast amount of luggage, not in

trunks and suitcases, but in sacks and boxes of all sizes and shapes. In liveliness and conversational interest, however, it has a clear advantage over other modes of travel.

The dining car is a Western importation which is usually to be found only on the longest runs of the most important lines; but it is always possible to buy a great variety of provender, ranging from roast pigs to sunflower seeds (Russia's substitute for peanuts and chewing gum), from peasants at the wayside stations. The rush for hot water for tea at each station (from time immemorial the Russian railroad lines have provided taps at every stop of any size) is something that makes all passengers on the Russian train kin.

The chief reasons why so few foreigners are in Russia are that the cost of living is high and the opportunities for occupation are limited. Before the Revolution both Moscow and St. Petersburg had their colonies of foreigners of different nationalities, engaged mostly in some sort of trade or business. At the present time concession enterprises in the Soviet Union are few and insignificant, Russia's trade in general has declined, and the new system of state monopoly of foreign commerce considerably reduces the openings for individual salesmanship.[1] The number of citizens of American and European countries permanently resident in the Soviet Union probably does not exceed a few hundred. Moscow has no club or other place of entertainment where foreigners may foregather.

So far as casual and temporary visitors are concerned, Russia was always off the beaten track of the tourist; and this is true to-day even more than in pre-war times. Every summer a large party of very capitalistic-looking South Americans interrupts a pleasure cruise in the waters of Northern Europe long enough to spend a few days in Moscow and Leningrad, and small parties of travelers, mostly from America, are beginning to filter into Russia for more extensive trips. However, it seems doubtful whether the Soviet Union ever will catch more than a modest trickle from the vast annual stream of American

[1] For a fuller treatment of this question of Russia's commercial contacts with the outside world see Chapter XVI.

tourist trade. There is an abundance of wild and picturesque mountain scenery in the Caucasus; the sweep of the southern Crimean coast down to the Black Sea, with its vineyards and cypresses and tropical vegetation and a range of high mountains in the background, is magnificent and has been compared with the Riviera. But the remoteness of the Soviet Union, the legendary tales of its horrors, which are still circulated abroad, and the general inability of Russian hotels to measure up to the somewhat Sybaritic requirements of American tourists are factors which seem likely to prolong the state of isolation, in this field at least.

Of course, Russia has a special attraction for a new type of tourist who may be characterized as a sociological globe-trotter. These people, who usually are endowed with immense energy, which seldom is balanced by equivalent amounts of the gifts of reflection, analysis, and advance knowledge of the subject, bustle into Russia, rush through a round of visits to model institutions, and bustle out again, feeling that the Soviet Union holds no more mysteries for them. However, the sociological globe-trotter, while a very active species, is not a numerous one.

If few foreigners come to Russia, few Russians go abroad. Here the element of financial exigency comes into play. Soviet currency is not exchangeable abroad, except through furtive agencies and at rates of exchange substantially lower than the official one of approximately two rubles to the dollar. With a view to preventing speculation, the Soviet Government forbids the transfer of Russian currency abroad. Therefore, every Soviet citizen who travels in foreign countries is, in a more or less direct way, a charge on the state treasury, since he must either exchange rubles for foreign currency at the State Bank or otherwise procure the necessary foreign money for his journey. Inasmuch as the Soviet financial authorities are extremely reluctant to deplete their limited stocks of foreign currency, or, in general, to see it leave the country, permission to travel abroad is very difficult to obtain for any Soviet citizen who is not employed on some mission of recognized state importance.

This same financial situation further contributes to the isolation of the country by imposing considerable restrictions on the importation of foreign books and the bringing of foreign artists into the country. Russia is a music-loving country, and even a second-rate foreign pianist or violinist can usually count on a large audience in Moscow. But fees paid in Soviet currency are valueless outside of Russia; and the supply of foreign currency allotted for the payment of foreign artists is stringently rationed.

The sense of Russia's isolation is further strengthened when one finds it impossible to buy a thermometer in Moscow. Such articles as fountain pens and typewriters, while obtainable under great stress, command extremely high prices, and there is no surer target for the attentions of the street waifs and other pickpockets of Moscow than a fountain pen worn in an outside coat pocket.

Isolation in some cases breeds hatred of the foreigner and his ways, and one might anticipate some manifestations of this spirit in Russia, especially in view of the fact that "war preparations against the Soviet Union" and "imperialistic plots" are among the stock headlines of the Soviet press. But as a matter of fact the popular attitude toward the foreigner is probably friendlier in Russia than in any other country in the world. I have traveled many thousands of miles in the Soviet Union without encountering any instance of discourtesy, to say nothing of hostility, directed against me as a foreigner; and I think this testimony would be confirmed by most travelers in Russia. Even the Moscow policeman, ruthlessly insistent on collecting a ruble fine from any Russian whom he catches jumping on or off a moving tramcar in defiance of traffic regulations, is quickly mollified if the offender displays the linguistic incapacity that marks the foreigner. The crowds which formerly marched in orderly organized fashion to demonstrate in the vicinity of the British and Polish Missions, when the British Government had dispatched a hostile note or when a Polish court passed a severe sentence on a Communist or a mild sentence on a Russian émigré who had attacked a Soviet diplomat,

never threatened the security of individual Englishmen or Poles.

There probably are several reasons for the almost complete absence in Russia of the unpleasant form of nationalism that finds expression in hatred for people of other countries. In the first place, the same newspapers which constantly report the machinations of the capitalist governments against the Soviet Union consistently represent these governments as being faced with more or less formidable movements of their own insurgent proletariats. However incorrect this representation may be, it is at least calculated to discourage chauvinism by concentrating the wrath of the aroused reader on the government rather than on the people of the country concerned. Then the Russian has not the same provocation to antiforeignism as the German or the Frenchman who at certain periods saw his country overrun by foreign visitors, taking advantage of the inflation to buy up everything in sight at bargain prices, or as the Chinese who sees colonies of Europeans living in a state of comfort that stands in contrast to his own poverty. The foreigners in Moscow, or in Russia generally, are too few to make any particular impression, and, far from attempting to "buy up" Russia, they make every effort to purchase their clothes and articles of personal use in countries where prices are lower and standards of quality are higher.

One cannot live long in Russia without feeling that it is a Eurasian country. It is not merely that most of the territory of the Soviet Union is in Asia or that a substantial minority of its population is made up of Asiatic peoples. There is a deep strain of Asiatic influence in the Russian historical heritage. Apart from the effect of the long period of Tartar overlordship, the landlocked Muscovite state of the Middle Ages was at least as accessible from the Near and Middle East as from Europe. The Moscow merchant of the sixteenth century, dressed in his magnificently colored long flowing robe, resembled his fellow dealer from Persia or Turkey rather than the contemporary merchants of England or Holland.

Even to-day there are certain features of Russian dress

which suggest Asia as much as Europe. The *rubashka*, or Russian shirt, which is worn outside the trousers and tightened about the waist with a belt, is something of a cross between the oriental robe and the European shirt. The high cone-shaped Astrakhan wool hat which many Muscovites wear during the winter would excite more surprise in London or Berlin than in Kabul or Teheran. If the Western element clearly predominates in the Russian cities, the villages of the country, with their primitive implements and methods of farming, their general illiteracy, and their roads that are streaks of dust in summer and morasses of mud in autumn and spring, still belong in many respects to Asia, in spite of the ambitious projects which are on foot to introduce electricity and tractors and other appurtenances of modern life.

Nowhere is the Eurasian quality of Russia more in evidence than in Moscow itself. The crowning glory of the city, the massive enclosure of the Kremlin, with its squat watchtowers, crenelated battlements, and thick walls, designed to resist the raids of Tartar horsemen and Polish lancers, strongly suggests the fortress-residence of an oriental khan. Equally Asiatic is the so-called Chinese Wall, pierced with arched gateways through which the humdrum traffic of present-day Moscow passes. And one never thinks of any place west of Byzantium when contemplating the Church of St. Basil, with its intricate and twisted design of cupolas shaped in the image of pears and pineapples and other fruits and its riotous rich coloring.

On the other hand the greater part of Moscow resembles a drab and dingy European city, grown up without any benefit of plan. Whereas Leningrad reflects the care lavished on it by generations of sovereigns in its wide straight streets and many handsome public buildings, Moscow is an architectural jumble, without even a main thoroughfare to give it some degree of unity.

By general testimony Moscow has not changed very much externally since the Revolution. There has, of course, been some new building, but not enough to alter the general character. A few new public buildings, such as a new post office,

and new large apartment houses, are built along severe and simple lines. There is a large number of mushroom one- and two-story houses, set up by private builders with limited capital and occupying much potentially valuable space. The atheistic and utilitarian Moscow Soviet has removed a number of churches which were so situated as to constitute obstructions to traffic.

In general, however, the changes are in the new uses of old buildings, rather than in the erection of new ones. The former Hall of the Nobles, for instance, has been transformed into the headquarters of the Moscow Trade-Unions. The great ballroom with its huge crystal chandeliers is now a hall for meetings and popular concerts. The *osobniaks*, or little mansions which the old Moscow merchants and manufacturers built for themselves and decorated profusely with mural paintings and gilded ornaments, have mostly been turned over to government institutions and workers' clubs.

One of the strongest impressions that one almost inevitably gets in Moscow is that of endless and ever-moving crowds. In the central part of the city, where the largest stores and chief government business and administrative offices are located, it is sometimes difficult to pick one's way through the streams of people who crowd and block up the narrow sidewalks. This impression of crowding is usually intensified enormously if one rides on the tramcars which are the city's chief means of public conveyance. There are also some autobuses, purchased in England and Germany, and there are always the traditional droshkies, small conveyances with scant seating room for two, equipped with wheels in summer and sleigh runners in winter. Taxicabs in Moscow are few and difficult to get, except at a few central stations.

The surging, pushing crowds in the streets and on the tramcars are fully duplicated in the Moscow houses. What with the inevitable gravitation of people toward the political and economic centre of the country, and the natural increase of the population, Moscow's population has swelled from 1,600,000 before the War to well over two million, and it goes on increas-

ing from year to year at a rate which seems to defy all efforts to provide an adequate amount of new housing. The result is that the Soviet capital is by far the most crowded of the large European cities. A room is difficult enough to obtain, while an apartment (and anything above one room in Moscow ranks as an apartment) is usually to be had only after the payment of a premium of several thousand rubles, with the additional harassing possibility that the title of the seller may be open to question, in which event one is likely to become involved in the infinite complexities of a Soviet housing suit.

As a result of these constricted housing conditions, the life which many Russians lead in Moscow rather suggests a process of camping out. A five-room apartment which formerly served the needs of a single family is now usually divided up among three or four or five. The hallway usually resembles a baggage office; it is filled with trunks and furniture which the owners cannot place in their small quarters and do not wish to discard. An individual kitchen is a rare luxury. The Russian family either does its cooking over a primus, a small, sputtering oil stove, or shares a general kitchen with several families. The private landlord has very largely disappeared under Soviet conditions, and most large houses are managed by committees, elected by the tenants and responsible to the housing department of the municipality for the upkeep of the houses.

Rents are regulated, in municipally owned houses, by the "class principle" which is supposed to permeate every field of Soviet life. Manual workers pay a very low, almost a nominal rent, and employees who are registered trade-union members pay somewhat more, but also a small amount. The rates rise for "members of free professions," doctors, lawyers, writers, etc., and become very high for Nepmen, or private traders. These observations apply to the older houses, which were taken over from their former owners without compensation by the municipal authorities. In the case of new houses, where the high cost of building materials makes it necessary, as a rule, to exact much higher rents, it is not always possible to give the workers the full benefit of the class principle; and complaints

are not infrequent that some new houses are almost monopolized by the more highly paid employees, to the disadvantage of the workers.

The crowds of Moscow quickly form into lines. For economic reasons, which are explained more fully elsewhere, there is a constant shortage of certain kinds of manufactured goods and a more or less sporadic shortage of certain food products. The problem of food supply increased in sharpness during 1928 and 1929, partly as a result of the attempted elimination of the *kulak*, or prosperous individual peasant, and partly because of the steady growth in the population of the cities. By the autumn of 1929 most important food products were rationed in Moscow. The list includes bread, meat, eggs, butter, sugar, tea, rice, and macaroni, while milk was so scarce that it was impossible even to organize a regular supply of it. Holders of trade-union cards (and, as is explained later, almost all persons engaged in labor which is considered socially productive are members of trade-unions) and members of their families are entitled to buy specified amounts of the rationed products at the comparatively moderate prices which prevail in state and coöperative stores. Moreover in Moscow it is possible to buy, in the private market, quantities over and above one's allotted ration, though at extremely high prices.

The size of the ration in Moscow varies from an adequate allowance of two pounds of bread a day for manual workers to such clearly meagre allotments as fifteen eggs a month and a quarter of a pound of butter a week. As a rule this system of distributing food is applied primarily to the city population, although some effort is made to provide the poorer peasants in regions which do not produce a grain surplus with grain at lower prices than those which prevail on the open market. The hardships of the Russian disfranchised — the ministers of religion, former landlords and factory-owners, merchants and traders, etc. under this system are greatly aggravated since they can only buy food at greatly increased prices. One week a line, mostly made up of patient-faced women with market baskets, will form for butter; the next week tea will

be the article most in demand; while supply always seems to fall short of demand with textile and woolen goods and many other manufactured products. The longest lines are usually to be found before the stores which dispense vodka, the fiery liquor with 40 per cent alcoholic content which constitutes the chief delight of the Russian toper.

The handling of the manufacture and sale of vodka is one of the most controversial questions in Russia, since there is much division of opinion on this question in the ranks of the ruling Communist Party itself, some Communists dwelling on the financial and economic advantages which the sale of vodka brings to the state, while others emphasize the admittedly bad effects of drunkenness on public order and labor discipline and the obstacles which excessive drinking creates for the realization of the ideal of a more educated and cultured working class.

The sale of vodka was one of the most profitable items in the pre-war Russian budget, yielding about a quarter of the total revenue. The Tsar, by a single decree, completely stopped the state sale of vodka after the outbreak of the War. Vodka remained forbidden during the first period of revolution and civil war, but began to come back, at first in diminished alcoholic content, after the adoption of the New Economic Policy. On October 1, 1925, vodka of the full 40 per cent strength was restored; and the citizens of Moscow celebrated with a drinking orgy which lasted over several days. Since that time drunkenness has been visibly on the increase in the cities, although the amount of vodka manufactured and sold by the state is still less than half of the huge pre-war figure. On the other hand, there is a large undefined consumption of samogon, or illicit vodka, made in peasant stills in the country districts. Samogon is a raw liquor, brewed out of wheat flour and terrifying to the uninitiated; but the peasant's palate is far from delicate, and since samogon usually contains an even higher percentage of alcohol than the state vodka and is cheaper in price, he gulps it down whenever it is obtainable, despite the fact that its manufacture is punishable with fine and imprisonment.

The annual drink bill of the Soviet Union is estimated at 1,200,000,000 rubles, a sum lower than is spent in some countries with a smaller population, such as Germany and England. But the drinking habits of the average Russian are of a violent and intemperate character. Instead of drinking more or less moderately day by day, the Russian worker or peasant is more apt to reserve all his energies for a large-scale alcoholic debauch, preferably on some big religious holiday. These debauches sometimes end in sanguinary fights, and at best leave the participants unfit for work over a period of several days.

The most recent tendency of Soviet policy in the drink question has been to apply measures of partial restriction and regulation in the larger cities. So saloons and liquor shops in the immediate vicinity of factories may be closed, if the workers vote in favor of such action; the sale of vodka on holidays is forbidden; there is a movement to stop the sale of vodka in coöperative stores, restricting it entirely to the state liquor trust stores. Furthermore, the amount of vodka sold in the cities is being somewhat reduced, while larger quantities are being sent into the country districts, where, it is argued, the state sale of vodka serves the double purpose of pushing out samogon and giving the peasants some inducement to part with their hoarded grain.

To walk through the streets of Moscow at night is almost to feel one's self in a Puritan city. The shine and glitter of the night life of a typical large city have been completely knocked off by the Revolution. There is very little nocturnal illumination, beyond what is needed to light the streets. There are no lines of parked motor-cars and taxicabs to indicate the entrances to the State Opera House and the principal theatres. There are no artistically attractive cabarets in Moscow, and very few of any kind. There is practically no public dancing. The sole gambling casino in Moscow recently closed its doors, and the only public opportunities which Muscovites enjoy for gambling are provided by the horse races and by the state loans, which, instead of a regular interest rate, pay a series of lottery cash prizes. It is, perhaps, a significant commentary

on the Russian national character that these lottery loans, in which one most probably receives nothing except the principal but enjoys the alluring possibility of winning a prize to the value of ten, twenty-five, or a hundred thousand rubles, are vastly more popular than the more conventional bond issues which pay an assured interest rate of 9 or 10 or 12 per cent.

I should not wish to imply that Moscow has reached the state of puritanical grace which even England could not achieve, despite Milton's eloquence and Cromwell's sword. Heavy drinking and irregular sex relations are far from uncommon in the Soviet capital. But there is no external gilding for these things; the vast, pleasure-seeking, organized "night life" of Berlin or Paris, New York or London, simply has no parallel in Moscow.

No one can live very long in Russia without gaining an impression of leveling in the everyday life of the people. Not that absolute material equality, or anything like it, has been achieved. There are marked variations in the standards of living, not only among the people as a whole, but among the members of the Communist Party. But, whereas in other countries there is a tendency to display wealth, in Russia there is every impulse to hide it. The Communist or Soviet official who is observed to spend more freely than his modest salary would seem to permit is likely to be called on for an explanation, either by some Party tribunal or, in especially serious cases, by the secret police. Flaunting of wealth by the harassed private trader is likely to invite new visitations by the tax-collecting authorities.

Under these conditions, dress, which in almost every age and country has served as a badge of social distinction, has almost ceased to fulfill that function in Russia. The instinct for personal adornment has not disappeared in Russia. Women, with the exception of the occasional mannish girl student or office employee who affects a cap and leather coat, probably devote as much attention to their apparel as ever; and, despite the prohibitive duties on silk and other luxury articles, they often achieve quite successful results in their costumes, with the

aid of French and German fashion magazines, which somehow find their way into the country. The foreign embassies represent a limited centre of social life where the conventional rules of dress and social formality are carefully observed.

But this is a small island in a large ocean. The *arbiter elegantiarum* for Soviet officialdom is not the foreign embassy, but the Control Committee of the Communist Party, which is composed of the most austere veteran Party members and is entrusted, among other things, with the charge of detecting and punishing any comrades who succumb to disintegrating "bourgeois" influences. On one occasion the Secretary of this Committee, Jaroslavsky, warned Communists resident abroad against luxurious modes of living which would invite the gibes of hostile newspapers, and especially cautioned them against "struggling into frock coats which suit them as well as a saddle does a cow." It may readily be imagined that Communists in Russia (and practically all high Soviet officials are Communists) are under even stronger pressure.

Dress, in fact, has ceased to be a reliable indicator of social status; the man in a collarless Russian shirt on the ground floor at the opera or the theatre may be a *bona fide* proletarian taking advantage of his opportunity to purchase tickets at the reduced trade-union rate, a newly enriched trader anxious to hide his prosperity, or a high state official setting an example in democratic dress. Moscow is perhaps the only capital in the world where one may wear practically anything at any time in any place without attracting special attention, still less running any risk of incurring social reprobation.

There is only one conspicuous exception to this statement which I can recall; and that is humorous and paradoxical enough to prove the general truth of the rule. One positively must not appear at the entertainment which the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs gives annually in celebration of the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution except in the full regalia of evening dress.

Moscow was and is a city of many beggars. One finds them everywhere, outside the many churches and shrines, in the

neighborhood of the larger theatres, in the more secluded side streets. Contrary, perhaps, to a general impression abroad, these beggars do not, in the overwhelming majority of cases, belong to the former aristocracy and wealthy classes. There are, of course, many cases of pitiful destitution among people who formerly were well-to-do; occasionally one may perhaps see an old landowner or merchant soliciting alms near his former mansion, or notice a French book in the hands of the woman who is selling cigarettes at some little stand.

But most of the beggars come from the vast hinterland of the Russian village. Some of them are professionals, organized in collective groups, and divide up their receipts at regular intervals. Others really justify their descriptions of themselves as poor peasants who are stranded in the city without food or work.

Begging is not, one suspects, an unpopular occupation in Russia; it affords an outlet for the histrionic faculty with which most Russians are endowed to a greater or less degree, and, despite their poverty, the Russians are more generous toward beggars than the people of most other countries. The widespread unemployment to-day provides an economic background for mendicancy. But it is quite possible that in the future Communist Utopia, should it ever be achieved, where there is work for everyone and full insurance for all who cannot work, there will still be a few free spirits who will prefer to live by begging, and a somewhat larger number who will give them alms.

Three or four years ago every visitor was struck by the numbers of *byezprizorni*, or shelterless children, homeless waifs of all ages and sizes, who thronged the railroad stations and markets and all other places where there was a good chance to beg or steal. These were genuine wolf-children, hardened and criminal beyond their ages, quick to use the ugly long "Finnish knife" which is the favorite weapon of the Russian gangster or criminal, adepts in drug peddling, victims of sexual perversion. Traveling as stowaways in the most unlikely parts of trains, the byezprizorni spread all over the Soviet Union, migrating with the seasons from south to north and back again.

A Kazak with His Family

Most of these waifs were orphans whose parents perished in civil war and famine or who were somehow torn off from their families. As recently as 1925 their number was estimated as high as 300,000, although no reliable census could ever have been taken, in view of their constantly shifting nomadic street life. It is a noteworthy social achievement of the Soviet authorities that these waifs, formerly so pitiful and terrible a spectacle, have now almost disappeared, as a result of a strenuous campaign to place them in children's homes, working communes, and other institutions.

When I first visited the bustling city of Rostov-on-the-Don, several years ago, it was a huge rendezvous of the byezprizorni. They surrounded the station in a veritable cordon; the traveler had to keep his hand on his pocket every minute to forestall the attentions of these precocious young pickpockets. Revisiting Rostov in 1928, I was impressed by the absence of the waifs on the streets. To the natural question, "What has become of them?" I received a partial answer when I visited the "Workshop Commune," a working school for former waifs established in the city itself.

Approaching the entrance to the colony, one found on guard an erect young man in uniform. "Who is the soldier at the gate?" I asked the manager of the colony. "Soldier?" he laughed. "That 's one of our own boys, of the special detachment which we created to guard the commune and its property. Our eight hundred boys are working under strict discipline, but it 's discipline of their own making. They organize their own institutions, elect their own officers. We have instructors for manual training, but no outside guards or overseers."

In the workshops there was no sign of sullenness or malingering. Whether wielding hammers or saws or digging earth for a dyke or laying out a sports ground, the boys were not only working hard, but gave every sign of being satisfied with what they were doing. The work was intelligently planned and organized. Most of the waifs at some time had been employed on odd jobs, and after being admitted to the colony they were carefully sorted out and assigned to tasks for which they

possessed some training and aptitude. With a little instruction some of these former street children proved capable of setting up a simple system of electric lights. The colony was proud of its little library and of its newspaper, filled with poems, stories, and sketches of daily life, here and there illustrated with a drawing or a caricature.

Self-government was broadly developed, and pressure of public opinion enforced decisions which mere outward authority might have required the application of physical force to carry through. The institution had its "prison," a cellar, where refractory rule-breakers were confined by sentence of their fellows. The manager interviewed the solitary prisoner, who had been sentenced for starting a fight, gave him a homely lecture on the advantages of settling disputes peacefully, and passed on.

Much of the success of this Rostov colony seemed to be due to the personality of the manager, a former worker with a vast amount of energy and good natural executive ability, who conveyed the impression of liking his work and of being able both to handle promptly any difficult disciplinary situation and to win the liking and confidence of his charges. Not all the Russian children's homes are well directed, and the reclaimed waif, with his taste for roving life and his frequent drug habits, is not an easy pupil. Still, the fact that the streets have been cleared of the bands of waifs which were such a familiar sight a few years ago is an indication that the whole problem is not so impossible as formerly seemed to be the case.

Russia always has been and still is, to some extent, a country which takes a leisurely attitude toward life and work, which regards time as something decidedly less valuable than money. The visitor from more pushful and mechanized lands may be delighted, amused, or horrified, according to his temperament, at finding that in Russia appointments are made to be broken, few ceremonies except the departure of trains and the opening of theatrical performances begin on time, the procuring of some simple required official letter or stamp may quite easily involve hours of waiting, and the carrying out of some trivial

repair takes what seems to be a disproportionate amount of time and human energy.

But New Russia is also a land of stress and strain. If the old Muscovite is apt to be a personage who takes his ease behind a huge samovar, the Muscovite of the present generation, should he belong to the vast army of Soviet state employees, is apt to wear a haggard and harassed look as he dashes from one *zasedanie*, or official conference, to another with a bulging portfolio of papers under his arm.

Two opposed forces are at work in the soul of the present-day Russian; on the one hand is the influence of centuries of semi-Asiatic passivity and deliberation; on the other is Lenin's injunction that Russia must catch up with and outstrip the technical achievements of the leading capitalist countries. Whether Russia ever will acquire the mechanical efficiency of America and Western Europe is a question for the future. In the meantime the rush and roar of modern industrial life seems to recede and subside as one travels from Berlin or some other European capital to Moscow, where there are only a few score taxicabs.

A trip through the provinces is calculated to strengthen rather than change the external impressions which one derives in Moscow. The centralized Soviet political and economic system tends to place a stamp of uniformity on the country. Everywhere the same products of the same state trusts and syndicates; everywhere the same articles in newspapers which differ chiefly in their titles; everywhere the same "weeks" to promote coöperation, health, national defense, or some other object.

Of course, historical, racial, and architectural differences cannot be obliterated overnight. The various cities of the Soviet Union have their distinctive traits, although the element of differentiation is probably less than in the older towns of Europe.

The capital founded by Peter the Great, now renamed Leningrad, which was prematurely consigned to extinction by some hasty observers during the period of civil war, is reviving

as a port and industrial centre, even though it has lost its status as the capital of the country. Its palaces have experienced various vicissitudes of fortune. The Winter Palace, where the Kerensky Government made its feeble last stand against the onrushing Bolshevik Revolution, is gradually being turned into a huge art museum, a sort of Russian Louvre, as the collections in the adjoining Hermitage museum overflow into the rooms of the palace. The yellow building of the Tauride Palace, presented by Catherine the Great to Potemkin, and in more recent times the meeting place of the Imperial Duma, is a Communist University. The palaces in the neighborhood of Leningrad, in Gatchina and Tsarskoe Syelo (now renamed Dyetskoe Syelo, or Children's Village), are magnets for thousands of proletarian excursionists.

Novosibirsk (formerly Novo-Nikolaevsk), the capital of Siberia, has grown up very much, as compared with pre-war times, and is proudly described by its inhabitants as the Chicago of Russia's undeveloped Far East. One finds a touch of southern warmth and gayety in Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, while Baku, the greatest oil centre in the Soviet Union, shows the effects of planting a modern industry in the midst of a primitive Mohammedan population.

The feeling of general leveling is perhaps even stronger in the provinces than in Moscow, because the relatively small classes of private merchants and well-paid specialists tend to concentrate in the capital. Moreover, even if one were as rich as Crœsus, it would be impossible to live very luxuriously in the bleak provincial hotels or to dine in very epicurean fashion in the standardized coöperative establishments which practically monopolize the restaurant field. In most provincial towns the housing situation is less strained than in Moscow, although there are some rapidly growing industrial centres in the Donetz Basin and the Urals where the congestion is even greater.

A country of contrasts and paradoxes, a country which has begun to span its distances with airplanes before it has provided them with roads, which thinks in terms of the latest technical discoveries in industry and electrification while its

peasants still often till the soil with tools and methods more suggestive of Asia than of Europe. A country where the worker who could never dream of owning a Ford automobile may find himself to-morrow the governor of a province or the head of an industrial enterprise worth tens of millions of rubles, where the peasant who has scarcely heard of a telephone may be sent off, at state expense, to loll at ease in the former Tsarist palace of Livadia amid the cypress groves of the Crimean coast. A country with a strange, Eurasian historical and cultural heritage, pointed toward a future that seems destined to be neither typically European nor typically Asiatic. A nation of enormous natural vitality, which, after the shattering blows of World War and civil war, famine and pestilence, and industrial prostration, is increasing in numbers every year by an amount greater than the whole population of Denmark. Such is the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics; such is the new face of the age-old Russian land.

III

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

It is a familiar Moscow joke that there may be any number of political parties in the Soviet Union, but under a single indispensable condition: that one party be in power and the others in jail. This expresses quite accurately the realities of the Russian situation; it also indicates that the Russian Communists do not constitute a party in the Western sense of an organization that competes periodically for political power with other organizations, enjoying similar freedom of agitation and propaganda. The All-Union Communist Party is the instrument of an absolute dictatorship, which, besides directing the organized political and economic life of the country, attempts to exercise a decisive influence on every important phase of intellectual and social development.

While, as I shall show later, it is not the desire of the Communist leaders to make Party members out of all, or even out of a majority of the population, and while non-Party people are not only permitted but encouraged to participate actively in public life, every important institution in Russia, whether it be a central or local governing body, a trade-union, a state trust, a coöperative, or a university, is subject to Communist control, usually embodied in a Communist president or other official head. Joseph Stalin, General Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee and the most important political figure in Russia to-day, says: —

"In the Soviet Union . . . no important political or organizational problem is ever decided by our Soviets and other mass organizations without directives from the Party." [1]

[1] See Stalin's *Leninism*, the English translation of his work, *Problems of Leninism*, published by George Allen and Unwin, London, p. 33.

This does not mean that the local branches of the Communist Party attempt to decide every petty detail of the work of the Soviets, trade-unions, and coöperatives. As a matter of fact they are expressly warned not to do this, but to leave to the above-mentioned organizations the maximum liberty and spontaneity of action consonant with the carrying out of the general lines of Party policy. But these general lines must always be carried out.

The philosophy underlying the Communist dictatorship is Leninism, or the revolutionary interpretation of Marxian socialism worked out by Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin. The main points in this philosophy, summarized very briefly, are as follows.[1]

The achievement of socialism is the highest goal of humanity, because this will mean the abolition of the elements of inequality, exploitation, and oppression which are inherent in private capitalism and will stop the recurrent wars which are an inevitable by-product of competing systems of capitalist imperialism. Socialism, or communism (Lenin, like Marx, uses these two terms interchangeably), can never come by a process of peaceful evolution, even in countries where such democratic liberties as universal suffrage and freedom of press and assemblage prevail. Under the capitalist system the small wealthy minority enjoys such advantages in the manipulation of public opinion through the control of newspapers and large publishing houses and the manifold other advantages which are associated with wealth that it is utopian to hope to win away even the majority of the working class, to say nothing of the majority of the population, from this capitalist influence by argument and propaganda alone. Moreover, the bourgeoisie, in a moment of revolutionary crisis, would not abide by the rules of its own parliamentary game; should it find its economic privileges seriously threatened it would resort to military or Fascist dictatorship.

[1] I need scarcely emphasize the point that the following paragraphs represent not an exposition of my own views but an effort faithfully to interpret those of Lenin and his disciples.

Therefore, the first task in realizing the goal of socialism is the violent overthrow of the capitalist state, which can be accomplished in a period of extreme weakness and disintegration of capitalism by the more class-conscious revolutionary elements among the working class, acting perhaps in alliance with the poorer peasantry and dissatisfied national minorities, depending on the political and social condition of the country concerned, and always obeying the direction of a firmly disciplined revolutionary party, the Communist Party. The overthrow of the capitalist state is to be followed, both in Russia and in other countries where it may take place, by a phase known as the dictatorship of the proletariat, when all the resources of the state are directed primarily to the crushing of the inevitable resistance of the former ruling classes.

The Communist Party, having fulfilled its function as organizer of the revolution, must continue to direct the building of the new socialist order; and it must always adhere to the principles of strict unity and iron discipline. In Lenin's *Conditions of Admission into the Communist International* occurs the passage: —

"During the present epoch of intense civil warfare the Communist Party can accomplish its task only on condition that it is highly centralized, that it is dominated by an iron discipline which is quasi-military in its severity, that it is guided by a group of comrades at the centre, enjoying the confidence of the rank-and-file members, endowed with authority and possessing wide executive powers."

The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be dispensed with even when the revolutionary state is firmly established in a single country and when open resistance to its authority has ceased. Because there remains the inevitable antagonism between the single socialist state (Russia, in the given case) and the capitalist world. This basic antagonism cannot disappear, even though, over a more or less prolonged period, external peace and commercial relations may exist between socialist Russia and capitalist Europe and America. In this connection Lenin wrote (see Volume XVI of the Russian edition of his *Collected Works*, p. 102): —

"It is inconceivable that the Soviet Republic should continue to exist interminably side by side with imperialist states. Ultimately one or the other must conquer. Pending this development a number of terrible clashes between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois states must inevitably occur."

Hence the Bolshevik Revolution is not only Russian but international in its scope and significance. The Soviet state may survive indefinitely in Russia, building up a socialist economic order on the vast natural resources of the country and enjoying a breathing space as a result of the political antagonisms and other causes which may hold back the capitalist powers from launching an open attack against it. But the menace of such an attack, of a renewal in some form or other of the wars of intervention which marked the first years of the existence of the Soviet Republic, is never absent. Therefore, the final victory of socialism, which will usher in the golden communist era of humanity, when armies, police, and all means of compulsion will be abolished and the state itself, in Lenin's phrase, will wither away because there will be no more of the class economic antagonisms which the state expresses — this final victory, then, can only be an international victory, the world revolution which is the Messianic hope of Russian Communists.

Lenin, like many potent leaders before him (one thinks instinctively of the founder of the Order of the Jesuits, Ignatius Loyola), perceived very keenly the advantages, for purposes of swift, decisive action, of a small, but fanatically devoted and reliably disciplined organization, as against a larger body, vaguer in ideas and likely to prove flabby and irresolute in moments of crisis. In pre-revolutionary polemics with his Menshevik and other opponents Lenin always insisted that a revolutionary socialist party, in order to function effectively, must be distinguished by two qualities: absolute subordination of the will of the individual members to the central organs of the Party, and willingness of each individual member to make any sacrifice, up to life itself, for the advancement of the cause. He strongly emphasized the superiority of quality over mere

numbers in this connection. And the course of the Revolution demonstrated the practical correctness of his viewpoint. The Communist Party owed its victory in the civil war more to these instincts for discipline and unity, which Lenin had drilled into its older members, than to almost any other single factor.

The All-Union Communist Party in January 1929 reckoned 1,529,000 members and candidates, the latter being applicants for membership who are still on probation. So about one person in every hundred in the Soviet Union is a professing Communist. There are over 2,000,000 members of the Union of Communist Youth, an organization with less severe entrance requirements than those of the Party.[1] For it is no easy matter to gain admission to the ruling Party in the Soviet Union. Workers are preferred above other classes of the population as candidates for membership; but even a manual worker, the aristocrat of Soviet Russia, must obtain two recommendations from old Party members and pass through a period of six months' probation before he may be admitted to full-fledged membership. For peasants, employees, and intellectuals a larger number of sponsors and longer periods of probation are required. Members of the classes disfranchised under the Soviet Constitution, merchants, traders, priests and ministers of religion, private employers of labor, etc., are naturally disqualified from belonging to the Communist Party.

The ceremony of admitting new members into the Party, which I witnessed once at a meeting of the *yacheika*,[2] or local branch of the Moscow electrical station, is quite simple and devoid of any suggestion of ritualistic initiation. Candidates who have been on probation for the required length of time are proposed for membership at a general meeting of the branch; their qualifications are discussed; and they are admitted or rejected by a majority vote. In this particular yacheika the spirit of proletarian class-consciousness was very strong. The names of the few intellectuals who were proposed for membership were subjected to searching scrutiny and criticism; it seemed to be about as difficult to pass a camel through the eye of a needle as to bring a nonproletarian into this Communist local branch. On the other hand worker candidates for membership were apt to pass even when serious criticisms were voiced against them.

[1] The Union of Communist Youth is described in more detail in Chapter XIV.

[2] The word in Russian literally means "cell."

The basic unit in the Communist Party is the yacheika, which consists of all the Communists in a given factory, office, army unit, or village. There are about 50,000 of these local branches all over the country.[1] The local branches of a country district receive instructions from a county committee, which they elect, and this county committee in its turn is subordinated to the higher provincial committee. Ward committees, over which stands a city committee, guide the work of the local branches in the cities.

At the head of the whole Communist organization stands the Party Central Committee, which consists of seventy-one members and fifty candidates, or alternate members. This body is elected by the Party Congress, which meets every two years and has attached to it a large staff of permanent departments for special agitation and propaganda work among women, peasants, and non-Russian nationalities, for control and direction of the press, etc. The actual highest governing authority in the Party, and hence for the whole country, is not the large unwieldy Central Committee, but an inner steering group of nine members and eight alternates, elected by the Central Committee and known as the Political Bureau. This body holds steady and frequent sessions and its decisions are binding for the whole vast mechanism of the Communist Party, which, in its turn, determines the policies of the Soviet state.

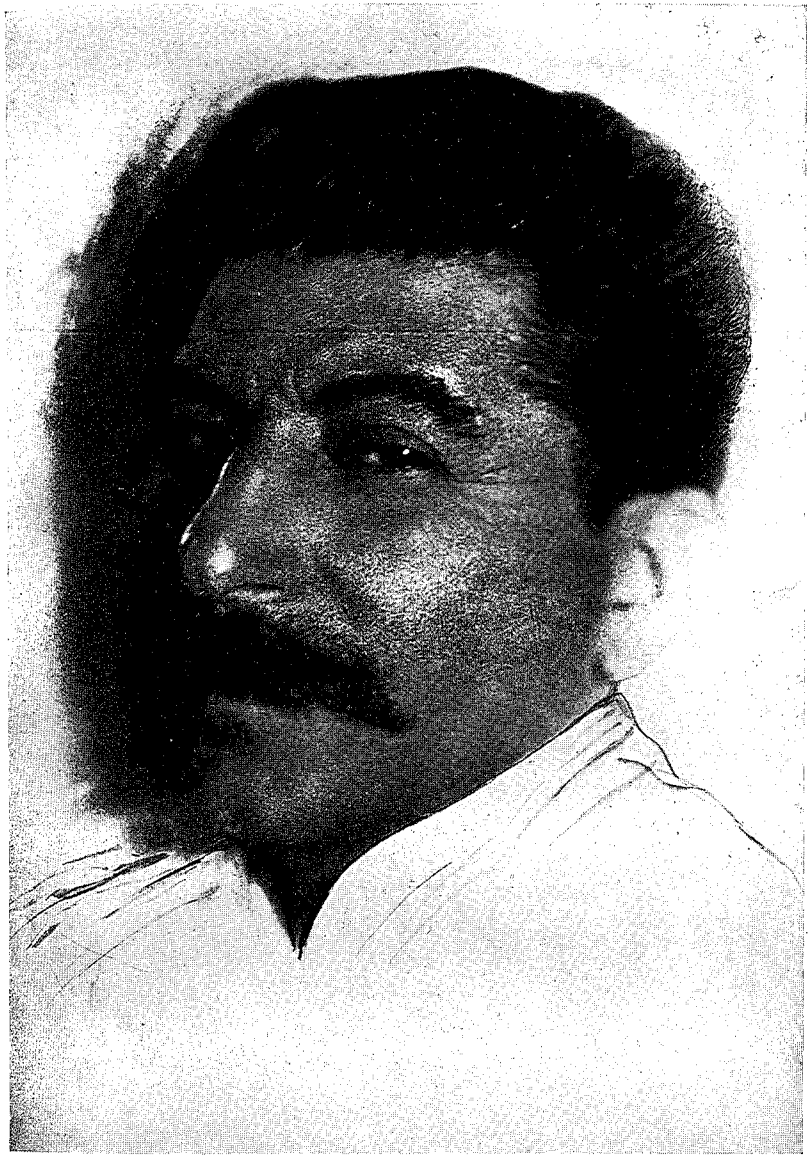
The Central Committee is convened four times a year in plenary sessions, which are held jointly with a still larger body, the Control Commission, numbering almost two hundred members. Whereas the Central Committee is primarily an execu-

[1] The statistical facts regarding the Communist Party membership and organization are taken from *The Communist's Calendar for 1929*, published by the *Moscow Worker*, 1929, pp. 84–100.

tive organ for the Party, the Control Commission is entrusted with the functions of maintaining discipline and morale and possesses the right to reprimand and expel unworthy members. I do not believe that during recent years there has ever been a case when an important decision of the Political Bureau was reversed by these plenary sessions of the Central Committee and the Control Commission. The biennial Party Congress invariably bestows its benediction on the resolutions which are proposed for its adoption by the retiring Central Committee. In general, while the Communist Party organs are formally elective, the prestige and authority of the Central Committee and its steering committee, the Political Bureau, strengthened as they are by a large permanent apparatus of propaganda and organization, are so great that no rank-and-file movement aimed at the replacement of the personnel of these organs by other candidates has much chance of making headway.

The Secretariat, of which Joseph Stalin, in his capacity as General Secretary, is head, and which includes four secretaries and four alternates, and the Organization Bureau, with its thirteen members and eight alternates, are two important institutions in guiding the activities of the 1,500,000 Communist Party members and candidates. In general the Communist Party organization, in spirit and methods, has not a few points of resemblance to a disciplined army. The Political Bureau is the general staff, the members of the Organization Bureau and the Secretariat; the Central Committee and the Control Commission are the generals and higher officers; the provincial and county secretaries are the captains and lieutenants; the secretaries of the local branches are the sergeants and corporals.

What sort of people are enlisted in this army of Communism? The Party has been built up in a series of concentric layers. Its original kernel is represented by the "old Bolsheviks," by the men and women whose Party cards date back to the days of Tsarism. There are between 7000 and 8000 of these pre-revolutionary Communists; but their weight in the Party



JOSEPH STALIN, "MAN OF STEEL"
Chief Pilot of the Communist Ship of State

councils is out of all proportion to their actual numbers. It is an unwritten tradition that the highest Party and Soviet offices should be held, for the most part, by these veteran revolutionists. All the members of the Political Bureau belong in this category, and only 8.3 per cent of the members of the Central Committee joined the Party in 1917 or later.

The 7000 or 8000 "old Bolsheviks" include a fairly high percentage of university-educated intelligentsia. Since 1917 the tendency has been for the Party to become more and more proletarian in character, because the Russian intelligentsia, as a class, was opposed to Bolshevism, and, especially during recent years, there has been an organized effort to raise the percentage of actual manual workers to 50 per cent of the total membership. According to data of January 1, 1928, 60.5 per cent of the Communist Party members were workers by origin, 19.2 per cent were peasants, 18.5 per cent were employees, and 1.2 per cent fell under other categories. The corresponding percentages for Communists by occupation were 40.8, 12.3, 36.1, and 10.8. This discrepancy is quite natural, because many working-class and peasant Communists are promoted to the state service or sent to the higher schools.

According to the Communist Party census of 1927, 65 per cent of the members at that time were Russians, 11.72 per cent were Ukrainians, 4.32 per cent Jews, 3.18 per cent White Russians, and the remainder were divided among the many peoples of the Soviet Union. Of the Party membership 12.8 per cent consists of women.

One can find just about as many types of Communists as there are types of human nature. I shall not soon forget the veteran Communist, Nikolai Alexandrovitch, whom I met several years ago in Bokhara. Sent there by the Party Central Committee with sweeping powers to reorganize and guide the activities of the young Bokharan Communist Party, Nikolai Alexandrovitch and his wife, like himself a student revolutionary in pre-war days, lived like Spartans, utterly oblivious and contemptuous of the rich gifts in silks and other luxuries which the not always very sincere Bokharan Communists would have

been only too glad to shower on such influential visitors. Later I found him in Moscow, where he was holding a high post in the Commissariat for Finance. Although he was suffering from a fairly advanced stage of tuberculosis, he never permitted himself any indulgence or any rest; and it required almost an order from the Central Committee to make him go to a sanatorium and take a cure. He was a classical example of the devoted idealistic Communist, of the man who lives solely with the idea of "building socialism." Such characters are not common in the Communist Party or anywhere else; but there are enough of them in Russia to constitute a very powerful moral reserve for the Soviet state order and to explain why it has successfully held out, in many cases against heavy odds.

By way of contrast to the Nikolai Alexandrovitches, one has the scandals which recur from time to time in Communist provincial organizations, which are apparently sometimes dominated by people not very different in character from American ward bosses. To strike the balance between the idealistic and the deteriorating tendencies in the Party would be a very difficult task; and no outsider could essay it with any degree of confidence. In order to have a proper base for any such estimate one would have to work for years in the Control Commission, which is the collective keeper of the Party conscience.

It is my personal impression that the best Communists, as a rule, are to be found in two classes: the intelligentsia whose revolutionary activity began in pre-war times, and the more earnest and sincere manual workers, especially those who fought on the various fronts of the civil war. The worst types of Communists are largely recruited from an element which is difficult to classify or define, consisting of people who belonged neither to the educated classes nor to the industrial working class before the Revolution. Every social upheaval brings to the top, along with its unsuspected heroes and idealists, a fair proportion of adventurers and careerists; and Russia does not represent an exception to this general rule.

It is never possible for a large ruling group to maintain the uniformly high standards of devotion and sincerity which

usually characterize a small persecuted sect. Under Tsarism no one joined any revolutionary party unless he was willing to take his chance of imprisonment or Siberian exile. To-day a worker may join the Communist Party because he thinks this will be an insurance against dismissal; an employee may put in an application for membership because he hopes this will be the stepping-stone to a higher post; a student may become a Communist because this will enhance his chances of being admitted to the university.

The Communist Party leadership is quite alive to these inevitable dangers of internal deterioration and tries to guard against them by enforcing a rigorous disciplinary code through the agency of the Control Commission, which has among its members many old Bolsheviks with a stern attitude toward any yearning after bourgeois fleshpots on the part of the younger Party recruits. Mediæval monastic orders demanded of their members the observance of the three rules of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Relative poverty is imposed on the Communist, who is limited to a salary of 225 rubles (about 115 dollars) a month, although there are certain loopholes here, because the Communist authors may retain most of the proceeds from their writings, and the highly placed Communist enjoys some perquisites in the shape of comfortable living quarters, traveling expenses, use of automobiles, etc. The Communist is not obliged to fulfill the requirement of chastity; but obedience, the third rule of the mediæval monk, is very strictly enforced. A Communist can commit no greater offense than to disobey a decision handed down by the Central Committee or to refuse to carry out an order which he has received from the Party committee under which he is working.

Functioning with the aid of a network of local commissions established all over the country, the Control Commission every year excludes from the Party a little over 2 per cent of its total membership. Expulsion is the supreme penalty; milder forms of punishment, such as reprimands and demotions, are more commonly applied. The most familiar causes of expulsion from the Party are drunkenness, embezzlement, heretical politi-

cal views, and what is rather quaintly called in Russian "connection with an alien element." This last phrase means that the person concerned has too many close associations, through marriage or otherwise, with "bourgeois" circles, in which no self-respecting proletarian is supposed to move.

Apart from these habitual failings, a glance through the columns of the journal published by the Central Committee, which reports the names and details of many expulsions, reveals a considerable variety of applications of the new discipline and the new morality. Sometimes tragic or comic human dramas are hidden behind these dry, matter-of-fact announcements. Here is a peasant, for instance, excluded for "having his child christened in a church and indulging in a drunken orgy," two very old Russian customs which, from the Communist standpoint, are equally objectionable. Another peasant is cast out because he abused his Party position to conceal his tax liabilities and to obtain an unfair share of credit from the local bank. Somewhere in the southeast a Communist is exposed as a former active participant in the White movement of General Denikin; he is lucky if he escapes with mere expulsion from the Party. Then there was the case of A. Abdukarimov, a member of the Central Soviet Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in Central Asia. It seems that his racial tradition was stronger than his grasp of the teachings of Marx and Lenin, and he arrested a fellow Uzbek who publicly took off his wife's veil, with the latter's consent. This was characterized, in the sentence of expulsion, as "outrageous opposition to the cause of liberating the women of the East."

Besides examining Communists against whom definite complaints are made, the Control Commission at long intervals resorts to wholesale "purges" of the Party. In 1929 it was decided to institute such a purge, with a view to checking up on the rapid numerical growth of the Party, which has been increasing at the rate of about 200,000 a year during the last few years, and eliminating undesirable elements. It was estimated in advance that about 150,000 Communists, or 10 per cent of the total membership (including the candidates) would

be expelled during this process. In a purge every Party member, regardless of whether any charges have been preferred against him or not, must appear before representatives of the Control Commission and satisfy them that he is a sound Communist in thought and action. In the factories non-Party workers are sometimes called on to participate in the purge by offering judgment on the Communists and pointing out those who are *shkurniki*, or people who look after their own skins, a familiar Russian characterization for careerists.

Communist morality is strictly pragmatic in character. Every action is judged not by any criterion of personal virtue or sin but from the standpoint of whether it advances or injures the interests of the Party, which, of course, are assumed to coincide with those of the proletariat. There is, for instance, no rule that a Communist must be a total abstainer. But if he drinks so long and deep that he discredits the Party by creating public scandals, or shows a tendency to lay his hands on state or public funds to which he may have access, he becomes liable to expulsion. The same standard is applied to other moral lapses. The Control Commission demands the absolute subordination of personal feelings to the welfare of the Party. So, in considering the applications of repentant Trotzkyists for readmission into the Party ranks it always lays down the condition that they must reveal the names of their associates in opposition work, even though these associates may be relatives or close friends, to whom they are bound by pledges of secrecy. Occasionally this demand encounters a decisive refusal; I recall the case of a Communist woman in Odessa who replied to a demand for the names of her associates in Trotzkyist underground work: —

"I should no more reveal them to you than I should have betrayed them to the Tsar's gendarmes before the Revolution."

But by the laws of Communist ethics the Control Commission has an undoubted right to demand any political information from Party members. On the whole it is my impression that the Control Commission carries out effectively its functions of hunting down heretics, maintaining Party discipline

and unity, and excluding obviously unworthy members. The notorious grafter, the debauched Party or Soviet official who resorts to the somewhat feudal practice of bringing pressure on the women in his employ to live with him, are almost certain to fall sooner or later into the far-flung net of the Control Commission. Of course, no mechanical institution can ensure 100 per cent loyalty and devotion in a large mass party. There are careerists clever enough to evade any sort of tests and traps that may be set for them; and there are always personally idealistic revolutionaries, more devoted to Communist ideas than many officially registered Party members, who fall under the ban of higher authority by associating themselves with some nonconformist opposition movement.

Notwithstanding its strict rules of internal discipline, the Communist Party has always had its heretics and dissenters. This is all the more natural and inevitable because such pre-revolutionary groups as the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists, to say nothing of more conservative parties, have been practically extinguished. The Communist Party, therefore, remains the sole agency for the expression of the political and economic differences of opinion which are bound to come up when the Soviet ship of state encounters unforeseen difficulties in its uncharted course.

The two most important dissident movements within the ranks of the Communist Party during recent years have been Trotzkyism and the so-called "Right Deviation." Of these, the former, in my opinion, has more significance for the past, and the latter for the future.

The first open intimation of a breach between Leon Trotzky and his associates in the Political Bureau was the publication in December 1923 of a message from Trotzky to the Moscow and Leningrad organizations of the Party, entitled *The New Course*. Rumors had been current for many months before this of serious differences of opinion between Trotzky and his adherents, of whom he had a few in the Central Committee, and the majority of the Party leaders. In *The New Course* Trotzky, greeting a recent decision of the Political Bureau to

the effect that more democracy should be introduced into the Communist Party organization, expressed the fear that the Party bureaucrats might not put this resolution into practice. He suggested that more consideration should be given to the youth in the Party councils, and that there should be more organized planning of the state economic life.

The publication of this appeal was the signal for a sharp struggle, especially within the Moscow organization of the Party, where Trotzky's supporters were strongest. But the Central Committee majority won all along the line. At the Thirteenth Congress of the Communist Party, held in the spring of 1924, Trotzky was almost completely isolated, and comparatively obscure Party functionaries assailed him and his views with impunity. A beginning was made with the tremendous publicity campaign, which developed more and more strongly in subsequent years and was designed to show, on the basis of Trotzky's numerous pre-war differences with Lenin, that he was never a real Bolshevik.

In the autumn of 1924 Trotzky published an introduction to a collection of his speeches and articles of 1917, entitled *The Lessons of October*. In this introduction he pointed out that Gregory Zinoviev and Leo Kamenev, who, along with Joseph Stalin, were his main opponents in the Party leadership, had opposed the launching of the successful Bolshevik insurrection in November 1917, and had incurred the unmeasured denunciation of Lenin, who called them "deserters and strike-breakers" for their attitude at that time.

This was regarded as a challenge by the Party leadership. A new flood of condemnatory articles poured from the presses. Trotzky was forced to resign from his post as War Commissar, in which he had really been superseded by the trusted appointee of the Central Committee, Mikhail Frunze, some time before, and withdrew to a Caucasian health resort for a prolonged vacation.

The year 1925 represented a new turn in the situation. Trotzky returned from the Caucasus in the spring and filled several minor posts, including that of head of the Concessions

Committee. Meanwhile a breach had developed between Stalin and his associates, Zinoviev and Kamenev. The latter desired to apply much more drastic punitive measures against Trotzky, including even his expulsion from the Party. Stalin opposed this and carried the majority of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee with him. Other differences cropped up. Zinoviev and Kamenev began to raise the cry that the conquests of the Revolution were in danger, that the Stalinite leadership of the Party was neglecting the task of fostering the international revolutionary movement and was promoting the strengthening of capitalism in Russia by a more moderate agrarian policy, which favored the growth of a new class of kulaks, or well-to-do peasants, in the villages.

The Fourteenth Congress of the Party, held at the end of 1925, witnessed a struggle on these issues. Stalin's mastery of the Party organization was again manifested; the Congress condemned as Menshevik and defeatist the views of Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had begun to express doubt as to the possibility of building up socialism in Russia alone, without any aid from the international revolutionary movement. While Trotzky preserved complete silence during this Congress, it was for some time credibly believed that his sympathies were with Stalin, who had saved him from complete political annihilation, rather than with his more vindictive enemies, Zinoviev and Kamenev.

However, for reasons which have never been altogether cleared up, Trotzky in the early summer of 1926 entered into a bloc with Zinoviev and Kamenev. Common jealousy of Stalin's predominant position and belief that their combined efforts might shake it probably influenced the formation of this alliance. Then Trotzky, as far back as 1905, had proclaimed his so-called theory of permanent revolution, which fitted in easily with the line of criticism adopted by Zinoviev and Kamenev. This theory, in essence, was that the Russian working class, without coöperation with the liberal bourgeoisie, would overthrow the Tsarist Government and set up a socialist state, which, in the course of time, would inevitably come into

conflict with the property-owning peasantry. The Russian Revolution, therefore, could only hope for lasting victory in the event that it received support in the form of other socialist revolutions in more advanced industrial countries.

Throughout 1926 and 1927 a furious theoretical controversy between the Stalinite majority and the opposition, headed by Trotzky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev, raged around the questions whether socialism could be successfully built up in a single country, whether the Soviet economic system could properly be called socialist or state-capitalist, and how far the Russian Revolution was dependent upon the international revolutionary movement for permanent survival. Conflicting texts from Lenin were hurled back and forth; and sometimes different meanings were extracted from the same text. The balance of quotations from Lenin during the period of the War, when he was convinced that the day of general socialist revolution was not far off, would tend to establish a close connection between the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and similar upheavals in other countries. But one of the last things which Lenin wrote, a pamphlet on *Coöperation*, contains the statement that "we have all the means for the establishment of a socialist society." [1]

This citation was a powerful weapon for the Stalinites in their contention that it was possible to build up socialism in a single country. They charged the oppositionists with unwarranted pessimism and lack of faith in the capacity of the Russian proletariat, and to the accusation of national limitation which was made against them by the Trotzkyists retorted that the successful building up of socialism in Russia would constitute the best means of encouraging revolution in other countries. The opposition also directed much criticism against the agrarian policy of the Party leadership, which it denounced as too favorable to the richer peasants, and in 1927 a new element entered into the controversy as a result of the elimination of the Chinese Communists from the nationalist revolutionary movement in that country. The opposition accused

[1] See Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 140.

the Party leadership of pursuing too timid and wavering methods in China, thereby condemning the Chinese Communists to inevitable defeat.

The Party leadership was rather slow in applying extreme disciplinary measures to the opposition leaders. There were plenty of warnings and resolutions of censure by the leading Party organs, and Trotzky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev were gradually stripped of their more important Party and Soviet posts. But the acute stage of the conflict was only reached in the autumn of 1927, on the eve of the Fifteenth Party Congress. The opposition demanded the right to print and circulate its platform, a long document covering almost every important question of Party policy. This permission was refused. Then the opposition in various clandestine ways began to print the platform illegally. The Party leadership responded with wholesale expulsions from the Party and with arrests of the individuals who were concerned with the illegal printing.

On the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, on November 7, 1927, groups of oppositionists organized counter-demonstrations under their own banners and slogans. Although this effort was very unsuccessful because of the small number of the participants, it gave the Party leadership an excuse for proceeding much more vigorously. Trotzky and Zinoviev were promptly expelled from the Party. The Party Congress, meeting at the end of the year, formally expelled all the other oppositionists of any prominence and laid down the rule that adherence to the views of the Trotzkyist opposition was inconsistent with membership in the Communist Party.

With expulsion and exile hanging over their heads Zinoviev and Kamenev weakened and left Trotzky alone in the rôle of a martyr to his principles. Together with most of their associates, they recanted and after a period of probation were readmitted into the Party. Trotzky remained unyielding, and early in 1928 he and a number of his chief associates were banished to various remote parts of the Soviet Union. The same fate overtook a smaller heretical group, headed by Sapronov and Smirnov, which had been even more violent than the

Trotzkyists in its denunciation of the Party leadership for alleged betrayal of revolutionary principles.

The fate of the Trotzkyists proved again that there may be any number of political parties in Russia, provided that one is in power and the others in jail. During 1927 the opposition had built up its own underground organization, with central and local committees paralleling those of the Party, and it was this implied challenge to its authority that the Communist Party leadership suppressed with the measures of wholesale expulsion and exile.

Trotzky's place of banishment was Alma Ata, in the eastern part of Russian Turkestan, not far from the Chinese frontier. He was not placed under actual restraint, but was kept under close observation. Notwithstanding this, he and his associates, all of them old revolutionists, well versed in the tricks of eluding guards and spies, kept up a lively clandestine correspondence between themselves and with the remnants of their underground organization throughout the country. Most of this correspondence, to be sure, ultimately fell into the hands of the Gay-Pay-Oo and the Party authorities.

Inasmuch as Trotzky displayed no inclination to modify his uncompromising attitude, and his followers in some cases began to distribute propaganda and attempt to stir up strikes in the state factories, the Party leadership decided to banish Trotzky and to crush his organization completely. During December and January there were sweeping arrests of the Trotzkyists, 150 being gathered in at one swoop by the Gay-Pay-Oo, or political police. Sentence of banishment for anti-Soviet activity was passed against Trotzky, and in February 1929 he left Russia, perhaps forever, for Turkey, the only country which apparently was willing, although rather grudgingly, to receive an exile with such a formidable revolutionary record.

The personal element in the Trotzkyist controversy is discussed in the following chapter. Its issue must be regarded as a decisive victory for the Party proletariat over the Party intelligentsia. For among Communist leaders one can distinguish two types: the pre-war émigré, usually an intellectual,

who lived abroad in the little colonies of exiled Russians which existed in England and France and Switzerland, wrote articles in the revolutionary newspapers, and returned to Russia, as a rule, after the downfall of Tsarism; and the revolutionary who remained in Russia, with periods of illegal work in factories and revolutionary circles alternating with terms of banishment and imprisonment. This second type of revolutionary was usually a worker. Now almost all of Trotzky's prominent associates and supporters, such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, and Rakovsky, and a large number of his rank-and-file followers belonged in this category of the former émigré intelligentsia, while Stalin's most reliable henchmen were of the ex-proletarian type. In view of the strong proletarian class-consciousness and anti-intelligentsia sentiment of the Party masses, this fact was of no small significance in contributing to the victory of the Party leadership.

It has been suggested both in Russia and abroad that some racial significance is attached to the elimination of the opposition, because the most prominent opposition leaders, Trotzky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Radek, were Jews, while the nine members of the Political Bureau, representing the Party leadership, are all Russians, with the exception of Stalin, a Georgian, and Rudziatak, a Lett. That anti-Semitism was not altogether absent from the controversy was admitted in 1926 by Emilian Jaroslavsky, Secretary of the Control Commission and in that capacity a most bitter opponent of the opposition. Jaroslavsky stated that he had received many letters from workers who regarded the opposition as an effort of Jews to capture the leadership of the Party. He condemned this anti-Semitic tendency unsparingly and declared that the struggle with the opposition must be carried on without any suggestion of racial antagonism. But, while anti-Semitism was an element, it was distinctly a minor rather than a decisive element in the episode of the Trotzkyist opposition.

There would seem to be little political future in Russia for Trotzkyism. Numerically it has never been very strong; the concern which it caused to the Party leadership is to be attributed not to its mass following but to the international reputation, past revolutionary achievements, and intellectual qualities of many of its leaders. The Trotzkyists could reasonably hope to win recruits for their extremist interpretation of the situation in Russia and their radical programme only among the workers; and it is far more difficult for an underground group to carry on agitation among the workers to-day than it was in Tsarist times. The Gay-Pay-Oo is at least as watchful and active as was the Tsarist secret police, and, what is more important, every factory has a large contingent of workers enrolled in the Communist Party and the Union of Communist Youth; and these workers, for the most part, would have no scruples about handing over to the authorities anyone whom they detected in surreptitious agitation.

Moreover, much ground has certainly been cut from under the feet of the Trotzkyists by the very radical turn in the agrarian policy of the Communist Party which set in early in 1928. The Party leadership forbade the circulation of the Trotzkyist platform and arrested anyone whom it caught printing this document. But if one reads through the agrarian section of this programme (the whole platform is printed in *The Real Situation in Russia* [1]) one will be amazed to find how great is the degree of similarity between this heretical programme of three years ago and the orthodox resolutions of the Communist Party to-day. Of the main agrarian proposals of the Trotzkyists — strengthened class war against the richer peasants in the village, intensified development of state and collective farms, release of the poorest peasants from taxation and heavier tax burdens for the rich, special agitation and organization work among the village poor — there is not one that has not been adopted in full or in very large part by the Party leadership. Inasmuch as the agrarian question was the most important internal point of difference between the Central Committee majority and the opposition, there would seem to be no reason, apart from such personal sentiments as loyalty to Trotzky and antipathy to Stalin, why those Trotzkyists

[1] Published in America by Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928.

who have not already done so should not return to the Party fold.[1]

The Secretary of the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party, K. Y. Bauman, declared in a speech in January 1929: —

"In the eyes of individual oppositionally disposed workers the Right Deviation and Trotzkyism begin to fuse into a general anti-Party deviation. For instance, the letter of one worker ends with the slogan: 'Long live the Right Deviation, long live Trotzky.'" [2]

What is this "Right Deviation," of which so much has been heard and written within the winter of 1928–1929 and which Stalin regards as a more serious menace than Trotzkyism? It is a direct reaction to the radical turn in Communist agrarian policy which began with the Fifteenth Party Congress and found expression in such measures as the forced development of state and collective farms, the adoption of measures of compulsion against rich peasants who were unwilling to sell their grain, the imposition of heavier tax burdens on the richer peasants, etc. Partly as a result of these measures, which deprived the more prosperous peasants of the incentive to raise any large surplus of marketable grain and other produce, a distinct shortage of agricultural products made itself felt during 1928.

This, together with the chronic shortage of certain kinds of manufactured goods, led to the growth of a sentiment in some Party circles to the effect that certain features of Communist economic policy should be modified with a view to giving greater scope to the peasant's instinct for individual gain. Specifically the Right Deviationists (the word "Right" is here used, of course, in its European political sense of conservative or moderate) favored a larger production of goods for immediate consumption, even at the expense of some of the ambitious investments in electrical stations and iron and steel plants, a

[1] In the summer of 1929 three of Trotzky's chief lieutenants in the Soviet Union, Radek, Smilga and Preobrazhensky, renounced their association with him and returned to the Party fold. Their example was followed by a considerable number of the rank-and-file oppositionists.

[2] Reported in the newspaper, *Workers' Moscow*, for January 9, 1929.

relaxation of the class war in the village, and a delay in the tempo of creating new state and collective farms. Addressing a plenary session of the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party on October 19, 1928, Stalin declared: —

"The victory of the Right Deviation in our Party would mean an enormous strengthening of the capitalist elements in our country. And what will a strengthening of the capitalist elements in our country mean? It will mean a weakening of the proletarian dictatorship and increased chances for the reëstablishment of capitalism."

The viewpoint of the advocates of the Right Deviation was made clearer by a letter which the Vice-Commissar for Finance, M. I. Frumkin, addressed to the plenary session of the Central Committee in November 1928. The letter itself was not published; but its general tone and spirit may be gauged from the following excerpts, which Stalin singled out for special denunciation: —

"The village, with the exception of a small part of the poor peasantry, is disposed against us."

"The position which has recently been taken has brought the basic masses of the middle-class peasants to adversity and lack of hope for the future."

"The extension of state farms should not be carried out in extreme haste."

"We must not interfere with the production of the farms of the kulaks (richer peasants), even while we combat their tendency to enslaving exploitation."

So far there has been no indication of a modification of Communist policy along the lines proposed by the Right Deviationists. They have achieved no more visible success than the Trotzkyists in making inroads on the solid unity of the organization. Their methods have been quite different from those of the Trotzkyists; they have been much more cautious and circumspect about violating the canons of Party discipline, and therefore have not exposed themselves to sweeping reprisals in the form of expulsions.

In some respects the Right Deviation seems a slighter men-

ace to Party unity than was Trotzkyism; in other ways its influence is wider and more significant. It has no personality of Trotzky's significance around whom to rally; and just because it is Right rather than Left it lacks the driving power of fanaticism which characterized Trotzky's small band of loyal supporters. Reason, rather than emotion, is the dominating element in this new heresy; and reason is not, as a rule, a force that makes people face exile and imprisonment with equanimity.

On the other hand the Right Deviationists derive constant unspoken support for their arguments from the economic difficulties through which the country is passing, and also from the international situation, which is certainly not promising from the standpoint of a speedy resumption of successful revolutionary activity outside of Russia. So long as the Party pursues a rigorous Leftward course, such as it certainly pursued steadily during 1928 and 1929, and so long as that course is accompanied by long queues waiting to purchase the scanty stocks of agricultural and manufactured products, the Right Deviation, no matter how often it may be officially condemned, is bound to reappear in some form or other.

The spirit of Russian Communism strongly suggests that of a new, young, fanatical, crusading religion, with a set of infallible dogmas in the shape of the teachings of Marx and Lenin and a rigid hierarchical organization in the Communist Party organization to enforce discipline and doctrinal orthodoxy. The Communists have been likened to the Jesuits, to the Mohammedans, and to the revolutionaries of France. But I think perhaps their strongest psychological similarity is to the English Puritans. Cromwell and Milton would probably feel more at home in Moscow, with its utter absence of gay night life, its contempt for frivolity, its intensive concentration on purposes far removed from individual enjoyment, in which respects it is strikingly different from the spirit which prevails in every other European capital. Self-sacrifice and devotion, intolerance of opposition, boundless faith in an end which justifies the use of any and all means for its achievement —

which of these typical psychological traits of Soviet Russia could not be matched in the fresh early stages of many of the creeds which at various times have captured the faith and imagination of different sections of mankind?

The Communists themselves would be the first to admit that they are still far from their goal of the free, equal, classless society. Whether this goal will ever be reached is a question that defies answering, because it raises so many other problems which are still in process of solution. How far is it possible to preserve over decades, over generations, the first hot idealism of a social upheaval? How much does a Communist monopoly of education and propaganda weigh in the balance against the deep-rooted inherited instincts of private property and self-enrichment, instincts which find a certain if a limited expression even in the Soviet economic order, where money has by no means lost its value and attraction? Is there some element of truth in Trotzky's Cassandra prophecy that a socialist government in Russia must come into conflict with the peasantry and look for salvation only in the dubious prospect of violent social revolution in Western Europe?

Whether they go forward triumphantly to their goal or whether they are deflected very far from their original course, like many groups of enthusiasts before them, these Russian Communists in their leather jackets have wrought a tremendous work, not only of destruction, but of reconstruction and remoulding. Compared with them, Peter the Great, that giant innovating figure in Russian history, seems but a pygmy. For Peter, with all his boundless energy, touched only the thin top crust of Russian society. The Communists have churned up its very depths; there is not a village in Russia or a nomad clan in the Kirghiz steppes that has not somehow felt their leavening touch. Were every repressive agency at the disposition of the Communist Party to disappear overnight, the old order in Russia could never return. Too much new seed has been sown; too many new ideas and relationships have grown up. Bolshevism has brought a good deal of hard metal into the Russian character, formerly soft almost to the point

of flabbiness. The Communist Party, with its gigantic regimentation of the national will for a common purpose, has created in Russia what the Tsars, with all their ironclad methods of rule, could never build up: a genuine sense for discipline and order.

"The sacred madness of the brave." This phrase of Maxim Gorky is a good epitaph for this epoch, the Bolshevik epoch in Russian history. And the future will show on which word in Gorky's double-edged phrase the decisive emphasis must be placed.

IV

PERSONALITIES OF THE REVOLUTION

OVER the impersonal structure of the Soviet state and the Communist Party organization broods the mighty personality of Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin,[1] who has probably done more to deflect the course of world history than any political figure since Napoleon. What sort of man was this Lenin, whose body lies embalmed in solemn state in the sepulchre on the Red Square, an object of visitation for hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from all parts of Russia, whose picture has pushed out the ikons from many workers' homes, whose commandments, for large numbers of the Russian people, and for smaller groups of persecuted disciples abroad, have all the authority of revealed religion?

The main secret, perhaps, of the significance of Lenin's personality lies in its rare combination of two qualities; absolute unwavering fanatical devotion to a set of theoretical principles, and extraordinary flexibility in choosing workable means for realizing those principles. Lenin was equally great as a revolutionary enthusiast and as a practical statesman. He knew not only when to advance but also when to retreat, a lesson which his heirs and successors might well keep fresh in memory. He could swing backward as well as forward with the movement of the revolutionary pendulum. That is why he was laid to rest in honor on the Red Square instead of being hurried off to some Russian equivalent for

[1] Lenin's real name was Vladimir Ilyitch Ulianov; but he became so famous under the revolutionary pseudonym of Lenin that he will never be known under any other appellation. The name Nikolai Lenin, which has acquired such wide currency outside of Russia, is based on a misunderstanding. Lenin was in the habit of signing his articles in the revolutionary press "N. Lenin," and somehow the assumption grew up that the noncommittal "N." stood for Nikolai.

the guillotine which ended the career of Maximilien Robespierre, who, similar to Lenin in iron revolutionary will, lacked the latter's capacity for manœuvre and compromise and for finding some exit from the most threatening impasse.

Lenin was born in 1870 in the sleepy little Volga town of Simbirsk (now renamed Ulianovsk). His father was an inspector of schools who, as he rose in the service, received the patent of nobility which was a regular reward in the higher grades of the Tsarist officialdom. So, while it is technically correct to say that Lenin was the son of a nobleman, he did not grow up in the atmosphere of wealth and social display which would have characterized one of the wealthy hereditary aristocratic families. His boyhood environment was rather that of a Russian middle-class intellectual family; and, like so many sons of this class, both Vladimir Lenin and his older brother, Alexander, from high-school days were drawn into the underground revolutionary movement.

Alexander, who, according to some acquaintances of the Ulianov family, displayed more boyhood precocity and promise than Vladimir, was charged with participation in a student plot to kill Tsar Alexander III and was hanged. Vladimir suffered the imprisonment and exile which have been the lot of practically every active Russian revolutionist, but went abroad in 1900 and spent most of his life up to 1917 in England, Switzerland, and other foreign countries, returning to Russia only for a comparatively short time during the revolutionary movement of 1905. He was one of the recognized leaders of the exiled Social Democratic groups, and was distinguished for his uncompromising intolerance of anything which he regarded as un-Marxian and heretical, either in the field of doctrine or in the field of organization.[1] He would always encourage a split in the thin ranks of the émigrés rather than accept what he regarded as a harmful compromise solution of a problem.

Before the War Lenin was known to the small, poverty-stricken, always quarreling émigré groups, to a few foreign Socialists, and to the ever-watchful agents of the Tsarist secret police. It is doubtful whether one Russian in a thousand had ever heard of him. That he and his small band of Bolshevik disciples, always at odds not only with the Mensheviks, who represented another Social Democratic tendency, and the Social Revolutionists, the successors of the nineteenth century *Narodniki*, but with little groups of rebels and doubters in their own camp, could replace the Tsar and his vast bureaucratic apparatus at the head of the Russian state would have seemed too fantastic a proposition even to merit discussion. And yet this is precisely what happened.

[1] I describe the theoretical differences of the Russian revolutionary parties in more detail in Chapter I.

The World War prepared the way for this unprecedented leap to power. Lenin himself, with the prophetic sense that is sometimes vouchsafed to the fanatic and denied to the man of reason and moderation, foresaw immediately the possibility that the War would lead to violent revolutionary upheavals. The following significant phrase appears in the manifesto which he wrote and the Bolshevik fraction of the Social Democratic Party published on the outbreak of the War: —

"To turn the contemporary imperialistic war into civil war, that is the sole correct proletarian solution."

And in Russia in 1917 this slogan was realized. Returning from his exile in Switzerland, Lenin immediately directed the course of the Bolshevik Party, which was somewhat wavering and confused in the first weeks after the March Revolution, along the line of no support for the Provisional Government and no support for the War. Undeterred by the accusations that he was a German spy, ridiculous to anyone who knew his lifelong record of bitter hostility to capitalism in all countries, undaunted by the failure of the first disorderly revolt against the Provisional Government in July, following which a number of Bolshevik leaders were arrested and Lenin himself was obliged to go into hiding, he worked untiringly for the downfall of the weak Kerensky régime, keeping closely in touch with the rising revolutionary wave throughout the country.

If Lenin proved himself a master of the strategy of revolutionary attack when he organized and pressed on to a successful conclusion the Bolshevik seizure of power in November 1917, he proved his signal capacity for practical statesmanship when, by throwing the weight of his prestige and authority into the balance, he wrested a bare majority vote in the Party Central Committee for the signature of the ruthless Brest–Litovsk Peace, dictated by the German Government. Nothing is more difficult for a young and successful revolution than a retreat; and Brest–Litovsk was more than a retreat, it was a humiliating rout. Only Lenin's firm realistic grasp on the fact that no resistance was possible, that nothing could bring the crumbling Russian army back into the trenches, staved off the threatened German occupation of Moscow and Petrograd, which might have spelled the end of the new Soviet state.

This same capacity for realistic appraisal of a situation came to the rescue of Lenin and the Communist Party in the spring of 1921, when, despite military victories on all fronts, the Soviet Government was in the gravest danger of collapse from the almost impossible economic situation resulting from the collapse of industrial production and the steady decline of the planted area. Lenin perceived that the one measure which could give immediate relief was a stimulus to the productive instinct of the peasants through the substitution of a fixed tax and free trade for the former system of forced requisitioning of their produce. This was done; the sharp crisis which found expression in the mutiny of the sailors at Kronstadt and numerous peasant uprisings all over the country was overcome; the country was able to enter upon a new stage of development and economic reconstruction.

Lenin's prescience had its limits and, broadly speaking, they were nationalist limits. More than once he grossly misjudged the political situation and revolutionary possibilities in other countries. He proclaimed again and again that the War must produce as its immediate aftermath other successful socialist revolutions. Strangely enough, he understood the Russian peasants, with whom he had comparatively little

contact, better than the labor and socialist movements of the countries where he spent so many years of his life. He knew that the Russian peasant soldier would not fight against Brest–Litovsk in 1918; he knew that the peasantry would wreck the whole revolutionary experiment if they were not placated in 1921. But he never fully understood the difficulties which stand in the way of violent Marxist revolution in England and France, Germany and Italy.

The international revolution which Lenin predicted so often and so confidently and which he believed would inevitably follow the triumph of Bolshevism in Russia has not yet broken out; and perhaps its prospects tend to grow dimmer rather than brighter with the passing of years. But as the leader of the Russian Revolution he ranks among the great statesmen of history.

When I recently stood in the lower chamber of the wooden mausoleum where the physical shell of Lenin is still preserved in its glass case, with the growth of beard on the face, the Order of the Red Banner pinned on the rough suit, and one hand clenched in an attitude of implacable determination that seems to defy death itself, another scene rose involuntarily in my memory. Far away from Moscow, under the hot blue sky of Turkestan, in "Jeweled Samarkand" rises the oval-shaped memorial sepulchre of Tamerlane, "the Earth-Shaker," whose armies overran Western Asia in the Middle Ages. A slab of the rare precious black nephritic stone marks Tamerlane's grave; and his horse-tail standard hangs near by, just as Lenin's mausoleum is the repository for one of the smoke-blackened red flags of the Paris Commune.

Tamerlane, if history does him no injustice, celebrated his captures of cities with pyramids of human heads. The Russian Revolution, like every crusading upheaval, demanded its toll of human sacrifices. And, although the mind of Lenin belongs to Europe, his spirit has no little affinity with Asia, the continent from which all the great religions and most of the great conquerors have come.

It is among the founders of religions rather than among the

destructive conquerors, the Tamerlanes and Attilas, that Lenin's place will be found. He was one of the greatest haters of all time; and in this fact lies no little of the secret of his hold on the aroused revolutionary masses. His detestation of capitalism, which he regarded as the chief instrument of human enslavement, was heightened to a feverish pitch by the World War, every one of whose victims he regarded as a direct victim of the inevitable clash of competing imperialisms. For an expression of this spirit take the following excerpt from a letter which he addressed to the workers of America in the summer of 1918: —

"The bourgeoisie of international imperialism killed ten million human beings and mutilated twenty million in 'their war,' a war to decide whether British or German robbers should rule over the whole world.

"If our war, the war of the suppressed and exploited against the oppressors and exploiters, will cost half a million or a million victims in all countries, the bourgeoisie will say that the first victims are justified and the second are not.

"The proletariat will give quite another answer." [1]

Boundless hatred for the capitalist system and its upholders, boundless faith in the right and ability of the working class to dominate a new social order — these were certainly the two dominant passions of Lenin's strong and simple character. But in this hatred there was no element of personal revenge or vindictiveness.

In private life Lenin was a typical old-fashioned idealistic revolutionary intellectual, with simple tastes and standards of living, no vices, predominantly classical tastes in literature and music, and a rather disapproving eye for the element of Bohemian dilettantism that sometimes made itself felt on the fringes of the Bolshevik movement. The vulgar fleshpots of power and office meant nothing to him. In his two rooms in the Kremlin he lived in much the same simple Spartan style which he had maintained during the years of poverty and exile. He was naturally, not ostentatiously, indifferent to

[1] See the Russian edition of Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, p. 411.

LENIN'S WIDOW — NADYEZHDA CONSTANTINOVNA KRUPSKAYA

dress, and the typical Russian workman's cap was his favorite headgear. This simplicity of life represented an additional element in his hold on the Russian masses; still another was his transparent sincerity in setting forth the difficulties and hardships through which the country was passing and had to pass, and in denouncing bureaucracy and other abuses.

"Ilyitch (a familiar affectionate term for Lenin) never lies to us," became almost a byword among the Communist workmen. Just because he was so certain in his own mind of the correctness of his Marxist revolutionary interpretation of life (I know of no evidence that he ever wavered in this faith, even in the most discouraging moments), he could afford to be unsparing in criticizing defects of detail and execution. The fanatic can sometimes despise the propagandist devices of the petty politician.

Lenin the man quite escapes and defies one's judgment because he is so completely submerged in the ideal of Leninism, or revolutionary Marxism. I doubt whether a man of corresponding will, energy, and mentality ever lived who was so averse to any theatrical exploitation of his personality, so willing to sink himself in his cause. To that cause, the cause of Communism, he gave his life in the fullest and most literal sense of the phrase. And by the success or failure of that cause the future will in large measure judge the significance of his life.

The mantle of Lenin's leadership has fallen on Joseph Vissarionovitch Stalin, General Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, about whom less is probably authentically known than about any other important personality in world politics. Stalin has surrounded himself with a cloud of mystery comparable with the clouds which sweep about the peaks of his native Caucasian Mountains.

Lenin combined the functions of leader of the Communist Party and head of the Soviet state. Although he was an extremely busy man, he was by no means inaccessible; many foreigners have talked with him; genuine interviews with him have been published in the foreign press. Stalin, on the

other hand, is exclusively a Party functionary and holds no state office. He sees almost no foreigners, unless they are Communists or members of the left-wing labor delegations which sometimes visit Russia. Even the American business man with a disposition to discuss granting credits, for whom almost any door in Soviet officialdom will be unlocked, has no access to Stalin, who never talks to representatives of the foreign press, and speaks, as a rule, only at Party congresses and meetings, from which non-Communists are barred.

All this external reserve does not, I think, cover an especially complex character. Strength of will and simplicity of world outlook are characteristic of Stalin, as they were of Lenin; and if one adds to these an extraordinary astuteness in manipulating the mechanism of the Communist Party organization, one has a fair measure of the main traits in the personality of the new uncrowned leader of the Communist Party. Stalin is an organizer and a man of action, rather than a theoretician; his published writings consist mostly of restatements of Leninist theories, sometimes accompanied by concrete illustrations of their practical application, and reprints of speeches and articles on current topics. For Stalin there is only one Marx, and Lenin is his prophet.

Physically the Communist General Secretary is an impressive figure, over six feet tall and well built, with black hair and an olive skin that reveals his Asiatic origin. For Stalin's real name is Djugashvili; he was born fifty years ago in the town of Gori, in the Tiflis Province of Georgia, on the southern side of the Caucasus Mountain range which is one of the boundaries between Europe and Asia. Stalin means "steel" in Russian, and this word well summarizes the character of the man who chose to bear it.

Stalin's father, a shoemaker, sent young Joseph to the local church school and then tried to make a priest out of him by educating him in a theological seminary; but this proved a hopeless task. Stalin was soon expelled from the seminary for subversive ideas, and entered on a long career of revolutionary activity, mostly in Tiflis, Baku, and other Caucasian

centres, in the course of which he was arrested and sent into exile on no less than six occasions. Five times he escaped and returned to resume his underground work; he was released from his last term of exile in the remote north by the March Revolution.

Stalin was always a consistent Bolshevik and was one of Lenin's most trusted lieutenants in guiding the Party work inside Russia. He made three short trips abroad, to attend the Stockholm and London conferences of the Party and to attend a meeting of the Bolshevik émigrés in Cracow. After the Revolution Stalin at different times held the posts of Commissar for Nationalities and Commissar for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, besides serving on various fronts in the civil war. In recognition of his activity in defending the town of Tsaritsin, the so-called "Red Verdun" of the lower Volga, against the troops of the Cossack General Krasnov, the name Tsaritsin was changed to Stalingrad. Himself a member of one of the minor nationalities of the Soviet Union, Stalin had much to do with working out the nationality policy of the Soviet Government, which is the subject of a separate chapter.

Stalin's emergence as the future leader of the Communist Party could be foreseen after Lenin's final breakdown in the spring of 1923, followed, after an interval of almost a year, by his death in January 1924, made the question of candidates for the succession acute. As General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, he held a strategically dominating position in matters of organization; and his opponents, especially the Trotzkyists, charge that he used to the fullest extent the opportunities which this post afforded of packing the provincial and city Party committees with his own partisans. The Stalinites retort that these are slanderous accusations, put into circulation by disgruntled people who failed to capture control of the Party for their own ends. They point to the unanimous votes registered at Party Conferences and Congresses as proof that Stalin's policies command the approbation of the solid masses of the Party members.

That the practice of Party politics in times of controversy can be pretty sharp is undeniable. But the fact that Stalin prevailed over Trotzky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev in the struggle for Party leadership does not necessarily prove that his methods were less ethical than were theirs. It does tend to show that he was more skillful, logical, and successful in driving toward his goal.

Stalin has developed a technique of achieving power by seeming to put it aside. At every stage in the internal Communist political controversies of the last years he has cloaked himself with the formidable authority of "the Party," expressed in resolutions and decisions of its central organs, although at no time during recent years have these resolutions and decisions, in important points, failed to coincide with Stalin's own will and opinions.

An amusing minor illustration of this technique was furnished to a foreign journalist who happened to be in the same summer resort with Stalin and hopefully put in an application for an interview. A reply came back to the effect that "Stalin never gives interviews, unless the Party commands him to do so." This close identification of himself with the Party organization is not the least of the elements in Stalin's rise to power. The spirit of Bolshevism is quite opposed to any kind of self-assertive, flamboyant, visible dictator on a white horse. Stalin understands and respects this spirit; that is one reason why his tenure of real power has been so long and unbroken.

One prediction about Stalin which was freely voiced several years ago has been pretty effectively demolished by the developments of the last year or two. This was to the general effect that, after ridding himself of the extremist opposition of Trotzky, Stalin would inaugurate a policy of concessions to foreign capital and to the property-owning instincts of the more prosperous peasants. As is pointed out more than once in this book, nothing of the kind happened; on the contrary, it was just after the expulsion of the Trotzkyists from the Party that Stalin embarked on the daring policy of trying to achieve socialism in agriculture — a problem which fairly

baffled Lenin himself. Was this a retort to the Trotzkyist taunts of opportunist betrayal of communist principles, or a response to immediate economic difficulties, connected with the refusal of the peasants to sell their grain, or the execution of a long-planned economic policy, or a master-stroke of internal Party politics — to carry out a large part of Trotzky's agrarian programme while sending Trotzky into exile? It is difficult to say; perhaps all these factors entered into the situation. At all events, Stalin is aiming at a difficult goal, which will demand for its achievement all the iron will and stubborn determination with which he is credited.

In the last year of his life, with a second and final nervous breakdown impending, Lenin committed to paper a sort of political testament, in which he expressed himself with the utmost freedom regarding the personalities of some of his colleagues and predicted that the main danger of a Party split lay in the clashing and different temperaments of Stalin and Trotzky, whom he characterized as "the two most gifted leaders of the present Central Committee."[1]

Lenin's apprehensions have been at least partially justified; although there has been no split, in the sense of a large-scale division of the Party masses into two hostile camps, there has been an elimination of many well-known Communists who sympathized with Trotzky; and the prolonged personal struggle between Stalin and Trotzky has ended with the former in the Kremlin and the latter in exile, a late and striking addition to the ranks of the émigrés. One of the political fables, which the Russians call "anecdotes" and of which there are so many in Russia, represents Trotzky as standing before the mausoleum of Lenin and reflecting: —

"He is alive, although dead; and I am dead, although alive."

[1] This testament has never been published in Russia, but was read at a session of the Twelfth Party Congress in the spring of 1924, after Lenin's death. Its authenticity is unchallenged, and was admitted by implication by Stalin himself in his last verbal passage-at-arms with Trotzky in the session of the Party Central Committee in October 1927. Its text has been several times published abroad, most recently in the book, *The Real Situation in Russia*, a collection of Trotzkyist documents, published in America by Harcourt, Brace and Company, and in Germany by the Avalun-Verlag, of Dresden.

There was truth as well as imagination in this fable. Trotzky is the tragic figure of the Revolution, an outcast from the new social order which, as President of the Petrograd Soviet in the decisive weeks preceding the overthrow of the Kerensky régime and later as War Commissar, he contributed so much to build. He is a Russian Danton — a Danton who has paid for his downfall not by the swift sharp stroke of the guillotine but by the slower and possibly more painful process of gradual elimination from the scene, extending over a number of years.

Both temperamental and political factors were involved in Trotzky's fall. Throughout his long revolutionary career, up to 1917, Trotzky was a man of such strong individuality that he could never remain long within the ranks of an organized political party or group. He had to be leader or nothing. He came into frequent and bitter clashes with Lenin, whom, as late as 1913, he called "that professional exploiter of every backwardness in the Russian labor movement," adding: "The whole edifice of Leninism at the present time is based on lies and falsifications, and contains within itself the poisonous beginning of its own disintegration." [1]

Lenin himself was no mealy-mouthed controversialist and he more than once in pre-revolutionary days characterized Trotzky by epithets which were equally trenchant and uncomplimentary. All these things, on the surface, were forgotten during the period of revolution and civil war, when Trotzky joined the Bolshevik Party and held the highest offices in its service; but they constituted a veritable arsenal of material for the upholders of the Central Committee majority in their campaign to discredit Trotzky which began in 1924.

Trotzky was irresistibly drawn into the revolutionary movement of 1917; his fiery rebel temperament could be satisfied only with the most extreme slogans and policies; and Lenin, whom he came sincerely to respect and who respected him,

[1] See *Lenin about Trotzky*, published by Novaya Moskva, Moscow, 1925, pp. 217–219. The above-cited vigorous expressions were used in a letter from Trotzky to the Georgian Menshevik member of the Duma, N. S. Ckheidze.

despite all the sharp early quarrels, was able to give free scope to Trotzky's vast fund of energy and organizing ability, and still maintain intact the unity and discipline of the Party.

But it proved impossible for Trotzky to work in harness with Lenin's disciples after the latter had become incapacitated. And there were several things which barred Trotzky from succeeding Lenin as Party leader. There was the taint of heresy about him in the eyes of the older Bolsheviks, who could not forget that he had only joined the Party in 1917; there were the many enemies whom he had made through his vitriolic pen and through his ruthless administrative measures as Soviet War Lord; there was a widespread feeling that, while Trotzky was an invaluable leader in the active, destructive period of revolution, he was too mercurial and unstable to be a reliable guide in the slower and more prosaic work of economic reconstruction. Finally, the whole Party organization was in the hands of his enemies, which meant that every attack on him received maximum publicity, while in presenting his own case he was handicapped by the strict rules of Party discipline. Over long periods of time he could make no public speeches and the newspapers did not print his articles. When he defied Party discipline and began to circulate his articles through underground channels he could reach only a small number of Communists, and those mostly his own sympathizers; and by this he placed on himself the stigma of breach of Party discipline and illegal activity.

Some day, when Stalin and Trotzky belong to history as completely as Boris Godunov and Prince Shuisky, some future Aleksei Tolstoy or Moussorgsky will perhaps write a great drama or opera based on the tragedy of the clash of these irreconcilable personalities, the Man of Steel and the Man of Fire.

So far Trotzky perhaps enjoyed the satisfaction of the biting word, and Stalin that of the decisive deed. Trotzky's speech before the hostile Central Committee which decreed his expulsion from its midst in October 1927 was a great rhetorical effort. One may recall two or three of its phrases: —

"The ruling faction thinks that everything can be done with force. This is a basic mistake. Force can play a great revolutionary rôle, but on one condition — that it be subordinated to a correct class policy. . . . Stalin's momentary victory in the organization will have for its consequence his political shipwreck. . . . The roughness and disloyalty, of which Lenin wrote, are no longer personal qualities; they are the characteristic qualities of the ruling group, both in its own policy and in the guidance of the organization."

This last reference was to Lenin's political testament, in which, in a postscript, apparently written in a moment of sharp exasperation, he characterized Stalin as rough and disloyal and recommended his removal as Secretary of the Party Central Committee. But against all Trotzky's oratorical darts and slings Stalin himself was composed and immovable, while Trotzky's speech was drowned in a chorus of abusive outcries from the overwhelmingly Stalinite majority of the Central Committee. When Stalin came to speak he declared that he had twice offered his resignation as General Secretary, but that the Party had rejected it on both occasions.

Shortly after this episode Trotzky wrote a letter to the Istpart, or Commission for the Study of the History of the Party and the Revolution, which from the first sentence to the last was a passionate vindication of his own rôle in the Revolution and a bitter satirical denunciation of his enemies. It was as impressive as the spring of a long-baited lion; and more than one highly placed comrade must have smarted under the lash of Trotzky's stinging satire. But Stalin's régime saw to it that this letter had only the scantiest surreptitious circulation within Russia, and few people outside of the country could even understand some of the points which were made.

The last and perhaps the most vivid illustration of this futile struggle of the biting word against the decisive deed falls after Trotzky had landed, a man absolutely without a country, in Constantinople. Most people who read Trotzky's articles in the British and American press, especially those who were familiar with his mastery of invective, must have been surprised at the relative moderation of their tone. But this very moderation had its deep-seated purpose and logic. Trotzky must have felt that, if he burst out with some vehement abuse of Stalin as a ruthless tyrant, the latter would have been only contemptuously amused at this sign of an émigré's helpless rage. So he chose his method of attack more subtly, selecting just the points on which he thought Stalin would prove most sensitive. He painted the latter not as some villainous Nero, but rather as a mediocrity, "the average man" of the Party. He dwelt on such points as Stalin's alleged theoretical weakness and ignorance of foreign languages.

Hatred usually teaches one where to strike. But Stalin was again equal to the occasion. Trotzky's articles in the "bourgeois press" were made the starting point for a final campaign against his personal and political character. "Mr. Trotzky in the service of the bourgeoisie," was the theme on which thousands of Party officials held forth at Communist workers' meetings all over the country. And these meetings passed their resolutions denouncing Trotzky as a traitor and renegade to the Revolution, although only a negligible percentage of the participants had any first-hand knowledge of the contents of the offending articles.

Stalin delivered a further counterstroke when an enterprising American news agency offered to print in full any reply which he might care to make to Trotzky. A reply was sent back to the general effect that Stalin was too busy to bother about such trivialities.

The last laugh in this prolonged historic duel would seem to be with Stalin, if indeed the preoccupations of his office leave him much time or inclination for laughter.

So far I have devoted this chapter to three men, of whom one is dead, one in exile, and the third the most powerful figure in the Soviet Union at the present time, because it seems to me that, in their several ways, they have been the most important personalities in the Revolution. What of the other prominent figures in the Communist Party and the Soviet Government?

After Lenin's death there was naturally much speculation as to his successor in the post of Premier. "We must have a Christian," a Communist said at that time, with a smile. By this he meant, of course, not a Christian in the theological sense of the term, but a Slavic Russian of the same racial stock as the majority of the population. Aleksei Ivanovitch Rykov, at that time President of the Supreme Economic Council, seemed the most eligible of the candidates with this basic qualification, and he has held the office of Premier ever since.[1]

I had an opportunity to observe Rykov fairly closely during a trip of inspection to the drought-stricken provinces of the lower Volga on which I accompanied him several years ago. Two features which impress one are the clear blue eyes and the deeply lined face. In manner Rykov has much of the simple, winning, homely hospitality which one often finds in the homes of the Russian provincial intelligentsia. On this trip he made the impression of having to struggle rather hard physically to keep up with the exactions of his office: speeches in the hot sun of factory courtyards, long tours of inspection daily in salvaged war automobiles over jolting country roads, the hearing of all sorts of complaints and petitions, hasty meals bolted at irregular times on the simply appointed Volga steamboat which was his means of conveyance.

Mikhail Ivanovitch Kalinin, President of the All-Russian Soviet Executive Committee, is the best living advertisement for the Soviet Government among the peasantry. If all Russia's peasants could be rolled into one to produce a common type, the result might quite easily be Kalinin; a spare and slightly stooped figure, with shrewd and kindly blue eyes, a wrinkled face, and a short straw-colored beard. And Kalinin

[1] Rykov, Tomsky, and Bukharin, the three outstanding leaders in the "Right Deviation," described in the preceding chapter, signed a statement, which appeared in the Soviet press on November 26, 1929, admitting that they had been wrong in their disagreements with the Party Central Committee and professing readiness to combat all deviations from the general Party line. This recantation followed the expulsion of Bukharin from the Political Bureau and the warning from the Central Committee to Rykov and Tomsky that they faced a similar fate.

is of peasant origin, a native of the village of Verkhnaya Troitsa, in the flax-producing province of Tver, which lies between Moscow and Leningrad.

Kalinin's functions are more similar to those of a European than of an American president; a striking feature of his antechamber is the crowd of petitioners, mostly peasants, from all parts of the Soviet Union, who come to present their grievances and problems to the "All-Russian Starosta," as Kalinin is frequently called. (The Starosta was the headman elected by peasant villages before the Revolution.)

One of Kalinin's functions is to receive newly appointed diplomats when they present their credentials; he wears conventional clothing on such occasions, and said "Your Majesty" for the first and probably the last time in his life when he went to meet King Amanullah of Afghanistan, on the latter's arrival in Moscow in the spring of 1928. But this peasant-president perhaps feels more at home when he goes back to his village for summer vacation, dons the peasant shirt and sandals, and pitches hay with his old neighbors.

The leading authority on Communist theory, especially after the elimination of the Trotzkyist opposition, was Nikolai Bukharin, for many years editor of the Communist Party Central organ, *Pravda*, and author of books and pamphlets on Marxist subjects. A fiery and eloquent speaker, quite popular among the workers because of his almost ostentatiously austere personal life, Bukharin, who began his political career after the Revolution as a heretic of the "left," is in some danger of ending it as a heretic of the "right."[1]

Bukharin was a main organizer of the so-called "left" Communist opposition to Lenin on the question of signing the Brest-Litovsk Peace, and strayed off the straight line of Party orthodoxy again during the dispute about the proper rôle of the trade-unions which preceded the introduction of the New Economic Policy. His later deviations have been rather in a "right" or moderate direction. So in 1925, when the

[1] Bukharin was expelled from the Political Bureau of the Communist Party in November 1929, by decision of the Party Central Committee.

Party seemed committed to a policy of tolerating the growth of a prosperous peasant class in the villages, Bukharin, whose tongue sometimes runs a little ahead of his discretion, blurted out the slogan "Get rich" for the peasants. This aroused a storm of maliciously gleeful criticism from the Trotzkyists, and Bukharin withdrew the offending expression.

During the winter of 1928–1929 it was a matter of common gossip that Bukharin was sulking in his tent as a result of differences with the Party leadership on the questions of forcing the tempo of industrialization and pushing collective forms of agriculture, and that he had little to do either with editing the *Pravda* or with the work of the Communist International, where he formerly played a leading rôle. A sharp-tongued oppositionist, Sapronov, long since cast utterly into outer darkness by the Party authorities, once characterized Bukharin as "that ever-sinning, ever-repenting Magdalene." Has he repented of his recent "right deviation"? Time will show.

Trotzky's old post of War Commissar is now held by Klimenti Voroshilov, who makes a fine figure of a man on horseback as he rides every May Day through one of the Kremlin gates to review the military parade on the Red Square and recite the oath of the Red Army soldiers for the new recruits to repeat after him. Voroshilov is not a professional soldier, but the son of a poor peasant. As a boy he worked in the mines, entered the revolutionary movement, and suffered the usual experiences of arrest and persecution. He saw a good deal of military action during the civil war, when he was for a time a political commissar attached to Budenny's cavalry army, which carried out so many brilliant raids against the Whites and the Poles. As commander of the North Caucasus military district he helped to root out the last remains of the White movement there. Like his predecessor, Mikhail Frunze, the immediate successor of Trotzky, Voroshilov was regarded as a man whom the Party leadership could entrust with the management of the army.

Stalin's right-hand man in matters of Party organization

is Vyacheslav Molotov. When symptoms of unsound views began to crop up in the Moscow Communist Party organization in the fall of 1928 Molotov was commissioned to clean up the situation and reassert the authority of the Central Party organs, which he vigorously and expeditiously did.

V. V. Kuibishev, as head of the Supreme Economic Council, is responsible for the execution of the most complicated and extensive task of industrial management in the world. He brings to it a spirit of boundless optimism; no matter how high the State Planning Commission estimates the capacity of the Soviet industries for increased production, Kuibishev is always sure that even more could be accomplished. It remains to be seen whether his optimism is justified.

Yan Rudziatak, Commissar for Transportation, is a Lett who was serving a ten-year prison sentence in the Moscow Butirka prison for revolutionary activity when he was released by the overthrow of Tsarism in March 1917. He has shown a keen interest in introducing American and other foreign improvements into the equipment and operation of the railroads.

The eight men who have been described, Stalin, Rykov, Kalinin, Bukharin, Voroshilov, Molotov, Kuibishev, and Rudziatak, with the addition of Tomsky, formerly President of the All-Union Trade-Union Congress and now in political eclipse, constitute the present members of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party Central Committee, which is the ultimate repository of power in the Soviet Union.

The President and Secretary of the Party Control Committee, Gregory Ordzhonikidze and Emilian Jaroslavsky, are also *ex officio* important figures in public life. Ordzhonikidze, a Georgian with a singularly romantic and poetic face, had even more than the normal share of personal adventure during the civil war. Being attached to one of the Soviet armies in the North Caucasus which was wiped out by General Denikin's White forces, he escaped over the wildest passes of the Caucasus and, after reaching Baku, made his way across the stormy waters of the Caspian Sea to Astrakhan on a fishing boat. Besides holding the invariably combined posts of Presi-

dent of the Control Committee and Commissar for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, Ordzhonikidze is Assistant Premier and assistant head of the Council of Labor and Defense, or economic cabinet.

Jaroslavsky, the son of a political exile in Siberia, is in an excellent position to publish a book on the scandals of Communism, if he were not too well disciplined a Party member even to think of such a thing. As Secretary of the Control Committee, which has the right to examine, reprimand, and expel Party members charged with delinquencies, he knows more about the inner weaknesses of his comrades than almost anyone else, unless it may be the head of the Gay-Pay-Oo. Jaroslavsky is himself an old Bolshevik of the strictest persuasion, and is said to have been chosen by Lenin himself for his present responsible post. As is psychologically quite natural in one who holds a post not unlike that of a grand inquisitor on behalf of a new, enthusiastic, and intolerant faith, Jaroslavsky is a most vigorous enemy of religion and the leading spirit in the movement to promote atheism throughout the country.

Foreign Commissar George Chicherin is an unusual personality, perhaps one of the most striking produced by the Revolution. He represents almost the sole example of a scion of an old hereditary aristocratic family holding high position under the Soviet régime. Chicherin is of diplomatic stock on both his father's and his mother's side; and this inheritance is clearly marked in his linguistic genius and in his extraordinarily retentive grasp of detail.

I have heard him pass with entire ease from Russian into English and then on to French and German; and no translator can quite satisfy his demand for meticulous exactitude of word usage in every language. An American woman correspondent from Seattle, meeting Chicherin at a diplomatic function, observed that she presumed he had never heard of her native city. Thereupon, to her amazement, the Foreign Commissar launched into a little lecture on the history, settlement, population, and resources of Seattle, containing many

facts of which she herself was ignorant. There was formerly a Russian consulate in Seattle, and Chicherin had apparently memorized its reports verbatim.

Chicherin is an ardent amateur musician; and for a time a piano was a regular part of the working equipment of the Commissar for Foreign Affairs. His working hours are the despair of visitors and secretaries, beginning in mid-afternoon and lasting sometimes until four or five in the morning. Ill health has recently forced Chicherin to spend a good deal of his time in German spas.

During his absences the direction of Soviet foreign policy is in the hands of Maxim Litvinov, a portly, paterfamilias type of man, who, with his lively English wife, usually presides at the entertainments which the Foreign Commissariat gives in the ornate "Sugar King's palace," directly facing the Kremlin, from the other side on the Moscow River, and in the other houses at its disposition. A Jewish revolutionary émigré in the pre-war period, Litvinov lacks Chicherin's formal diplomatic background and training; but he possesses a naturally keen mind, quick to seize a point in negotiation and slow to relinquish it. In common with Chicherin, he possesses a noteworthy faculty for sarcasm, which has found abundant opportunity for expression during the sessions of the League of Nations disarmament commission, which Litvinov has regularly attended as the Russian representative.

Leo Karakhan, a tall, dark, handsome Armenian, looks after the Eastern interests of Soviet diplomacy. Karakhan negotiated the agreement under which the Chinese Eastern Railway was operated, with joint Soviet-Chinese control. For a time he was Soviet Ambassador in Peking, where he gave delight to radical students and offense to foreign diplomats by continuously proclaiming the Soviet belief that China should be treated on a basis of equality by other nations, and extolling the liberating nationalist movement in Eastern countries.

Death and political fatality have permanently or temporarily removed many of the leading actors in the first stage of the

Revolution. The fanatical, iron-willed Dzerzhinsky, organizer of the Chekha, one of the most terrible and at the same time one of the most idealistic figures of the Bolshevik movement, now lies buried under the Kremlin wall, behind Lenin's mausoleum. So does Leonid Krassin, formerly Ambassador in France and England and first Commissar for Foreign Trade, an unusual example of a successful engineer and business man who was also an old revolutionary. Death has overtaken Mikhail Frunze, who took over the War Commissariat from Trotzky, Victor Nogin, who did much to build up the state textile industry, and Adolf Joffe, who helped to negotiate a number of the peace treaties with the border states and was one of the first Soviet envoys in the Far East. Joffe, a man of brilliant mentality, tortured with disease which he tried to relieve with drugs, a staunch adherent of Trotzky, shot himself at the time of the latter's expulsion from the Party, leaving behind a pathetic letter in which he set forth the combination of personal and political motives which impelled him to commit suicide.

Trotzky carried with him in his fall men of such prominence as Karl Radek, an Austrian Jew who, along with perhaps the keenest wit of any participant in the Revolution, possesses an encyclopædic fund of knowledge on international, political, and economic questions; Christian Rakovsky, a cultivated Bulgarian former physician, master of a number of European languages, who had filled the offices of Premier of Ukraina and Ambassador to France and England; Eugene Preobrazhensky, co-author with Bukharin of *The A B C of Communism* and a well-known Communist theoretician.

Trotzky's two chief associates in opposition, Gregory Zinoviev and Leo Kamenev, of whom the former was for a long time President of the Communist International and the latter Vice-Premier and President of the Moscow Soviet, have gone to Canossa, confessed their mistakes, and received minor posts in the Party and Soviet service. They may rise again in the public eye, although it is unlikely that they can ever again attain the prestige which they enjoyed in 1923 and 1924, when

they were generally regarded, with Stalin, as constituting the unofficial triumvirate which guided the destinies of the Communist Party.

New men are gradually coming up to fill the places left vacant by death or political elimination. Anastasius Mikoyan, a young man in his early thirties, who is, like Stalin, a native of Georgia, is an example of this tendency. Mikoyan, who by the merest accident escaped being shot along with twenty-six other Bolshevik leaders of the Caucasian oil centre, Baku, during the civil war, is now Commissar for Trade and a candidate, or alternate member, of the Political Bureau. After a period of political disfavor because of his Trotzkyist sympathies, Yuri Pyatakov, whom Lenin, in his political testament, mentioned with Bukharin as one of the more promising among the younger Party members, has made his peace with the Party authorities and received an appointment as head of the State Bank. He is a man of marked executive ability. Another rising star in the Party is Y. A. Yakovlev, founder of the *Peasants' Gazette*, which is one of the chief means of contact between the Soviet Government and the peasantry, and an indefatigable worker in the Commissariat for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, which operates as a sort of broom to sweep the state administrative offices clean of bureaucracy and corruption.

So long as they retain their health and their political orthodoxy the highest Soviet officials are seldom changed. Ever since the Revolution, Anatole Lunacharsky[1] has been Commissar for Education and Nikolai Semashko has been Commissar for Health. Lunacharsky, who was fairly well known as a critic and playwright in radical literary circles before the Revolution, is an unfailing orator at celebrations of an intellectual character; and his speeches seldom run under two hours in length.

[1] Lunácharsky resigned his office of Commissar for Education in September 1929. By taste and temperament Lunacharsky is perhaps better qualified for æsthetic criticism, for weighing the merits of new authors and dramatists than for the difficult executive work of the Commissariat for Education, which must every year greatly extend its school facilities on a budget that is never quite adequate.

Theatres and the fine arts as well as schools and colleges come under Lunacharsky's general charge; and credit is generally accorded him for preserving the old classical theatres from collapse under the first shock of the Revolution. To-day he functions as a more or less effective buffer between the critics who demand 100 per cent Communist ideology in literature and drama and the authors and playwrights who desire greater freedom.

Nikolai Semashko, a country doctor before the Revolution, has built up an extensive socialized health service. He is especially proud of the achievements of his Commissariat in the field of preventive medicine, and in reducing the formerly high rate of infant mortality.

A striking personality, and one calculated to inspire fear in the heart of any prisoner at the bar, is the State Attorney-General, Nikolai Krilenko. A short, but powerfully built man, whose favorite avocations are hunting, mountain-climbing, and chess-playing, his conduct of a state trial is calculated to suggest at once the chess player working for a mate and the hunter stalking and finally springing upon his prey. All the burning fanatical ardor of the Revolution seems concentrated and pent up in this little man, who might have walked out of one of the tribunals set up in France to try the "aristocrats" and the "suspects."

As I observed at the beginning of the chapter, the Communist Party and the Soviet Government are essentially impersonal organizations; and it is likely that they will become more rather than less so in the future. Anything tending to emphasize the personalities of individual leaders is frowned on; and it would be impossible to find in the Soviet press or in Soviet literature full-length character portraits of any prominent figures, from Stalin down. The first storm of revolution inevitably brought to the top a number of strong individualities, whose salient traits could not be hidden; but as the Soviet state becomes more settled and stabilized the personalities of the leading political figures tend more and more to merge with the offices which they hold. It is Communist theory that individual personality does or should count for little, that disciplined Party members should simply carry out the tasks which the Party assigns them. And, while there is still a considerable admixture of the fictitious element in this theory, fiction which is believed and acted on has a capacity for being transformed into fact.

V

THE CLASS STATE

THE Soviet Union is fundamentally and avowedly a class state, based on the dictatorship of the proletariat, or industrial working class. The Soviet régime definitely breaks with the theory that the franchise and access to public office are the rights of every citizen who has not been adjudged morally or mentally incompetent. Besides lunatics and criminals, the Soviet Constitution disfranchises and bars from public office the following categories of persons: —

People who employ hired labor for the purpose of extracting gain.[1]

Persons living on income not derived from toil, such as interest on capital, income from enterprises, earnings from property, etc.

Private merchants, trade and commercial middlemen.

Monks and ministers of religious cults of all creeds and characters, for whom this occupation is a profession.

Employees and agents of the former police, the special corps of gendarmes and secret police departments, members of the former reigning family, and also persons who directed the activity of the police, gendarmes, and punitive organs.[2]

Officers of the anti-Bolshevik armies during the civil war are also usually disfranchised, unless they have conclusively demonstrated their loyalty to the Soviet Government. Now disfranchisement is a much more serious penalty in Russia than it might be in other countries, because Soviet legislation and practice tend to make the *lishentsi*, or persons deprived of the right to vote, veritable pariahs in the community.[3]

[1] The employment of domestic servants is not a cause of disfranchisement.

[2] See *Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic*, p. 28. Published by the All-Russian Soviet Central Executive Committee, Moscow, 1925.

[3] In 1927 a total of 3,111,903 persons, or 4.3 per cent of the number of electors who would have qualified under the age limit, were deprived of the right to vote. The number of disfranchised rural voters was 2,170,929, or 3.6 per cent of the total number; that of city voters was 940,974, or 7.8 per cent of the total number. Figures are not yet at hand for the Soviet elections of 1929; but it is probable that both the number and percentage of the disfranchised will reveal an increase, because of the intensified class war against the *kulaks* in the villages and because the general instructions issued to the election commissions were to be stricter in scrutinizing the qualifications of every voter. In Russia proper, excluding Ukraina, White Russia, Trans-Caucasia, and Central Asia, 4 per cent of the electors were disfranchised in 1927, as against 1.5 per cent in 1925–1926, when the Soviet "class policy" was milder. (For election statistics see *Handbook of National Economy*, pp. 24–25.)

A person who cannot vote cannot be a trade-union member, and hence may not be employed in any state office or undertaking. His children will not be accepted into higher and middle schools. He will be charged double rates or more for medical treatment, for accommodation in state summer resorts, for a dozen other public and semipublic services. In short, his life will be made as uncomfortable as legislative and social discrimination can make it.

As against this pariah caste of the disfranchised, which, ironically enough, includes largely the classes which enjoyed the largest measure of wealth and privilege and social esteem in Tsarist Russia, former aristocrats and officers, merchants and factory owners, ecclesiastics and rich peasants, stands the new privileged class of the proletariat. The Soviet Government calls itself a Workers' and Peasants' Government. The privileges which workers enjoy in regard to holding office, admission to the universities, etc., are obvious and are fully described in another chapter.[1] The peasants are regarded with somewhat less unqualified favor, and only the poor (the *byedniaks*) are regarded as fully reliable allies of the ruling proletariat. The *kulaks*, or rich peasants, are rated as class enemies, to be fought at every turn, while the *seredniak*, or middle-class peasant, is viewed as a rather unstable figure, wavering between the influences of the kulaks and the byedniaks.

Although the ultimate goal of Communism is the abolition of all classes, the achievement of this objective lies in a far-distant future, since, according to the programme of the Communist International, it is bound up with the realization of

[1] See Chapter VII, "Labor as Aristocracy."

the communist social order, not only in Russia, but all over the world. Even in the Soviet Union full communism can scarcely be said to have been achieved at the present time, when there is a remnant, although a diminishing remnant, of private trade and industry in the cities, and, what is more important, a great mass of peasant small holders, farming their land on an individualist basis. During the present period, which is regarded as transitional between capitalism and socialism, class lines are nowhere drawn with greater rigor than in the Soviet Union. Every student, every applicant for office, must fill out a questionnaire stating his social origin, and any suggestion of "bourgeois" birth is as fatal a disqualification as non-Russian origin would have been in similar circumstances under the old régime.

Its avowed and consistent class character is a source both of strength and of weakness to the Soviet state. It is a source of strength because it inspires in the newly enthroned working class a sense of enthusiastic loyalty and devotion which could scarcely be matched in any other country. It is a source of weakness because its rigorous application almost inevitably transforms into embittered pariahs and "internal émigrés" not only the members of the disfranchised classes themselves, but also their children, who are denied educational opportunities and exposed to discrimination if they seek employment.

What is the political mechanism of this class state? Constitutionally sovereign authority is vested in Soviets, or Councils of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. For a time these bodies were annually reëlected; now reëlections take place every two years. There are two important technical differences between Soviet elections and those which are customary in Western Europe and America. Balloting is based on the occupational rather than the residential principle, and there is no secret ballot, the voting procedure consisting simply of raising hands for or against a candidate. The electoral unit is not a residential district, but a factory or office, while village Soviet elections are open meetings of all the qualified voters. The choice of delegates to the highest

organ of Soviet power, the All-Union Soviet Congress, passes through several stages of indirect voting. The village and town Soviets send a certain number of delegates to an *uyezdni*, or county congress of Soviets, which in its turn elects a certain proportion of its members as delegates to a *gubernsky*, or provincial congress.[1] The provincial congresses elect again a percentage of their delegates to the All-Union Congress.

The basis of representation in the All-Union Soviet Congress is one delegate to every 125,000 voters in the rural districts and one delegate to every 25,000 voters in the cities, another instance of the Soviet policy of according first political consideration to the urban proletariat. Inasmuch as it is convened only once in two years and sits for a comparatively short time, the Congress cannot even nominally fulfill the functions of a parliament or congress. Those functions are vested in a body called the Tsik (one of the familiar Russian abbreviations from the initials of the words for All-Union Central Soviet Executive Committee). The Tsik consists of a Council of the Union, made up of about a quarter of the delegates to the All-Union Soviet Congress, selected by that organization, and a Council of Nationalities, in which each of the autonomous Soviet Republics is represented by five delegates and each of the autonomous territories by one.[2]

The Tsik elects the Soviet Cabinet, which is known as the Council of People's Commissars. Sessions of the Tsik are held, as a rule, three times in the course of the year. Here are heard and approved reports of the various Commissariats, and decrees are passed. A presidium of twenty-one members, elected by the Tsik, is constitutionally the highest legislative,

[1] The Soviet Union is now undergoing a process of elaborate redistricting. The old divisions into *gubernias* (provinces), *uyezds* (counties), and *volosts* (townships) are being replaced by the *oblast*, or territory, which usually embraces the area of several former provinces, the *okrug*, or district, and, as the smallest administrative unit, the *raion*, or region. The new administrative boundary lines are drawn with a view to the natural economic unity of different parts of the country. This redistricting does not, however, affect the general political characteristics of the Soviet election system.

[2] The special functions of the Council of Nationalities and, in general, the federal features of the Soviet Constitution are described in Chapter IX, "The Babel Tower of Nationalities."

executive, and administrative organ in the Soviet Union during the intervals between sessions of the Tsik. Laws, as a rule, are promulgated by this presidium, although the Council of People's Commissars may also issue decrees, and the Sto, or economic cabinet, may issue ordinances with binding force in the field of economic policy. Possible serious conflicts of authority between these legislative bodies are averted because all really important legislative and executive decisions have a common source in the Political Bureau of the Communist Party Central Committee.

So much for a brief outline of the constitutional organization of the Soviet system. How does it fit in with the fact, noted in an earlier chapter, that the Communist Party is really the supreme power in the land? The chief factor in the absolute, secure, and unbroken control of Soviet executive and legislative organs by the Communist Party (all People's Commissars, all Presidents of Provincial Soviet Executive Committees, a substantial majority of the delegates to Soviet Congresses and of members of the Tsik, are invariably Communists) is the circumstance that no other party or political group is permitted to function legally within the country.

So a Soviet election has about it a strong suggestion of sham battle. Campaign slogans and appeals to all classes of the electors to come out and vote are liberally plastered over billboards and on the tops of street-cars and buses; an abundance of literature is distributed; there are torchlight processions with the victorious candidates to the Moscow Soviet, and other features which might suggest a hotly contested election in another country. But, one element is conspicuously lacking: any sort of open organized opposition, under the auspices of any rival party. Should the Trotzkyists or some other dissident group attempt to put up its candidates, the Gay-Pay-Oo, or political police, would quickly step in and handle the situation.

Under these conditions the procedure at Soviet elections is fairly simple. The Communist *yacheika*, or local branch, which exists in every factory and office of any size, draws up

a list of candidates with more or less regard for their popularity among the workers or employees, and it is very uncommon, in the cities, for any opposition list to be presented. In the villages, where there are fewer Communists and the kulaks sometimes exert a certain amount of influence on the remainder of the peasants, the elections may assume a more definite element of struggle. Here also, however, the Communist list usually goes through. The out-and-out kulaks are disfranchised, and the Communists have a monopoly of printed propaganda. Even in cases where an unacceptable village Soviet may be chosen, its significance is very limited. Should it disobey any laws or regulations about taxation or other agricultural questions, it would be dissolved and reëlected under circumstances which would leave very little doubt of a Communist victory. With each higher stage in the indirect election of an All-Union Soviet Congress the organized weight of the Communist Party grows, so that, while the majority of the members of the village Soviets are non-Party peasants, there is always a Communist majority in the provincial and national Soviet Congresses.

It should be noted that it is by no means the policy of the Party to elect only Communists into the Soviets. It is rather recognized as desirable to elect a certain proportion, ordinarily about 30 per cent, of non-Party deputies, as this strengthens the connection between the Party and the masses of working-class electors and raises the authority of the Soviets as popular representative bodies.

In the course of the winter of 1928–1929 I had occasion to witness the preliminary and the final stages in the Soviet electoral process, in the shape of an election meeting in a Moscow factory and a session of the Tsik. Descriptions of these episodes may help to illustrate the general character of the Soviet constitutional system.

Work stopped early in the "Dynamo" motor factory, and one of the large central sheds of the plant rapidly filled up with some 1800 prospective voters, each of whom had to present a certificate of his electoral qualifications to the soldier

on guard at the entrance. In the cities fifty per cent of the voters must appear in order to make the election valid (the requirement in the villages is 35 per cent). In this case the minimum figure was substantially exceeded, since about 90 per cent of the authorized electors attended.

The representative of the election commission, who was present to see that all the legal formalities were observed, declared the meeting open. Then a presidium was chosen, consisting of about twenty persons and including representatives of every department in the factory, not forgetting the women who clean out the shops.

After brief speeches of greeting from a bearded peasant, a native of the village to which the factory stood in the relation of a *chef*, supplying it with books and magazines and generally preserving contact with it, and from a lusty-voiced official of the Metal Workers' Union, the main orator of the occasion was introduced as Comrade Popov, from the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party. He launched into an hour's discourse on the internal and international position of the Soviet Union. After this was finished a few questions, written on slips of paper, were handed in. One of them was about the exile of Trotzky, and Popov thundered out: —

"Trotzky has sold himself to the bourgeoisie. We shall soon publish documents to prove that he received huge sums of money from bourgeois publishers to write slanderous articles about the Soviet Union."

As a final blow to the Trotzkyists someone brought in a suggestion that Joseph Stalin, General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, should be elected an honorary member of the Soviet from the Dynamo factory. This was greeted with some handclapping, and the secretary of the factory Party branch, who was conducting the meeting, swept the audience with his eye and asked: —

"Are there any objections to the election of Comrade Stalin as an honorary member of the Moscow Soviet?"

Not a hand or voice was raised in objection.

A good deal of time was then spent in reading the *nakaz*,

or set of general instructions, worked out for the guidance of the future deputies by the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party, and supplemented by a further nakaz, dealing especially with the local needs of the Dynamo factory district. Much of the content of these nakazes might have appeared in the municipal programme of any political party; they included both general and concrete suggestions for more and better schools and hospitals, better street-car service, cleaner streets, etc.

By this time the meeting had lasted three hours, and the actual election, which came at the end, was perhaps the shortest and simplest part of the whole ceremony.

Three deputies and two alternates were proposed for membership both in the Moscow and in the regional or ward Soviet, which has charge of purely local questions. The list had been made up in advance by the local branch of the Communist Party and discussed at general workers' meetings in various departments of the factory, so its acceptance by the gathering without any show of serious opposition was a foregone conclusion. Now and then two or three hands would be raised against some individual candidate, and the negative votes were registered with meticulous care by the chairman of the meeting. But in general the procedure had little of the atmosphere of political contest; it rather suggested a mass meeting with solid and unified sentiment.

Soviet elections are pretty well standardized in character, especially in the cities; and what I witnessed at the Dynamo factory was probably reënacted, with minor variations, in hundreds of other factories in Moscow and throughout the country. The newly elected deputies remain at work, merely receiving time off with pay when they attend the infrequent plenary sessions of the Soviet. There are about 2500 members of the Moscow Soviet, and about an equal number in the six district Soviets of the city. Obviously such a large body cannot and does not function in the manner of an ordinary municipal council. The full membership of the Soviet is called together on rare occasions, and most of the work of the deputies

is done in the fifteen sections, for health, education, finance, housing, etc. Each deputy is allowed to choose the section in which he wishes to work. The work of the sections consists not of actual administration, but of supervision and inspection; the rank-and-file membership of the Soviet really resembles an organized body of active municipal social workers rather than a legislative body. The deputies are unpaid, and do as much work as their energy and social interest may prompt. A deputy may be recalled by his electors if he is very inactive, or for other causes.

In the stately Hall of St. Andrew, attached to the Great Kremlin Palace and formerly the throne-room of the Tsars, meets Russia's Red Parliament, the All-Union Soviet Central Executive Committee, or Tsik. Even familiarity does not detract from the eternal symbolism and pageantry of this contrast.

The half-barbaric, half-Byzantine splendor of the throne-room, with its vaulted ceiling, its high pillars, its profuse gilded scrollwork ornamentation, remains, even though the throne has been removed to make way for the prosaic dais of the presidium of the Congress and traces of wear and tear are beginning to appear in parts of the palace architecture. And the Tsik is quite definitely something new and unique, unlike any parliamentary body in Western Europe or America.

One enters the massive enclosure of the Kremlin and gains admission to the palace after twice presenting credentials to attentive but courteous sentries. The Soviet delegates sit in rows in the body of the former throne-room, facing the raised dais, on which are perhaps a dozen members of the presidium, while the speaker of the moment stands on a somewhat lower elevation and delivers his utterances before a radio transmitter.

The first feature of the sessions of the Tsik which would probably impress an experienced parliamentary reporter is the absence of forensic training on the part of the great majority of the delegates. The Soviet Executive Committee contains a considerable number of workers in collarless blouses and peasants in sheepskin coats, who come to Moscow from their

factories and farms two or three times a year for the brief sessions and who are usually quite untrained in public speaking.[1]

The deliberations of the "Red Parliament" are guided by a presiding official, who may be Mikhail Kalinin, President of the Russian Soviet Republic, or the President of one of the associated Soviet Republics, Ukraina, White Russia, Trans-Caucasia, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. This presiding official allots the time and order of the speakers, puts questions to a vote, and generally fulfills many of the functions of the Speaker of a foreign parliament.

The divisions and party challenges, which one would have noted in the supreme legislative bodies of Great Britain and America, France and Germany, are conspicuous by their absence in this Soviet legislature. This is quite understandable in view of the fact that the majority of the members are Communists, bound by party discipline to vote as a unit, while the non-Party members are in full accord with the general Communist programme.

In the spacious Hall of St. George, where the names of the officers and regiments, recipients of the Cross of St. George, the highest pre-war Russian military decoration, are still engraved on the walls, the writer talked with several members of the Tsik at its last session. They were easy to identify by their red badges, with the inscription "Member of Tsik."

In the course of a few intervals between sessions it proved possible to form casual acquaintanceships with a genial worker from one of the factories of the Lena Goldfields Company, in the Ural district; with a peasant from the Glukhov district of Northern Ukraina; a woman agricultural laborer from Karelia, near the Finnish frontier; and a woman worker from the textile mills of Serpukhov.

One did not find in these typically proletarian legislators any very exhaustive grasp of the details of the governmental

[1] According to *The Handbook of National Economy* (p. 32), 17 per cent of the members of the All-Russian Soviet Executive Committee in 1927 were actual workers and 16.8 per cent actual peasants. A very considerable number of the others, however, are of working-class and peasant origin.

reports to which they had listened or of the decrees which they had enacted. However, the appeal of these Soviet sessions in the Kremlin to the imagination of the Russian masses should not be discounted merely because most of the rank-and-file delegates are inclined to take the legislative projects which are submitted to them pretty much for granted. The most simple and obvious impression to be derived from attending a session of the Soviet assembly, that here are representatives of the Russian poor and disinherited classes, installed, by the judgment of history, in the seats hitherto reserved for the Tsar and the nobles, happens, in this case, to be the most significant.

The Soviet system, as it functions in practice, does not place any check on the dictatorship of the Communist Party and affords no outlet for expression of opinion by dissident minority groups. But it is not, I think, unpopular with the masses of the people, if one excepts the numerically small former propertied and conservative educated classes who naturally look askance at the Revolution and all its works. The Soviets are more broadly representative in character than the national Duma and the municipal councils which existed in Tsarist times and were elected on a narrow propertied franchise. Then, although all the strings in the Soviet mechanism are pulled by the Communists, a very considerable number of non-Party working men and women, under the Soviet system, have an opportunity to participate in public life which they could scarcely have enjoyed in pre-revolutionary times. If people really learn by doing, the Russian working class is making progress in realizing the Communist ideal that it should be the actual governing power in the country.

With two exceptions, the executive apparatus of the Soviet state does not seem to call for special attention. What are called Ministries in other countries are known as Commissariats in the Soviet Union; but the functions are not markedly dissimilar.[1]

[1] The Supreme Economic Council, which is really a Commissariat for Industry, is described in Chapter VI.

The first of the two exceptions in this connection is the Rabkrin, or Commissariat for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This body, which is closely linked up with the Control Commission of the Communist Party, is a sort of permanent supercommission for audit and control; it is continually combing the other state departments for traces of graft, bureaucratism, and other abuses. The Rabkrin has a far-flung net; its inspectors look into everything, from the management of a Moscow art museum to the building of a new industrial plant, from the civil service qualifications of the officials in Daghestan to the condition of peasant farms in the Kuban.

Russians are in the habit of making jokes to the effect that the customary applied remedy for the recognized national evil of bureaucracy is to create more bureaucracy, and that, as soon as someone discovers that there are too many state commissions, the first instinct is to create a new commission to see what can be done about it. But the Rabkrin, which includes in its staff many of the oldest, most educated, and most experienced Communists, seems to make out a good case for its activity on the ground that the savings which it has recommended far outweigh the cost of its upkeep.

The Commissariat for Health plays an important rôle in the Soviet Union, because medical aid there has been largely transformed from a private to a public function. The Commissar for Health, N. E. Semashko, stated that during eleven months of the year 1927 a total of 49,435 workers and employees went to private hospitals as against 14,000,000 who received treatment in state hospitals and dispensaries. The worker's average expenditure for medical aid during this time was twenty-three kopecks, most of which sum went for home medicines. During the year 1926–1927 the state spent, on the average, 30.84 rubles on medical aid to each worker's family.[1]

The Health Commissariat is inclined to take special pride in its work for the prevention of disease. At the time of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of

[1] See newspaper, *Vechernaya Moskva* ("Evening Moscow"), for February 24, 1928.

the Commissariat for Health, in the autumn of 1928, Dr. Semashko declared that two thousand doctors were employed in the field of protecting the health of children through regular physical examinations of school pupils, inspections of the sanitary condition of the schools, encouragement of physical training, etc. A good deal has been done in the way of investigating occupational diseases of factory workers, and a number of experimental sanatoria are maintained in this connection.

The pre-war figure of fifteen doctors per hundred thousand of the population has now increased to twenty-five,[1] and there has also been an increase in the number of hospitals and medical points. It is doubtful whether quality has always kept pace with quantity in this respect. The effort of the state to provide free medical aid for all insured trade-union members places a terrific strain both upon the doctors, who are usually extremely overworked, and on the equipment of the existing hospitals and clinics. Attacks by patients, nervously worn out by days of waiting in crowded clinics, on doctors who did not, as they felt, treat them promptly enough or who did not give them the desired permission to go to a sanatorium were at one time so frequent that some special propagandist trials were organized in an effort to check the practice. The peasant villages are still far behind the cities in the amount of medical service which they receive; and all the measures of compulsion and persuasion which have been brought into play have not been successful in inducing a sufficient number of doctors to forsake the cities for the villages.

In medicine, in the provision of hospitals, clinics, and sanatoria, as in so many branches of Soviet life, one is forcibly struck by the impression of leveling. Existing accommodations are, as a rule, inferior to what wealthy or even middle-class people would command before the Revolution. But workers and the poorer classes who could not in pre-war times have afforded to pay the fees of private doctors and hospitals now receive a much larger share of free medical attention. The health of the population as a whole seems to be better

[1] See newspaper, *Rabochaya Gazeta* ("Workers' Gazette"), for October 16, 1928.

than was the case before the War, if mortality statistics represent a fair criterion. The death rate in European Russia in 1913 was 27.4 per thousand. In the European part of the Soviet Union in 1926 it was 19.9 per thousand.[1] There has been an especially marked decline in infant mortality, due to the legislation for the protection of mothers and babies, which is described elsewhere.[2] The country has also been free during recent years from the terrible scourges of cholera and typhus, although this may be due in part to the fact that these epidemics were so widespread during the period of civil war that a considerable part of the population acquired relative immunity through contracting the diseases.

The class character of the Soviet state is nowhere more in evidence than in its judicial system. Rejecting the idea of abstract or impartial justice as a fiction, designed to cover up the rule of the bourgeoisie, Soviet jurists boast of the "class justice" which is meted out in their courts. On one occasion I submitted to Mr. Nikolai Krilenko, the fiery Attorney-General of the Soviet Union, who is almost always the prosecutor in important state trials, a series of questions, including one regarding the Soviet understanding and application of this principle of class justice. Mr. Krilenko's written reply to this last question reads as follows: —

"Consideration of the social position of the person who has committed a crime is an obligatory but not decisive element in determining the measure of social defense (that is, the sentence to be imposed). Naturally, in the case of two quite identical crimes, the Soviet court will act differently toward the bourgeois, who has committed a crime as a result of his class ideology and habits, and toward the worker, who has committed a crime from poverty or from slightly developed social consciousness.

"But the fundamental element in the class approach to crime is not only and not so much the consideration of the

[1] See in this connection the article, "Growth of the Population in the Soviet Union," by P. Kurkin, in the magazine, *Our Achievements*, No. 1, pp. 129–142.

[2] See Chapter XVII.

social position of the criminal as, in the main, consideration of the social danger of the given person from the standpoint of the interests of the state of the proletarian dictatorship as a whole. Facts demonstrate that the majority of the most socially dangerous criminals (counter-revolutionaries and others) consist of kulak and capitalist elements, and individual toilers are implicated in such crimes only in exceptional cases."

As is evident from this statement, the safety of the state is a primary consideration in the administration of Soviet jurisprudence. This not only governs the workings of the ordinary courts, but accounts for much of the activity of the Gay-Pay-Oo, or political police, a special institution dealing with a wide range of supposedly counter-revolutionary offenses which do not come under the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts.

These ordinary courts may be divided into three classes. First comes the People's Court, which hears the ordinary petty civil or criminal case. It consists of a judge and two assessors. More important cases are tried in the provincial courts, which also hear appeals against the decisions of the lower courts. At the apex of the Soviet judicial system stands the Supreme Court of the Republic, which passes on the constitutionality of decisions of the lower courts, hears cases of exceptional political importance, touching the interests of two or more Soviet Republics, furnishes explanations and interpretations of the constitutionality of judicial decisions and legislative measures to the supreme courts of the individual republics, and serves as a tribunal of final appeal.

What sort of justice is administered in these courts? Next to its avowedly class character, which usually results in a bourgeois faring worse than a proletarian in a Soviet lawsuit,[1] perhaps the most distinctive feature of the sentences passed

[1] A good example of this was the execution of a Moscow merchant's son, Kalganov, for murdering an official of the local house committee, Karavaev, an old Communist. The murder followed some trivial quarrel over a dog, and under ordinary circumstances would not have incurred a sentence of more than ten years' imprisonment. But the court held that Kalganov's action was an expression of his counter-revolutionary class ideology.

by Soviet courts is their extreme flexibility. Take, for example, the rather familiar Russian offense of embezzlement. Under normal conditions conviction on this charge would probably involve a sentence of two or three years in prison, which would perhaps be cut down in the event of good behavior. But, if some unlucky wight should make off with the funds of his trade-union or coöperative just at a moment when Soviet public opinion was especially aroused over the evil of this practice, he would quite possibly incur a sentence of ten years in prison (the maximum term permitted under the Soviet legal code), or even the extreme penalty of death by shooting.

This flexibility, this conscious adjustment of the law to circumstances, is nowhere more evident than in the application of the death penalty. Capital punishment does not exist in Russia for ordinary criminal offenses, and this was also true in pre-revolutionary times. But, just as the Tsarist Government, by such devices as declaring martial law in regions where political crimes were prevalent, probably inflicted more death penalties than the courts of many countries where capital punishment is a recognized part of the criminal jurisprudence, so the Soviet authorities every year execute a certain number of persons on charges of having committed crimes which are counter-revolutionary and strike at the bases of the new social order.

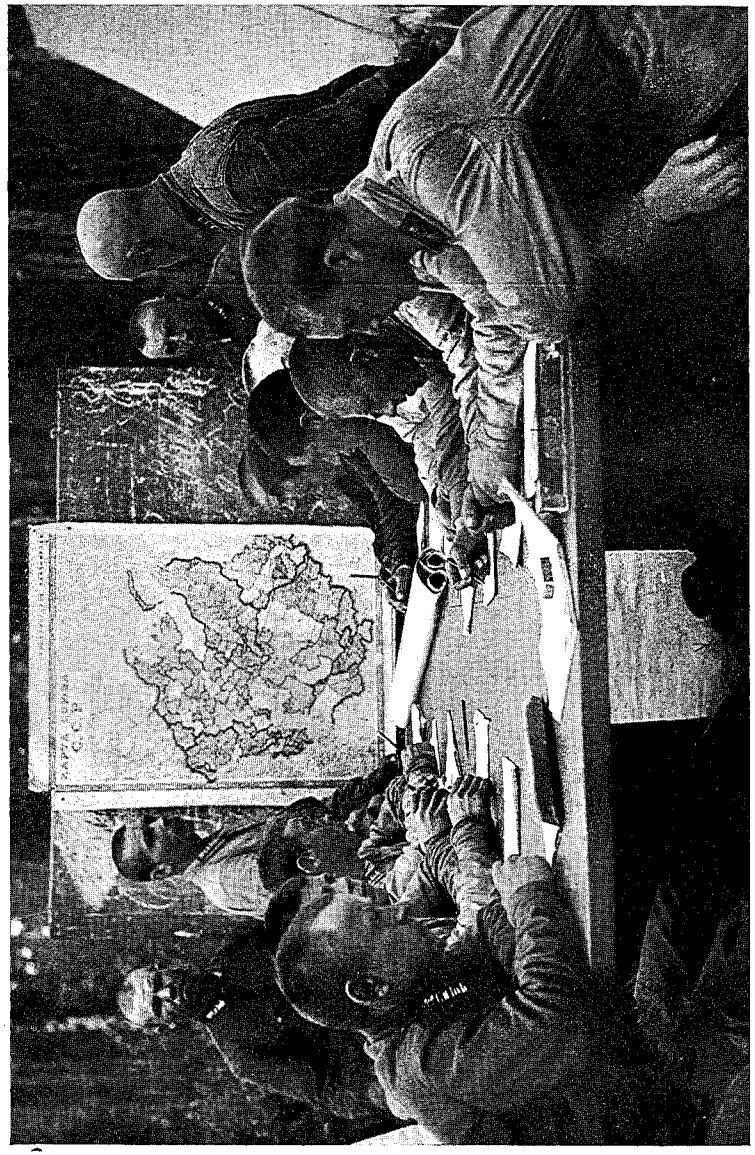
What offenses come under this category of "counter-revolution"? They vary with time and place. Espionage or attempts to organize an armed uprising against the Soviet Government are capital offenses. Industrial sabotage in the sense of deliberate mismanagement of state enterprises is a serious offense and may be punished with death. So at the end of the great Shachti trial of fifty-three engineers and specialists the public prosecutor, Krilenko, demanded twenty-two death sentences. The court passed eleven, of which five were actually carried out, the remainder being commuted following a petition to the All-Union Soviet Executive Committee. Death sentences for corruption and embezzlement have rather declined during recent years; on the other

hand, during the winter of 1928–1929 the number of executions for attacks on village Soviet officials and active workers greatly increased, in proportion to the increasing number of these attacks. Persons who have committed many murders and armed bandits are sometimes executed.[1]

The Soviet prison system, as applied to ordinary criminals, embodies a number of progressive penological ideas. Educational and manual training instruction courses exist in the more advanced prisons; prisoners are not required to wear uniforms; and the well-behaved prisoner receives a vacation of two weeks every year, which is certainly a unique Russian institution. The Soviet Attorney-General, Mr. Krilenko, after mentioning these features of the Soviet prison régime to the writer, declared that it "eliminated everything which counted on the suppression of the human dignity of the prisoners." This ideal is best realized in some of the more adequately equipped prisons of Moscow. In regard to the provincial prisons one often hears complaints of overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions; but it is questionable whether in these respects the prisons fall much below the general standards of Russian life.

The Red Army of the Soviet Union, like every other institution of the Soviet state, bears a distinctly class character. Persons who are disfranchised under the Soviet Constitution may not serve in the fighting branches of the army, but are mobilized for service in non-combat units, and also obliged to pay a special tax. This regulation dates back to the time of the creation of the Red Army, in 1918, when civil and class war was raging throughout the country and the infiltration of anti-Soviet elements into the ranks of the newly formed army would have been politically very dangerous.

[1] Mr. Krilenko furnished me with the following figures regarding death sentences passed by the courts of Russia proper (excluding Ukraina, White Russia, Trans-Caucasia, and Central Asia) during the year 1928. In all, 287 sentences were passed, affecting 479 persons. Of these 289 were commuted by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, while the All-Russian Soviet Executive Committee commuted about 30 per cent of the remainder. The number of persons actually executed was, therefore, in the neighborhood of 130.



THE RED ARMY — A LESSON IN TOPOGRAPHY

A second distinctive feature of the Red Army is its close identification with the ruling Communist Party. The regular land and naval forces of the Soviet Union have an enlisted strength of 562,000; and of this number 99,000 are Communist Party members and 137,000 belong to the Union of Communist Youth.[1] Among the officers, or commanders, as they are called in the Red Army, on January 1, 1928, 49.7 per cent were Communists and 4.45 per cent Young Communists. This proportion of Communists tends to increase, because most of the new commanders, who are turned out steadily by the military training schools, are members either of the Party or of the Union of Communist Youth. The Red Army is probably the most thoroughly propagandized military force in the world. The Pur, or Political Administration of the Army, supervises an extensive system of training in Communist and Soviet political ideas. Formerly, when there were comparatively few Communists in the commanding staff of the army, every officer had attached to him a Communist commissar, who had the double duty of watching out for any symptoms of political disloyalty on the part of the officer and of stimulating the morale of the soldiers through training in Communist principles. The watchdog functions of the commissar have now been largely abolished, since the condition of the army has become more stabilized and the loyalty of the remaining non-Party officers is regarded as pretty well assured. Commanders who are Communists now have no commissars, but supervise the political education of their men themselves. Commissars are still attached to non-Communist officers and carry on the political education which is regarded as an essential part of the training of every Red Army soldier.

These two factors, the presence in the army of large numbers of Communists, in whom Party discipline takes precedence over loyalty to any military chieftain, and the intensive cramming of the soldiers, mostly peasant lads, with political propa-

[1] See article by L. Degtyarev, "The Political-Moral Condition of the Red Army," in *Pravda* for February 23, 1929.

ganda, have helped to safeguard the Soviet Union against Bonapartism and against generals' plots and coups of the Chinese and Mexican variety.

A third unmistakable characteristic of the Red Army is the democratic relationship which prevails between its officers and men. The old Russian army, as was pointed out in the first chapter, dissolved as a result of a tremendous mutiny, largely caused by the intolerable strain of the World War on the nerves and morale of raw peasant troops, often obliged to fight with most inadequate equipment, but strengthened by the bitterness which the brutal discipline and caste spirit of the Tsarist army had engendered in the minds of the masses of the soldiers.

When the Red Army was created it was necessary, of course, to establish discipline, to assert the authority of the officers, to inflict ruthless punishment upon cowards and deserters. But Trotzky and his associates in the creation of the Red Army were careful not to revive the excessive privileges of the pre-war officers and the restrictions, many of them of an extraordinarily humiliating character, which were placed upon the Tsarist soldiers.[1] The very word "officer," hateful through its associations with the past, has been abolished in the Red Army and replaced by "commander." The high-sounding titles, "Your High Excellency" and others, with which soldiers formerly had to greet any high officer, standing rigidly at attention as they did so, have been completely discarded, and the commander is designated merely by his function, as commander of platoon, regiment, division, etc. The huge spreading epaulettes of the Tsarist officer have been eliminated; one can discern the rank of a Red Army commander only by unobtrusively small markings in the collar of his uniform.

[1] Articles 99–104 of the pre-war military service regulations provided, among other things, that soldiers might not smoke in public places, might not ride in the interior of tramcars, being obliged to stand on the platforms, could only travel in third-class cars on trains, and could not enter restaurants, with the exception of station and boat buffets of the third class. See in this connection A. Shlyapnikov's *The Year 1917*, published by State Publishing Company, Vol. II, p. 102, with the appended references to pre-revolutionary sources.

The abolition of the compulsory salute immediately after the March Revolution has often been represented as the cause of the disintegration of the Tsarist army, although as a matter of fact it was rather a symptom of the general mood of mutinous revolt. The Red Army compromises on this question. The salute is compulsory in service, but is optional if officers and men pass each other in the street when off duty. The democratization of the Red Army, as compared with the pre-war Russian army, is furthered by the fact that most of the new officers come from the same social classes as the men themselves — that is, from the working class and the peasantry — whereas the Tsarist officers' corps up to the time of the War was largely a preserve for sons of the nobility.

What is the fighting capacity of the Red Army? It is recruited on the basis of universal liability to service of all male citizens between the ages of nineteen and forty. Members of a few small religious sects are granted exemption from bearing arms and given alternative service either in the non-combatant branches of the army or in socially useful work, such as fighting forest fires and epidemics. The regular army and navy, with an enlisted strength of 562,000, do not absorb nearly all the recruits who come up for service; every year about 1,200,000 persons become eligible for enlistment. About 800,000 of these are passed as physically fit, and of this number 450,000 are actually taken into service, approximately half in the regular army and navy and half in the territorial forces, which are organized on a regional militia basis.[1] There is a strenuous effort to make military training universal, except for members of the disfranchised classes, and voluntary courses in rifle practice are organized for the benefit of those who do not find a place either in the regular or in the territorial forces.

As has always been the case, Russia is better provided with human reserves than with mechanical equipment. The Red Army has built up a considerable air fleet, largely based on

[1] See *The Calendar of the Communist for 1929*, published by the *Moscow Worker*, p. 358. This publication is a sort of Communist almanac, and its figures may be accepted as reasonably official.

motors of Russian production. More than two years ago War Commissar Voroshilov made the following statement regarding the state of Soviet armaments: —

"In artillery we obtained stable results in the field of increasing the length of range; besides this we already have excellent construction of automatic arms. It is especially necessary to note the very successful manufacture of small-calibre rifles. The mass production of these will give a powerful impetus to the development of shooting sport in the near future. In the matter of chemical production we have solved one of our most important problems: the manufacture of our own counter-gases."

In the winter of 1927–1928 Mr. Voroshilov pointed out some of the defects of Russia's technical preparation. Perhaps the most important of these is the condition of the roads and the state of motor transport. At the time of Mr. Voroshilov's statement Russia had only 22,000 automobiles and trucks, with a domestic production of only 300 to 500 automobiles a year. Russian roads have always been notoriously bad, constituting perhaps an equal handicap to any rapid aggressive movement from the Russian side and to any invader who tries to penetrate deeply into the country. Lack of chlorine and nitrate and the still weak development of the Soviet chemical industry place the country at a disadvantage in the manufacture of asphyxiating gases.

The morale of the Red Army soldier is probably better than that of the Tsarist soldier, because of the increased educational work in the army and the more humane disciplinary regulations. These factors also tend to develop more initiative on the part of the soldier. A good many of the new "Red commanders" got their taste of fire in the civil war; the effect of radically changing the class composition of the students in the military training schools can perhaps only be gauged in the test of actual warfare. Inasmuch, however, as less complicated abstract thinking is required for the making of an officer than for the training of an engineer or a scientist, it is probable that the new captains of the Red Army give less cause for concern, in the matter of preparation, than the new captains of Soviet industry.

It is clear from this necessarily brief and condensed review that the Russian Revolution, like its French predecessor, has created a definitely new type of state. The French Revolution awakened the principle of nationality and ushered in an era of national states, struggles for national unifications and liberations, national wars. The Russian Revolution will quite probably exert a similar general influence, substituting class for nationality as the guiding stimulus. That it has already made over Russian psychology, in this respect, is indisputable. There is very little national chauvinism in Russia to-day; but there is a very strong class chauvinism, finding expression in class pride, class consciousness, class hatred. To an audience of Communists and workers the "Internationale," the song of class consciousness and class war, is as intoxicating as was the "Marseillaise," the song of national consciousness and national liberation, to the revolutionary throngs of Paris. And the merciless disabilities which are visited on the pariah disfranchised classes in the Soviet Union suggest very strongly the disabilities which the Tsarist Government, eager to base itself on exclusive Russian patriotism, visited upon the races which were regarded as "lesser breeds without the law."

VI

THE BALANCE SHEET OF SOCIALISM

MEN have dreamed of socialism ever since the coming of the modern industrial system. Philosophers and economists have worked out theoretical schemes of substituting public for private ownership of the means of production. Orators have stirred the masses with pictures of a new order which would ensure freedom and plenty for all. In all the industrially developed countries of Europe more or less powerful political parties have set socialism as the goal of their parliamentary efforts.

But the roots of capitalism and private enterprise are deep and strong. Even the World War, probably the greatest shock which international economic life ever received, did not profoundly modify the essential features of the private capitalist system, except in Russia. There, in the technically backward former empire of the Tsars, where capitalism itself was a late and largely imported development, superimposed upon a semi-Asiatic feudal and patriarchal social order, there has grown up a new economic system, different from anything that exists elsewhere in the world, and shaped, so far as its organizers can contrive, along the lines of revolutionary doctrine laid down by Karl Marx and Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin.

The word "socialism" is so loosely used and abused that a little explanatory definition seems necessary. The decisive feature that appears to me to mark the Soviet economic system as genuinely socialist, in the Marxian sense of the term, in contradistinction to the economic systems which have prevailed, under the rule of professedly socialist governments, in Germany and Austria, in Sweden and Czecho-Slovakia, is the elimination of private profit as the dominant incentive in

economic activity and the replacement of private by state operation of most of the country's industry and commerce.

State ownership of railroads and municipal ownership of public utilities are quite common in Europe; and in most countries consumers' coöperatives attempt to compete more or less successfully with the private middlemen. But the main branches of commerce and industry are in the hands of private corporations or individuals.

In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, private enterprise accounts for only about 2 per cent of the factory and mining production. Something over 90 per cent of this production comes from enterprises which are, in some form, owned and operated by the state; 6 or 7 per cent is from the factories of the consumers' coöperatives. Less than 10 per cent of the total trade turnover of the country passes through the hands of private dealers; and even in retail trade, where there was a revival of private activity in the first years of the New Economic Policy, the state and coöperative stores now handle more than three quarters of the total volume of trade. The state operates practically all the railroad and water transportation of the country, directs all the large banks, and monopolizes foreign trade.

No private person may legitimately make a penny of profit out of this system of state and coöperative industry and trade, banking and transport. There are no individual shareholders in the state industrial enterprises; and the financial columns of the Russian newspapers are restricted to brief quotations of the rates of the state loans. All the normal means of acquiring large personal fortunes are thus pretty effectively blocked up in Russia; and if there are some Nepmen, or private traders who have become ruble millionaires through lucky dealings in commerce or speculation, they are certainly neither a numerous nor a conspicuous class.

Side by side with this sweeping socialization of trade and industry there still exist considerable elements of capitalism. First and most important, there are twenty-five million peasant households, of which very few yet have cared to sink

their personal fortunes in producers' communes. To fit the individualist peasant into the structure of a socialist system is, in my opinion, the most formidable and complex problem with which the Soviet Government is faced. However, if the peasant is, strictly speaking, a capitalist, he is a very small-scale capitalist, with an average money income of a little more than two hundred rubles a year. The big landlord, even the big farmer on the countryside, has been expropriated more thoroughly than the big merchant or manufacturer in the cities.

Then there are the handicraft workers, shoemakers, cobblers, tailors, blacksmiths, etc., who are also, in a way, small capitalist producers. They are more and more becoming organized in productive coöperatives, which receive preference in obtaining raw materials and credit, and in this field also one can scarcely see any signs of a rebirth of large-scale private capitalism.

What may be called a capitalist business technique is quite widely applied in the predominantly socialist organization of Russian trade and industry. Under socialism, as under capitalism, it has been found economically necessary to maintain a steady medium of exchange in the shape of a stable currency, to pay wages and salaries with some regard to the skill and importance of the work which has been performed, to make out budgets for state administrative and economic organizations, and to see that these budgets are observed. So in the transactions of everyday life money plays much the same rôle in Russia as anywhere else. However, as will be seen later, the uses of banking and credit in Russia are often quite different from what they are under private capitalist systems.

What are the new forms of economic organization which have replaced the familiar business institutions of other parts of the world? The bulk of Soviet industry, including almost all the big factories and mines, is managed by the Supreme Economic Council, which is practically a state department for industry. Its president sits in the Council of People's Commissars.

Hugo Stinnes, multimillionaire of the German inflation period, never supervised such a wide range of industrial activities as fall under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Economic Council, which must direct the development of Caucasian oil fields and Siberian gold mines, Moscow textile mills, Ukrainian metal factories, lumber mills of the Far North, and all the host of enterprises which enter into Russian industrial life.

It would, of course, be obviously impracticable for a single central organization to direct all the details of operation of a whole nation's factories and mines. The functions of the Supreme Economic Council are of a general directing character, while actual responsibility for operation is vested in the so-called trusts, into which every large industry is divided. A Soviet trust as a rule manages a certain number of factories and mines, which are grouped together on a regional basis. A trust may be large or small, according to local needs, and there is no fixed rule regarding the number of trusts which may be set up in a given industry. In the oil industry, for instance, there are only four trusts, each directing operations in one of the four centres of oil production, Baku, Grozny, Emba, and the Kuban district. In larger industries, such as the metal and textile trades, with ramifications all over the country, the number of trusts is much greater. It is estimated that two or three hundred of the larger trusts control about 80 per cent of Russian industrial production.

The All-Union Supreme Economic Council appoints and removes the boards of management for trusts which are of All-Union scope. Smaller industrial enterprises are committed to the charge of the Supreme Economic Councils of the various federal republics or to provincial Economic Councils. The trust board of management, in its turn, appoints and removes the managers of the individual factories or mines in its charge, after consultation with the trade-union of the given industry. After fixed charges, including taxes, have been met and an allowance has been made for amortization, the profit, if there is any, is divided between the state Treasury and the industry itself. The proportions of this division vary from

year to year, but over a period of five years the Treasury has received slightly more than half the profits, as may be seen from the following table.[1]

	1923–24	1924–25	1925–26	1926–27	1927–28	Total
Profits of industry (in millions of rubles)	160	456	633	647	743	2,605
Receipts of Treasury	126	185	283	445	391	1,464

At the same time, as will be shown later, the Soviet industries receive more from the state budget than they contribute to it.

As a general rule the trusts market their product and receive their supplies through syndicates, which serve all the trusts of a given industry. There are about a score of these organizations, and some of them, such as the Oil and Textile Syndicates, make considerable purchases of supplies and raw material in foreign markets, subject, of course, to the general restrictions of the state foreign trade monopoly. With a view to eliminating superfluous competition and coördinating the general work, the syndicates are united in a Union of Syndicates.[2]

While the Supreme Economic Council is the highest executive authority in industry, it is by no means an absolute dictator in the industrial field. Experience has shown that the needs and interests of state industry must be harmonized with those of state trade and banking, and other branches of national economic life. One of the great advantages which Communists claim for their system, as against private capitalism, is that it permits the introduction of elements of planned organization not only in the management of individual industries but in the direction of the whole economic life of the country.

[1] See *Konyunktura Promishiennostiv 1927–1928 godu* ("Outline of Industry during 1927–1928"), p. 92. Published by State Technical Publishing Company, Moscow, 1928.

[2] The share of the syndicates in marketing the products of various industries is as follows: oil, 99 per cent; salt, 99 per cent; leather, 95 per cent; textiles, 89 per cent; metal, 75 per cent. See *Izvestia* for August 3, 1928.

A unique body in the Soviet state system, one which would be possible only under a highly centralized and socialized economic system, is the Gosplan, or State Planning Commission. This institution, which is headed by a veteran Communist engineer, Krzhizhanovsky, has set for itself the highly ambitious task of plotting the graph of future economic development, not only for each new business year, but for longer, five-year periods. If one looks into one of these *pyatiletkas*, or five-year plans of national economic development, one can find a forecast, for 1932, of the population, of the amount of coal that will be mined, of the number of houses that will be built, of the quantity of grain that will be contracted for purchase by the state, etc.

The Gosplan has its agents all over the country, collecting the relative information; moreover, it receives the proposed development plans of the Supreme Economic Council and other economic administrative bodies. Out of this great mass of material it constructs its one-year and five-year projects, which assume the force of authoritative directions when they are confirmed by the Sto, or Council of Labor and Defense. This latter body may best be described as an economic cabinet; it is made up of those members of the Council of People's Commissars whose work is connected directly with economic problems, together with a few industrial and financial experts who do not have seats in the Council of People's Commissars. It is the final arbiter of the disputes which frequently arise between the new organs of Soviet economic administration, although the broad general lines of economic policy are laid down by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Recently, for instance, a difference of opinion developed between the Gosplan and the Supreme Economic Council as to how much the cost of industrial production should be reduced during the fiscal year 1928–1929. The Gosplan demanded an 8 per cent cut, while the Supreme Economic Council insisted that 6 per cent was the best it could promise. The Sto split the difference and decreed a 7 per cent cut as obligatory, simultaneously granting industry an extra

appropriation from the state budget to make up for the prospective loss of income.

How far has the wide-reaching experiment in economic planning, exemplified in the work of the Gosplan, justified itself? Its forecasts are seldom grossly mistaken, but 100 per cent accuracy is rarely attained, and, of course, deviations from plan which look small in percentages often involve seriously large financial amounts. Curiously enough, the Gosplan, in its estimates of industrial development, has shown a tendency to undershoot rather than to overshoot the mark. In 1928, for instance, it predicted an increase of industrial production of about 15 per cent; the actual figure was about 23 per cent. On the other hand a projected increase of agricultural production by 4 per cent turned out to be only 2.7 per cent. The output per worker was supposed to increase by 17.6 per cent and actually grew by 14.4 per cent. Wages increased by 10.2 per cent instead of the projected 7.2 per cent. Cost of production was supposed to go down by 6 per cent; it was reduced by 5 per cent; but this apparently slight difference of one per cent in the calculations made a difference of a hundred million rubles in the financial plans of the industries.

There are fascinating possibilities in the Gosplan's scheme of ordered national economic life; it is an extraordinarily daring effort to apply scientific method in a field where, except in war time, *laissez faire* has hitherto held almost undisputed sway. But before these possibilities can be fully realized both the socialization of Russia and the technique of economic planning will, I think, have to make substantial further progress. The individualist peasant producer is to-day the main stumblingblock in the path of the Gosplan forecasters. No one can be quite sure when the peasant will feel that he is being paid too little for his products and stop raising them in sufficient quantity, thereby compelling a rise in the price level and disarranging all the carefully prepared advance projects.

Then the familiar Russian faults of bureaucratic delay and red tape make themselves felt in the field of economic planning.

The "control figures," as the Gosplan's yearly projects are called, are seldom ready when they should be, at the beginning of the business year. N. Berezin, writing in the magazine *Bolshevik* (No. 23–24, for 1928), notes the following characteristic incident: —

"From Ukraina they report that the Supreme Economic Council had to consider 99 projects in 1927–1928 and considered only 42. For the new business year it was necessary to consider 86 projects, of which only 32 came in, and of these 16 were considered. Delay in the confirmation of a project either leads to overhaste, which makes building more costly, or, as before, building begins without any confirmed plan."

So much for criticism of the technique of Soviet planning. The larger question, whether the industrial and commercial life of a country can be planned in advance with profit or whether this complex task places too great a strain upon the wisdom and foresight of any group of men, will be answered with finality only after there has been a longer period of comparison between Russia's economic experiences and those of countries which employ a different system.

All forms of transport are under the management of the Commissariat for Transport. Most important in this connection are the railroad lines, which in September 1927 had a mileage of 76,200 kilometres. During the five-year period, 1928–1933, it is planned to build 14,400 additional kilometres. The longest of these is the Siberian-Turkestan Railroad, connecting Semipalatinsk, in southern Siberia, with Pishpek (renamed Frunze) in eastern Turkestan, a distance of some seven hundred miles. Work on this line has already begun from both ends, and it is regarded as possessing substantial economic significance, since it will link up the grain regions of Siberia directly with the cotton plantations of Turkestan. Other projected lines will tend to relieve the traffic congestion at Moscow, which is now a central point for almost all the main Russian lines, and will provide more direct outlets from Siberia to European Russia and from the Ural and Volga regions to the ports of the Black Sea.

The Commissariat for Transport contends that the Soviet railroads are definitely profitable in their returns, yielding an excess of income over operating expenses of 279,000,000 rubles in 1927–1928 and promising a corresponding excess of 452,000,000 rubles in 1928–1929. On the other hand a glance at the state budget for 1928–1929 shows that the Commissariat for Transport is expected to yield an income to the state of 1,904,458,700 rubles, receiving at the same time an allotment from the budget of 2,069,461,118 rubles. The expense side of the budget also contains an item of 127,600,000 rubles for the construction of new railroads. The explanation for this apparent discrepancy, which will also be encountered in the field of industry, lies in the fact that both industries and railroads draw a sharp line of distinction between operating expenses and new capital investment. The former item, with rare exceptions, is fully covered by their income; capital investments, on the other hand, are to a considerable extent financed through the state budget.

Trade in the Soviet Union is more and more becoming concentrated in the hands of two large coöperative organizations, the Centrosoyuz and the Selskysoyuz. The former is a consumers' coöperative organization, with twenty-two and a half million members, organized in twenty-two regional unions and thirty thousand local societies, and with an annual turnover of eighteen billion rubles. A system of graduated dues, depending upon the income of the members and ranging from five to fifty rubles, is being introduced.

The Centrosoyuz makes large-scale purchases from the syndicates of the manufacturing industries and distributes its goods among the local societies according to the purchasing power of the region and the exigencies of the grain-buying campaign, which is always an important factor in determining the allotment of goods in peasant regions. Although there is more autonomy and flexibility in the coöperative system than in the state trade which it is replacing, the Centrosoyuz is closely linked up with the general organization of Soviet economic life and is bound to carry out the policies of the

Communist Party in such matters as price-fixing, organization of trade, etc.

The consumers' coöperatives have gained rapidly in membership and volume of business; in 1926–1927, for instance, their retail turnover increased by 31 per cent while industrial production was growing by about 17 per cent.[1] This is quite understandable in view of the fact that membership in a coöperative is often the only guaranty of getting at least a limited supply of some article of which there is a shortage. Moreover, the coöperatives generally undercut the private traders by from 15 to 30 per cent in price.[2] They are well able to do this, in view of the privileges which they receive from the state in such matters as allotment and transportation of goods and lower sales prices. It must be said that, especially in the case of perishable products, such as meat, vegetables, and butter, the coöperatives are apt to suffer in qualitative comparisons with the private dealers.

Soon after the introduction of the New Economic Policy Lenin told the Communists that they must learn to trade. Under the headline "Coöperation has not learned to trade," the newspaper *Commercial-Industrial Gazette*, in its issue of February 13, 1929, prints a series of familiar complaints about the work of the coöperatives from various parts of the Soviet Union. In Rostov it is reported that eggs, potatoes, and other products spoil because they are kept in unsuitable places. In Dniepropetrovsk people must stand in line for bread because the coöperatives have not opened enough stores. In a Tartar village an old woman complains that, while the representative of the coöperative makes eloquent speeches about the future electrification of Russia, he does n't supply the local store with kerosene. In Bokhara a patron of the coöperative reports that it stocks up with wines, liquors, powders, and luxuries, but does n't supply its customers with the necessities of life.

[1] I. Lubimov, *Dva Goda Raboti Potrebitelskoi Kooperatsii* ("Two Years of the Work of Consumers' Coöperation"), p. 11. Published by Centrosoyuz, Moscow, 1929.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

The coöperatives doubtless have their countercharges and justificatory explanations. They are habitually short of working capital, since their profits are limited and seldom exceed 2 or 3 per cent. So lack of funds is one explanation for their failure to open a sufficient number of stores to care for their growing business.

In addition to its primary function of serving the internal trade of the country, the Centrosoyuz has charge of purchasing abroad the very small quantity of goods for general consumption which are permitted to come into Russia. It also manages a number of its own factories, mostly for the manufacture of sausage, chocolate, soap, and other articles of general use.

The Selskysoyuz, the other chief Soviet coöperative organization, is really a federation of peasant coöperatives for the marketing of the produce of their members. It has also grown very fast and now counts fifteen million members. Allowing for duplicate membership (the same peasant sometimes belongs to two or more of these rural coöperative societies), it is estimated that eleven million peasant households, or about 40 per cent of the total number, are enrolled in the Selskysoyuz. Besides marketing the peasants' products on a commission basis, the agricultural coöperatives supply their members with tractors, machinery, fertilizer, and other articles which are directly necessary for farm work. They attempt to improve the quality of the butter and other products made by the peasants, and in some cases open small factories which work on agricultural raw material.

There can be little doubt that the future of Russian trade belongs to the coöperatives. The very visible and noisy revival of private trade which characterized the first years of the New Economic Policy and which caused some hasty and superficial observers to announce that Russia was returning to capitalism has proved hollow and illusory. Freedom of private trade still exists theoretically in Russia; but this freedom is of rather an academic character when the private trader can obtain neither an adequate supply of goods, which are practically

all manufactured in state factories, nor store buildings, which are leased first of all to coöperatives, nor transportation facilities.

In 1924–1925 internal trade in the Soviet Union was divided in the following proportions: coöperatives, 36.5 per cent; state trading organizations, 36.8 per cent; private dealers, 26.7 per cent. For 1927–1928 the corresponding figures were 57.9, 32.3, and 9.8 per cent.[1] During these four years, a period of intensive growth of industrial production, and of some progress in agriculture, the turnover of the coöperatives almost quadrupled, that of the state trading organizations almost doubled, while the turnover of private trade was actually less in 1927–1928 than it was in 1924–1925. It is pretty obvious from these facts and figures that, far from returning to private capitalism, the Soviet Government is steadily and rapidly socializing the field where private capital apparently had gained something of a foothold after the introduction of the New Economic Policy. An expert in the Supreme Economic Council summed up the situation quite accurately, I think, when he said: —

"Immediately after the New Economic Policy we had, for a time, an open economic system, where the uncontrolled market played a considerable rôle. Now we are tending toward a closed economic system, where everything is planned and arranged in advance."

Banking and finance constitute an integral part of this "closed economic system." With the exception of some small mutual-credit societies which finance the operations of private industry and trade, the banking system is entirely under state management. Separate banks exist for the purpose of fulfilling special functions. The State Bank, besides issuing the *chervontzi*, or bank notes, which are the basic form of Soviet currency, maintains a virtual monopoly in short-term credits to industries and institutions. A Bank of Long-Term Credit attends to the financing of the less profitable industries, which

[1] See magazine, *Sovietskaya Torgovlya* ("Soviet Trade"), the organ of the Commissariat for Trade, No. 40 for 1928, p. 38.

require extended credits, sometimes almost indistinguishable from subsidies. There are banks also for crediting foreign trade and agriculture and for other specific purposes.

Since 1924 the ruble has been officially stabilized at its pre-war par value of a little less than two to the dollar and a little less than nine and a half to the pound sterling. Internally the stabilization up to the present time has been a fact, finding expression in a price level which has remained generally fairly even, with occasional rises or dips. The Soviet ruble, however, has no standing on international money markets. It is designed, in fact, to be purely a national currency, and its exportation and importation are forbidden by law. The price which smuggled rubles command on foreign markets varies considerably, but perhaps averages half of the official value.

I once asked a distinguished specialist in the Commissariat for Finance whether or not the Soviet ruble could become a stable medium of international exchange. He replied that this was unlikely, so long as such a sharp difference existed in the price levels of the Soviet Union and the rest of the world. The dollar, the pound, the mark, practically every other unit of currency, represents much greater purchasing power than its nominal equivalent in rubles. The gold index of the cost of living in the Soviet Union in June 1927 (and any changes since that time have been in an upward rather than in a downward direction) was 221 (taking 100 as the 1914 figure), while in America at the same time it was 173, in Great Britain 168, in Germany 148, in France 107.[1] Moreover, the international stabilization of the ruble would require large Soviet foreign bank balances in gold or foreign currency; and such balances do not exist at the present time.

The amount of Soviet currency in circulation on January 1, 1929, was 2,028,374,300 rubles, of which 1,091,043,500 rubles, or 53.8 per cent, consisted of bank notes issued by the State Bank, and 730,511,000 rubles, or 36 per cent, were in the form of Treasury notes, issued in one-, three-, and five-ruble denominations. The remainder was made up of silver, copper, and bronze money, used for small change. The difference between the chervontzi, or State Bank notes, and the Treasury notes is that the former require covering to 25 per cent of their face value in gold and foreign currency, while the latter have no guaranty of value except the legal order that they must be accepted on a basis of parity with the chervontzi. The State Bank reserve of gold and foreign currency, according to the Bank's statement of January 1, 1929, amounted to 300,413,928 rubles, thus providing slightly more than the required 25 per cent covering of the chervontzi. As a matter of fact, as the Finance Commissariat specialist pointed out to me, the difference between the chervontzi and the Treasury notes is technical, rather than real, because neither would actually be exchanged for gold or foreign currency if they were presented for payment.

[1] These data are taken from the magazine, *Planovoe Khozaestvo* ("Planned Economic Life"), No. 1 for 1928, p. 337.

During the year 1928 there was a substantial growth in the amount of currency in circulation, which on March 1 stood at 1,509,700,000 rubles,[1] thus increasing by more than 500,000,000 rubles before the beginning of the new year. This fact, among others, has led some Soviet economists to raise the question whether the country is not faced with the danger of currency inflation.[2] According to the law the Treasury notes should not exceed half the quantity of chervontzi in circulation,[3] and this limit has clearly been exceeded. There is a constant struggle between the Supreme Economic Council and the trusts, which are primarily interested in increasing production and always feel that more funds would mean a greater output, on the one hand, and the Commissariat for Finance, which looks out first for the stability of the currency, on the other;

[1] See *Outline of Industry in 1927–1928*, p. 8.

[2] A vigorous discussion of this question is to be found in the magazine, *Planned Economic Life*, No. 10, for October 1928, pp. 41–70. Mr. L. Shanin, who argues that the country stands in danger of inflation as a result of too reckless financing of industrial construction, points to the feverish haste with which the trusts attempt to convert their money allotments into supplies, even though these supplies may not be of immediate need or value. Mr. N. A. Kovalevsky, who defends the financial policy of the Government against the charge of inflationism, contends that this accumulation of supplies is the result, not of inflation, but of sharp shortage of goods.

[3] *Soviet Union Year-Book, 1928*, p. 414.

and it is possible that during 1928 the industrialists obtained rather too free a hand. At the same time, the most familiar consequence of inflation, a spiral mounting of prices, is less likely to occur in the Soviet Union, where most prices are under fairly effective state control, than in countries where the rôle of the free market is greater.[1] This fact, however, does not mean that the Soviet Government, any more than any other, could resort to unlimited currency emission without suffering the inevitable consequence of a fall in the value of the money. It would perhaps be fair to characterize the present currency situation as strained and as requiring watchful attention and some restriction if something in the nature of inflation is to be averted.

A study of the state budget for 1928–1929[2] brings out some interesting features of the Soviet economic system. The first impressive fact about the state budget, which balances at 7,731,523,402 rubles, is its size, in relation to the national wealth. The Soviet national income for 1928–1929 is estimated at 28,000,000,000 rubles; and if one reckons the nine billion rubles of the combined state and local budgets it will be seen that more than 30 per cent of this national income flows through budgetary channels. The size of the budget is largely explained by two factors: first, that taxation, both direct and indirect, is very heavy; second, that many items relating to transport and industry, which would be absent in the budgets of other countries, appear in the Soviet state accounting.

Soviet revenue is almost equally derived from taxation and nontaxation sources. The largest tax items are the excises, of which the one on vodka is most profitable, and a general turnover tax on the proceeds of industry and trade. The excise taxes are expected to yield 1,700,287,000 rubles, and the

[1] The general Soviet trade index rose from 200 on December 1, 1927, to 215 on December 1, 1928. This was largely due to the increased prices for grain and flax which the Government established in the summer of 1928, with a view to stimulating peasant production.

[2] The budget for 1929–1930, though not prepared in final form at the time of writing, is reported to show a marked increase, preliminary estimates placing the total sum at 11,600,000,000 rubles.

turnover tax is put down for 1,005,000,000 rubles. The most important items in the nontaxation category are income from the transportation system (1,904,458,700 rubles), state loans (800,000,000 rubles), and the returns from state industrial enterprises, state trade, banks, forests, etc. These sources, taken together, are supposed to yield 784,813,777 rubles.

A little more than a quarter of the Soviet budget is spent on the transportation system and about another quarter on the financing of industry, trade, agriculture, and other branches of economic life. The local budgets, which, incidentally, bear most of the expenses of the education and health services, receive a grant of a billion rubles from the state budget; the military expenses are estimated at 850,742,000 rubles, an increase of 14.6 per cent over the previous year, with an additional 23,833,000 rubles for the military sanitary administration and 55,380,000 rubles for "special troops," presumably those of the Gay-Pay-Oo, or State Political Police. Administrative expenses take up most of the remainder.

Inasmuch as the Soviet state operates almost all the industry of the country, one may wonder why it chooses to impose taxes on its state trusts and then give back substantially equivalent amounts in the form of financial grants. The explanation, however, is quite simple. The budget serves as a redistributing agency, making it possible for the state to spend its money where it is believed that expenditure is most necessary. The heaviest taxes are naturally paid by the most profitable industries, which, as a rule, are those which produce goods for immediate consumption. On the other hand, the state is most interested in the rapid development of the metallurgical, chemical, and other so-called heavy industries, which are regarded as the indispensable foundation for the industrialization of the country. Of the grants and long-term credits which are advanced to industry from the state budget and from the Bank of Long-Term Credit, the heavy industries, which are listed under Group A, in contradistinction to the light industries of Group B, receive 93 or 94 per cent.[1]

[1] See *Putii Industrializatzii* ("Ways of Industrialization"), No. 1 for 1929, p. 31.

I have now completed what is necessarily a very brief and condensed sketch of the structure of Soviet economic administration. As may be seen, the Soviet Government, to a large extent, has welded industry and trade, banking and finance, into one enormous unit of production, theoretically at least responsive to unified centralized control. It is a new and enormously complicated machine, this Soviet system of "planned economic life"; and it is not surprising that the innumerable wheels and cogs and levers do not always function quite as they should.

The Soviet socialist industries have set for themselves extraordinarily high goals of future achievement. No nation ever consciously embarked on such an ambitious plan of economic development as one finds outlined in the five-year plan for the development of industry, composed by the Supreme Economic Council and ratified by the Soviet Congress in the spring of 1929. According to this project, industrial output in 1932–1933 will be 2.67 times the figure for 1927–1928. Heavy industry will more than treble its production during this period, and light industry will more than double it. The basic capital of industry will grow from 9,700,000,000 rubles to 23,366,000,000. Cost of production will be reduced by 32 per cent; wages will increase by 35.6 per cent, measured in money, and by 52 per cent if the projected reduction of living costs is taken into account; productivity of labor will grow by 95 per cent.

This project is grandiose in the extreme, especially if one considers that by the end of the business year 1927–1928 the Soviet Union had already exceeded its pre-war industrial production level by some 25 or 30 per cent. Its achievement will strain to the uttermost every nerve and fibre of the national economic body.

Yet optimistic Communists believe that the plan will be fulfilled not within five years, but within four and a half or even four years. So far as quantity output is concerned the results for 1928–1929, the first year of the plan, seem to give some basis for their optimism. Industrial production during this year

increased by 24 per cent, instead of the proposed 21.4 per cent. For 1929–1930 a much more rapid increase has been forecast. Industrial production is supposed to grow by more than 30 per cent, whereas the original *pyatiletka* (five-year plan) called for a growth of only 20 per cent. Among the factors which, it is believed, will facilitate this extremely rapid growth are the completion of new factories and electrical stations and the extended application of two new devices for increasing output: the so-called socialist competition and the uninterrupted working week.

Under the socialist competition, workers in different factories, or in various branches of the same factory, set up improved standards of productivity and hold competitions for carrying them out efficiently. The unbroken working week is a new scheme for deriving the maximum output from existing plant and equipment. Under this system the factories will work every day, instead of standing idle on Sundays, as is now the case. The workers will have one day's rest in six, instead of one in seven, simultaneously foregoing all the holidays which they now enjoy, except for five big revolutionary holidays, when all work will be stopped. The advantage of this plan is that, by employing more workers, the same amount of machinery can presumably turn out a larger production. In some industries shortage of raw material will perhaps interfere with the success of the scheme; but in enterprises where there is no shortage it no doubt has its possibilities.

Quality, rather than quantity, seems to be the chief stumbling-block in the execution of the five-year plan. While the quantity output for 1928–1929 exceeded the plan, cost of production was cut by only 4 or 5 per cent, instead of the projected 7 per cent; productivity of labor fell a little short of the projected 17 per cent and, most serious of all, the quality of much industrial production admittedly declined from a level that was certainly none too high in the first place. The plan for 1929–1930 calls for a 10 per cent cut in costs of production and a rise of 23 per cent in productivity of labor; if these severe demands are satisfied it will be a sign that the Soviet industrial machine is swinging into a better pace.

The five-year plan, which will undoubtedly call for an uncommonly rapid pace of industrial development, is simply the concrete expression of the basic Communist economic programme: to industrialize Russia as rapidly as possible on the basis of applying the most modern technical methods. Lenin, in one of his few expressions where one may detect a glint of nationalist spirit, declared that "Russia must cease to be poor and helpless and become in the full sense of the words powerful and plentiful." On another occasion he said that Russia must as rapidly as possible catch up with and overtake the technical achievements of the leading capitalist countries.

The Communist effort to carry out these injunctions of Lenin by forcing to the utmost the industrial transformation of a technically backward, predominantly peasant country, cut off for several reasons from full economic contact with the outside world, presents an absorbing spectacle of stubborn, disciplined will, pitted against great natural obstacles. One of the most obvious of these obstacles is Russia's inferiority in productivity of labor and technical equipment. Mr. V. V. Kuibishev, President of the Supreme Economic Council, recently cited a number of facts which illustrate this situation.[1]

In machine-building, Germany has achieved one and a half times and America five times the Soviet measure of labor productivity. The average yearly output of a worker on a blast furnace is 330 tons in the Soviet Union and 3330 tons in America. While a large tractor factory in Germany puts out 4000 tractors a year, the whole tractor production of the Soviet Union does n't reach a third of this figure, and the cost of production is three or four times the foreign cost. In the cotton industry, where England employs three and a half and America three workers per thousand spindles, the general figure for the Soviet Union is eight. Such examples could be multiplied almost endlessly.

The Socialist reconstruction of Russia is further handicapped by the comparative isolation of the country from the markets of world capital and by the failure, as yet, to make a smooth

[1] See his article in *Putii Industrializatzii*, No. 1 for 1929, pp. 8–15.

working adjustment with the peasants.[1] The need for a strong upswing in agrarian production is especially keen and urgent. While industry has been striding ahead at a rapid pace, agriculture during the years preceding 1929 has made very slight progress; in fact one can even observe retrograde tendencies. The sweeping programme of industrial progress which has been marked out in the five-year plan cannot conceivably be fulfilled unless the peasant is induced to give a substantially larger surplus of grain to feed the increasing numbers of city workers and of flax, wool, cotton, oil-seeds, and other raw material to feed the growing industries.

One of the weak links in the economic life of the country, and especially in the relations between city and countryside, is the sharp and chronic shortage of manufactured goods. At first sight it seems paradoxical that such a shortage should exist when the state industries report such regular and sweeping gains of output. But there are the indubitable facts of the frequent waiting lines outside the stores which sell textile and woolen goods, the bare or scantily supplied shelves of the rural coöperatives, which sometimes offer the peasants little in exchange for their grain. An official in the Gosplan told me that the unsatisfied annual demand for manufactured products may be estimated at anywhere from 200,000,000 to 400,000,000 rubles.

There are several factors which help to account for this shortage. In the first place, a very large share of the increased industrial output is consumed within the industries themselves and does not reach the consumer. In the plan for 1928–1929, for instance, it is calculated that, while the "organized consumption" of industrial establishments and state institutions will grow by 22 per cent, the amount of goods offered on the broad market for the everyday consumer will increase by only $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 per cent.[2] Then the lion's share of increased produc-

[1] Both these points are discussed in much greater detail in separate chapters, No. XVI, "Russia and World Capital," and No. VIII, "Karl Marx and the Peasant-Sphinx."

[2] *Planned Economic Life*, No. 9 for 1928, p. 27.

tion is in objects which have little direct significance for the consumer. The man, or woman, in the waiting lines before the stores is not apt to be in search of electrical energy (the production of which is supposed to increase in 1928–1929 by 28.4 per cent) or of Diesel motors (scheduled increase, 40.3 per cent), or yet of superphosphate, of which the supply will be greater by 74 per cent. He, or she, is more likely to demand cotton goods (supposed to increase by 12.4 per cent), or woolen goods, of which there will be 8.2 per cent more, or linen, of which there will be slightly less, as compared with last year.[1]

Moreover, the regions of the old Russian Empire which are not within the frontiers of the Soviet Union, Poland and the Baltic States, contain in proportion to their population a larger share of factories than one can find in Soviet territory. The loss of the great Polish textile centre of Lodz is alone enough to explain in part the lack of textile goods.[2]

Carrying out a rigid policy of maximum industrialization, the Soviet Government refuses, with slight and unimportant exceptions, to import goods designed for immediate consumption, concentrating its purchases abroad on machinery and essential raw material. This still further deepens the chasm between internal supply and demand. When one further considers that the inferior quality of present-day goods makes it necessary to renew them more frequently, one has perhaps covered the more fundamental causes of the goods shortage which has been one of the most visible Soviet economic problems for the last few years.

Soviet industrial life has still other discrepancies and disproportions which are calculated to make sleepless nights for the officials in the Supreme Economic Council and the Gosplan. The President of the Gosplan, Krzhizhanovsky, lists three of

[1] These figures are taken from the tables appended to the book, *Osnovnie Problemi Kontrolnikh Tsiffr narodnovo Khozaestvo na 1928–1929 Godu* ("Basic Problems of the Control Figures of National Economic Life in 1928–1929"), by G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, F. G. Grinko, and Z. I. Kviring. Published by Gosplan, Moscow, 1929.

[2] The newspaper, *Trud*, of March 29, 1929, points out in this connection that the parts of the former Russian Empire which are not included in the Soviet Union contain 21 per cent of the cotton-goods industry and 46 per cent of the woolen industry of pre-war Russia, while they number only 15 per cent of its population.

them: the disproportion between industrial and agricultural prices (the former being much higher); the disproportion between the demand for agricultural raw material (cotton, leather, wool, etc.) and its supply; and the disproportion between the number of working hands in the villages and the possibility of using them economically (the agrarian overpopulation). Then there is the shortage of cast iron and of bricks, cement, and other building materials, a serious problem in view of the fact that every year larger investments are being made in new industrial construction. To make factories without bricks is quite as difficult as to make bricks without straw.

Notwithstanding the difficulties which were experienced with building materials, the plan of new building for 1928–1929, according to preliminary reports, has been fulfilled. The amount of projected new industrial building for 1929–1930 is almost double the figure which was achieved in 1928–1929. If this very ambitious plan for 1929–1930 is carried out it will prove the correctness of the argument of the dominant group in the Party leadership that it was possible to get over construction difficulties, not by curtailing building, but by increasing the output of building materials.

In general it may be said that under the pressure of the extremely fast tempo of industrialization which has been adopted the whole Soviet economic apparatus works with great strain and tension, and even slight deviations from accepted plans are apt to produce minor crises which seem out of proportion to the causes which lie behind them. Reserve supplies of every kind (gold, currency, grain, goods) are reduced to the minimum, and sometimes below the minimum which is consistent with the smooth functioning of the machinery of production. And experience has shown that to operate without adequate reserves is as difficult in economics as in war. Nikolai Bukharin, who, although recently under fire for his alleged heresies, has always been regarded as a leading Communist economist, recently wrote: —

"Not only have we no reserves, but we have interruptions in supply, lines and queues have become an everyday event,

which to a considerable extent disorganizes our productive life." [1]

If the traditional form of economic crisis in capitalist countries is the failure of purchasing power to keep up with the output of goods, with consequent trade depression and unemployment, the economic crisis which has been chronic in the Soviet Union during the last few years finds expression in the sharp disparity between the supply of consumable goods and the nominal purchasing power of the population. Supply simply does not keep up with demand, despite the sweeping increase in industrial production. It will be interesting to see whether capitalism or socialism first succeeds in creating something like an ideal equilibrium as between production and consumption.

In surveying such a challenging experiment as the organization of the industrial and commercial life of a great nation along socialist lines the questions inevitably arise: How has it worked? How does the socialist system of the Soviet Union compare in productive efficiency with pre-war Russian capitalism and with the post-war capitalism of other countries? I have often wished that the responsibility for answering these interesting but very complicated and difficult questions might rest with some commission of super-experts in economics and industrial production, approaching the subject with no advance bias in favor of either capitalism or socialism and fully equipped with the encyclopædic knowledge which would be necessary for an authoritative consideration of the subject. In the absence of such a commission I shall venture to state a few quite humble and tentative impressions of my own on the working of Soviet economics up to date.

There are two points, I think, in which the Soviet system during the last few years has confounded its critics and given fair cause for jubilation to its upholders. These are quantity industrial production and the development of new capital from the internal resources of the country. In the first years

[1] *Zametki Ekonomista* ("Notes of an Economist"), published by State Publishing Company, Moscow, 1928, p. 44.

of the New Economic Policy, when the state industries found it most difficult to turn out 25 or 35 per cent of the pre-war output, most foreign observers were convinced that Russia could not regain its pre-war level of industrial production without giving freer scope to the development of private capitalism within the country and attracting large-scale aid in the form of loans and concessions from abroad. But now the pre-war level has been left far behind; the percentage of industry, and especially of trade, in state and coöperative hands is greater than it was a few years ago; and the Soviet Union has received no loans and very little help in foreign investments.

Industrial production for 1927–1928 was about 25 per cent higher than in 1913; production for 1928–1929, if the plan is carried out, will surpass the 1913 figure by 50 per cent. A few comparative figures for individual industries show what a big upswing there has been since the inauguration of the New Economic Policy, when the Russian industries had sunk to a low-water mark of 15 or 20 per cent of the pre-war output.

In 1913 the part of Russia now included in the Soviet Union mined 28,900,000 tons of coal and 9,300,000 tons of oil. The corresponding figures for 1927–1928 were 36,100,000 tons and 11,900,000 tons. The output of agricultural machinery in 1927–1928 was almost double the amount of 1913; the production of electrical energy was two and a half times as great. Even in the textile industry, where there is such a sharp goods shortage, due to causes which have already been discussed, the production for 1927–1928 shows gains ranging from 2 to 20 per cent, as compared with 1913. Only in metal production and building materials does one find a decrease, as compared with the pre-war amount. So one gets the following set of comparative figures: iron ore, 1913, 9,214,000 tons; 1928, 5,800,000 tons; pig iron, 1913, 4,207,000 tons; 1928, 3,328,000 tons; bricks, 1913, 2,144,000,000; 1928, 1,785,000,000.[1] Metal and bricks are the weak spots in the plan of national

[1] See the tables in *Basic Problems of the Control Figures of National Economic Life for 1928–1929*, pp. 172–211.

economic development; and desperate efforts are being made to increase their production.

In the matter of creating new capital the Soviet industries have passed far out of the stage when they could justly be reproached with consuming the confiscated capital of the past, without creating any new surplus themselves. The sum of three billion rubles, which has been designated for new investments in industry during 1929–1930, is far in excess of the average industrial investment in pre-war years, even if one takes into account the high building index (which was 201 in September 1929), the lack of any inflow of foreign capital and the fact that Soviet economists lump in expenditures on amortization with general costs of new building.

During the last four or five years the total investments in Soviet industry, counting its own accumulations, its assignments from the budget, and its bank credits, have amounted to almost six billion rubles.[1] Any trip through the country shows that these expenditures are beginning to bear fruit. Down on the rapids of the lower Dnieper a huge combination dam and hydroelectric power plant, estimated to cost about a hundred million dollars, is being built for the double purpose of making the upper reaches of the Dnieper navigable for ocean-going ships and supplying electricity to neighboring factories, some of which have still to be constructed. Probably another hundred million dollars is being sunk in the construction of a new railroad line, connecting Siberia with Turkestan. In Rostov-on-the-Don the largest agricultural machinery factory in Europe is already in process of construction, and a big tractor factory is projected in Stalingrad (formerly Tsaritsin). The Soviet oil industry has been provided with modern equipment, and an improved pipe line between Baku and Batum and a new pipe line between Grozny and Tuapse facilitate the flow of oil to the Black Sea ports and hence to the markets of the outside world.

The introduction of electrical energy is making substantial

[1] See article by S. Kuznetzov published in the newspaper, *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* ("Economic Life"), January 1, 1929.

progress, and in some industrial regions, such as the Donetz Basin, many industrial processes have been facilitated in this way. New branches of industry, such as the manufacture of tractors and textile machinery, have started since the Revolution, and while their output thus far is very expensive they fit in with the general plan of industrializing the country and especially freeing it, so far as possible, from dependence on foreign imported machinery. The chemical industry, which was in a very early stage of development in Russia before the War, has greatly increased its output. In short, the Soviet Union to-day makes the impression of a country that is forging rapidly ahead in the field of industrial production. The situation has changed greatly since 1924, when Premier Rykov told the delegates to a Congress of the Communist International that not a single new factory had been built since the Revolution.

But quantity of output is not the sole or even the chief gauge in determining the relative efficiency of an industrial system. It is perhaps idle to speculate on what might have happened if the private capitalist system had been restored in Russia after the Revolution; but it seems likely that under the same conditions of an enormous hungry market, freedom to charge very high prices, and complete protection against foreign competition private industry would also have shown substantial gains of output from year to year. When one begins to apply such essential standards of comparison as quality and price the case for nationalized and state-operated industry shows many weaknesses.

There is probably no method of measuring quality as precisely and definitely as one may ascertain quantity in industrial production. But it is the unanimous testimony of Russian consumers, a testimony which is not contradicted, even by Soviet economic officials and experts with whom I have talked, that the quality of Russian products, especially of wearing apparel and many other articles of immediate consumption, has not reached the pre-war level. Several years ago Leon Trotzky initiated the idea of a commission which should hear

complaints regarding the quality of industrial production; its offices were soon flooded with boots that leaked after the first trial, knives that failed to cut, textiles that tore after a short period of wear, etc. Krzhizhanovsky, President of the State Planning Commission, admits that "the quantitative needs of production often compel us to ignore quality." [1] And here is an excerpt from *The Conjuncture of Industry for 1927–1928*,[2] a book published under the auspices of the Supreme Economic Council, regarding the quality of production during this period: —

"During the year there were complaints regarding deterioration of quality from the metallurgical industry, because of the increased number of cinders from the coal, and from the railroads, because of the increased quantity of damaged goods in some products of the metallurgical industry. There were also complaints regarding the deterioration of the quality of overshoes, shoes, building material, aniline dyes, some forms of agricultural machinery, etc."

Low quality is accompanied by extremely high prices. The general wholesale index of prices of industrial products, as estimated by the Supreme Economic Council on October 1, 1928, was 185 (taking 100 as the pre-war level).[3] Even this figure does not indicate how much of the high cost of socialism is borne by the consumer, more especially by the peasant. Prices on iron, steel, chemicals, and other products which are consumed by the industries are artificially kept down, while prices on articles of broad consumption are raised, the index for the latter being about 199. This is only the wholesale index. By the time the products reach the peasant through the several stages of coöperative or state trade he very often is obliged to pay two and a half or three times the pre-war price of the goods. On the other hand the fixed state price on his basic product, grain, has been kept quite low, and up to the summer of 1929 was very little above the pre-war price. In the

[1] *Basic Problems of the Control Figures for 1928–1929*, p. 9.
[2] See page 38.
[3] *Outline of Industry for 1927–1928*, p. 84.

summer of 1929 with a view to stimulating peasant production, there was an increase of about 15 per cent in the fixed prices of grain; but this obviously did not restore anything like the pre-war relation between industrial and agricultural prices.

What lies behind the high prices and low quality of Soviet manufactured products? Of course, the price level has risen all over the world since the War, but nowhere to such a great height as in Russia. Formerly foreign industrial products were 40 per cent cheaper than Russian; now they are 60 per cent cheaper.[1] Increased real wages of the industrial workers legitimately account for part, but only part, of the increased prices of goods, and scarcely justify the deterioration of quality. One evidently must look for further causes within the new Soviet economic system itself.

One should not apply this generalization about high prices and low quality to all Soviet industrial undertakings. The Azneft, the trust which directs the Baku oil industry, has reduced costs of production far below the pre-war figure and increased its extraction of the more valuable petroleum products by introducing in Baku a whole series of modern American methods, including the oil-cracking process. Other individual examples of the same kind could no doubt be cited. But the output of Soviet industry, taken as a whole, unmistakably suffers severely from the two defects which have been mentioned.

If one were asked to sum up in one word the greatest evil of this system, the chosen word, I am sure, would be "bureaucracy," using that term in its worst Russian sense. Anyone who has had extended experience in dealing with Russian offices knows what an extraordinary expenditure of time and energy is often necessary to obtain some very trifling thing — a stamp on an official paper, for instance. From time immemorial Russian officialdom has acted on the double principle that time does not matter and that nothing should be done to-day which can, under any pretext, be put off till to-morrow. Although there is much agitation for combating bureaucracy,

[1] See the report of the Soviet Commissar for Finance, N. P. Brukhanov, before the Soviet Central Executive Committee, in *Izvestia* for April 13, 1928.

the Revolution has not yet effected any great change in these working habits. The introduction of socialism inevitably involved a spread of the bureaucratic tradition over a wide field of industry and trade. How much harm this can inflict on the proper functioning of the productive machinery is visible from the following incident, described with much indignation by a German engineer, Dr. Heinrich Poppelmann, who was employed as a consultant for the building of a new factory in Lubertsi, a station just outside Moscow.[1]

Dr. Poppelmann at first was permitted to communicate directly with German firms from which he wished to order equipment, but later this right was taken away from him and he was told that all his communications must go through the Soviet Trade Mission in Berlin. He sent some letters in this way, containing urgent orders and accompanied by plans and blueprints, from Lubertsi on October 16. Being in Berlin in December, he was amazed to find that the German firms had not received his letters, and, calling at the Trade Mission, he discovered letters and blueprints still lying there "in a disorderly condition." On another occasion he had to wait two months to obtain an export license for a few pounds of sand, which he wished to send abroad for analysis.

Imagine this sort of thing more or less prevailing throughout the state industries and it is not difficult to understand why overhead costs are so high and so difficult to reduce. Another classical case of almost criminal bureaucratic mismanagement was the building of the Sergievsk glass factory, which was exposed in the winter of 1927–1928 by Mr. Y. A. Yakovlev, Vice-Commissar for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. In choosing the site no account was taken for the factory requirements in sand and lumber, so that the nearest woods were almost two hundred miles away and sand had to be carried about eighty miles. The expense of building the factory was five times greater than the original plan called for, while the output was one fifth of what was expected. Two thirds of the output was waste and unfit for use.

[1] See *Pravda* for February 6, 1929.

Obviously Russia could not have made the progress which has been achieved if every industrial enterprise were as badly planned as the Sergievsk glass factory. And, of course, mismanagement and bankruptcy are not unknown under capitalism. But, although definite statistics on such a subject would be difficult to compile, it is my impression that instances of gross industrial negligence, such as choosing unsuitable building sites, making up inaccurate financial plans, and leaving new machinery to spoil unused, are rather more common in Russia than elsewhere. Capitalist enterprises are ensured against such negligence by a very strong human motive, the motive of private gain, while the people responsible for construction in the Soviet Union are handling not their own money but the state's. Unquestionably there are a certain number of devoted Communists, willing to work harder for their cause than private capitalists might be willing to work for the sake of gain. But there are not enough such people to leaven adequately the whole body of industry.

Inexperience is perhaps second to bureaucracy as a handicap in Soviet industrial management. The great majority of the managers of Soviet factories and mines are workers and Communists; about three quarters of them lack the equivalent of an American high-school education.[1] Of course, among these managers one finds a certain number of naturally good executives, "self-made men," who come to the fore in the industrial life of any country. Many of the "red directors," as the Soviet factory managers are called, served as officers during the civil war or had some other preliminary administrative experience. However, lack of adequate technical and general education is apt to prove a serious handicap in the management of a large and complicated industrial plant.

In general, the problem of management is one of the most serious which socialism in Russia is called on to face. The "red director" has an engineer, usually a man of pre-revolutionary experience, as a technical advisor. Not a few of the

[1] Authority for this statement is to be found in the article by M. Rutin, "The Directing Forces of the Communist Party," in the *Bolshevik*, No. 15 for 1928.

engineers are hostile or at best passive in their attitude toward the Soviet régime, and recurring discoveries of cases of deliberate mismanagement by technical specialists introduce an element of strain and suspicion into the relations between the red directors and their technical associates.

In a sense, this situation leads to a sort of vicious circle. Every new case of sabotage naturally inspires the Communists to apply measures of repression and vigilance which sometimes hamper the work of quite loyal specialists and tend to make the average non-Communist engineer very reluctant to depart from routine methods or to make any experiments which, if they turned out badly, might involve him in a charge of sabotage, an offense which is regarded as very serious and may be punished by death. When all the red directors possess a firm grasp of the technical details of the enterprises which they are supposed to manage and when a new generation of engineers and other specialists, sympathetic with the existing order, is trained, the difficulties with management in Soviet enterprises will probably tend to decline; but there must be considerable lapse of time before either of these conditions is fully realized.

The element of corruption cannot be overlooked in reviewing the difficulties of the new system of economic administration. Of course, this, like bureaucracy, is nothing new in Russia; in fact it is prosecuted and punished more severely under the Soviet Government than was the case under the Tsarist régime. But the new organization of industry and trade affords more temptation, or at least less effective resistance, to corrupt dealing, because people are not always so careful in defending the state's money as they would be in safeguarding their own. The consumers' coöperatives, for instance, lose ten million rubles a year in embezzlements, which are especially common among the rural societies.

Perhaps the most definite lesson that can yet be drawn from the test which socialism has received in Russia is that the mere abolition of private capitalism does not automatically make possible a substantial improvement in the living conditions of the masses of the people. Some evils which ardent socialist orators in other countries attribute entirely to the capitalist system, such as congested housing and unemployment, exist in Russia in quite sharp forms; the new system has not provided any immediate remedy for them. The ill-managed, bureaucratic trust, which puts out defective goods at high prices, and the negligent coöperative, which allows its cashier to run off with the funds and stores its potatoes next to leaking kerosene tins, can be just as much of a plague to the consumer as the grasping monopoly or profiteering middleman under capitalism. In short, the magic Marxian formula of nationalizing the means of production has not by itself proved capable of abolishing poverty and want. If socialism is to prove in the end the superior economic system, it must work out a technique of business management and industrial administration which will be more efficient and more economical than that of capitalism.

It scarcely can be claimed that socialism in Russia has yet worked out such a technique. But, of course, it would be unfair to pronounce a final judgment on a new system which has still had less than a decade of peaceful reconstruction in which to orient itself. The late Mr. Leonid Krassin, one of the ablest of the Soviet economic administrators, argued on one occasion that the first stages of a new social and economic order, just because it is new, are always inferior to the last stages of an old order, even though in the end the new system may prove clearly superior.

During the last few years, at the price of tremendous deprivations inflicted upon the consumer, much of the framework of a potentially powerful Russian national industrial system has been built. If this system in time begins to operate with smoothness and efficiency it is possible that many of the difficulties of the present period, outlined in this chapter, will diminish in retrospect and that the industrialization of the Soviet Union will take its place in economic history as a feat comparable with the same process, as carried out at various times by America, Germany, and Japan.

The ultimate success of socialism as an economic system would seem to depend in no small degree upon whether and how far the traditional incentives of private ownership and personal gain, which are weakened and in some cases entirely destroyed under the Soviet system, can be replaced by new stimuli, rooted in class and community loyalty. An example of such a new stimulus is the "socialist competition," which was launched in the Soviet industries during the early months of 1929. The workers of a mine or factory, under the terms of this competition, would sign a pledge to achieve definite results in the way of increased output, reduced costs, diminished absenteeism. Then they would send a challenge to other factories of the same industry to match or exceed their record. At the time of writing this competition has not ended; but it has already achieved tangible results in pushing up the productivity of labor. It remains to be seen whether this will prove a permanent means of heightening labor efficiency or whether the effect will wear off with the novelty. So far the effect of this and other social incentives to more intensive and efficient work varies with different classes of the population. They are more influential in the towns than in the villages, and they carry more weight with the manual workers than with the engineers.

Socialism in Russia, so far as may be judged now, has a tremendous theatre and an indefinite period in which to demonstrate its possibilities. I do not foresee the slightest likelihood of any drastic modification of the existing economic order, or anything in the nature of a return to private capitalism. The workers of Russia, with more than a decade of Soviet rule behind them, would never, I think, submit again to the discipline of a private employer. But the new psychology and new status of the Russian workers are a subject for another chapter.

VII

LABOR AS ARISTOCRACY

"In our state the most honorable title is the title of worker. To be a worker, to be a member of a trade-union, is to be a privileged citizen of the Soviet Union."

This declaration of M. P. Tomsky, President of the All-Union Trade-Union Council, before a recent Congress of the Soviet Trade-Unions, was more than an orator's effort to tickle the susceptibilities of his audience. It was, to a very large extent, a statement of actual fact. So far as legislation and intensive propaganda can achieve this end, labor is the aristocracy, the privileged class of the Soviet Union.

Nowhere else in the world is a trade-union card such a prized possession. The holder of such a card enjoys a whole series of benefits and preferences, ranging from free insurance to the right of first consideration for a vacant position. And, while office employees, teachers, doctors, and other brain workers are enrolled in their own unions, the industrial proletariat admittedly constitutes the favored class in the Soviet state. Factory workers and their children are preferred candidates for admission to the universities, for promotion in the state service. As has already been pointed out, there is a systematic effort to maintain a predominance of manual workers in the ranks of the ruling Communist Party.

This dictatorship of the proletariat finds expression in a hundred varied ways. The former Nobleman's Club in Moscow is now the Hall of the Trade-Unions, and a like transformation has probably occurred in the case of every similar institution in the country. A Grand Duke's villa in the former fashionable Crimean summer resort of Yalta is now a rest home for the Dockers' union. When a high Soviet official visits a provincial

town his main speech is almost always delivered in the building of the largest local factory or railroad shop. In the course of a Soviet election delegations of workers visit one government office after another; and the Commissars for War and Foreign Affairs and Finance always find time to receive these delegations and answer their questions.

The transformation of social values in Russia is so complete as to be almost amusing. One never sees pictures of rich or socially fashionable people in the Soviet illustrated newspapers, except when there is some moral of class hatred or ridicule to be pointed; but factory life, which goes on almost ignored in other countries, receives a generous amount of attention in the shape of illustrations showing the workers at their machines or in their clubs and theatres. Whenever the phrase, "the social composition of such and such an institution requires improvement," is used in the Soviet press it implies as a matter of course that more workers should be brought into the given institution. I know of a case in which the son of a former general is working in a factory in order to acquire the "class standing" which is a prerequisite for entrance to the universities. As a worker he has a good chance of admission, unless someone is malicious enough to denounce him for his origin; as the son of a former general he would be forever disqualified from enjoying higher education, and also probably from holding any post in the state service.

Still another feature of the proletarian domination of the new Russian social order is the high proportion of ex-workers in governmental and industrial executive posts. The President of the Moscow Soviet, Ukhanov, is a former worker in the large "Dynamo" motor factory. The majority of the Presidents of Provincial Soviet Executive Committees and of the managers of state factories are also of proletarian origin.

Of course, only a very small proportion of workers can hope to rise to the higher administrative posts. There can be only one ex-worker manager in a factory where two or five or ten thousand men and women are employed. Under what conditions does the actual factory worker in the Soviet Union live?

During 1928 and 1929 I visited two proletarian centres, the textile settlement of Sobinka, in Vladimir Province, and the mining town of Shachti, in the Donetz Basin. Sobinka centred around a large textile factory, employing six or seven thousand workers, which had been renamed "Proletarian Vanguard" since the Revolution. Most of the workers lived in large, ill-smelling brick tenements, or barracks, as they are called in Russian; and these dwellings were badly overcrowded. One family to a room was the general rule; and one or two extra persons, usually unmarried women or girls, were stowed away in curious cubbyholes, built under the ceilings, somewhat in the fashion of upper berths of trains, and curtained off from the rest of the room. Communal kitchens, serving the needs of a whole floor, were the general rule. Even with the best will in the world it was difficult to maintain satisfactory sanitary conditions in the midst of such congestion; and an epidemic of measles was in full swing at the time of my visit.

A few hundred fortunate families have been removed from these tenements and placed in tolerably decent newly built two-room apartments; but the tenements remain the shelter of the majority. In the matter of provisioning the situation of the Sobinka workers also left much to be desired. Bread was sold in limited quantities, as was the rule all over Russia in the spring of 1929; and the workers complained of frequent shortages of such products as meat and butter. Milk was expensive and hard to get; and this fact, together with the darkness and crowding of the tenements, helped to explain the pasty appearance of many of the children. In general, even apart from difficulties of supply which might prove temporary, the average monthly wage of sixty rubles was not calculated to support a very high standard of living.

And yet, despite all these obviously unfavorable conditions, an impartial observer would not, I think, carry away the impression that the workers of the "Proletarian Vanguard" were disaffected in their attitude toward the existing régime. In the first place, the element of relativity never must be forgotten in passing judgment on Russian conditions. Things which

would be regarded as intolerably bad in America, England, or Germany are borne with more endurance in Russia because the workers never have known anything better.

The Soviet trade-union officials with whom I talked were quite ready to admit that Sobinka was far from being a workers' paradise. But they could point to various new developments which, however small and imperfect in themselves, were at least signs of improvement. The congested tenements were an inheritance from the pre-revolutionary past; and while only a minority of the workers have been provided with adequate housing, some progress in this direction was being registered from year to year, because 10 or 15 per cent of the profits of the Vladimir Textile Trust, which manages the factory, go into a fund for improving the living conditions of the workers.

A public nursery, functioning in two shifts and accommodating a number of small children whose mothers are at work, is another innovation of the present time. So is the factory club, with its library and reading room and "circles," or groups for the study of music, radio, and other subjects. So is the factory theatre, which was filled to its limited capacity for a performance of *Rigoletto* by a traveling company.

Still more important, perhaps, was the unmistakable fact that the active-minded worker has far more opportunities for self-expression than was the case before the Revolution. The manager of the clean and comfortable little house for transient visitors where I stayed was a former weaver in the factory. Besides her work with the house, she found a good deal of occupation in a commission for regulating and inspecting the state and coöperative stores.

The factory committee, which is supposed to represent the workers in their disputes with the management, attracts many of the more energetic workers into its various fields of activity: negotiations of wage differences, maintenance of safe and healthy conditions of labor, cultural work, etc.

Undoubtedly there are many workers, especially in the textile industry, which employs large numbers of women (usually less educated and literate than men in Russia), who take little

interest in these new cultural and social activities and respond primarily to the stimulus of the full dinner pail or the full market basket. But the more active workers, who in other countries often become strike leaders and organizers of discontent, possess so many means of self-expression under the Soviet system of industrial management that very few of them, in the natural course of things, become permanent malcontents. This is a factor of no small importance in determining the strength of the grip of the Soviet system upon the working masses.

In Shachti, in the southeast corner of the great Donetz coal region, I gained impressions not dissimilar from those which I carried away from Sobinka. Living conditions in this sooty, cindery town are bleak and hard; the wages of sixty-five rubles a month are low; ventilation in the old mines is often bad. I happened to be in Shachti at a time when the pit committee of the large neighboring Vlasovka mine was being reëlected; and this procedure was certainly calculated to dispel the impression that the Russian workers are inhibited from expressing grievances by the management, the Communist Party, or any other organization. The whole reëlection was accompanied by brief, pungent speeches, most of which set forth complaints in the bluntest and most vigorous fashion.

"Why are a thousand of our workers outside the union?" asked one speaker. "Not because they don't want to pay two per cent of their salary for dues, but because the union does n't defend their interests. It just does what the management wants."

Another fiery orator shouted: —

"By law we should have a six-hour working day, but in practice it sometimes turns into a ten-hour day. The limitations on overtime work which the Commissariat for Labor prescribes are ignored. We don't want the extra pay for overtime hours; we want the shorter working day and our health."

But, while one could hear such complaints in open meetings and much grumbling about the high cost of food and clothing among the miners in their homes, a quick change of tone was

perceptible as soon as one suggested a comparison of the present with the pre-revolutionary past. One of the more thoughtful miners (a non-Communist, incidentally) seemed to sum up the general mood when he addressed to me the following little impromptu speech: —

"Now we complain, and rightly, that there is too much overtime work, that the six-hour day which is supposed to exist for the more dangerous branches of underground work is seldom observed. But before the Revolution the working day of a Donetz miner was often twelve hours. Now we criticize our trade-union for not defending us vigorously enough, but formerly there was no trade-union at all.

"You, as a stranger, may see that some things do not go so smoothly here as they may in technically more advanced countries; but we, who have lived here all our lives, can see a great improvement over the old days. For instance, while we still have drunkenness and hooliganism, we also have real public sentiment against them; we now have our clubs and theatres and libraries; moreover, there is a new sense of self-respect that makes even the more backward miners realize that man was n't made to work inhumanly long hours and then spend all his wages in a debauch.

"If we criticize our pit committees and trade-unions for their mistakes, still we made these organizations ourselves; their weaknesses and mistakes are very largely our own weaknesses and mistakes; and we should fight to maintain our organizations, if it ever should be necessary."

From Sobinka and Shachti and from the factories which I have visited in such cities as Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, and Nizhni Novgorod [1] I gained two outstanding impressions:

[1] The question naturally arises whether Sobinka and Shachti should be considered representative industrial centres. I think they give a fair cross section of the everyday life of two large groups of Russian workers, the miners and the textile workers, at least of those who live outside the largest cities. The workers of Moscow and Leningrad receive higher wages and enjoy better club and educational facilities than those in the provinces; but in those cities also the housing situation is quite sharp. Then there are many out-of-the-way little factory settlements which are more backward than Sobinka and Shachti. D. Schwartzman, a trade-union official, writing in *Izvestia* for April 2, 1929, on "Living Conditions and Productivity of Labor," points out that, while some progress has been made in improving the workers' housing (during 1927–1928 more than 50,000,000 rubles was deducted from the profits of industry for improving the living conditions of the workers), much still remains to be done, especially as many new industrial enterprises develop outside the large cities, where everything has to be built up afresh. Mr. Schwartzman writes that while the Soviet industrial workers in general possess a housing space allotment of 4.75 square metres per person, the allotment of the textile workers is 4.15 square metres and that of the miners 3.70 square metres.

that the Russian workers, as a general rule, live under harder and more primitive conditions than those which prevail in America and Western Europe, and that there has been a distinct improvement in their lot, materially and morally, since the Revolution. This improvement finds expression in three fields: wages, hours, and conditions of labor.

Real wages of the Russian workers, according to a statement made to the writer in the winter of 1928–1929 by Mr. A. Dogadov, Secretary of the All-Union Trade-Union Council, are 22 per cent above the pre-war level.[1] They have risen steadily since the introduction of the New Economic Policy, although the rate of increase tends to decline from year to year, and during the winter of 1928–1929 the shortage of many food products and the increased prices of others probably offset the increase in money wages, at least so far as the diet of the workers was concerned.[2]

[1] During 1927–1928 the average wage for all Soviet industry was 66.90 rubles a month. The best paid class of workers were the printers, with a monthly average wage of 90.37 rubles, and the worst paid were the textile workers, with 55.87 rubles. All workers and state employees in Russia are divided into categories and paid wages and salaries according to skill, productivity, and the responsibility of their work. Industrial workers are divided into eight categories, the most highly skilled receiving three times the wages of the most inexperienced, while office workers are divided into sixteen categories, of which the highest is paid eight times the salary scale of the lowest. (For these and other details of Soviet wage regulation see the book, *Soviet Trade-Unions, 1926–1928: The Report of the Trade-Union Council to the Eighth Congress of Trade-Unions*," pp. 312–325.)

[2] Discussing this rise in prices, *Izvestia* for March 29, 1929, says: "The menu of the average worker's family has scarcely changed appreciably during the last years, notwithstanding the unquestionable growth of real wages. And if the growth of retail prices evoked quite unanimous and energetic protest in the press, it was not because sardines increased in price by 15 per cent and because the price of cocoa went up, but because prices for herrings rose by 8.2 per cent, salt 2.6 per cent, onions 5.2 per cent, potatoes 6.2 per cent, oil-seeds butter 2.3 per cent, not to mention products less accessible to the worker, such as butter (12.7 per cent), milk (21.7 per cent), eggs (20 per cent)."

Money wages of the Russian workers increased by about 10 per cent during 1928–1929. During this period, however, there was such a sharp rise in the cost of living

The problem of comparing the real wages of Russian workers, both with pre-war wage rates and with the scales which prevail in foreign countries, difficult at best, was made almost impossible by the widespread introduction of the system of rationing food products during 1929. In most countries money represents definite purchasing power; but in the Soviet Union this purchasing power at the present time is sharply limited. One may form some idea of the standard of living of Russian workers and employees by listing the allotments of various food products which were prevalent in Moscow in the autumn of 1929. Conditions in provincial cities and towns, so far as I could observe, varied with time and place; but on the whole supply was apt to be scantier and more irregular than was the case in Moscow.

It was usually possible to buy products in excess of these allotments on the open market; but prices were so high that only the very small minority of Soviet citizens who receive high incomes could derive much benefit from them. In Moscow, for instance, butter on the free market in the fall of 1929 was quoted as high as three rubles (nominally $1.50) a pound, and meat was one ruble and sixty kopecks (about eighty cents) a pound. With a monthly average wage level of seventy or eighty rubles for the Soviet Union and perhaps one hundred rubles for Moscow it is clear that the average worker's family could not afford to exceed very much the food consumption limits marked out by the rationing system.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that for the mass of the Soviet population the general introduction of the rationing system meant a distinct lowering of the standard of living, so far as food consumption is concerned; and so long as this system continues increases of money wages are obviously of rather limited significance.

The working day in industry, which before the Revolution was seldom less than nine hours and sometimes as long as twelve hours, was fixed at eight hours soon after the establish-

that it is questionable whether the real wages of the workers increased. Officially a growth of 2 per cent or 3 per cent in real wages for the year is claimed.

ment of the Soviet power.[1] In 1927, in honor of the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, the All-Union Central Executive Committee decreed the gradual introduction of the seven-hour day. During the first year after the promulgation of this decree twenty-eight factories with 126,000 laborers went over to the seven-hour day; industrial workers are being placed on the seven-hour basis at the rate of 20 per cent a year, and the whole process, which usually requires the introduction of three shifts, so as not to lower the productive capacity of the factories, will be completed within the next few years. The six-hour day is supposed to exist for underground workers in the mines and for especially dangerous and harmful branches of other trades.[2] The labor in industry of children under the age of fourteen is entirely forbidden. Children between the ages of fourteen and sixteen may work four hours and between the ages of sixteen and eighteen eight hours.

Insurance and miscellaneous welfare expenditures on behalf of the workers are calculated at 32 per cent of the wage bill, as compared with 8 per cent before the War. The state provides free social insurance for workers and employees, the entire cost of this system, which exceeds a billion rubles a year, being met by contributions from the state or private enterprises. A person incapacitated by injury or sickness receives full salary or wages from the insurance funds in the event that his incapacitation is temporary. Should his disability be permanent he receives a pension, ranging from two thirds to a little less than one third of his regular compensation, depending upon the seriousness of the disability. A similar system prevails in regard

[1] As a matter of practice the eight-hour day was quite generally introduced under the Kerensky Government, as a result of the initiative of the trade-unions, Soviets, and other workers' organizations immediately after the overthrow of Tsarism.

[2] Overtime work is permitted in the event of special emergencies such as accidents requiring urgent repairs, and also in other cases, provided that the consent of the local representative of the Commissariat for Labor is obtained. According to the data of the Central Statistical Department, the proportion of workers who worked overtime hours varied from 15 per cent to 20.5 per cent during the first three quarters of the business year 1927–1928. Overtime is prevalent in the mining industry, where the number of laborers on overtime work amounted to 40 per cent during the same period. Overtime work is paid on the basis of time and a half for the first two hours and double pay for subsequent hours.

to pensions granted to dependent widows, and a system of old-age retirement pensions is being introduced, but is still in a very early stage of development.

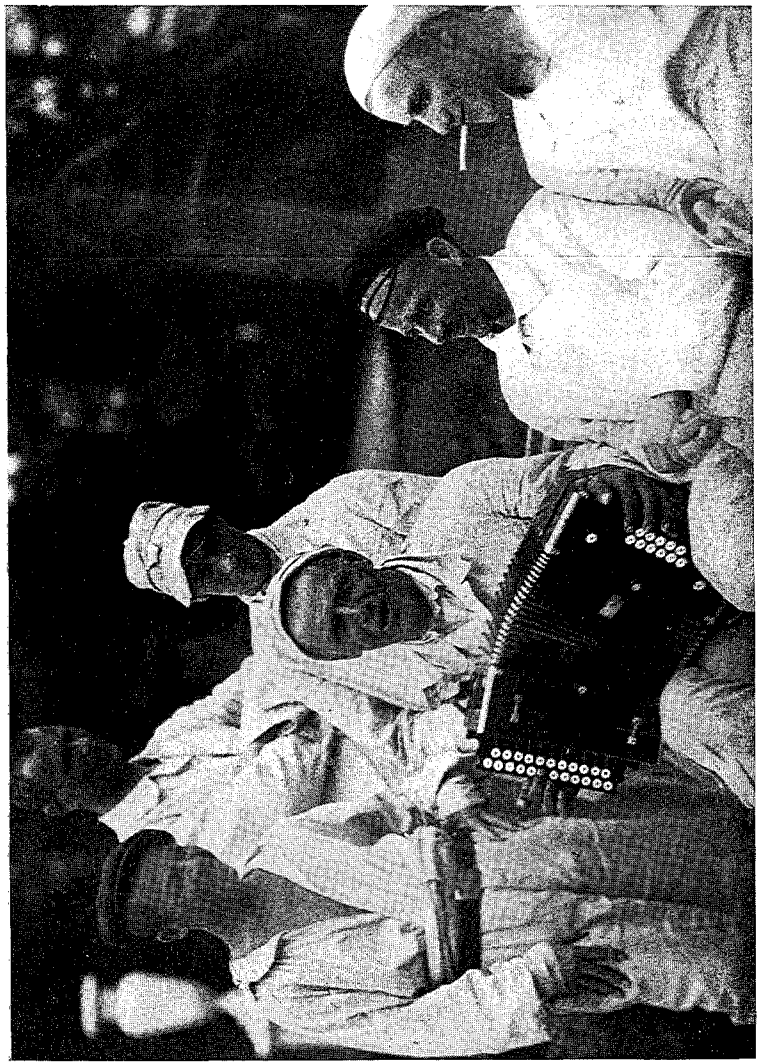
The state insurance funds provide the maternity benefits for women workers which are described more fully elsewhere.[1] It also makes it possible to send 70,000 or 80,000 sick trade-unionists to sanatoria every year, while hundreds of thousands of workers and employees spend their vacations in rest homes maintained by their trade-unions or by the social insurance organization.[2] Every worker and employee has a legal right to two weeks' annual vacation with pay, and for persons in unhealthful occupations, such as underground workers in mines, this term is extended to a month.

The workers receive a number of supplementary benefits, varying with the circumstances of individual factories and including, in some cases, free housing, free supply of light and water, cheap tramcar tickets, etc. The management of every factory is bound to pay a comparatively small sum for the upkeep of the club and other cultural and recreational institutions.

Laws for the protection of labor are stricter now than was the case before the Revolution, and there is a much larger corps of inspectors, appointed by the Commissariat for Labor, to enforce them. While no exhaustive figures of comparison with pre-war times have been compiled, an official of the Commissariat for Labor with whom I talked made the claim that the number of fatal and serious accidents in Russian industry had been greatly reduced. He admitted that in some cases the total number of accidents had increased, but attributed this to the fact that many minor injuries which never would have been noted in pre-war times are now registered and that the workers are now encouraged to ask for medical aid in the event of even slight disability. He argued that this policy was preferable, even from the standpoint of labor productivity, because many light cuts and bruises, receiving immediate treatment, were

[1] See Chapter XVII.

[2] The distinction between a sanatorium and a rest home lies in the fact that the ormer is adapted to the cure of invalidism, while the latter is simply a vacation resort for healthy people.



PEASANTS AT A REST HOME (A FORMER PALACE OF THE TSARS) IN LIVADIA, CRIMEA

cured and not permitted to develop more serious complications.

At the same time it is generally testified that the number of accidents has been increasing during recent years. The newspaper *Rabochaya Moskva*, in its issue of January 13, 1929, pointed out that there were 140.1 accidents per thousand workers in the first three quarters of 1927–1928, as against 122.6 per thousand in the preceding year. *Trud*, the organ of the All-Union Trade-Union Council, in its issue of March 28, 1929, declares that the number of persons receiving pensions for total disability incurred in industrial accidents increased from 7100 to 23,700 during the last four years, while the number of families which lost their breadwinners in the same way during this time increased from 5000 to 12,200. Among the causes adduced for the increased number of accidents are the wearing out of machinery, the inflow of large numbers of untrained new workers, less careful and less experienced in handling themselves, and the growing consumption of liquor. The complaint is also made that the sums allotted for protection of labor are not fully used up, and that the organs of the Labor Commissariat and the trade-unions which are supposed to supervise this department of work display a certain amount of carelessness and indifference. One is sometimes struck by the gulf between the Russian labor legislation, which compares favorably with that of industrially much more advanced countries, and the occasional laxness of its application. The Russian workers will get the full benefit of their labor-protection laws only when an improvement in the general educational level of the country makes it possible to supervise their enforcement more consistently and effectively. Even now, however, I should think there is little doubt that they are much better safeguarded than was the case before the War.

Although the private capitalist, as was shown in the preceding chapter, has been reduced to a negligible factor in the industrial life of the country, a certain conflict of interest between labor and the abstraction known as capital remains. The Russian workers desire very much the same things which attract workers in other countries: higher wages, easier conditions of

labor, more social benefits. The new class of state managers, or "red directors" of factories, who have replaced the former capitalist owners, are mostly Communists and former workers. But by the very nature of their position they must look at industrial life from a rather different angle from that of the workers. Although they make no personal profit out of the enterprises which they manage, they are supposed to turn in a profit for the state. This means that they must insist on labor discipline and heightened productivity. They cannot consent to social expenditures which would threaten their ability to balance accounts at the end of the business year. Hence there is always the possibility of conflict; and to meet this possibility an elaborate machinery of adjustment and conciliation has been set up.

There are twenty-three trade-unions in the Soviet Union, with a total membership, on July 1, 1928, of 11,060,400.[1] Entering the trade-union elections as the sole united and organized force, the Communist Party controls and directs the activities of the unions in very much the same way as it controls and directs the activities of the Soviets. The presidents of the unions are Communists. So are the majority of their central committees, and of their responsible workers generally. So are the majority of the delegates at the biennial Trade-Union Congress. Under this system, while the unions enjoy autonomy in carrying out their special functions, they are bound, in all important questions of principle, to follow the line of the Communist Party.

Every year the representatives of each union meet representatives of the management of the industry, trade, or profession with which they are connected and work out the details of a new collective agreement, covering wages and conditions

[1] This figure seems extremely high, if one considers that the whole urban population of the Soviet Union, according to the census of 1926, was 25,775,000. However, it must be remembered that, because of the benefits and privileges accruing from the possession of a trade-union card, every adult worker, from the ballet dancer in the State Opera House to the peasant casual laborer, is extremely anxious to be enrolled. Eleven unions of industrial workers number 3,783,600 members, and there are 1,139,400 railroad workers. (See *Soviet Trade-Unions, 1926–1928*, p. 27.)

of labor. While the Communist Party lays down general principles as to how much wages may increase and how much productivity of labor must go up, stubborn bargaining is not unusual in the negotiation of these collective agreements. The last extremities of industrial warfare in other countries, the strike and the lockout, are usually averted, however, because Party discipline can always be invoked to knock the heads of too recalcitrant negotiators together. Once a collective agreement has been signed it is binding for management and workers alike during the ensuing year.

However, there is always the possibility of difference as to interpretation of the contract, or of the cropping up of points which might not have been foreseen when the contract was signed. Petty differences are settled by the wage-conflict commissions which exist in every factory, with representatives of the workers and of the management. More serious disputes are referred first to a conciliation committee, and, if this fails to bring about an acceptable settlement, to a court of arbitration, which consists of one representative of the workers, one of the management, and a president who may either be selected by agreement between the two sides or nominated by the Commissariat for Labor. The decision of this court of arbitration is compulsory, although an appeal may be lodged within a limited period of time with the local organ of the Commissariat for Labor.

Strikes are not formally illegal in Russia; but in practice they are made extremely difficult and, when they occur, are usually of limited extent and short duration.[1] It is not, of course, the policy of the Communist Party to encourage strikes in state industries, and therefore the trade-unions, under Communist leadership, instead of urging the workers to strike when

[1] In 1926 there were 337 strikes in the Soviet Union, with 43,200 participants, involving a loss of 140,056 working days. Of these strikes 202 were in state, 114 in private, 14 in coöperative, and 7 in concession enterprises. In 1927 the number of strikes increased to 396, but the number of participants declined to 25,400 and the number of days lost to 48,597. During the first six months of 1928 there were 90 strikes with 9,700 participants. Less than one per cent of the strikes in state enterprises in 1927 lasted more than five days. Only two per cent of the strikes during 1926 and 1927 were called with trade-union sanction. (See *Soviet Trade-Unions*, pp. 358–360.)

any grievance comes up, throw all the weight of their organization and influence on the side of a peaceful settlement of the dispute. Such strikes as do take place are not organized, concerted movements, but flare-ups of indignation over some local grievance, usually involving a small number of workers and quickly settled through the mediation of the trade-union. These observations apply to strikes in the state factories. The trade-unions have no scruples about calling strikes against private employers, and such strikes usually turn out in favor of the workers. Concession enterprises occupy rather an intermediate position; in the case of these foreign capitalist factories the trade-unions do not feel bound to coöperate in raising labor productivity, as they do in state factories; but they show more restraint in calling strikes against concessionaires than they would feel bound to display in regard to Russian private capitalists.

The question naturally arises: How far do these Soviet trade-unions, which discourage strikes instead of inciting them and are bound to follow out the policies of the governing political party, give adequate representation to the everyday demands and grievances of the rank-and-file workers? It cannot be denied, and is indeed freely noted in the Soviet press, that from time to time individual trade-union leaders and departments become bureaucratically alienated from the masses, and this is partially due to the fact that a trade-union official is more certain of dismissal if he disregards the orders of the Communist Party than if he is indifferent to the needs of his trade-union members. This occasional spirit of antipathy between the bureaucratized Communist trade-union official and the non-party worker found amusing expression at a workers' meeting in the Murminsk factory, in Ryazan Province, where a Communist working woman, Kurzyaeva, blurted out: —

"Although I am a Communist, still I am for the workers." [1]

[1] This incident is reported in *Rabochaya Gazeta* for April 3, 1929. The newspaper proceeds to read Kurzyaeva a lecture to the following effect: "Can a Communist really not be for the workers? By her statement the working woman Kurzyaeva apparently wanted to flatter the sentiment of the backward part of the workers. Such Communists consciously or unconsciously help our class enemy." Of course, if one accepts unreservedly the Communist view that the Soviet state is fundamentally a workers' state and that the Communist Party has no objective but the welfare of the workers, no real contradiction between the interests of the Communists and those of the masses of the workers can exist. But a considerable number of workers have not yet been so thoroughly indoctrinated in Communist theory that they are willing to forego without grumbling their immediate interest in the highest possible wages and the least burdensome conditions of labor, even though the Communists may argue convincingly that the state has no unlimited wage fund and requires intensified productivity of labor.

But the general view of Social Democratic and Anarchist critics of the Soviet régime, that there is a deep rift between a few Communist officeholders at the top and the working masses at the bottom, is, in my opinion, distorted, exaggerated, and quite at variance with the actual facts of the Russian situation. In the first place, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that there is extremely little conscious political opposition to the Communist régime among the Russian workers. A few workers may vaguely remember belonging to the Menshevik or Social Revolutionary parties before and during the Revolution; a few others may cherish secret sympathy with the heretical views of Trotzky, or of some of the other leaders of dissident groups which have been expelled from the Communist Party. But the overwhelming majority of the workers accept the Soviet system and the dominant rôle of the Communist Party in it as something which, if not perfect, is at least far better than anything they experienced under the Tsar. Such knowledge as they have of the condition of workers in countries where progressive capitalism and political democracy have given the masses far higher living standards than those which prevailed in pre-revolutionary Russia is obtained, as a rule, from the Soviet press, which consistently emphasizes only the unfavorable sides of life under capitalism, such as strikes, clashes with the police, unemployment, real or alleged persecution of workers; and from foreign labor delegations, usually recruited from the Communist wing of the trade-union movement and conveying similar impressions in their speeches.

Moreover, the trade-union officialdom, especially in its lower ranks, is constantly being changed and strengthened with the infusion of fresh blood. The dissatisfied worker who voices some grievance to-day may to-morrow be elected to the factory

committee or promoted to some other responsible post where he most probably will find that it is easier to criticize than to administer to everyone's satisfaction. The practice of *vidvizhentsvo*, of having the trade-unions recommend and promote their more promising members to responsible posts in state, trade-union, and other organizations, has its defects: it leads to much bungling through the entrusting of more or less important functions to inexperienced hands. But it is a source of unmistakable strength to the existing social order because it provides the outlet of opportunity for the more energetic and ambitious workers. In just the same way in America the frequent election of men of humble origin and scanty education to high political office may not always conduce to maximum efficiency, but does provide the necessary stimulus for the sense of social equality that has always, to a certain extent, distinguished America from Europe.

Although strikes are almost completely eliminated in the Russian state industries, it cannot be said that the problem of labor discipline has been solved altogether satisfactorily. During the latter part of 1928 and 1929 serious defects in this field were noted in the Soviet press, the newspaper *Economic Life* writing on one occasion: —

"Absence from work, beating and insulting the administrative and technical personnel, drunkenness in the works, spoiling of tools, sleeping during working hours, leaving work without permission, etc., these are characteristic manifestations of a loosening of discipline that inflicts enormous injury upon production."

There seem to have been three main causes for this deterioration of discipline. Increased drinking of vodka unquestionably has been responsible for much rowdyism and absence from work. The inflow of new workers from the village, less thoroughly saturated with Communist propaganda and less amenable to discipline, is another factor, while the spectacular trial of fifty engineers and technical specialists accused of sabotage in the Shachti district of the Donetz Coal Basin unquestionably worsened the relations between the workers and the old technical specialists, relations which are apt to be strained in any event.

With a view to restoring discipline, the powers of the factory management have been more clearly defined and extended. Formerly a worker could not be dismissed without the consent of the factory committee; now the management may dismiss him independently, although the worker who feels that he was unjustly discharged may appeal to the wage-conflict commission. The factory management is also freed from some of the regulations which formerly hampered the summary discharge of workers guilty of very serious breaches of discipline, endangering the lives of their fellows or the property of the factory. Despite the admitted slackness in the field of discipline, labor productivity is above the low pre-war level; this is probably due partly to technical improvements in factory equipment, partly to the general introduction of piecework as the basis for calculating wage rates.[1]

Under the Soviet system, as under capitalism, unemployment remains the bane of the wage worker. On October 1, 1928, there were 1,344,000 persons registered on the labor exchanges of the Soviet Union, a high figure if one considers that the peasants, who constitute about four fifths of the population, are seldom reckoned among the unemployed, so long as they farm their bits of land. In round numbers, 350,000 of the unemployed are persons seeking work for the first time, 400,000 are unskilled laborers, 300,000 clerical and other employees, 100,000 building workers, and 200,000 skilled and semi-skilled workers.

This classification alone shows that unemployment in Russia has rather different roots from unemployment in the more industrialized Western countries. The skilled worker is seldom obliged to look for a job, and the purely factory or mining centre is not the place where unemployment is most prevalent. The Russian unemployed are recruited, in the main, from three

[1] In May 1928, 60.4 per cent of all the hours of work in Soviet industry were paid on a piecework basis. In separate industries the amount of piecework varies from 85.2 per cent in the sewing industry to 17.4 per cent in the electrical stations. See *Soviet Trade-Unions, 1926–1928*, p. 323.

classes: young people who cannot find openings in trade and industry, employees who have been discharged as a result of the campaign for economy in the state offices, and unskilled peasant laborers who cannot maintain themselves in their native villages and flock into the cities looking for work. In short, the fundamental causes of unemployment in Russia are agrarian rather than industrial; and this explains the apparently paradoxical fact that unemployment persists and increases while the industries are increasing production at an average annual rate of 20 per cent.[1]

About half of the unemployed receive allowances from the state insurance funds, varying from twelve to thirty rubles a month, according to their skill, former salary, and place of residence, the cost of living being taken into account in fixing the allowance. In trade and handicraft coöperatives 133,000 are enrolled, and 46,000 are employed on public works. Inasmuch as the surplus hands from the villages constantly swell the ranks of the Russian unemployed and the peasant population is increasing at a rapid rate, there seems little likelihood of any substantial diminution of unemployment until one or both of two conditions are fulfilled: (*a*) a sweeping expansion of industry, requiring the employment of greatly increased numbers of workers, and (*b*) a development of more intensified forms of agriculture, which would make it possible for the land to support profitably a larger population. Birth control would probably in time make the problem of unemployment more manageable, but the Communists are not Malthusians, and it is very unlikely that contraceptive measures will acquire any wide currency where they would be most effective, among the vast masses of the peasantry.

The trade-unions in Russia, according to an often-quoted phrase of Lenin, should function as schools of Communism. They certainly supervise an enormous amount of educational, propagandist, and recreational activity. The workers' clubs, of which there were 3776 on April 1, 1928, represent an important agency in this connection. The club is the chief centre of cultural life in the factory. Its management organizes the musical, dramatic, and moving-picture performances, of which there were 54,000 before workers' audiences in the first quarter of 1928.[1] Around the club develop the groups of workers interested in music, radio, amateur theatricals, and other subjects. The clubs are still unable to cope adequately with the demand of the workers for recreation; many small factories are without them, and very often the club buildings, which are sometimes former churches, are unsuitable for use and usually overcrowded. The technique of organized popular entertainment has not always been sufficiently developed, and one sometimes hears complaints that some clubs attract a relatively small number of workers. But, with all their defects, they represent a great stride forward in comparison with pre-war times, when the state vodka-shop was frequently the worker's sole resort for recreation.

[1] As a result of the strong movement for rationalization in Soviet industry the number of workers increases much more slowly than the amount of industrial output.

It is a well-known law of psychology that if a person is told something about himself often and insistently enough he is quite likely to begin to believe it. The same observation holds good for a class; and ever since the Revolution the Russian working class, by every resource known to propaganda, has been indoctrinated with the ideas that it is the salt of the earth, the ruling power in the country, and the vanguard of the international revolutionary movement. This is a fact of enormous significance in attempting to estimate the hold of the Communist leadership on the proletarian masses.

One can scarcely pick up a Soviet newspaper without seeing some new demonstration of this ceaseless propaganda. Here is a picture with the caption: "Leningrad working women consider the five-year plan of national economic development." Now this five-year plan, which was referred to in the preceding chapter, is a most complicated and ambitious effort, calculated to tax the understanding of the greatest economic experts of the country; it is very unlikely that the Leningrad working women

[1] A detailed survey of the club and educational work of the trade-unions is to be found in *Soviet Trade-Unions, 1926–1928*, pp. 191–312.

were able to "consider" it in the sense of discussing and offering serious criticism or suggestions for a change. But the picture doubtless produced the desired impression upon the proletarian readers of the newspaper: the five-year plan, like everything else in the country, was subject to the authority of the sovereign proletariat. And there is educational as well as propagandist value in this method; one would certainly be more likely to find an elementary knowledge of political and economic ideas and institutions in the worker of to-day than in the worker of Tsarist times.

Class hatred is a powerful factor in cementing the Soviet régime. The elaborate series of discriminations worked out against the so-called "non-toiling classes" strengthen the worker's sense of superiority and power. He is always the preferred citizen of the first rank, even if the preference may only assume the form of giving him the right to the exclusive purchase of the sour, heavy rye bread which is a staple food of the Russian masses when there is a shortage of supply.

"Hatred for the *barin*, the gentleman, was the strongest force holding the Red Army together." This was the opinion expressed to me by a man who had been mobilized into the Red Army without feeling any great partisan preference for either side and looked back on the civil war through the eyes of a neutral observer. One could readily believe this after looking at a collection of civil-war posters, where bitter caricatures of the *barin*, of the landlord, capitalist, and general constituted a striking feature. And a little incident which I witnessed on a train showed that this sense of proletarian class hatred still persists. A drunkard had made his way into the car; and a number of passengers engaged in a typically Russian prolonged discussion as to who was responsible for letting him in and what should be done with him. The argument quickly subsided when one of the participants, who looked like a worker, turned to another, a woman who read a French book and spoke with a cultivated accent, and with measured bitterness said to her: —

"Citizeness, you 're a *barishna* (gentlewoman), that 's what you are."

"Ye that are nothing shall become everything." This promise of the Communist hymn, the "Internationale," is like strong wine to the head of many a worker whose grandfather has been a serf, who has himself tasted the bitterness of being a worker in the Tsarist factory and a common soldier in the Tsarist army. Class consciousness, class pride, class hatred — these psychological forces, even more than the material gains which the industrial proletariat unquestionably has obtained as a result of the Revolution, constitute a guaranty that at any moment of crisis the Russian workers will rally and fight in defense of a social order which the more active-minded of them, not without reason, regard as their own.

VIII

KARL MARX AND THE PEASANT–SPHINX

"Oh, thou great All-Russian Sphinx. It is not easy to be thy Œdipus." It was thus that Ivan Turgeniev, most poetic of Russian prose writers, apostrophized the Russian peasant. And a sphinx the peasant has been, ever since the educated classes of the Russian cities began to take an interest in his welfare.

The Slavophiles of the last century saw in the peasant, with his strong village community organization, the mir, and his supposed loyalty to the Tsar and the Orthodox Church, the Russian primitive Christian. The romantic revolutionaries of two generations ago, and the Social Revolutionists, who took over many of their ideas, hailed the peasant as the natural communist, who needed only to be freed from the oppression of Tsar and landlord to set an example to the whole world in spontaneous coöperative farming. The Bolsheviks regarded the peasant as a small producer, who must be conciliated during the period of active revolution but who ultimately must somehow be fitted into a Marxian collectivist order of things.

Sixteen years of war, revolution, civil war, and post-revolutionary reconstruction have demolished some familiar mistaken conceptions about the peasant and revealed him more as a normal human being than as a mysterious idol in a sheepskin coat. First of all, the idea of the peasant as a devoted son of "Holy Russia," imbued with heartfelt devotion to Tsar and Church, has been smashed beyond any conceivable reconstruction. Despite the fact that they made every possible appeal to nationalist and religious traditions in their propaganda, the White anti-Soviet movements never enjoyed popular support among the masses of the peasantry and crumbled away

under the pressure of numerous peasant uprisings. Hatred for the pomyeschik, for the big landed proprietor whose broad acres contrasted with his own poor small holding, was far stronger in the heart of the Russian peasant than fealty to the Tsar.

A second exploded fallacy about the peasants is the belief that they are naturally inclined to communism. They were thoroughgoing revolutionaries so long as it was a question of sacking the large estates and dividing up the land among themselves. Once this process was completed they became, for the most part, zealous upholders of the rights of individualist private property; and after twelve years of mingled economic pressure and economic persuasion from the side of the Soviet authorities less than 5 per cent of the peasants were induced to try their fortunes in collective farms. If more and more peasant families are being converted to the practice of communal farming it is only as the result of a stupendous exertion of will and energy on the part of the ruling Communist Party. The instinctive sentiment of the Russian or Ukrainian peasant in favor of "his own" farm, so far as I can judge from personal observation, is at least as strong as that of the German or French peasant or the American farmer.

Agrarian policy always has been a pivotal problem for the Soviet Government; and this is especially true to-day, when the inadequate supply of agricultural products threatens the development of such important branches of economic life as industry and foreign trade. In tens of thousands of log-cabin village Soviet headquarters the familiar bewhiskered portrait of Karl Marx stares down at bearded peasants, the living members of Turgeniev's collective Peasant-Sphinx. And the village Soviet officials, few of whom probably have heard of Turgeniev, must sometimes feel that the peasant nature offers some sphinx-like riddle to which Marx has not furnished the answer.

Russian peasants often say of themselves, "We are a dark people." And the Russian village is dark with the shades of poverty, neglect, and technical backwardness. One cannot generalize too sweepingly about such a huge country; the peasant in some parts of Russia enjoys a higher living standard

than in others. The Cossack in his fertile ancestral wheatlands of the Don and the Kuban, the pioneer settler in Siberia, the German colonist in south Russia, lives better, as a rule, than the peasant who must eke out a living in the congested regions of central Russia or the swamp-lands of White Russia. But some idea of the prevalent poverty may be obtained if one considers that the average yearly income of an adult peasant is officially estimated at 217 rubles,[1] that approximately three peasant households in ten have no working cattle, while only about one in five possesses more than one working animal,[2] and that the countryside as a whole is split up into twenty-five million little holdings, of an average size of little more than ten acres. These holdings are obviously too small for profitable extensive farming, and very few Russian peasants are occupied with those forms of farming which can give a high yield from a small area.

The peasant in the wooded north of Russia usually lives in a log cabin; clay is the favored building material in treeless stretches of the south and southeast. Frame houses and tin roofs denote an unusual prosperity. Weddings and big church holidays are occasions for gorging and heavy drinking in the villages; but in general the peasant's food is coarse, simple, and far from plentiful. Meat, except in soup, is rarely eaten; the staple articles of diet are heavy rye bread, kasha (a cereal preparation from grits), and various sour-milk dishes. The wooden plough is a more familiar sight in the village than a tractor or threshing machine; there is probably not a peasant

[1] See *Control Figures of National Economic Life*, pp. 494–495, published in Moscow in 1928 by the State Planning Commission.

[2] The following table of percentages showing the distribution of working animals among the peasants of Russia proper, without certain Asiatic and Caucasian regions, was supplied to the writer by the Commissariat for Agriculture.

	1924	1925	1926
Without working cattle	31.0	30.6	30.4
With one head	51.4	52.3	50.2
With two head	12.5	12.4	13.8
With three head	3.1	2.9	3.5
With four and more	2.0	1.8	2.1

Later figures were unobtainable; but the process of change is obviously very slow.

in the whole Soviet Union who possesses a telephone or an automobile. Russia's 40 per cent of illiteracy exists mostly in the peasant districts. In time of childbirth, peasant women, partly from ignorance, partly for lack of proper medical service, are apt to call in the doubtful aid of the local old crone with a gift for soothsaying and casting spells.

Yet with all this background of material poverty, inherited, of course, from the past, and intensified in some cases by the ravages of civil war, the Russian village, by general testimony, has experienced a genuine awakening since pre-revolutionary times. There is a difference even in the tone in which the peasants pronounce the old axiom, "We are a dark people." Formerly it was an expression of fatalistic resignation. Now it is said bitterly, resentfully, as if in response to a condition which ought to be and could be changed.

The War was a primary factor in changing the psychology of the Russian peasant. Two million Russian soldiers, most of them peasants who had previously seen little outside their native villages, were captured in the great German offensives against the Russian front and worked in Germany as farm laborers or in other capacities. Here they were able to contrast German farming methods and the living standards of the German peasants with their own; and the effect was very marked. In traveling through the Russian villages I have often noticed that the returned war prisoner is the most staunch advocate of new ideas and new practices. The few hundred Russian officers who came into contact with revolutionary ideas in France at the time of the Napoleonic Wars later launched the uprising of the Dekabristi. It is quite possible that the two million Russian former war prisoners may help very much to bring about a less spectacular but more permanent revolution in the daily life and habits of the Russian peasantry.

Revolution and civil war also shook the Russian village to its depths. True, the peasant did not take the initiative in formulating the issues of the civil war; he was rather an object to be propagandized and mobilized, conscripted and subjected to requisition, by Reds and Whites. Yet this competing

propaganda inevitably had some effect on his mind; and there were times when, by obeying or resisting a mobilization, he gave his crude and elemental answer to the political problem as to whether the Whites with their returning landlords or the Communists with their grain levies represented the greater evil for him.

Now every young peasant who is called up for service in the Red Army gets a Communist course in citizenship along with his military training. How many of these officially inculcated ideas he retains when he goes back to his home and turns again from a soldier into a peasant is another question. But this army educational work is a factor, along with the rural reading room and the occasional radio installed in some of the larger villages, tending to make the peasant begin to think about problems which were almost outside his sphere before the Revolution.

Several years ago Moscow established a *Dom Krestyanin*, or Peasants' Home, which combined the functions of a boarding-house, club, and free legal aid society and was designed for the accommodation of peasants who had been sent as delegates from their communities with petitions regarding land or taxes or some other subject. Here the peasant visitors were provided with wholesome meals and clean rooms at slight cost, while lawyers attempted to guide their steps through the labyrinthine intricacies of the Soviet bureaucracy. The Peasants' Home contains a library and reading room, besides halls for lectures on agricultural and other subjects and entertainments. This Moscow innovation has been generally imitated, so that now every large city and town has its Peasants' Home.

The white-columned palace of the Tsar at Livadia, on the southern coast of the Crimean peninsula, now houses three hundred peasant patients who suffer from tuberculosis and kindred ailments. Admission to this unique health resort is eagerly sought, and care is taken to ensure a fair geographical distribution of the places, so that one can find peasants from the most varied parts of the Soviet Union wandering in the cypress groves and playing handball in the courtyards of the palace.

Inasmuch as less than two thousand persons can be accommodated at Livadia in the course of the whole year, it is obvious that very few of the peasants can actually enjoy its imperial splendors; but the very existence of such a health resort doubtless has its propagandist value, and there is some tendency to set aside places in other sanatoria for the peasants.

An important link between the government and the peasants is the *Krestyanskaya Gazeta*, or "Peasants' Gazette," a little paper which appears twice a week and is entirely addressed to a peasant audience. Its circulation fluctuates with the season, but has been as high as a million. Perhaps the most interesting feature of this paper is the number of letters which it receives from its readers. They pour in at the rate of 1500 or 2000 a day, written on leaves torn out of school notebooks, on bits of wrapping paper, often scrawled and misspelled, but giving convincing proof that the peasant has awakened to a point where he has ideas and wishes to express them.

Running through a few dozen of these letters one obtains a fairly composite idea of what the more articulate part of the peasantry is thinking. From a village in the northern province of Vologda a serious girl writes to the effect that the local branch of the Union of Communist Youth consists of two girls and four boys. The girls want to read and study; but the boys are more wayward; they prefer to dance and play and drink. From another place in this same province a peasant complains that his son can go to school only four years, so that he will remain all his life "a half-dark man." He calls for more and better schools. From the village Grishevsk, in Voronezh Province, someone asks where he can obtain a radio, which he heard for the first time in the city of Voronezh and liked very much.

Letters of criticism are far from infrequent. So Citizen Nazar Misik, from the Slavgorod region of Siberia, offers the following economic calculations: "Before the War we got three arshines (a measure equal to 2.4 feet) of cloth for a pood (thirty-six pounds) of wheat, and now we get only one. Moreover, we have to pay three times as much for iron." Vladimir Tsokhativ, from Leningrad Province, objects to the amnesty which

was proclaimed on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, on the ground that it will permit too many murderers and thieves to return to their villages after serving a short time in prison. He also attacks the introduction of the seven-hour working day in industry, complaining that the peasants already work sixteen or seventeen hours a day.

Some of these letters come from casual writers; others are sent in by the fifteen thousand *syelkors*, or village correspondents, whom the newspaper has at its disposal. These village correspondents, of whom there are several hundred thousand in the whole country, constitute a valuable intelligence service for the Soviet Government in the country districts. Their occupation is far from safe, because the *syelkor* who exposes the embezzlements of the local officials or becomes unpopular with his fellow villagers by accusing them of holding back their proper share of taxes is apt to be found in a remote spot with a bullet or knife wound in his body. As a rule they hide their identity behind numbers which are signed to their letters; and in some cases their communications are not printed, but simply used as a source of confidential information for the higher authorities.

Krestyanskaya Gazeta boasts that in about one year it caused the removal of a thousand corrupt or tyrannical officials on the basis of letters from its *syelkors* and peasant readers. Like the Peasants' Home, the *Krestyanskaya Gazeta* maintains a legal-aid department, where eight regularly employed lawyers and 150 occasional legal counselors help to straighten out the habitual difficulties of peasant petitioners with land and taxes.

Peasant health resorts, Peasant Homes, and peasant newspapers are all very well in their way; they help especially to meet the demand of the younger peasants for new interests and activities. But the mind of the usual head of a peasant household is more occupied with other questions: how much will he have to pay in taxes, how much will he receive for his wheat and rye and oats, whether he can get manufactured goods at reasonable prices. What are the outstanding factors which dominate the relations between the Soviet Government, with its ultimate goal of communism, and the Russian peasants,

whose ambition, in the vast majority of cases, is certainly the acquisition of as much private property as possible?

The pomyeschiks, or Russian country squires, have been literally swept off the face of the countryside by the impact of the most thoroughgoing agrarian upheaval in history. One could travel from one end of the Soviet Union to another without finding, except by the rarest accident, a manor house still owned by a private family. Gone forever are the "noblemen's nests," the low-built country residences where Turgeniev's heroines learned French and music and read the verses of Pushkin and Lermontov. Not a few of the Russian manor houses were burned or razed to the ground in the course of the Revolution; the others have been transformed into rest homes, schools, or public buildings. The few pomyeschiks who somehow managed to go on living on their native estates through the period of civil war were forced to depart under the terms of a Soviet decree which was issued several years ago, since it was feared that their influence on the peasants might be harmful, from the standpoint of the new social order.

The Soviet Land Law, which is surely a unique piece of agrarian legislation and without a parallel, to the best of my knowledge, either in Europe or in Asia, vests the title to land in the state but permits anyone to use it, on condition that he farms it with his own labor. The amount of land allotted to any peasant is determined by the size of his family and the amount of land in the possession of the village community. (A point that should be emphasized here is that the individual homestead system is very little practised in Russia, although it is sometimes found in Ukraina. Instead of having a separate farm, in American or West European fashion, the Russian peasant lives in a village, which may be a tiny hamlet of a dozen houses or a large settlement with several thousand inhabitants, and goes out every day to work on his share of the village land.) If, for instance, the amount of village land permits an allotment of one dessiatine (the usual Russian land measurement, equal to 2.7 acres), a family of seven, consisting of a father, mother, and four children, with an old grandmother,

would be entitled to receive seven dessiatines, while a newly married couple would receive only two.

A person convicted of buying or selling land is liable to a sentence of three years in prison; but old habits disappear slowly, and surreptitious land sales sometimes take place. The peasant who leaves his native village in order to try his fortune as a pioneer settler in Siberia likes to get something for his piece of land, instead of turning it back, as he legally should, to the community land fund. And when he arrives in Siberia the older settlers are apt to raise obstacles about giving him a share of their community land, unless he pays some price for this privilege.

If farming ability could be parceled out as evenly as land, the Soviet system should ensure the maximum of equality among the peasants. But experience has shown that it cannot be, and in every village one finds more or less clearly defined classes of *kulaks* (literally "fists"), or rich peasants, *seredniaks*, or middle-class peasants, and, finally, *byedniaks*, or poor. This division into classes was natural and inevitable after the New Economic Policy gave the peasants a certain amount of freedom in disposing of their products. Those peasants who emerged from the civil war with more cattle and machinery, those who were better farmers and traders, began to forge ahead of their less fortunate or less capable brethren in the acquisition of this world's goods. The emergence of a new class of rich peasants on the ruins of the old pomyeschik system of large landed estates was hampered and checked but not altogether prevented by the workings of the Soviet Land Law. Its more rigid application, under which the village Lazarus, with a big family and no working animals, might find himself in legal possession of a large tract of land which he could not till, while his next-door neighbor, Dives, owner of three horses and some machinery but entitled only to a tiny holding because of his small family, would be unable to benefit by his superior equipment, has yielded to the pressure of necessity. While land cannot legally be bought or sold, it can be leased over a period of several years from one peasant to another. It is estimated that between

6 and 7 per cent of the arable land is held on a leasehold basis, and, contrary to the general practice elsewhere, in Russia it is the rich who must rent land from the poor. A familiar arrangement is for the poor peasant who cannot till his own holding to lease it to a richer neighbor, with the understanding that the crop shall be shared equally.

Who is a kulak? This is one of the most difficult and delicate questions of Soviet political economy. Communists who take a more indulgent attitude toward the peasant as an individualist producer are inclined to list among kulaks only persons who definitely exploit their neighbors by lending money and machinery on usurious terms or who hire labor throughout the year. But a stricter view, and one which is quite often applied by village officials, especially since the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party, which declared for an offensive against the kulak, is that any peasant who has raised himself above his fellows in wealth is a kulak and must be subjected to heavy taxation and various forms of administrative discrimination. This stricter view finds expression in the discussion of the case of a certain Komarov, a farmer of the Northern Don region, in *Pravda* for August 14, 1928. Komarov, it seems, was a former merchant who before the War owned a large farm of several hundred acres. He was expropriated, of course, during the Revolution, but since the New Economic Policy he had succeeded in building up a new farm of some eighty or ninety acres, which he made profitable by concentrating on the production of meat and cheese. He owned eighteen cows, two bulls, and four horses, took prizes at local agricultural exhibitions, and contributed letters on agricultural subjects to the press. But the writer who discussed his case in *Pravda* sternly condemned him as "a new and cunning type of kulak."

Estimates of the number of "kulak" farms in the Soviet Union vary with the definitions of the term, but they probably do not exceed five per cent of the total number. At the other extreme are the very poor peasant households, which as a rule constitute about a third in every village. Thirty-eight per cent of the peasants are freed from the agricultural tax on the

ground of extreme poverty. In between the "kulaks" and "byedniaks," or very poor, come the mass of the Russian peasants, who fall under the heading "seredniaks."

In the heat of the civil war Lenin laid down as the guiding rule of Communist policy in the village: "Reach an agreement with the seredniak, leaning firmly only on the byedniak, and never for one moment stopping the struggle with the kulak." This maxim, applied with variations of emphasis at different times, has on the whole guided the agrarian policy of the Soviet Government.

In the early part of 1925, to be sure, there was an apparent relaxation of the struggle against the richer peasants. With a view to conciliating the masses of the peasants and increasing agricultural productivity, the burden of the agricultural tax was lightened; restrictions on leasing land were relaxed; and the process of hiring agricultural laborers was made simpler and easier.

But this moderate agrarian policy was of comparatively short duration. The opposition in the Communist Party, headed by Trotzky and Zinoviev, raised the cry that the conquests of the Revolution were being surrendered to the kulaks. And curiously enough the dominant group in the Communist Party leadership, while suppressing and outlawing the opposition, took over and began to apply many of its critical suggestions in regard to agrarian policy. So the law excluding the kulaks from participation in Soviet elections was enforced more rigorously; the agricultural tax was distributed in such a way that its main burden fell on the richer peasants, while larger and larger percentages of the poor were exempted from taxation; more strenuous efforts were made to organize the poor peasants against the rich and to recruit more Communists from the ranks of the agricultural laborers and poorer villagers generally.

Some observers have interpreted this gradual reversal of the moderate agrarian policy of 1925 as a tactical political manœuvre, designed to disarm the opposition by carrying into practice some of the measures which they advocated. But the fundamental reasons for the shift go deeper than this. A class

of rich peasants, of independent individualist producers, is a political and economic anomaly in the Soviet state. Not only is it a challenge to Marxist principles to see the rich peasant rising on the shoulders of his poorer neighbors, but the whole Soviet economic system, which depends very much on centralized planning and price adjustments, is menaced if the wealthier peasants concentrate in their hands the grain reserves of the country and hold them back for higher prices than the Soviet state organs feel able to pay.

A genuine and severe economic tug-of-war between the Soviet Government and the more prosperous peasants occurred during the winter of 1927 and the spring of 1928, and seems likely to go on indefinitely, perhaps in milder forms. As early as the fall of 1927 it became evident that the peasants were holding back their grain to a degree which not only destroyed any possibility of exporting it but even seriously menaced the bread supply of the cities. How did this "grain strike" come about? It is very hard to answer this question. There is certainly no widespread secret organization among the peasants which could coördinate their activity or instruct them all to do the same thing at the same time. And yet they sometimes display an uncanny faculty for apparently unconscious spontaneous action, as when they deserted from all parts of the front and swarmed on the landlords' estates in 1917.

Something of this faculty must have come into play in the autumn of 1927, when in Siberia and Ukraina, in Central Russia and the North Caucasus, the same phenomenon of peasant unwillingness to part with grain made itself felt. Of course, there were reasons for this action. There had been a certain amount of loose talk about the danger of war, which frightened the peasants and made them inclined to hoard their food stores. Then the price relation between agricultural products, especially wheat and rye, and manufactured goods is and has been decidedly unfavorable for the peasant. This is sufficiently evident from the following table of comparative prices, which was supplied to the writer by the Commissariat for Trade. The effect of this table, which shows a depreciation of the purchasing

power of all peasant products, except flax, in relation to all the industrial goods which are chiefly used by the peasantry, except kerosene, is heightened if one considers that there is an acute shortage of manufactured goods, so that the peasant is often completely deprived of their use or else is forced to pay high speculative prices for the small quantities which trickle through.

The table is as follows: —

Purchasing power of one tsentner (about 218 pounds) of the following agricultural products in

		Metres of Cotton Goods	Kilograms of Sugar	Tsentners of Salt	Kilograms of Kerosene	Tsentners of Soap	Kilograms of Nails
Rye	Pre-war	23.7	14.6	1.83	0.41	16.2	24.4
Oct. 1927	. . . .	12.6	7.3	1.27	0.42	9.3	16.1
Oct. 1928	. . . .	15.4	8.8	1.53	0.49	11.2	19.0
Wheat	Pre-war	30.2	18.6	2.33	0.53	20.6	31.0
Oct. 1927	. . . .	18.0	10.5	1.82	0.60	13.4	23.1
Oct. 1928	. . . .	21.9	12.5	2.18	0.70	15.9	27.0
Flax	Pre-war	147.3	99.6	11.9	2.39	102.4	159
Oct. 1927	. . . .	122.0	71.8	11.0	3.95	99.4	150
Oct. 1928	. . . .	176.7	90.0	13.2	4.58	105.6	183
Cotton	Pre-war	111.1	66.8	6.0	1.97		
Oct. 1927	. . . .	86.5	47.2	4.5	2.49		
Oct. 1928	. . . .	86.5	47.2	5.2	2.55		
Sugar Beets	Pre-war	4.8	3.0	0.38	0.09	3.3	4.9
Oct. 1927	. . . .	3.6	2.1	0.34	0.10	2.2	4.2
Oct. 1928	. . . .	3.7	2.1	0.38	0.10	2.2	4.2

Faced with a severe crisis of grain supply, the Soviet Government introduced a series of "extraordinary measures," which were at least mildly reminiscent of the period of military communism which preceded the New Economic Policy. Maintaining its fixed prices unchanged, it instructed the local Soviet officials in the countryside to get the recalcitrant peasants' grain at any cost. A number of richer peasants and private traders who were offering prices above the fixed rates were punished with exile and imprisonment. The masses of peasants were placed under strong pressure to give up their surplus grain. In many cases the free markets in towns and villages were closed.

This strenuous policy produced both good and bad results. It fulfilled its immediate purpose of obtaining the grain. But it left an unmistakable spirit of smouldering bitterness not only among the kulaks but among any peasants who had any surplus grain to lose. They had other grievances besides the forced grain levies. Practically all the peasants with whom I talked in the course of a trip through Ukraina and the Don region in the summer of 1928 complained that they had been compelled to buy bonds of a Peasant Loan and to pay, in the guise of so-called self-taxation, which, however, had no voluntary character, a sum equal to about 25 per cent of the regular agricultural tax. The government used these supplementary imposts as a further means of bringing economic pressure on the peasants to part with their grain.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party, meeting in plenary session in July 1928, decided that, while the "extraordinary measures" had served their purpose of overcoming a crisis of grain supply, it would be inadvisable to erect them into a permanent system. So it was agreed that future grain purchases should be voluntary, that there should be no more compulsion to subscribe to state loans, and that the peasants, as a further stimulus, should receive a 15 per cent increase in prices paid for their grain. At the same time it was declared that the offensive against the kulaks must go on and that more attention must be paid to stimulating socialist and collectivist forms of agriculture, in the form of *sovhozes* (state farms) and *kolhozes*, or farms organized by coöperative groups of peasants. The following plenary session of the Central Committee, which took place in November, did not reflect any very substantial change from the position of July; its long resolution on agriculture advocated the policy of simultaneously encouraging collective and individualist forms of farming.

One idea that is beginning to dominate Soviet thinking on the agrarian question is the extraordinary backwardness of the farm production of the country. According to figures which are to be found in the resolution of the November session of the Party Central Committee, the Soviet Union in 1928 had

only 90 per cent of the pre-war area under grain cultivation, 80 per cent of the pre-war grain production, and 56 per cent of the pre-war amount of marketable grain. And this with a population which is already more than 10 per cent greater than in pre-war times and which is growing rapidly, especially in the cities. In the light of these figures it is easy to realize why white bread has vanished from the Russian cities and why the huge building in Moscow which displays the sign "State Grain-Exporting Company" somehow conveys an ironical suggestion.

The situation with the so-called "technical cultures," flax, hemp, cotton, tobacco, sugar beets, etc., is somewhat better, but still far from satisfactory. The area under cultivation is estimated at 58.5 per cent higher than the pre-war figure, but the yield per acre has declined, as compared with the pre-war level, in the following substantial proportions: cotton, 25 per cent; flax, 32 per cent; hemp, 15 per cent; sugar beets, 10 per cent.[1]

This same decline in yield is noticeable in the field of grain, where 90 per cent of the pre-war acreage yields only 80 per cent of the pre-war crop. This fact is all the more ominous because, while there are large belts of rich black-earth soil in various parts of the Soviet Union, Russian peasant agriculture has always been notoriously backward.

What are the causes for the marked decline in Russian agriculture? The change in the system of land ownership is undoubtedly an important factor in diminishing the supply of grain available for sale and export. Before the War the big estates of the pomyeschiks and the large farms of the kulaks produced about three quarters of the marketable grain. The middle-class and poor peasants between them produced little more than was needed for their own consumption. The effect of the agrarian revolution has been to annihilate the big landlords and to reduce substantially the wealth and productive capacity of the kulaks. Whereas it is estimated that the landlords before the War supplied to the market over four and a half million tons of grain and the kulaks almost eleven million,

[1] See *Rabochaia Gazeta* for November 3, 1928.

the Soviet state farms in the year 1926–1927 produced only about six hundred thousand tons of marketable grain and the kulaks about two million.

The surplus production of the poor and middle-class peasants has increased somewhat, but not nearly enough to compensate for the sweeping reduction in the number of large-scale farms which were formerly the chief providers of grain for the market. The marked tendency of Russian farms to split up into smaller and smaller units is another unfavorable element in the situation, because experience has proved that the larger farms are able to supply more marketable produce. There are now from twenty-five to twenty-seven million homesteads in the Soviet Union, as against sixteen million before the Revolution. This is attributable partly to increased population, partly to the unwillingness of younger peasant families to go on living with their parents, and partly to escape taxation, which falls more heavily on larger and richer homesteads.

The Soviet "class policy" of crushing the rich and favoring the poor peasants is not the least of the factors which account for the decline in grain production and the lowered yield per acre. The Soviet land system keeps far more land in the hands of incapable farmers than would be the case if free trade in land were permitted and no artificial restrictions were placed in the way of the growth of the kulak. I had a practical illustration of the effect of this class policy on agricultural production when I visited a Cossack village near the River Don last summer. Talking with one of the Cossacks, a hale, philosophically-minded old man who in general showed no particular bitterness or prejudice against the new order, I asked him how present-day crops compared with those of pre-war days.

"Of course, they 're much smaller," he replied.

"Why?" I inquired.

"First of all, we lost a good deal of man power and many animals in the civil war. Many of our farms are carried on by women now, and we have n't nearly as many horses and bullocks as we need. But, besides that, there is the question of the distribution of the land. According to the rules our poor-

est peasants must get the best land, and the land nearest the village. The richest get the worst land, and land that 's far away. The result is that our best land is poorly cultivated, because the poor lack horses and machinery, and are sometimes bad farmers anyway, while the better equipment of the rich is partly wasted because they have inferior land."

The official statistics seem to bear out this simple Cossack's view of the situation. Mr. Y. A. Yakovlev, Vice-Commissar for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and editor of the *Peasants' Gazette*, has published in his little book, *Za Kolhozi* ("For Collective Farms"), a series of charts and diagrams illustrating the productivity and cost of production in various types of peasant homesteads. Here (see pages 9–11) one finds that the poor peasant in Pskov Province averages 8.2 poods (a pood is equal to 36 pounds avoirdupois) of flax to a dessiatine, while his richer neighbor, working on the same soil, gets 15.2. The poor peasant in Kiev gets 26 poods of rye to the kulak's 50.9. The poor farm in the Kuban realizes 50 poods of wheat to a dessiatine, as against the rich farm's 74. Constant harrying of the kulak may be good politics, good Communist ethics, or good Marxism; but the figures show that it is not good agricultural production.

The output of the individual peasant, who still produces more than nine tenths of the grain in the Soviet Union, unmistakably suffers for lack of an adequate economic stimulus. I recall another significant little incident from my visit to the Don Cossack village. A peasant was boiling with indignation because he had been listed as a kulak, which meant for him heavier taxation and all sorts of civic and social disabilities.

"I worked over my own five dessiatines of land, and then, because I had a horse and machinery, I leased and worked six more dessiatines which belonged to some poor neighbors and which otherwise would n't have been cultivated at all," he shouted. "But I 've learned my lesson. Since the powers don't want us to be rich, I 'll never do a bit of extra work to increase my land holding in the future."

Premier Rykov spoke out plainly on this subject at a meeting of Leningrad Communists. Protesting against the incorrect application of a special individual tax, which should be reserved for the wealthiest kulaks, he said: —

"We can't fight for culture in the village if we reckon as kulaks peasants who are using metal spoons instead of wooden ones, and there are such cases. If we consider the peasant who has a radio receiver a kulak, then for a sewing machine or a gramophone we could call him a pomyeschik. If the peasant works the soil well, without exploitation of others, they burden him with the individual tax. Then who will undertake to work the land well? I don't think there will be any such idiots who will do this when they know that for this they will be subject to the individual tax, their children will be driven out of school, and they themselves will be deprived of electoral rights." [1]

The Communists are really confronted with their most difficult dilemma when they face the problem of how to deal with the individual peasant producer, whose disappearance was predicted by Marx, but who is still here in Russia, twenty-five million homesteads strong. If the present policy, of merely cutting down the peasant who raises himself a little above his fellows, were to continue, the outlook for the future of Russian agriculture would be dark indeed. It would almost inevitably remain on a low level, with little surplus production; and both the foreign trade and the industrial development of the country would correspondingly and severely suffer.

But the Communists are determined that things shall not remain as they are. They see an outlet in the large-scale collectivization of agriculture through the agency of state and collective farms. They argue that giving the kulak a free hand in the village would not only destroy the prospect of building up in Russia a genuine socialist state, but would also be disadvantageous to the masses of the peasantry, because for every strong farmer who would emerge under a *laissez faire* agrarian policy several poor and middle-class peasants would go completely to the wall. The importance which is attached to agriculture on a collectivist basis is evident from the following

[1] See *Pravda* for December 4, 1928.

excerpt from a speech which Stalin delivered before the November session of the Party Central Committee: —

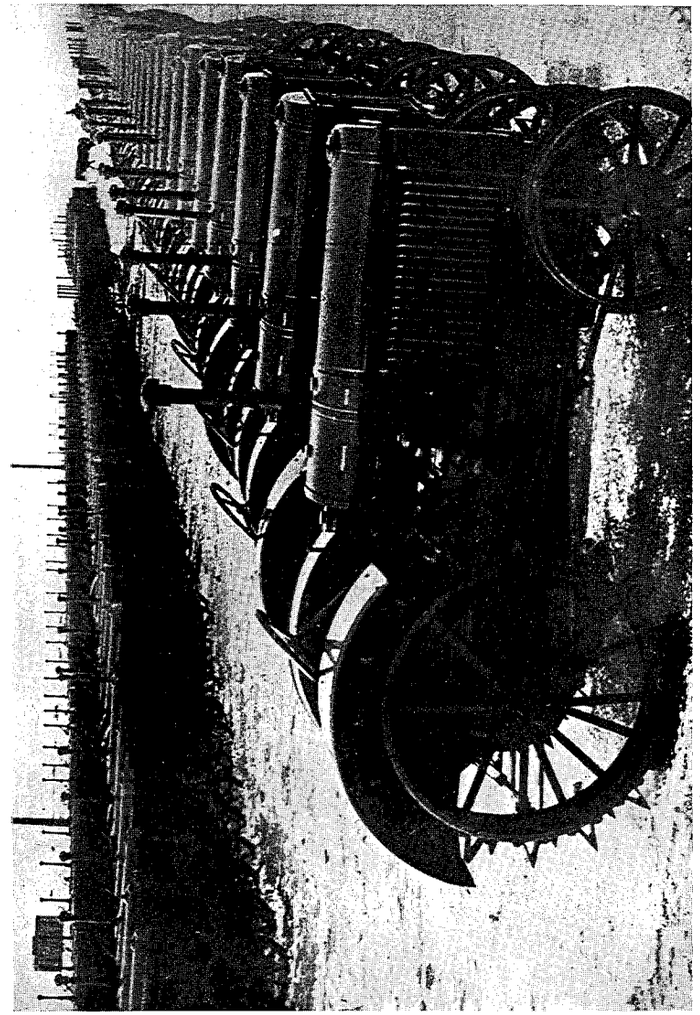
"We must not for too long a period of time base the Soviet power and the socialist structure on two different foundations, on the foundation of the largest and most unified socialist industry and on the foundation of the most divided and backward little peasant farming. It is necessary gradually, but systematically and stubbornly, to remake agriculture on a new technical basis, on the basis of big production, pulling it up to the socialist industry. Either we solve this problem, and then final victory is guaranteed, or we retreat from it without solving it, and then the return to capitalism may become an unavoidable development." [1]

The Communist with an eye to faith sees the present Russian peasant villages, with their tiny holdings, divided into uneconomic strips and patches of land, their primitive implements and their backward farming methods transformed into big state or coöperative productive units, equipped with tractors and the best modern machinery and turning out harvests comparable with those of Western Europe and America.

Until 1928 the state and collective farms (*sovhozes* and *kolhozes*) had been mere islands in the sea of individual peasant homesteads. Early in 1928, according to figures furnished to me by the Soviet Central Statistical Department, there were 4794 state farms, with 126,076 workers and employees and 1.27 per cent of the total planted area, and 32,000 collective farms, with 375,377 families and 1.15 per cent of the planted area.

The sovhoz is managed, in principle, like a state factory. It is a fairly large tract of land, usually a former landlord's estate, which the government succeeded in salvaging in the midst of the orgy of peasant land seizures. Its employees receive wages, like factory workers, and the profits of the enterprise, if there are any, belong to the state organization which manages the farm. The sovhoz is supposed to be a model farm and often operates some small factories for the

[1] See *Pravda*, November 24, 1928.



TRACTORS READY FOR THE STATE FARM "GIGANT"

working over of its own produce and that of the surrounding villages. Sometimes an agricultural experimental station is operated on the territory of the sovhoz. Financially these state farms were not very successful, their total losses up to January 1, 1928, being estimated at 8,000,000 rubles.[1] Frequent changes of personnel and lack of experienced managers are cited as reasons for their sometimes unsatisfactory functioning. However, their advocates contend that their book losses are partly due to the fact that they furnish the neighboring peasants with valuable agricultural aid at low prices.

Confronted with the crisis of grain supply in 1928, the Communist Party turned to the state farm as a means of salvation. A programme of creating a large number of new state farms on unused land in the potentially fertile steppes of southern and southeastern Russia was drawn up, and a definite goal was set: the production of between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000 tons of marketable grain by 1933. It is difficult to obtain precise figures regarding a process which is actively going on; but Trade Commissar Mikoyan declared in the summer of 1929 that this goal would be reached much earlier than 1933, since it had been found possible to inaugurate more new farms with a larger planted area than had seemed possible at first. A feature of the new state farms is their size, which often runs to tens of thousands of acres. While in 1928 grain was the principal objective of the state farms, by 1929 it was considered desirable to extend the system to the production of other articles in which a shortage was felt, such as meat, milk, dairy products, flax, etc. The marketable output of a state farm, which operates over large tracts of land and is well supplied with modern machinery, including tractors, is usually much greater than would be possible on the same area, if divided among individual peasants.

Even more spectacular and significant than the growth of the state farms was the development of kolhozes. The passive peasant resistance to the idea of coöperative farming was visibly broken through during 1928 and 1929. Here again it

[1] See article by K. Kindeev in *Pravda* for September 29, 1928.

is difficult to cite figures which will not soon be outdated because of the rapid development of the movement. Mr. G. N. Kaminsky, writing in *Pravda* for September 12, 1929, summarizes the growth of the collective farms in the following manner: In 1928 2.1 per cent of peasant homesteads were drawn into some form of collectivist agriculture. This proportion increased to 4 per cent by July 1, 1929; and in 1930 it is expected that 10 per cent of the homesteads will be organized in this way.

Mr. Kaminsky's figure of 10 per cent has already been surpassed in some districts where especially strong efforts were made to promote the growth of the collective farms and where natural conditions favor this development. In the Armavir district of the North Caucasus, which I visited in August, 1929, 18 per cent of the peasant homesteads had already abandoned individualist for collectivist farming. In the summer of 1929 there were about 50,000 collective farms in the Soviet Union, the members with their families numbering about 4,000,000.

Communal farms in the Soviet Union are of three types: communes, where the members live together and share the proceeds of their labor equally; *artels*, where they live together but are paid according to labor, and the looser *tovarischestvos*, or coöperative groups, in which the members band together to work the land, but usually retain their own homes. This loosest form of association is the most common of the three.

From the productive standpoint the capacities of a dozen or more peasants who have pooled land and working animals in a collective farm are greater than those of the same families, when they hold the same amount of land in divided individual farms, especially under the Russian plan, where the individual peasant, instead of holding his land in one piece is usually given strips of good, bad, and indifferent land, scattered about in different localities.

The obstacles which delay any general adoption of the collective system are largely psychological. Again and again I have heard peasants express the fear that in a collective farm, where all will live together and eat together, they will become

involved in constant family quarrels and will have no guaranty that the lazier members of the group will not attempt to shirk and live on the labor of others. Still more potent, perhaps, is the feeling of the individual peasant that he loses something of his independence when he enters a collective organization. An Armavir peasant who, like many of his fellows, was wavering as to whether he should join a collective farm or not, summed up the question as follows:

"Of course, the tractor makes the harvesting and planting easier in the commune, and there 's a nursery where you can put the children. But the worst thing about the commune is that you 're not your own master. You have to work as the management directs and not as you want to do yourself. You have to eat what everyone else eats, whether you like it or not, whether it' s good or bad. Still, I think I 'll have to join: there 's nothing else for a peasant to do in these days."

I heard this same expression from a number of middle-class peasants; and its wide circulation helps to explain the phenomenally rapid growth of socialized farming which began in 1928. There are, of course, other factors which are pushing the peasants into the collectivist movement.

In the first place, the state lavishes advantages of every kind on the communal farms. They receive the best land; and peasants who do not wish to join receive inferior tracts if their patch happens to lie in an area which has been earmarked for a commune. Tractors and large agricultural machines are sold primarily and, indeed, almost exclusively to collective groups, not to individual peasants. Taxes are lower for members of collective farms, and these organizations receive preference in the supply of seeds and credit.

Another powerful influence is the so-called machine-tractor station — a base for a group of state-owned tractors, which plough and harvest the land of surrounding villages in exchange for a quarter of the crop and on condition that the peasants who are served in this way will organize their holdings on a collectivist basis. This idea originated in Southern Ukraina, but it has now extended to all parts of the country, and in

1930 a hundred machine-tractor stations will be functioning in various regions, mostly in the level steppe country, which is most favorable for tractor farming.

Side by side with this intensive encouragement of the collective groups has gone a war of extermination of the kulak; and any individual peasant who rises a little above the general level of poverty is likely to incur that unpleasant characterization. The kulak is subjected to ruinous special taxes; if he refuses to sell his grain to the state at fixed prices he may be fined five times the amount of the withheld grain or even exiled or imprisoned; one almost never finds a peasant to-day who owns a tractor, a threshing machine, a mill, or any subsidiary enterprise. The tax collectors, guided by their class principle, have done their work too well. So the middle-class peasant realizes that, if he should improve his well-being by hard labor, he will soon run the risk of incurring the name which is most dreaded, and with good reason, in peasant villages, that of kulak. Perhaps he would prefer to carry on with his individual farm; but with such strong economic pressure against him he is very apt to go off and join the nearest collective group.

If the collectivist movement continues to grow at the present rate it is quite possible that within another decade, or perhaps even sooner, the individual peasants will constitute a dwindling minority of the Soviet agricultural population. Such a socialization of agriculture, measured by the number of people affected and the magnitude of the changes in their psychology and working habits, would represent probably the greatest of all the changes which the Communists have brought about. It would be comparable in significance with the substitution of the factory for the hand artisan's workshop in industrial production. And the pangs of regret which many Russian peasants feel to-day at being forced off their farms into the collective farms may in retrospect seem similar to the dissatisfaction which many artisans felt when the industrial revolution drove them into the new and forbidding factories.

If the Communist agrarian programme succeeds, Turgeniev's Peasant-Sphinx will be transformed into a disciplined member

of the new Soviet social order. Each state and collective farm will have its production plan, worked out for years in advance, just like the factories and mines at the present time. The peasant will be won over from an individualist to a collectivist outlook on life and labor.

It may be noted that the peasant does not always lose his individualist psychology, even when he joins a collective farm. Especially in the looser forms of association, in the *tovarischestvos*, the richer peasants sometimes capture the leadership and contrive to enrich themselves behind the communal mask. Bitter struggles go on in many of the collective farms between the poor peasants who, with nothing to lose themselves, wish to make all the working animals and machinery the sole property of the farm, and the more prosperous members, who try to keep a hold on as much of their former property as they can. Cases are even reported when the collective farm members show as little inclination as the individual peasants to sell their grain to the state, although they are legally bound to do so, in return for the credits and other aid which they receive.

It is still too soon to speak with certainty about the productive results of the new agricultural methods which are being pushed with such vigor, but 1929 may be considered the first year when large scale farming, in the shape of state and collective farms, took a definite stride forward. The grain situation was eased during 1929, due to a somewhat better harvest and to an extension of the planted area variously estimated at from 4 per cent to 6 per cent. But a new agrarian difficulty made itself felt during that summer and autumn in the acute shortage of meat, eggs, and milk as has been described. The serious nature of the meat crisis was indicated in a statement by Mr. Pankratov, a member of the collegium of the Soviet Trade Commissariat, published in *Izvestia* for September 22, 1929. According to this statement the number of big cattle in the Soviet Union declined from 106,300,000 in 1926 to 96,600,000 in 1929; the number of pigs for the same period from 97,600,000 to 82,800,000, and the number of sheep from 107,800,000 to 100,400,000. There seem to have been two

main causes for this decline: the Soviet policy of economically crushing the richer peasants, which made it unprofitable for the latter to keep large flocks and herds, and the extensive killing of stock during the autumn of 1928, when there was an acute shortage of fodder.[1]

The struggle between old and new forms in the village is by no means peaceful. The "extraordinary measures" of grain requisition and the heavy taxation collected in the autumn of 1928 left their heritage of rankling bitterness, especially among the more prosperous peasants. Attacks upon Communists and active Soviet agents in the villages became increasingly frequent during the latter part of 1928; and from August 15 until October 15 there were forty-four murders of village officials and correspondents,[2] besides thirty-three attempted murders and numerous burnings of houses of individuals and property of the newly formed coöperative farms, which are an object of special antipathy to the richer peasants. The Soviet authorities retaliated by treating these village murders and attacks as counter-revolutionary crimes and shooting a number of persons implicated in them.

The following list of items, taken from *Izvestia* of November 11, 1928, indicates that the phrase, "sharpening of class war in the village," often used by Communist writers and speakers, has behind it a considerable element of reality: —

In the Cossack village Priblizhskaya, in the Terek district, a shot was fired through the window at a woman Communist, Sklarova.

In the village Baranovka, in Tula Province, the kulaks fired at the teacher and social worker, Raevsky.

In the village Komarikha, in the Perm region, the local kulak Antipev mortally wounded with a knife the only Communist in the village, Login.

In the village Gubanovo, in Eletz district, the president of the revision commission of the village Soviet, Anisimov, was killed during the night.

In the Jaroslavsky kolhoz, in Tula Province, the kulaks, from revenge for taking away the land, burned a quantity of hay.

[1] See *Pravda*, October 27, 1928. [2] *Ibid.*

In the village Novaya Kutaya, of Penza district, the home of the village correspondent, Ignati Zhirkov, was burned.

In the village Nikolaevka, in the Kansk district (of Siberia), the village correspondent Belkovzky was murdered by kulaks, brothers Pushechkin.

In Izdeshkovskaya township (Smolensk Province) ended a big trial of a group of kulaks, who savagely murdered the peasant Trofim Volkov, of the village Dimskoe.

Inasmuch as Soviet agrarian policy, especially since the Fifteenth Party Congress, is avowedly designed to repress the rich and to help the poor, one may wonder why its application has provoked so many murderous assaults in the country districts. There are few Russian villages where the poor peasants do not outnumber the rich ones by ten to one.

Perhaps in this connection it is worth while to recall one of the very few points in wit which was ever registered against the Soviet Foreign Commissar, Chicherin. Sometime in the course of the intervention and civil war, Sir Arthur Balfour, as he then was, observed in a controversial interchange with Chicherin that Bolshevism was an excellent means of making rich men poor but a questionable means of making poor men rich. And the agrarian experiments of the last ten years indicate that it is far easier to despoil and ruin a kulak than to set a poor peasant on his feet. Hence resentment among the richer classes of peasants is apparently a stronger sentiment than gratitude on the part of the poor.

Moreover, there are some points, notably the shortage and high prices of manufactured goods, in which all peasants have a sense of grievance against the cities. Then, in agitating against the state and collective farms, the kulak can appeal to the deep-rooted peasant sentiment in favor of individual farming.

How will it all end, this contact of Karl Marx with the Peasant-Sphinx, this daring attempt to turn the grandsons of serfs into practical communists, equipped with the most modern machinery, this agrarian class struggle, now being fought with every means, from taxes and credit policies to the bullet and knife of the desperate and embittered kulaks? The issue

depends on so many factors that one hesitates to venture a prophecy. It depends on the stubbornness with which the present agrarian policy is carried out, on the tenacity of the resistance of the more prosperous peasants, on the success of the still experimental state and collective forms of large-scale farming, on the ability of the cities and the industries to weather the internal blockade with supplies of food and raw material which the discontented part of the peasantry is consciously or unconsciously attempting to impose. But, whatever may be the issue, the effort to extend socialism from industry to agriculture, to end the chronic dualism of the collectivist city and the individualist countryside, is, in my opinion, the most absorbing and most important episode of the Russian revolutionary drama which is now being played out.

IX

THE BABEL TOWER OF NATIONALITIES

It is perhaps not generally realized that the Soviet Union contains one of the most variegated and complicated patchworks of nationalities to be found anywhere in the world. A little over half the population consists of Great Russians, and a little over a fifth is made up of ethnological first cousins to the Russians, the Ukrainians, who have, however, a distinct language and cultural traditions of their own. The remainder is divided up among almost two hundred races, ranging from peoples with a long historical past, such as the Tartars, Turcomans, and Armenians, to tiny tribes of the mountains and deserts, whose very names are known only to a few specialists.[1]

A gathering of representatives of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, each speaking his own language, would suggest a veritable Tower of Babel. Besides Slavic peoples, Great Russians, Ukrainians, and White Russians, one would find in such a gathering Finnish and Tartar stocks, Mongolian descendants of Genghiz Khan's conquering hordes, aboriginal Siberian tribes whose origin is still a subject of dispute, the picturesque and varied races of the Caucasian Mountains, where people sometimes do not understand the language of their neighbors in the nearest valleys, Jews, Armenians, and many others.

The Great Russians are most solidly concentrated in perhaps a score of provinces in the central and northern part of European Russia, with Moscow as the centre. Starting from this base, the general streams of Russian colonization, as a general

[1] According to the census of 1926, the peoples constituting more than one per cent of the population of the Soviet Union are divided in the following proportions: Russians, 52.97 per cent; Ukrainians, 21.25; White Russians, 3.23; Kazaks, 2.70; Uzbeks, 2.66; Tartars, 1.99; Jews, 1.82; Georgians, 1.24; Turanians, 1.16; Armenians, 1.07.

rule, follow the rivers and the railroad lines. To the west are the White Russians; to the south lies the land of the Ukrainians. In the Valley of the Volga Russians are inextricably mixed with Tartars, Bashkirs, Chuvashes, Mordvians, and other small nationalities. There is a solid belt of Russian peasant settlement north and south of the single railroad which spans Siberia. North of this belt, Yakuts, Tunguzes, Samoyeds, and other Arctic tribes, with their reindeer herds, maintain a precarious existence by hunting and fishing. South of it one comes to the steppes and deserts, over which wander the nomadic Kazaks (not to be confused with the Cossacks, Russian and Ukrainian colonists who were settled in various parts of the country and enjoyed special privileges in return for their obligation of constant military service in the Tsarist armies). Still farther south lie the cotton regions of Central Asia, where a thin layer of Russians is to be found along with the native population of Uzbeks, Turcomans, Tadjiks, and other middle-Asiatic tribes. In the far southeast of European Russia the blue-eyed and fair-skinned Cossacks of the fertile valleys of the Don and Kuban give way to dark-skinned mountaineers, mostly devotees of Islam, as one enters the foothills and main ranges of the Caucasus Mountains.

The Tsarist Government attempted to solve the problem of its racial minorities by applying a policy of uncompromising forcible assimilation and Russification. The written use of non-Russian languages was discouraged and sometimes positively forbidden. Russian was the sole language of official business. Russians, as a rule, received preference in the state service, and the member of a minor nationality who aspired to high office had first of all to prove himself a thoroughgoing Russian nationalist.

This policy was perhaps a logical fruit of the steady process of conquest and colonization by which the Russian Empire was built up. But it quite failed to extinguish the national aspirations of many of the non-Russian peoples. This became very evident in 1917, when centrifugal nationalism was not the least of the forces that rent the fabric of the old Russian state order

and prepared the way for the coming of Bolshevism. During the period of revolution and civil war more than a score of nationalist governments, of various degrees of significance and stability, sprang up in separate regions of the former Empire.

The end of the civil war found the Soviet Government in control of the territory of the former Russian Empire, with the exception of Poland, Finland, Esthonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, the independence of which states has been formally recognized, and the province of Bessarabia, the occupation of which by Rumania is still officially challenged and unrecognized by the Soviet Union. But from a very early period of its existence the Soviet Government proclaimed a complete reversal of the Tsarist policy of compulsory Russification. A *Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia*, signed by Lenin as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and by Stalin as Commissar for Nationalities, and published November 15 (new style), 1917, eight days after the Bolshevik seizure of power in Petrograd, lays down the following four basic principles of Soviet policy in regard to the nationalities of Russia: —

1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, including separation and the organization of an independent state.
3. Abolition of all national and national-religious privileges and limitations.
4. Free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.[1]

In the stress of civil war it was not always easy to apply the broad principle of self-determination without some additional qualifications. More than once it happened that a minority consisting of workers in some non-Russian territorial unit favored the Soviet power, while the peasant majority of the population showed itself indifferent or hostile. This led to a movement in the Communist Party to declare the working

[1] This declaration is published in *Sovyetskaya Politika za 10 Let po Nationalnomu Voprosu v RSFSR* ("Soviet Policy in the Nationality Question in the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic for Ten Years"), pp. 1–2.

class the recognized interpreter of the national will. However, Lenin always insisted that, just because the Tsarist Government had oppressed the non-Russian nationalities, the Communist must be especially careful to avoid even the appearance of "Russian chauvinism" and must respect the wishes of the nationalities in such matters as the use of their native language.

For a time the task of looking after the needs of the racial minorities was largely entrusted to a Commissariat for Nationalities, which was headed by Stalin. Ultimately, however, this Commissariat was liquidated as superfluous, in view of the final organization of former Russia on a federal basis. Under the new federal constitution, formally adopted in 1923, the Soviet state was called the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The omission of any reference to Russia in this new title had perhaps a double significance: it emphasized the absolute equality of all peoples inhabiting the territory of the former Russian Empire, and it left the door open for the adhesion of future Soviet Republics, should they be organized in other countries of the world.

The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has six component members: the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, the White Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, the Trans-Caucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, and the two Central Asian Republics of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Much the largest of these political units is the Russian Soviet Republic, which includes more than two thirds of the population and more than nine tenths of the area of the Soviet Union. It stretches over most of European Russia and all of Asiatic Russia, except for the territory of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. It is itself a large-scale federative structure, with eleven autonomous republics and twelve autonomous *oblasts*, or territories, carved out of its area to correspond with the varied national composition of the population.[1]

[1] In general, the status of a republic, as distinguished from that of a Territory, is granted to nationalities of a larger population and area, and in a more advanced state of cultural development.

Trans-Caucasia is also a federation, its three main units being Georgia, Azerbaidjan, and Armenia, while several smaller autonomous republics and territories have been created to accommodate the racial minorities of these republics. Ukraina has one autonomous Soviet Republic, Moldavia, which lies along the left bank of the River Dniester, directly opposite the lost province of Bessarabia, where the Moldavian element in the population is quite strong. Soviet Moldavia, therefore, may become the nucleus of a future Soviet Bessarabia. In the southern part of the Central Asiatic Republic of Uzbekistan, adjacent to the Afghan frontier, exists the autonomous Republic of Tadjikistan.

The central government of the Soviet Union reserves for its exclusive control the following administrative departments: war, foreign affairs, trade, transport, posts and telegraphs. The Gay-Pay-Oo, or secret police, is also under unified direction. The Commissariats for Labor, Finance, and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, together with the Supreme Economic Council, function in an All-Union capacity, but also exist as local organs in each republic. Each republic retains in its own management the governmental departments dealing with education, health, justice, agriculture, and some other subjects.

In practice the Soviet Union is a much more centralized state than one might imagine from reading its Constitution. The Communist Party, which recognizes no national limitations on its authority, is a powerful connecting link for the whole state system. A decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party about trade or industry, education or agriculture, is equally obligatory for the Communist officials of Russia and Ukraina, White Russia and Trans-Caucasia. The theoretical right of secession, enjoyed by the republics making up the Union, could not, in practice, be exercised without revolution and civil war. The legislative and executive organs of all the associated republics are entirely under Communist control; and it is almost inconceivable that any large group of Communists should ever vote for secession; in fact any such

group would be promptly denounced as traitors to the Revolution and expelled from the Party. And any nationalist movement against the Soviet power which started under anti-Communist leadership would be regarded as bourgeois and counter-revolutionary and suppressed with all the armed forces at the disposal of the Union, as has, indeed, happened in the Caucasian Republic of Georgia, where Russian troops are at hand to suppress any revolt headed by the Georgia Mensheviks, or Nationalist Socialists.

However, while recognizing that the Soviet Union, for all political and economic purposes, is a solidly unified state, one should not for a moment underrate the significance of its organization along federal lines. Two results of the first importance have emerged from this reconstruction: first, the absolute elimination of any legal discrimination as between the different races of the Soviet Union, and, second, a sweeping development of the individual national cultures.

Equal representation for all nationalities is the principle underlying the creation of the Council of Nationalities, a body which sits simultaneously with the All-Union Soviet Executive Committee and possesses equal rights with the latter body as a legislative chamber. The Council contains five representatives from each of the autonomous Republics and one from each of the autonomous Territories. Theoretically it would be possible for a combination of the small nationalities to block a measure which had received the approval of the All-Union Soviet Executive Committee and thereby create something in the nature of a legislative deadlock. The Constitution merely prescribes that, in the event of a difference of opinion between these two legislative chambers, a commission from both shall be appointed to work out a solution. As a matter of fact, however, the predominance of Communist influence in both these legislative bodies pretty effectively ensures substantial harmony of opinion on major questions. Perhaps the most important functions of the Council of Nationalities are: to serve as a clearing house for examining the suggestions and complaints which come from the national republics, to initiate

legislation especially designed to meet the needs of the minor races, and to introduce such modifications into general laws as seem required to meet the varied special local conditions which inevitably exist among races of different historical and cultural traditions and modes of life.

Under the new federal system the highest public officials of the various autonomous republics almost invariably belong to the dominant nationalities of the individual republics. The state employees in the smaller and more backward of the national republics are still to a large extent Russians;[1] but those officials who come most in contact with the masses are, so far as possible, drawn from the native nationality. The predominance of Russians in the state service of many of the non-Russian republics is largely due to the fact that there are not enough educated natives to staff these services effectively. A serious effort is being made to overcome this educational handicap, both by creating new elementary and higher schools and by setting aside a certain number of places in the state universities and technical schools for students of the minor nationalities. In Dyetskoe Syelo (formerly Tsarskoe Syelo), near Leningrad, there is an interesting "Rabfac," or special preparatory school for students picked out from some of the very small tribes of eastern and northern Siberia. In Moscow has grown up the University of the Toilers of the East, where seven hundred students, mostly from Central Asia and the Caucasus, are passing through a four-year course of political and general education which is supposed to prepare them to substitute Marx and Lenin for the Koran and the Shariat as the guides of their Mohammedan fellow countrymen.

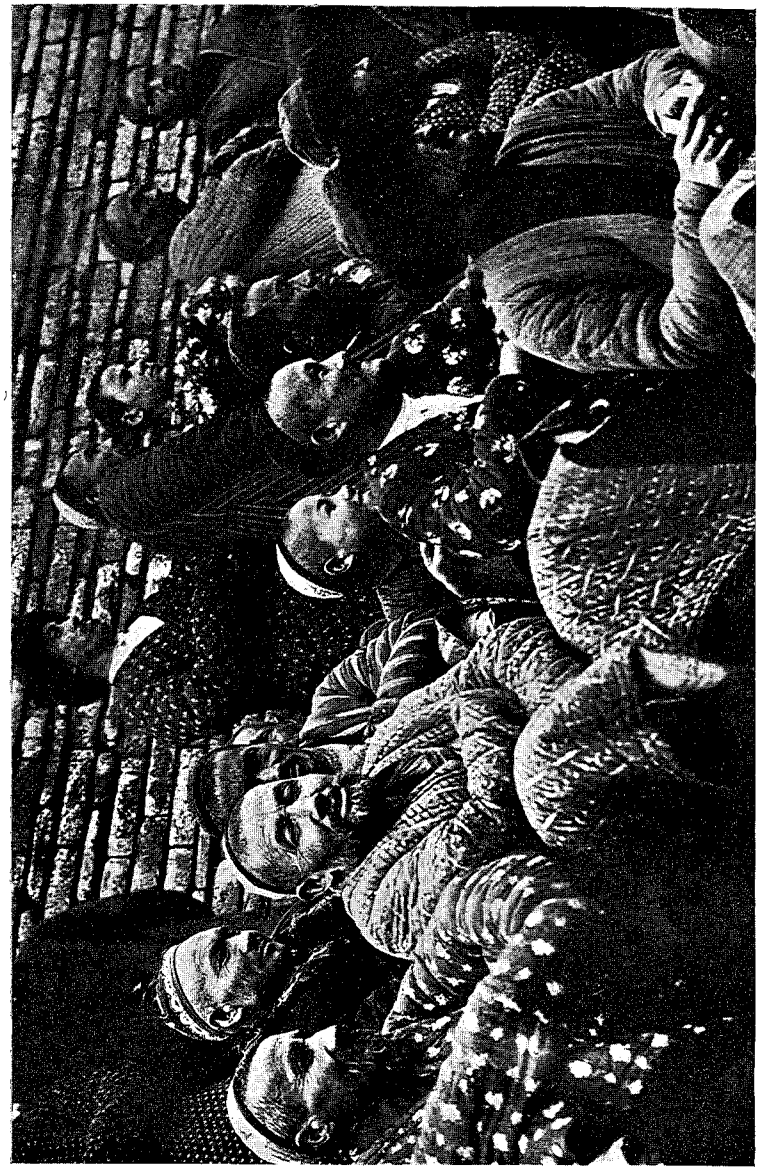
The Soviet Government with one bold stroke has cut the

[1] Mr. S. Ordzhonikidze, Commissar for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, gave the following figures for the percentages of Russians and natives in the state service of some of the national republics: Tartar Republic, Russians 65.8, Tartars 25.5; Crimea, Russians 60.7, Jews 16.3, natives 16.1; Kazakistan, Russians 70.3, Kazaks 16.5; Uzbekistan, Russians 61.9, natives 24.7; etc. He draws the conclusion: "The upper layers are local; but the state apparatus to a very great degree consists of Russians." See the *Report of the Central Control Committee and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection to the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party*, pp. 31–33. Published by the State Publishing Company, 1928.

Gordian knot of the language problem, the bane of most states in eastern and southern Europe which are inhabited by populations of mixed nationality. One finds a practical illustration of the principle of cultural autonomy as soon as one crosses the border from Poland into the Soviet Union. On the Polish side every public sign is in Polish. On the Soviet side the name of the border station, Nyegorelye, is written in the characters of four languages, White Russian, Russian, Yiddish, and Polish, corresponding with the four chief races of the region.

In general the rule is carried out that every nationality in the Soviet Union possesses the right to its own language in schools, courts, and the transaction of public business. In this respect the framers of the Soviet Constitution have tried to be fair not only to the minorities of the former Russian Empire, but to the minority enclaves which often reside within the boundaries of the larger minorities. In Georgia, for instance, the Georgian language, quite different from Russian not only in character but also in its alphabet, has been quite generally introduced in public administration. But the Georgians, who have always resented Russian domination, during their period of separate national existence under the Menshevik Government displayed a tendency to repress the cultural autonomy of the Abkhazians and Adjarians, two peoples who live along the coast of the Black Sea. So two little autonomous Republics of Abkhazia and Adjaristan have been created within the framework of the Georgian Republic, endowed with the same right to reject Georgian that the Georgians assert to reject Russian. A similar educational adjustment has been made in Ukraina, where the city population is divided more or less evenly among Russians, Ukrainians, and Jews, while the country population is almost solidly Ukrainian. In the Ukrainian cities and towns each of these three races enjoys schools in its own language in proportion to its numerical weight in the population.

Courts, like schools, are carried on, as a general rule, in the language which is comprehensible to the majority of the local population, and any citizen of the Soviet Union may demand



At the May Celebration in Old Tashkent

the right to plead his case in his own tongue. Now that the racial minorities are not only permitted but encouraged to develop their own language there has been a great expansion of the printed word in the national republics. Ukraina in a single year put out five thousand volumes in thirty-five million copies.

For the more remote, small, and backward nationalities, some of which did not possess a written language before the Revolution, the work of the Central Publishing House of Nationalities is of great significance. This enterprise publishes an enormous amount of literature simultaneously in a great number of languages. Up to the present time it has issued 1805 books in fifty-four languages and dialects, with a total circulation of almost nine million copies. It also publishes five newspapers, two in Tartar, one in Chuvash, one in Mordvian, and one in Mariisk. Its output ranges from the inevitable translation of the works of Lenin to nursery rhymes, which doubtless represent a new event in the lives of children whose parents never saw a printed page.

Sixteen new alphabets have been created, several of them for the Caucasian mountain tribes, and the movement to substitute Latin for Arabic characters among the Tartar, Turanian, and Finnish peoples of the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Volga Valley is making rapid progress. If one now visits Baku or Tashkent or any other oriental city of the Soviet Union, one sees the old delicate complicated Arabic script, which was always inevitably the property of a very small educated minority of the people, yielding to strange-looking combinations of Latin characters, representing the new official language of these Eastern peoples. The advantages claimed for the new alphabet over the old are that it makes literacy much more accessible to the masses of the people and brings these comparatively primitive Eastern peoples into closer contact with the science and culture of the West.

While the general principles of the Soviet nationality policy are applied all over the Union, they produce various effects in various parts of the country. One of the most interesting

fields for this experiment in granting full freedom of cultural development is Ukraina, next to Russia the largest of the federated republics, with a population of about thirty millions and an area equal to France. A visit to Kiev, the largest city of Ukraina, gives one a good concrete illustration of how far the policy of Ukrainization has been carried out.

There was a time when Kiev was known as the Mother City of Russia. It was here that the Russians were first converted to Christianity and baptized en masse in the River Dnieper. In pre-revolutionary days the Pechorskaya Lavra, Kiev's famous monastery, perched on a high bluff overlooking the Dnieper and dominating the city with its burnished golden domes, was an object of pilgrimage for vast numbers of devout Russians.

But to-day one could almost walk the streets of Kiev, or Kiiv, as the Ukrainians insist on calling it, without realizing that the city has any connection with Russia. Street signs, advertisements, names of public buildings, are all written in Ukrainian. The main newspaper of the city appears in Ukrainian, and only a small news sheet satisfies the needs of the citizens who read only Russian. If one goes to the local opera house to hear *Carmen*, the singing is in Ukrainian.

Ukrainian nationalism made visible strides during the interval between two visits which I paid to the city in 1924 and 1927. In 1924 Russian still held its own as a dual language. But now Ukrainian has completely pushed it out in the government offices and institutions. It is not unusual to find among state employees the same aversion to speaking Russian, even when they know it, that prevails among the people in Poland, Latvia, and other countries which have broken away from the former Russian Empire. This intense, somewhat self-conscious nationalism is especially marked in the Ukrainian Commissariat for Education. When I visited the central headquarters of this department in Kharkov, the Ukrainian capital, one of the officials insisted on expounding the special characteristics of the Ukrainian educational system — very distinct, as he proudly assured me, from the Russian — in

German, rather than in Russian, although linguistically he was probably more at home in the latter language.

The new nationalism in Ukraina has its intolerant sides. There is a commission on Ukrainization which is ruthless in weeding out state employees who are too indolent or too wedded to the Russian language to learn Ukrainian. One day the Kiev newspapers printed a warning list of thirty-six persons who had been dismissed for this reason. The old Russian population of Ukraina is inclined to feel that it has been suddenly transferred to a strange and not very hospitable country.

And yet, while the policy of forcible Ukrainization doubtless has its excesses and defects, it must, I think, on the whole be reckoned as a bold and shrewd stroke of statesmanship on the part of the ruling Communist Party. The Ukrainian cities, with their mixed population, are only islands in the sea of peasant villages; and the native tongue of the peasants is Ukrainian.

The history of Ukraina during the Revolution also furnishes strong arguments for granting the country full cultural autonomy. The Soviet régime was established in Ukraina, especially in the five northwestern provinces (Kiev, Chernigov, Poltava, Volhynia, and Podolia), where Ukrainian national sentiment was strongest, with greater difficulty than in almost any other region. Long after the regular civil war was over Western Ukraina was harassed by insurgent guerrilla bands which roamed about, attacking stray military detachments, destroying railroad communications, and making pogroms against the Jews. Besides exploiting the discontent of the peasants with the requisitioning policy which the Soviet authorities pursued at that time, the leaders of these bands proclaimed the slogan of Independent Ukraina and denounced the Communists as foreign rulers from Moscow.

The present thoroughgoing Ukrainization of the schools and courts, the newspapers and the state services, has helped to take the wind out of the sails of these nationalist anti-Soviet agitators; and political banditism in Ukraina is now a thing of the past. It has made the village teachers, the agricultural

experts, and in general the rural intelligentsia more friendly to the Soviet Government.

Incidentally the recognition of Ukrainian as an official state language may well have international significance. Several millions of Ukrainians live in the eastern frontier districts of Poland, districts which are always suggestively referred to in the Soviet press as "Western Ukraina." While Polish policy toward the Ukrainian and White Russian minorities has become more liberal since the inauguration of the Pilsudsky régime, it is still very far from reaching the state of complete linguistic independence which has been achieved in Soviet Ukraina. Unless the Polish Government succeeds in assimilating its Ukrainian citizens, or agrees to grant them some form of federal autonomy (and both these contingencies are rather remote) it will always be at a disadvantage in comparison with the Soviet Union, so far as nationalist Ukrainian sentiment is concerned.

There are two important points of contrast between Tsarist and Soviet policies in regard to the Mohammedan peoples of the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Valley of the Volga. The Tsarist Government gave no recognition to their languages and placed them under the administration of Russian officials. At the same time it left almost untouched the network of feudal and patriarchal Islamic customs which governed the daily lives of these tribes of the forests, the deserts, and the mountains. The Soviet Government grants them the free use of their languages, even creating alphabets when these were hitherto lacking, trains and installs as rapidly as possible a native Communist administrative class, and simultaneously carries on a vigorous, crusading onslaught against Asiatic living habits which have behind them the weight of centuries of tradition.

An unromantic jail sentence now awaits the Caucasian mountaineer who attempts to avenge an insult or honor the memory of a murdered relative with the aid of his revolver or dagger. The sale and abduction of brides are also legally prohibited. The harem has also been outlawed.

The bey, or tribal chief, and the mullah, or Mohammedan priest, still enjoy a certain amount of prestige; but every effort is made to undermine their power, politically, economically, and socially. The beys of Kazakistan, the huge territory of steppes and deserts which rolls from the borders of China to the Caspian Sea, were recently subjected to a process of drastic expropriation; all their sheep and cattle (the chief form of wealth in these arid regions) above a certain minimum norm were confiscated and many of the more influential beys were banished from their native districts, in order to destroy the last remains of their influence.

Talking with an old Tartar peasant in one of the remote mountain villages of the Crimean Soviet Republic, once the realm of Tartar khans, I acquired a vivid impression that Islam, in its old traditional forms, was a dying force in the Soviet East. The old Tartar was very far from being a Communist; but with oriental fatalistic philosophy he recognized the coming of changes which he probably neither understood nor approved.

"People don't believe in the Prophet any longer," he declared. "Only a few of us old men go to the mosque on Friday. But now our two mullahs have resigned because there is no one to pay for their support, so there is no one to read the Koran. Look how the women go about unveiled and join a circle where men are talking. They would never have done this in former times," the old man concluded, with a sweeping gesture which included his wife and another woman who had come in.

The Khan's palace in the old capital of the Crimea, Bakchi-Serai, produces the half-haunting, half-melancholy impression of a grandeur that has passed. One pauses before the Fountain of Tears, where single drops of water slowly form and fall in memory of the Khan's beautiful Polish captive, Princess Pototzky, poisoned, according to the legend, by one of his jealous wives. There are some excellent specimens of mosaic work; restful gardens are surrounded by walls ornamented with flower patterns and verses from the Koran; Venetian

stained-glass windows recall the fact that Crimea formerly lay athwart one of the trade routes between Europe and Asia.

But an atmosphere of neglect and decay broods over the edifice. Much of the original beauty of the palace was lost as a result of the barbarous methods of renovation employed by some of the Tsarist governors. Swallows flutter through the Khan's reception halls and courtyards. One more touch points the contrast between past and present; and that is furnished on the entrance gate, where the inscription is scrawled: "Krim Rabfac, 1926." Evidently some students from a Crimean *rabfac*, or workers' high school, had passed through Bakchi-Serai on an excursion.

It is in the hands of this youth, crude and unformed, but energetic and bursting with the enthusiasm that comes with the first taste of knowledge, that the future of the Soviet East seems to lie. They will build neither palaces nor fountains of tears. But under their guidance these old Mohammedan lands will probably shake off some of the drowsy torpor that envelops one in the shadow of Tamerlane's mausoleum in Samarkand and other monuments of the Mohammedan Middle Ages, and begin to install factories, electrical stations, and sanitation systems.

In its Latin alphabet, in its forbidding of polygamy and encouragement of women to cast off their veils, the Soviet East has followed much the same Westernizing line that Mustapha Kemal has carried out with such iron iconoclastic resolution in Turkey and that King Amanullah, after a tour of Western Europe which included Russia and Turkey, tried with less success to introduce in backward Afghanistan. The new national Soviet republics which have sprung up on the ruins of old Tartar and Turcoman khanates are as different as possible from their predecessors in outlook and character.

Something has been written and a good deal has been whispered and insinuated about the alleged Jewish domination of the Soviet Government; in fact the idea that the Revolution is somehow the handiwork of the Jews ranks with the "nationalization of women" as one of the most obstinate and widely

believed canards about the Soviet Union.[1] As a matter of fact the Jews represent one of the most interesting and complicated of the Soviet racial minority problems.

That the Jews supplied both leaders and rank-and-file members of the revolutionary movement in greater proportion than the Russians or any of the other races which inhabited the Tsarist Empire is undeniable and quite natural, in view of the systematic and merciless policy of anti-Semitic repression and discrimination which the Tsarist Government applied, especially during the reigns of Alexander III and Nicholas II. Jews, as a general rule, were forbidden to live outside a Pale of Settlement in the southern and western provinces of the Empire; they were not allowed to buy land; they were almost completely excluded from the state service; only a limited percentage of Jewish students were admitted to high schools and universities. Moreover, the Jewish communities were never altogether out of the shadow of pogroms, or mob outbursts of massacre and looting, which were organized by nationalist anti-Semitic societies with the connivance of, or at least with little effective opposition from, the governing authorities.

Macaulay somewhere describes the pariah status of the native Irish under British rule during the eighteenth century and suggests that the Irish émigrés in the service of France and Spain must have experienced profound satisfaction whenever they could strike a blow against Great Britain. Certainly, if the British Empire had succumbed to a process of violent dissolution during the eighteenth or nineteenth century one would not have been surprised to find gentlemen with Hibernian names actively assisting at every stage of this process. And so it is quite natural that many Jews, driven into the revolu-

[1] Perhaps the most decisive refutation of the idea that the Soviet Government is under Jewish domination is to be found in the fact that for the last two or three years and up to the moment of writing (September 1929) all the members of the potent Political Bureau of the Communist Party Central Committee and of the Soviet cabinet are non-Jews, although, of course, no racial test is required for membership in either body. Several Jews are Assistant Commissars, and one is a "candidate," or alternate member, of the Political Bureau.

tionary movement in Russia not only by general considerations but by their special plight of racial discrimination and persecution, should have found their way into the directing staffs of the three most important revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, and Social Revolutionists.

This circumstance of earlier and greater activity in the revolutionary movement partially accounts for the fact that the number of Jews in the upper and middle ranks of the Soviet bureaucracy is considerably in excess of their proportion in the population.[1] In this connection other factors must also be taken into consideration. The Jews, as an overwhelmingly urban group in the population, had a lower percentage of persons obviously disqualified for state service by illiteracy than the Russians and Ukrainians, with their large masses of ill-educated peasants. The very persecution to which the Jews were subjected under the Tsarist régime tended to make them more energetic, resourceful, and adaptable than the more slow-moving Slavs. Whereas the Russian intelligentsia, almost as a unit, boycotted the Soviet régime during the first period of its existence, the Jewish educated classes showed a less intransigent attitude and hence filled up many of the positions which the Russians insisted on leaving.

Free access to the state service and to the universities and higher schools, absolute elimination of restrictions on the right of movement and residence and other humiliating marks of pre-revolutionary racial discrimination, protection against mob violence — these are the substantial gains which the Russian Jews owe to the Revolution. But against these gains must be set losses and disabilities which caused an American

[1] There are about 2,800,000 Jews in the Soviet Union, about 1.8 per cent of the population. Mr. Ordzhonikidze, in his report to the Fifteenth Party Congress, which I have already quoted (p. 30), gives the following percentages of Jews in various branches of the state service in Moscow and Leningrad: Soviet administrative offices, Moscow 10.3, Leningrad 8.1; Finance Commissariat, Moscow 8.9, Leningrad 4.8; judicial offices, Moscow 7.8, Leningrad 8.7; police, Moscow 1.6, Leningrad 1; administration of state trade, Moscow 16.6, Leningrad 19.7. In Ukraina, where the Jews constitute 5.4 per cent of the population, they hold 22.6 per cent of the civil service posts. In White Russia, where they are 8.2 per cent of the population, they hold 30.6 per cent of the posts. (See Mr. Ordzhonikidze's Report, p. 31.)

Jewish observer, very well acquainted with Russian conditions, and by no means unfavorable in his general attitude toward the Soviet régime, to express the opinion that the Jews have suffered more than any other part of the Russian population during and since the Revolution.

In the first place, the majority of the Jewish population, living in districts of southern, western, and southwestern Russia which temporarily fell under the sway of the Whites during the civil war, experienced a series of pogroms more terrible in extent and ferocity than any which have been perpetrated since the Middle Ages. The Tsarist pogroms, bad as they were, pale by comparison with the massacres carried out by the troops of Denikin, Petlura, Gregoriev, and the innumerable Ukrainian band leaders. The establishment of the Soviet power stopped the pogroms, but the Soviet policy of relentlessly crushing private trade and treating the trader as a political and social pariah bore with special severity on the Jewish population, of which 42 per cent before the Revolution was occupied in some form of commerce.[1] As against 300,000 Jews who are now in the state service and a much smaller number who still contrive to enjoy precarious wealth as Nepmen, or private merchants, one must reckon an enormous number of former petty traders and handicraftsmen who have been quite ruined by war and revolution and now have no secure means of livelihood.

The plight of these people has led to a very interesting and constructive experiment in transferring large numbers of Jews to the land. Before the War there were about 50,000 Jewish farm colonists of long standing, who were exempted from the general laws forbidding Jews to own land; now this number has grown to 200,000 as a result of a vigorous campaign of colonization, aided by the Soviet Government, and heartily supported by the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, of America, and by Jewish social organizations in Russia. The

[1] See the article of U. Larin, "The Social Structure of the Jewish Population of the Soviet Union," in the magazine, *Bolshevik*, No. 15 for 1928, for an interesting analysis of the social readjustments which have taken place in the Jewish population of the Soviet Union since the Revolution.

Joint Distribution Committee has recently advanced to the Soviet colonization authorities a loan of ten million dollars, which, it is estimated, will make possible the continuation of this colonization work over a period of ten years. Most of these Jewish farm colonists are settling in the northern half of the Crimean peninsula; and here some day a Jewish autonomous Territory or Republic may be created. There are already settlements and districts where Yiddish is the official language.

Along with the farm settlement (the Soviet Government has also set aside a large district in the Amur River region of Eastern Siberia for Jewish colonization), efforts are being made to ease the readjustment process by providing work and raw material for the handicraftsmen and by bringing more Jews into the factories. But poverty and unemployment will apparently be the lot of a considerable number of Russian Jews for some time.

In spite of these difficulties, the average Russian Jew, even though he may be an ex-bourgeois or a Menshevik intellectual, and hence opposed to communism in principle, is far less likely to indulge in unqualified condemnation of the Soviet Government than is a Russian of the corresponding social origin. The spectre of the pogrom has not altogether disappeared.

There is still a good deal of anti-Semitism in Russia; cases of maltreatment or persecution of individual Jews are quite often reported in the press, and sometimes brought up in the courts for trial. Some of this anti-Semitism is an inheritance from the past; some of it grows out of jealousy and competition for posts in a factory or in the state service. The official Communist Party and Soviet attitude toward anti-Semitism, or indeed toward any stirring up of racial animosity, is one of uncompromising hostility; but it is frequently complained that the lower organs of the Party, the Union of Communist Youth, and the trade-unions do not act with sufficient energy when cases of race persecution are brought to their attention. Complaints of this kind have increased during the last few years; this is probably due to the fact that the Party and its junior

organization, the Union of Communist Youth, have been increasing very rapidly in membership and have absorbed into their ranks, along with their new members, a certain quota of Russian popular prejudices. Of course, the position of the Jews, as regards personal safety, is far better than it was in the Tsarist days, when anti-Semitic organizations were allowed to organize openly and incite riots. But the elimination of anti-Semitism is still a hope of the future, rather than a present-day reality.

In general the Soviet nationality policy, while it certainly has improved the relations between the various races of the Soviet Union, has not established complete harmony between peoples of whom many are divided by old and bitter feuds. There are Russian Communists who still regard Ukrainians, Tartars, and Turcomans as "lesser breeds without the law," and there are Communists of the minor nationalities who have not overcome their old antipathy to everything Russian. As an example of the latter tendency one may note the case of the former Ukrainian Commissar for Education, Shumsky, who was removed from his office for carrying out the policy of Ukrainization of the national minorities too roughly and hastily. A seventeen-year-old girl of the Bokharan high school in Moscow, Matluba Muhamedieva, recently created a mild scandal by writing a poem denouncing the Russians as oppressors of her people, notwithstanding the fact that she held a membership card in the Union of Communist Youth.[1]

To provide an honest and competent governing apparatus in the new national republics has not been altogether easy. The former Tartar President of Crimea, Veli Ibrahimov, ended his days before a firing squad in May 1928, after a hectic career of malfeasance in public office, involving the embezzlement of as much of the public funds as he and a gang of adventurers with whom he was associated could lay their hands on and the removal by murder of more than one inconvenient witness. It would be unfair to generalize too widely on the strength of

[1] This incident is described in the newspaper, *Komsomolskaya Pravda* ("Young Communist Truth"), of March 8, 1929.

Ibrahimov's case; but administrative corruption, often leading to wholesale removal of officials when it is exposed, seems to be rather more common in the backward national republics than in Russia or Ukraina.

Still, the benefits of the Soviet nationality policy seem to me very decidedly to outweigh its defects. The fate of the former Russian and Austrian Empires shows the inevitable weakness, in moments of crisis and military defeat, of states which are based on the subjugation of large, self-conscious national minorities. The Soviet federal constitution, with its almost unprecedented accompaniment of actually encouraging the small peoples of the heterogeneous states to use their own languages, is a fresh, bold, original piece of statesmanship. It is already, I think, reaping its reward in the devotion which one often finds in the Chuvash or Kazak or Tartar, who, like the Communist worker, sees in the Revolution a genuine act of emancipation. The cultural autonomy of the non-Russian nationalities, like the substitution of public for private control of industry, the new status of the workers, and the transfer of the land to the peasants, is, in my opinion, one of those fundamental results of the Revolution which will endure in principle, even if there may be an occasional modification in detail.

X

MAIN CURRENTS IN FOREIGN POLICY

THE whole trend of Soviet foreign policy is first of all determined by the political isolation of the Soviet Union. Isolation, of course, is a relative term. The Soviet Union is no longer commercially blockaded or subjected to a complete diplomatic boycott, as was the case during the period of civil war and intervention, from 1918 until 1921. But the recent Revolution and its results, the unsolved question of foreign claims for repudiated debts and confiscated property, Communist activity in the labor movement of Western Europe and in the Asiatic colonies of the European powers — all these factors, to a greater or less degree, tend to estrange the Soviet Union from the other nations of the world.

Hence there is an essentially defensive character in Soviet foreign policy. Holding aloof from the League of Nations, in which it sees an assembly of mostly hostile powers, taking no part in the new groupings and alliances which have grown up in post-war Europe, the Soviet Government is first of all concerned to block the creation and paralyze the activity of military, political, and economic understandings which may be directed against it.

In the spring of 1927, when three ominous developments, the raid of the Chinese police on the Soviet Embassy in Peking, the breach of diplomatic relations with Great Britain, and the murder of Volkov, the Soviet Ambassador in Warsaw, followed in fairly quick succession, there was a quite genuine and widespread conviction in Soviet official circles that Russia was in imminent danger of actual war. The events of the following two years did not bear out these extreme apprehensions; but the shadow of the possible war menace has by no means dis-

appeared from the Soviet political horizon. To ward off attack or hostile encirclement is, I think, the primary objective of Soviet diplomacy at the present time.

Several means have been employed in the effort to achieve this objective. Most spectacular, perhaps, was the Soviet proposal for complete dissolution of all armies and navies, submitted to the disarmament commission organized by the League of Nations to prepare for a conference on disarmament in March 1928. This suggestion was promptly rejected by the commission, and a second modified proposal for partial disarmament, involving a 50 per cent cut in the military and naval strength of the larger powers, with more sparing reductions in armaments for countries maintaining small armies and navies, also seems to stand little prospect of adoption.

No one in Moscow expected that these drastic disarmament proposals, in the strained European political situation, would be accepted or even seriously considered. It was anticipated, however, that a certain amount of sympathy would be forthcoming from Germany, chafing under the state of affairs where she is disarmed while the victorious powers in the World War remain fully armed, and also from pacifist opinion throughout the world.

Besides carrying on a fairly continuous, although thus far unsuccessful propaganda for disarmament, the Soviet Government has attempted to safeguard itself by concluding a series of nonaggression and neutrality pacts with bordering and neighboring states. The first of these treaties, which are of uniform content, was concluded with Turkey in Paris on December 17, 1925; and subsequent treaties were concluded with Germany (April 24, 1926), Afghanistan (August 31, 1926), Lithuania (September 28, 1926), and Persia (October 1, 1927).

Under these treaties, which are concluded for varying terms of years, each contracting power binds itself to abstain from attacking the other, to remain neutral in case the other is attacked without provocation by a third power, and not to participate in hostile political, economic, or financial combinations directed against the other power. These last two provisions are especially designed to meet the requirements of Soviet diplomacy, which always professes to fear either some combined offensive of foreign powers, perhaps under the auspices of the League of Nations, or some form of concerted economic pressure, possibly designed to compel a settlement of the claims of the holders of pre-war Russian bonds and owners of nationalized property.

It must be said, however, that the success of the Soviet policy of surrounding itself with neighbors bound to nonaggression by treaties has been decidedly limited. Treaties have been concluded with those states which, for political and geographical reasons, would be most unlikely to engage in hostilities, not with Poland and Rumania, which are most generally regarded as likely opponents in the event of war.

In regard to Poland and Rumania, as in regard to France and England, the Soviet Union now possesses whatever security against attack may be inherent in the common signature of the Kellogg Pact. The Soviet Government keenly resented its exclusion from the negotiations which led up to the signature of the Kellogg Pact, and statements of Soviet officials and publicists regarding the efficacy of the Pact as a means of averting war were highly skeptical. However, when the French Ambassador in Moscow, M. Jean Herbette, conveyed to the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs the invitation to sign the Pact, Acting Foreign Commissar Litvinov, on August 31, 1928, expressed the willingness of the Soviet Government to accept the proposal, associating this consent with sharp criticisms of the absence in the Pact of any obligations relating to disarmament, "the insufficiency and indefiniteness of the formula for the prohibition of war itself," and the French and British reservations.

Notwithstanding the failure of the Soviet disarmament proposals to achieve any tangible results, and the very limited extension of the treaties of nonaggression and neutrality, the efforts of Soviet diplomacy, and still more, I think, the objective circumstances of the situation, have operated to prevent the actual development of the "anti-Soviet bloc" of Western

powers which is the nightmare of the Soviet Foreign Commissariat and the hope of the Russian émigrés and anti-Soviet extremists of every country.

The political and economic rivalries of the European powers and groups of powers are so keen that efforts to establish a united anti-Russian front, following the period of actual blockade and intervention, have invariably and inevitably ended in failure. When Lord Curzon sent his threatening ultimatum to Russia in the spring of 1923, M. Poincaré sent an economic mission to Moscow — more, one suspects, for the sake of vexing Lord Curzon, with whom he was habitually on bad terms, than for any other reason, because no concrete results of this mission's activity were ever visible. When the British Government, following the raid on the Soviet trade organization, Arcos, in London, broke off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, intimations were quickly forthcoming that Italian firms would be glad to receive any orders which might be diverted from England. A politico-economic Soviet bloc, to be effective, would require the inclusion of Germany; and Germany could only be conceivably induced to join in such a combination on terms which would be unacceptable for France and Poland.

Soviet diplomacy finds vast manœuvring possibilities in the conflicts and jealousies of the European states; and a concerted Russian policy of all the Great Powers seems as unlikely as a concerted Chinese policy or a concerted policy on any large international question.

If the primary objective of Soviet foreign policy, that of warding off attack or hostile encirclement, seems to have been measurably achieved, much less success has attended its secondary objective, that of establishing some workable basis of economic collaboration with Western Europe and America. Among the larger powers which could conceivably make important contributions to Soviet economic development only Germany has entered into political and economic relations which can be regarded as satisfactory from the Soviet standpoint; and Germany, itself a heavy borrower in foreign markets, has

little capital to offer Russia directly. The American State Department has consistently refused even to discuss the possibility of dealing officially with the Soviet Government. Great Britain, after concluding a Trade Agreement in 1921 and establishing diplomatic relations in 1924, annulled the former and broke off the latter in 1927. While the Soviet Union and France maintain formal diplomatic relations, these have been very frigid during the last two years. The French Embassy in Moscow refuses to grant visas even to non-Russian residents of Moscow without making protracted inquiries in Paris.

Different considerations have different weight in determining the attitude of these countries toward the Soviet Union. But one issue unites them all: resentment against the action of the Soviet Government in repudiating the Tsarist foreign debts and nationalizing foreign industrial and commercial property without granting compensation. The Soviet Government has long intimated its willingness to discuss this question on the basis of according partial compensation to foreign creditors on condition that credits be made available for Russian industrial development and that Soviet counter-claims, based on damages sustained by Russia during the period of civil war and foreign intervention, should be taken into consideration.

Twice this matter has got beyond the stage of general principles and reached a point where definite solutions were proposed, but on each occasion without success. On August 8, 1924, the Labor Government of Ramsay MacDonald signed a treaty with the Soviet Government, providing for a solution of the controversy along the following lines. The British Government was to guarantee a loan to the Soviet Union, in return for which the Soviet Government pledged itself partially to compensate British holders of pre-war state and municipal bonds, payable in foreign currency. The question of compensation to owners of property was to be referred to an Anglo-Soviet mixed commission. More precise figures of the amount of the loan and the amount of compensation to be paid were to be included in a supplementary treaty. However, this supplementary treaty was never concluded, because the Labor

Government was severely defeated in the general election of October 1924, and the succeeding Conservative Government declined to continue the negotiations.

A more concrete proposal, and one which was more advantageous, from the standpoint of the foreign bondholders, was made by the Soviet Government to France in September 1927. The Soviet commission which had been negotiating for a settlement of the pre-war French debt claims offered to pay sixty-one annuities of 60,000,000 gold francs in consideration of French credits to the amount of $120,000,000, to be granted over a period of six years. This was the most substantial offer of pecuniary compensation to foreign creditors which the Soviet Government has ever made. But a violent campaign in the French press against the Soviet Ambassador, Christian Rakovsky, a campaign which resulted in a formal request of the French Government for his recall, brought the whole proposal to naught. The powerful British oil magnate, Sir Henri Deterding, an implacable enemy of the Soviet Government, was largely blamed in Soviet circles for initiating this campaign in newspapers where he possessed a controlling interest; it is very probable that British influence was exerted to prevent the settlement. Since that time the whole question of debts and credits has been in a state of deadlock, the Soviet Government paying no debts and receiving no loans.

The Soviet Union is a bridge-state between Europe and Asia; it has one foot planted firmly in each continent. But, despite occasional talk of a turn to the East, Russia's immediate vital interests lie much more in the West, especially since the eclipse of Soviet influence in China in 1927. If there is a war danger, it is much more likely to materialize in the West than in the East; and it is only from the West that capital can be obtained for the country's planned large-scale industrial development. So, while the Soviet Union, with an Asiatic frontier stretching thousands of miles from the Caspian Sea to the Pacific Ocean, has varied and important contacts with the East, its main centre of diplomatic attention is the West.

The spirit of antagonism which marked Russo-British relations during the greater part of the nineteenth century, and was sunk only in common antipathy to Germany during the period immediately preceding the War, has, as a general rule, characterized Anglo-Soviet relations ever since the Revolution. England played a leading rôle in the intervention on behalf of the anti-Soviet leaders during the Russian civil war; General Denikin's army, operating in South Russia, was lavishly outfitted with munitions and material, and British troops for a time garrisoned towns in the Caucasus and the Trans-Caspian territory. The conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Trade Agreement in March 1921 was followed by a period of more or less constant bickering; the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, was especially sensitive to any symptom of Soviet activity in the Near and Middle East. He addressed a sharp note of protest on this subject to the Soviet Government in the autumn of 1921, and in May 1923 went so far as to present an ultimatum, accompanied by a threat of breaking off diplomatic relations. Besides accusing the Soviet Ambassadors in Afghanistan and Persia, Raskolnikov and Shumyatzky, of carrying on anti-British intrigues in contravention of the terms of the Trade Agreement, Curzon, in his ultimatum, demanded the right of British trawlers to fish up to the three-mile limit in Russian northern territorial waters, and the payment of compensation for two British subjects, one of whom had been executed and the other imprisoned during the period of civil war.

A break on this occasion was averted because the Soviet Government, while denying that any breach of the Trade Agreement had been committed, conceded the substance of Curzon's demands. Some improvement in Anglo-Soviet relations was visible after the accession to power of the Labor Government in 1924. The Soviet Union was accorded full diplomatic recognition in February 1924; and in August of that year the treaty which was described earlier in the chapter, regulating the principles of settling the problem of debts and credits, was concluded.

However, the Labor Government went out of office under

circumstances which made a worsening of Anglo-Soviet relations almost inevitable. On October 24, 1924, on the eve of a parliamentary election, the British Foreign Office dispatched an extremely sharp note to the Soviet representative in London, Rakovsky, accusing the Soviet Government of disregarding its obligations regarding abstinence from propaganda in the internal affairs of Great Britain and appending as proof a letter, under the alleged signature of Gregory Zinoviev, then President of the Communist International, to the British Communist Party, urging the inauguration of an active propaganda for mutiny and desertion among British soldiers and sailors. The Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and Zinoviev personally repudiated this letter as a forgery and challenged an impartial investigation of its contents. Various discrepancies in the style and composition of the letter seem calculated to cast considerable internal doubt upon its authenticity, although its actual authorship, up to the present time, never has been definitely established. Coming out immediately before the election, it naturally contributed materially to swell the Conservative majority; and the new Conservative Government promptly refused to proceed further with the treaty regulating the question of debts and credits.

Relations between the Soviet Union and Great Britain under the Conservative Government steadily deteriorated. The Locarno Treaty, the most striking achievement of the British Foreign Minister, Sir Austen Chamberlain, was interpreted in Moscow as an effort to draw Germany away from the Soviet Union. Conservative British opinion strongly resented the sending of money contributions from Russia to help finance the general strike and the miners' strike in the spring and summer of 1926, even though these funds were sent by the trade-unions, which have no formal connection with the Soviet Government. A new factor making for strained relations was the rapid progress of the Nationalist movement in China during the latter part of 1926 and the first months of 1927. This movement in its early stages had a strong anti-British tinge, and the presence of numerous Soviet advisers in the Chinese Nationalist camp,

even though these advisers had no official governmental status, was regarded in London as a further proof of the hostility of the Soviet régime.

All these factors prepared the way for the definite breach of Anglo-Soviet diplomatic relations in the spring of 1927. On February 23 Sir Austen Chamberlain presented a note to the Soviet *chargé d'affaires* in London, repeating the familiar charge of propaganda violating the terms of the Trade Agreement and setting forth a thesis, which, if rigidly upheld, would alone be sufficient to make impossible the maintenance of diplomatic relations, to the effect that members of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party Central Committee (which has always included at least one member who is high in the councils of the Communist International) were equally responsible with members of the Soviet Government for public revolutionary statements. On May 12 the British police carried out a raid on Arcos, the Soviet trading organization in London, and on May 27 the British Government communicated to the Soviet *chargé d'affaires* its decision to terminate diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Two years elapsed between this decisive step and the British general election of May 1929. What have been its results? It probably strengthened the American State Department in the conviction of the correctness of its policy of nonrecognition and discouraged any movement toward the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union by countries which had not already taken this step.[1] On the other hand no country which had actually granted recognition to the Soviet Government followed the British example of breaking off relations. The Soviet Government was able to inflict economic reprisals on Great Britain by diverting a considerable number

[1] In 1924, to some extent under the influence of England's example, a considerable number of countries, including Italy, France, China, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Greece, and Mexico, accorded *de jure* recognition to the Soviet Union. Since Japan opened up diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union early in 1925 diplomatic recognitions have been few and unimportant. The following European powers have still not recognized the Soviet Union: Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Jugoslavia, Rumania, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Albania.

of orders which might have gone to England to other countries, such as Germany, America, and Czecho-Slovakia.[1]

The British business community began to grow restless over this situation, and on March 28, 1929, a delegation of eighty-four British business men arrived in Moscow for the purpose of exploring the possibilities of increasing Anglo-Soviet trade. The delegates were courteously received and enjoyed facilities for visiting Soviet industrial establishments and conferring with the heads of Soviet economic organizations. But Mr. Yuri Pyatakov, President of the Soviet State Bank, speaking with the full authorization of his government, gave the delegates plainly to understand that "broad economic coöperation between England and the developing industrial and commercial life of the Soviet Union is possible only on condition that normal diplomatic relations between our governments are restored." Given this condition and the working out of a mutually satisfactory financial arrangement (presumably involving a large loan or long-term credit), Mr. Pyatakov declared it was possible to place orders to a total value of £150,000,000 on the British market during the next five years.

The inauguration of a Labor Government, following the British election of May 30, 1929, did not result in an immediate resumption of the diplomatic relations which had been broken off by the Conservatives. Although Labor Party speakers during the pre-election campaign had advocated the prompt unconditional resumption of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, Premier MacDonald and Foreign Minister Henderson moved with extreme caution in this question. A conference between Henderson and the Soviet Ambassador to France, Dogalevsky, broke down in the summer because Henderson proposed to discuss the question in dispute between the two countries before arranging for an exchange of ambassadors, while the Soviet Government firmly adhered to the viewpoint that any such discussion must follow, not precede the restoration of full diplomatic relations. Later the Labor

[1] Soviet orders placed in Great Britain declined from 23,500,000 pounds sterling in 1924–1925 to 5,800,000 pounds sterling in 1927–1928.

Government yielded on this point and restored diplomatic relations.[1] But it already seems quite clear that in such matters as Communist propaganda and the settlement of British debt and damage claims the Labor Government occupies a position not appreciably different from that of its Conservative predecessor.

Although French foreign policy under the direction of M. Briand has not been so actively anti-Soviet as the British foreign policy of Sir Austen Chamberlain, France could scarcely be reckoned among the friends of the Soviet Union. France is less concerned than Great Britain about Communist activity in its colonial possessions and Russian influence in the Far East; but its system of military alliances with the new and enlarged states of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Poland, Rumania, Jugoslavia, and Czecho-Slovakia, is not calculated to make for good relations with the Soviet Union. There is, of course, an economic factor in France's attitude toward the Soviet Union — the repudiation of the Tsarist bonds, widely held by small investors in France, is keenly resented.

However, political factors seem to outweigh economic considerations in determining French policy. The Soviet Government would almost certainly be willing to make substantial concessions to the French bondholders in return for a more friendly political attitude on the part of the French Government: the proposed settlement in the autumn of 1927 offers conclusive proof of this. Were France placated on the question of the bonds it might be expected that she would signify her political reconciliation with the Soviet Union by signing a nonaggression and neutrality treaty, which in turn might be the prelude to more cordial relations between the Soviet Union and France's East-European allies. But so far France has shown little interest in the settlement of the pre-war debt question, and there is no indication that her influence is being exerted on behalf of an "East-European Locarno," involving regional disarmament and other conditions calculated to relieve the tension in Eastern Europe.

[1] Sir Esmond Ovey and Grigorie Sokolnikov are the new British and Soviet Ambassadors at Moscow and London respectively.

France's coldness toward the Soviet Union is doubtless attributable in part to the spectre of a Soviet-German combination, capable of upsetting the post-Versailles organization of Europe, even though the developments of the last few years have reduced this spectre to rather tame and unterrifying proportions. In contrast to Great Britain and France, Germany has maintained with the Soviet Union relations which have been characterized by cautious, conditional, but on the whole consistent friendship.

The foundation of these relations was laid at Rapallo on April 16, 1922, when the Soviet Foreign Commissar, Chicherin, and the German Foreign Minister, Walter Rathenau, surprised and scandalized the Genoa Conference, then in session, by signing a treaty whereby Germany, first among the Great Powers, granted full recognition to the Soviet Union and renounced all claims to compensation for pre-war debts and nationalized property, with the significant reservation, however, of the right to bring up such claims in case the Soviet Government should recognize their validity in the case of other countries. Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, an old-school German diplomat and a convinced believer in an eastern orientation of German foreign policy, was sent to Moscow as Ambassador.

Seven years have passed since the signature of the Rapallo Treaty; and while each side has experienced its disappointments and disillusionments, there seems little doubt that a certain measure of Soviet-German understanding is a constant factor in European politics. Despite the fact that the German Communist Party is one of the largest and most active in Europe, the German Government has never made an issue of "Bolshevik propaganda," and its occasional disagreements with the Soviet Government have always been based on more concrete economic issues.

In 1922 Germany and the Soviet Union were almost irresistibly drawn together. Both countries were outcasts in a Europe dominated by the victorious Allied powers. Many German nationalists, who abhorred the idea of Bolshevism in their own country, looked to Russia as a possible future

ally and also as an economic field of almost unlimited potentialities.

The Dawes Plan, the Treaty of Locarno, and Germany's entrance into the League of Nations substantially modified the German psychology in regard to Russia and made a purely eastern orientation of German foreign policy impossible. Politically and economically Germany has become more closely bound to the West. Only the wildest visionaries in Germany believe that a military alliance with Russia offers Germany a way of escape from the burden of reparations payments. German public opinion in general is resigned to the solution of this problem on a basis which will perpetuate Germany's present dependence upon Anglo-American capital and thereby pull the country still further out of the orbit of Soviet political influence.

But, although Germany has gained a partial and grudging acceptance into the post-Versailles "concert of the powers," while the Soviet Union remains quite aloof from it, German diplomacy still sets a substantial value upon Russian friendship. Almost simultaneously with the signature of the Locarno Treaty, Germany and the Soviet Union signed a detailed commercial treaty, and this was followed by the extension of a state-guaranteed 300,000,000-marks credit to the Soviet Union. Shortly after Germany had entered the League of Nations a Soviet-German pact of nonaggression and neutrality was signed in Berlin; and this to some extent took the edge off the Soviet apprehension that Germany might consent to be used, at least passively, in some new scheme of invasion and intervention. The Soviet Union is always a good card in reserve for a German Foreign Minister who finds himself being pressed too hard by France and England. And, while the Soviet Union has not proved an El Dorado for German industrialists and traders, and German commercial experts are inclined to shake their heads and dolefully calculate that Germany's trade with Denmark exceeds her trade with the Soviet Union, the Russian market cannot be altogether neglected by any country which suffers from industrial overproduction and underemployment, and Germany has been cultivating it quite assiduously.

The relations between the Soviet Union and its largest western neighbor, Poland, have always been characterized by strain and friction. The Polish governing circles regard Communist propaganda in their country, apart from its menace of social subversion, as directed against the independent existence of their country and preparing the way for a reunion with Russia. The Soviet press continually prints accusations that high Polish civil and military officials maintain close contact with the Ukrainian émigré politicians and still toy with the idea of detaching Ukraina from the Soviet Union and making it a Polish dependency. The attacks of Russian White exiles on Soviet diplomatic officials in Poland represent another source of irritation. The most serious of these incidents was the murder of the Soviet Ambassador, Volkov, by the young émigré Kowerda, in June 1927.

A constant struggle for influence in the new Baltic states, Latvia, Esthonia, and Finland, goes on between the Soviet Union and Poland. The latter country is inclined to assume a protecting attitude toward these smaller northern neighbors, to attempt to unite them under its leadership, a procedure which the Soviet Union finds highly distasteful. There are powerful political forces in the Baltic states which favor closer rapprochement with Poland; this is particularly true of Esthonia, which has not forgotten its narrow escape when a Communist uprising broke out in its capital, Tallin (formerly Reval), on December 1, 1924. But economically these little Baltic states are very dependent upon the transit trade to and from Russia; therefore there is little likelihood that the dream of some of the more ambitious Polish politicians, of uniting them into a "Baltic bloc," directed more or less openly against the Soviet Union, will be realized.

Among these little new states Lithuania occupies a special position. The Lithuanians are bitterly resentful of the seizure of Vilna, the city which they regard as their proper capital, by the Poles in 1920. Ever since that time Lithuania has refused to enter into diplomatic relations with Poland, the frontier between the two countries has been closed, and Lithuania up

to a comparatively recent time has maintained that a state of war exists with Poland, although, of course, it would have no prospect of victory in the event of a single-handed armed clash with its larger neighbor. All the efforts of the League of Nations to settle the controversy on some basis which would recognize Poland's possession of Vilna have failed.

The maintenance of the independence and territorial integrity of Lithuania is a cardinal point of Soviet foreign policy. At the same time the Soviet Government has no desire to be drawn into a war with Poland over the Vilna question. Therefore, while refusing to recognize as legal the Polish occupation of Vilna, the Soviet Government has attempted to restrain Lithuania from provocative tactics which would provide an excuse for Polish aggression and possible complete annexation of the country. More than once the Soviet press has launched a chorus of alarming reports about the alleged intention of the Polish Government to settle accounts with Lithuania by force. Poland has always denied these reports, and no actual attack on Lithuania has ever taken place. Whether these Soviet press campaigns were based on unfounded rumors or whether, as is asserted in Moscow, they diverted Poland from actual aggressive designs by concentrating international attention upon the Lithuanian situation is a question which perhaps can only be authoritatively answered by some future historian of East-European diplomatic relations who will have at his disposal all the relevant archive material.

Another factor tending toward estrangement between Poland and the Soviet Union is the former country's close military alliance with Rumania. In 1918, during a period of confusion and civil war in Russia, Rumanian troops occupied the former southwestern Russian province of Bessarabia, lying between the Rivers Dniester and Pruth, and on November 25, 1928, the Sfatul-Tseri, a Bessarabian popular assembly, decreed the annexation of the province by Rumania. The Soviet Government has always refused to acknowledge the legality of this annexation, and Bessarabia is marked as Soviet territory on all maps printed in Russia. The only attempt to settle this

disputed issue at a Soviet-Rumanian conference in Vienna in the spring of 1924 broke down almost immediately, because the Soviet representatives demanded a plebiscite of the population, to be held in the absence of Rumanian troops, while Rumania insisted that Bessarabia was already an inalienable, integral part of its territory. This issue has not been acute of late, because the Soviet Government obviously has no intention of hazarding a war for the recovery of Bessarabia, or for any other object, but it remains one of those vexing unsettled points which make peace in Eastern Europe a rather relative and unstable conception.

On February 10, 1929, as a result of a proposal initiated several weeks earlier by the Soviet Foreign Commissariat, a protocol was signed in Moscow by representatives of the Soviet Union, Poland, Rumania, Esthonia, and Latvia, bringing into effect, as between the signatories, the obligations of the Kellogg Pact regarding the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. Little progress, however, has been made with the pact of nonaggression and neutrality which the Soviet Government suggested to Poland in 1926. Poland raised various objections regarding its obligations under the League of Nations Covenant, and also suggested a procedure of arbitration for possible disputes which was unacceptable to the Soviet Government.[1]

Turning from Europe to America,[2] one finds in the relations, or rather absence of relations, between the Soviet Union and the United States a striking contrast of eager receptivity on one side and stony negation on the other. America played a less active rôle than France and England in the intervention in

[1] While admitting the principle of arbitration in some of its contracts with foreign concessionaires, the Soviet Government has opposed its application in political disputes because of the alleged impossibility of finding genuinely impartial arbiters, in view of the fundamentally different social and economic philosophies of socialism and capitalism. Its nonaggression and neutrality treaties, like the Kellogg Pact, include no provision for arbitration in the event of disputes, although in the case of Germany a mixed conciliation commission was instituted early in 1929 for the purpose of discussing points of friction and suggesting means of removing them.

[2] Within the limited space of the present chapter I attempt to discuss only the more important aspects of the foreign relations of the Soviet Union, leaving out of account the countries which have had only slight and unimportant contacts with it.

Russia, but has been more unyielding than either of those countries in its refusal to deal with the Soviet Government. On March 21, 1921, Maxim Litvinov, then Soviet representative in Esthonia, transmitted to President Harding and the American Congress a message from Mikhail Kalinin, President of the All-Russian Soviet Executive Committee, suggesting a resumption of business relations between Russia and the United States. The reply of Mr. Charles E. Hughes, American Secretary of State, was couched in the following blunt and uncompromising terms: —

"It is only in the productivity of Russia that there is any hope for the Russian people, and it is idle to expect resumption of trade until the economic bases of production are securely established. Production is conditioned upon the safety of life, the recognition of firm guaranties of private property, the sanctity of contract, and the rights of free labor.

"If fundamental changes are contemplated, involving due regard for the protection of persons and property and the establishment of conditions essential to the maintenance of commerce, this Government will be glad to have convincing evidence of the consummation of such changes, and until this evidence is supplied this Government is unable to perceive that there is any proper basis for considering trade relations."

America declined to participate in the Genoa and Hague conferences because of the presence there of Russian delegations, and Russia was not invited to participate in the Washington Conference, convened under American auspices to discuss limitation of naval armaments. President Coolidge in his message to Congress of December 6, 1923, intimated rather obscurely that a new policy toward Russia might be possible, in view of changing conditions in that country. Foreign Commissar Chicherin on December 16 addressed a message to Coolidge expressing the willingness of the Soviet Government to open negotiations on the basis of mutual nonintervention in internal affairs and reciprocal discussion of all claims. This, however, elicited another broadside from Mr. Hughes, to the following effect: —

"There would seem to be at this time no reason for negotiations. . . . If the Soviet authorities are ready to restore the confiscated property of American citizens or make effective compensation they can do so. If the Soviet authorities are ready to repeal their decree repudiating Russia's obligations to this country and appropriately recognize them they can do so. It requires no conference or negotiations to accomplish these results, which can and should be achieved at Moscow as evidence of good faith. The American Government has not incurred liabilities to Russia or repudiated obligations. Most serious is the continued propaganda to overthrow the institutions of this country. The Government can enter into no negotiations until these efforts directed from Moscow are abandoned."

This obviously left little basis for negotiation, and since that time the Soviet Government has addressed no more overtures to the American Government, although responsible Soviet officials have always intimated their willingness and desire to bring about an amicable settlement of points in dispute between the two countries. Beginning with large sales of cotton and extending to sales of machinery and equipment and the conclusion of a number of contracts for technical aid in the building of new industrial plants, Soviet-American commercial relations have developed, even in the absence of any diplomatic relations; but Mr. Hughes's uncompromising policy of non-recognition was steadily maintained by his successor in the State Department, Mr. Kellogg. It is still too early to forecast the Russian policy of the new American administration.

What is the explanation for the consistent hostility of the American Government to the idea of recognizing the Soviet Government? The Soviet Union and America have no important conflicting political interests, and American losses as a result of revolutionary legislation were considerably less than those of France and England.[1]

[1] No accurate account of American claims for confiscated property has as yet been compiled; but the total amount of American claims against the Soviet Government, including the repayment of loans floated by the Tsarist and Kerensky Governments, would probably be in the neighborhood of $600,000,000 or $700,000,000. Against this may be set indefinite Soviet counterclaims for damages in connection with American intervention.

The sentimental motive of dislike of Bolshevism, combined with the absence of any very strong factors pushing the State Department to act on the question of Soviet recognition, would seem to have played a considerable part in determining American policy. An ex-governor of an American state, visiting Russia, once said to me: —

"I have never used that political method myself, but it is a fact that one can arouse enthusiasm in any audience anywhere in the country simply by announcing an intention to defend American institutions and the American home against Communism or Bolshevism."

Organized labor, in the shape of the American Federation of Labor, is violently hostile to the recognition of the Soviet Union, and the business and banking firms which are interested in Russian trade have as yet apparently been neither powerful nor insistent enough to exert any appreciable influence in changing the State Department's policy of waiting until there is something like complete capitulation to the American viewpoint on the moot questions of recognition of pre-war debts, compensation for nationalized property, and cessation of Communist propaganda.

Politically and economically, American recognition would be very desirable, from the Soviet standpoint. The recognition of the Soviet Union by the wealthiest and strongest of the world powers would strengthen and stabilize its international position in relation to European countries. Moreover, American recognition would facilitate the granting of loans and long-term commercial credits to the Soviet industrial organizations. In view of these circumstances it seems probable that the Soviet Government would go far in the direction of meeting concrete American proposals in regard to the settlement of the debt and compensation questions, especially as the sums involved are relatively small. More difficulty would probably be experienced in finding a formula to cover the theoretical

acknowledgment of liability for the debts, which it is a matter of principle for America to demand and equally a matter of principle for the Soviet Union to refuse.[1] Discussion of the propaganda issue would be foredoomed to futility unless it were based in advance on the acceptance of the Soviet thesis that the Soviet Government cannot be held responsible for any of the activities of the Communist International.

Despite the frigid attitude of the State Department, the Soviet economic authorities have been assiduously cultivating business contacts with American firms. Apart from the desire to benefit by the introduction of American technical improvements and labor-saving devices, Soviet policy in this respect has pretty clearly been influenced by the consideration that closer commercial relations afford the best prospect of overcoming the political objections which have hitherto stood in the pathway of recognition. It is believed in Moscow that, as the possibilities of Russia as a market and a field for the application of American industrial technique are appreciated, American public opinion will tend to forget about the Communist International and that the disputed economic questions between the two countries will lend themselves to some form of amicable conclusion.

Soviet policy in the Far East has been distinguished by two features: the gradual reëmergence of Russia as a Pacific power and the steady encouragement of the rising Nationalist movement in China. Japanese troops remained in occupation of Russia's chief Pacific port, Vladivostok, and of the northern half of the island of Sakhalin, off the Siberian coast, for some time after the period of general intervention had ended. Vladivostok was restored to Soviet sovereignty late in 1922. The restitution of Northern Sakhalin presented more difficulties, because it contained valuable coal and oil deposits, which Japan wished to exploit. A compromise on this question was

[1] As a large creditor nation, America is obviously interested in maintaining the principle of the inviolable sanctity of international debts. The Soviet Government, on its side, could not very well acknowledge the legal validity of its debts to America without incurring intensified pressure from other countries, such as France and England, where much larger sums are in question.

finally reached, however, and embodied in the Soviet-Japanese Treaty of January 1925. Under this agreement Japan granted recognition to the Soviet Government and surrendered possession of Northern Sakhalin, while the Soviet Government bound itself to grant to Japanese firms concessions for exploiting approximately half of the coal and oil reserves of the territory.

Beginning with the spring of 1929, relations between the Soviet and Chinese authorities on the Chinese Eastern railroad went rapidly from bad to worse. A Chinese police raid on the Soviet consulate in Harbin in May was followed in July by a far more serious step: the forcible seizure of the railroad by the Chinese authorities, accompanied by the arrest and deportation of the Soviet representatives in the management of the road. On July 13 the Soviet Foreign Commissariat addressed to the Nanking Government a three-day ultimatum, demanding the restoration of the status quo on the railroad. When the Chinese failed to comply with this demand, the Soviet Government resorted to a series of commercial reprisals, closing its frontiers with China, breaking off the connection between its railroad system and the Chinese Eastern Railroad, and suspending all tea purchases and other commercial activities in China.

The strained situation which originated in this way has dragged on for a number of months at the time of writing, without having reached a solution. There has been a certain amount of border skirmishing, in which each side vigorously accused the other of assuming the offensive; but it was fairly clear in Moscow from the beginning that the Soviet Government did not propose to plunge into a Far Eastern War, which might have led to incalculable complications, while serious aggressive action by China against the Soviet Union was, of course, out of the question, in view of the great inferiority of the Chinese troops in leadership, discipline, and equipment.

A wordy war raged between the two countries simultaneously with the sporadic outbursts of firing along the Manchurian frontier. The Chinese defended their action in seizing the railroad by raising rather vague charges about alleged Com-

munist propaganda, carried on by the Russian employees of the railroad. The Soviet Government emphasized the illegality of the Chinese action, under the Sino-Soviet treaties of Peking and Mukden, concluded in 1924, and protested repeatedly against alleged inhuman treatment of Soviet citizens who were arrested and held in concentration camps in Manchuria. On December 22 the Soviet and Mukden Governments signed a protocol restoring the status quo ante on the Chinese Eastern Railway, as demanded by Russia. While negotiations were in progress Mr. Stimson, the American Secretary of State, sent notes to China and Russia appealing for peace under the Kellogg Pact. To this the Acting Foreign Commissar replied sharply, declaring that the Stimson note "cannot be taken as a friendly act."

The Soviet Government has always proclaimed its sympathy with "the nationalist liberating movements of colonial peoples"; and the course of its diplomacy in Asia has been strongly influenced by the application of this principle. Russian extraterritorial privileges in China lapsed during the long period of revolution and civil war; and the Soviet Government ostentatiously refused to reclaim them, and lost no opportunity, through its Ambassador in Peking, Leo Karakhan, of expressing its opinion that China should be treated as an equal by the other powers. The Soviet Union acquired considerable popularity among the Chinese Nationalist intellectuals; and Russian influence in China may be said to have reached its zenith during the latter part of 1926 and the first part of 1927, when the Cantonese Nationalist armies swept victoriously northward from Canton to Shanghai and the Yangtze Valley. The Russian High Adviser, Michael Borodin, was a great power in the inner councils of the Kuomintang, or Nationalist Party; Russian generals guided the operations of the Chinese armies, and Soviet financial experts functioned as advisers in the Chinese Ministry for Finance.

However, the decline of Russian influence in the Chinese Nationalist camp was even more rapid than its rise. The growth of the Chinese mass movement, the strikes and heightened wage demands of the workers, the violent seizures of land by the peasants, especially in some of the southern provinces, provoked a reaction, in which the generals, with their mercenary armies, united with the merchants and the more conservative wing of the Kuomintang intellectuals, quickly suppressed the Chinese Communists and also drove into political oblivion the left wing of the Kuomintang. This sharp turn to the right meant the end of the former close understanding between Nationalist China and the Soviet Union. The Russian advisers were withdrawn during the summer of 1927. In December of the same year an abortive and short-lived Communist insurrection in Canton proved the signal for violent internal reaction and a complete breach with the Soviet Union. The Soviet vice-consul in Canton, Hassis, and several other employees of the consulate, both Russians and Chinese, were executed without a trial by the Chinese general who suppressed the insurrection. The Soviet consulates in southern and central China were closed, and this breach has lasted up to the present time.

Outer Mongolia, a huge area of sparsely populated, mostly desert country, over which China exercised a shadowy sovereignty before the War, has now become a republic in close contact with the Soviet Union. During the last stage of the civil war Outer Mongolia was a base for raids into Siberia by the White troops of Baron Ungern-Sternberg; the Red Army pursued Ungern-Sternberg's troops into Mongolia, routed them, and helped the revolutionary elements in Mongolia to set up a new government, quite independent of China and closely attached to the Soviet Union. Whether Outer Mongolia will ever become a bone of contention between the Soviet Union and a united China remains to be seen; at present the Chinese Government at Nanking seems to have other problems closer at hand.

In the Near East the Soviet Government has pretty consistently supported the new centralized governments which, with varying degrees of success, have attempted to modernize Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan and to put an end to the old

tribal feudalism. Kemalist Turkey is in no small degree indebted to Soviet munitions for its victory over the Greeks; and Turkey is to-day probably the best friend of the Soviet Union among the nations of the world. While Turkey is not, of course, a socialist state, the Westernizing cultural revolution which Mustapha Kemal has carried through with such unrelenting vigor is similar in many respects to what has taken place in the Moslem East of the Soviet Union, in the Crimea, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Turkey has followed the Soviet example in remaining outside the League of Nations.

Soviet diplomacy got away to a flying start in Persia in 1921 by making a wholesale retrocession to the Persian Government of Tsarist banks, telegraph lines, and other concessions. Despite this, the course of Soviet-Persian relations has not always been smooth; such questions as the Persian rights of transit for their goods through Soviet territory and Soviet fishing rights in Persian waters in the Caspian Sea have at times led to protracted and acrimonious discussion. In general there is a sort of pendulum swing of Persian foreign policy as between the Soviet Union and Great Britain, and it is likely that Persia for an indefinite period will attempt to balance itself between these two powerful neighbors without definitely casting in its lot with either of them.

The Soviet Government furnished a certain amount of technical coöperation to King Amanullah of Afghanistan, supplying engineers to build telegraph lines and instructors for his aviation corps. Following the widespread revolt against Amanullah's Westernizing reforms in the winter of 1928–1929 the country has been in a chaotic condition. The Soviet Government has shown no disposition to support any of the warring groups or to adopt any sort of aggressive policy in Afghanistan which would additionally complicate its relations with Great Britain. It is interested in the preservation of Afghan territorial integrity during the troubled times through which the country is passing, and would view with concern the emergence in Afghanistan of any régime which would be clearly under British influence, inasmuch as this might constitute a standing threat to Soviet Central Asia, the cotton base of the Soviet Union.

It would scarcely be an exaggeration to describe the present Soviet foreign policy as one of peace at almost any price. Not that the Soviet leaders are pacifists. Communist doctrine is nothing if not militant. But a pacific policy is imperatively dictated to the Soviet Union by its present position as an Ishmaelite among the nations. The absorption of the country's energies in a difficult and complicated process of social and economic reconstruction, the danger that any local war in which the Soviet Union might become involved would draw in a whole combination of foreign states, these factors lend a ring of sincerity to the remark of a Soviet official who once said to the writer, on the occasion of some new affront or provocation in China or in Poland: —

"We shall not fight unless our territory is actually invaded."

But, if the Soviet Union cannot honestly be described as a military "menace" to its neighbors, its exclusion from the normal intercourse of nations creates a large vacuum and raises a number of embarrassing problems. Such a huge mass as the Soviet Union cannot be withdrawn from the politico-economic system of Europe and Asia without creating serious displacements. While the Soviet Union is ostracized there can be no stabilization of Eastern Europe, no restoration of the European economic equilibrium, no real progress in the field of disarmament, granting that the dominant European states sincerely desire to achieve any such progress.

From its first state of being surrounded by a world of enemies, expressing their hostility in actual warfare and blockade, the Soviet Union has progressed to a second stage, midway between this first state and one of full membership in the international concert of the powers. Whether and when the Soviet Government will achieve a transition from this midway stage to that of full restoration of normal relations with the outside world depends upon a number of factors, some of which are outside its own control. Among the factors which seem likely to determine the character of the future contacts

between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world perhaps the most important are: the working out of some mutually acceptable formula which will link the settlement of Russian pre-war obligations with the granting of fresh credits to the Soviet Union, the reality and extent of the Communist influence in the labor movement of Western Europe and the colonial countries of Asia and Africa (the Soviet Government's chances of establishing amicable relations with foreign powers are in precisely inverse ratio to the seriousness with which the activities of the Communist International are regarded), and the success of Soviet diplomacy in playing on the antagonisms of foreign powers and utilizing competition for commercial advantages in Russia as a means of exerting pressure for the achievement of political objectives.

XI

THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE WORLD REVOLUTION

To overthrow the existing political, economic, and social order in every country on the face of the globe and to establish a world federation of socialist Soviet Republics is the avowed goal of the Communist International, sometimes called "the general staff of the world revolution." In its constitution, adopted at its first congress, held in Moscow in March 1919, the International is described as "a union of Communist parties of all countries into one proletarian party, which fights for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the creation of a world union of socialist Soviet Republics, for the complete destruction of classes and the achievement of socialism — that first stage of communist society." The Sixth Congress of the Communist International, which ended its sessions in the Trade-Union Hall (formerly the Noblemen's Club) in Moscow early in September 1928, reasserted these basic objectives, simultaneously publishing a detailed programme of revolutionary strategy and tactics.

Governments have reacted in very different ways to the audacious challenge to their authority represented by the International. In the democratic countries of Western and Northern Europe and in the United States of America the Communists are free to carry on propaganda by speech and press, to organize political parties and elect representatives to national and local legislative bodies. In nearly all the countries of Eastern and Southern Europe identification as a Communist is apt to entail a long and indefinite prison sentence. And in China even the false suspicion of being a Communist, during the last two years, has been likely to stimulate the activity of the local general's beheading squad.

The Communist International is a product of the World War and the Russian Revolution. The War created an irreparable split in the ranks of the Second International, which up to that time had united the Socialist parties of the world in a loose federation. The majority of the Socialists in the various warring countries placed national defense ahead of loyalty to the international working-class movement and collaborated more or less heartily with the war-time governments. In every Socialist party there was a pacifist minority, which sought to end the War by negotiation and agreement. As against both these viewpoints, Lenin in his Swiss exile, and small extremist groups in the European Socialist movement which shared his ideas, championed the theory that the World War must end in a world revolution, which should sweep away completely the capitalist system. The slogan which Lenin propounded in response to the World War was not "Peace," but "Turn the imperialistic war into a civil war."

The Bolshevik seizure of power in November 1917 placed Russia in the hands of a Party which was thoroughly committed to the theory that the final victory of socialism could be achieved only through violent revolution, supported by the combined efforts of the working classes of various capitalist countries. But war-time legislation, the geographical isolation of Russia, and the desperate internal struggle which the Bolsheviks were obliged to wage in order to maintain themselves in power were all factors delaying the spread of Bolshevik ideas beyond Russia's frontiers.

The end of the War marked for Eastern and Central Europe a period of political confusion and economic hardship which provided the most favorable soil for the rapid spread of extreme revolutionary doctrines among the hungry, war-weary, and embittered masses. The year 1919 witnessed the establishment of short-lived Soviet republics in Hungary, Bavaria, and Latvia, two rebellions of the Spartacides, or extremist wing of the German Social Democrats in Berlin itself, and many smaller outbursts of revolutionary discontent. And in March 1919 the Third, or Communist, International was formally launched

in Moscow at a meeting of some twoscore representatives of the Russian Communist Party and of various revolutionary groups in other countries.

More important in the history of the Communist International was the Second Congress, held in Moscow in July and August 1920, with a much fuller attendance from countries in all parts of the world. By this time the post-war mood of revolt among the more radical elements in the European working class, which at first had been largely spontaneous and comparatively unorganized, had begun to crystallize in the formation of national Communist parties, while at the same time the growing unrest in India, Egypt, and the countries of the Near and Middle East suggested to "the general staff of the world revolution" in Moscow that Asia, as well as Europe, presented a promising field for agitation.

At the Second Congress of the International the Indian Communist, M. N. Roy, propounded the thesis that European capitalism draws much of its strength from colonial countries, so that the liberation of these countries is a direct aid to the revolutionary struggle of the European workers. The resolution adopted by the Congress on the national and colonial question emphasizes in the following terms the obligation of all Communist parties to support movements of nationalist revolt in the East: —

"Help from all Communist parties to revolutionary movements in nations which are in a dependent and unequal position (for instance, in Ireland, among the Negroes of America, etc.) is indispensable. . . . All Communist parties must show to revolutionary liberating movements in colonial countries help in fact; and the form of support must be considered with the Communist Party of the country concerned, wherever such a party exists. The obligation to show most active help first of all lies on the workers of the country on which the backward nation depends in its colonial and financial relations."

Karl Radek, then an active figure in the councils of the International, summed up the policy of colonial revolution more succinctly when he said: "We shall unite the workers of

the West with the peasants of the East in a common struggle against imperialism."

The First and Second Congresses worked out a constitution for the International which has survived, with minor changes and additions, to the present time. In strong distinction to the Second International, where the individual member parties went their own way with practically no control from any central organ, the Communist International lays down as a fundamental rule the observance of strict, almost military discipline and the complete subordination of the individual parties to the decisions of the Executive Committee of the International in Moscow. In the resolutions of the Second Congress one finds the following significant observations on the rôle and character of the parties which make up the International: —

"All class war is political struggle. The object of this struggle, which unavoidably turns into civil war, is the conquest of political power. . . . To lead the working class successfully in the approaching long and stubborn civil war the Communist Party itself must create iron military order within its own ranks."

The resolutions of the Communist International on constitutional questions bristle with points designed to avert any outcropping of factional indiscipline within individual parties and to prevent a relapse into nonrevolutionary methods of parliamentary and trade-union activity during the intervals between periods of sharp upheaval. Communist parties are required to participate in electoral campaigns in countries where they enjoy a legal existence; but every Communist candidate for public office must sign a declaration to the effect that he will be responsible to the Party Central Committee in all his work and will lay down his office at the demand of the Central Committee. Every Communist newspaper must be controlled absolutely by the Party of the country in which it is published. Under the third and fourth of twenty-one conditions, which the Second Congress laid down as obligatory for all parties desiring to affiliate with the International, Communists are

required to create a parallel illegal apparatus, even in countries where they are permitted to function legally, and to carry on illegal agitation among the soldiers and sailors. A number of French Communists have been arrested and sentenced to terms in prison on charges of carrying on "antimilitaristic work" of this sort, and British and American Communists have claimed credit for distributing anti-imperialistic leaflets among British and American troops en route to China and Nicaragua, although without any great visible success.

Just as the individual Communist in all his political activities is subordinated to the Central Committee of the Party to which he belongs, so this Central Committee, in turn, is subordinated to the supreme authority in the International, the Executive Committee, with its seat in Moscow. Decisions of the Executive Committee take precedence over those of any national Communist party; the programme of every affiliated party must be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval; and the latter organization is supposed to receive a copy of the minutes of all sessions of Central Committees of national parties. Moreover, the Executive Committee possesses and makes extensive use of the right to send its representatives to watch over the activities of the national parties. These representatives are entitled to participate in the councils of the national Party Central Committees; and a word from one of these direct envoys from Moscow is sometimes sufficient to deflect the course of policy pursued by a national party. The initiative for the recent decision of the British Communist Party to oppose Labor Party candidates actively in elections is generally believed to have come from the Executive Committee of the Communist International, and instructions from Moscow in 1924 caused the Workers' Party (the name adopted by the Communist Party of America for purpose of legalization) to reverse an earlier decision to support the presidential candidacy of the late Senator La Follette, thereby doubtless giving that statesman much relief. More recently a minor squabble in the German Communist Party, in which the well-known German Communist, Ernst Thalmann, was subjected to a

vote of censure by the Central Committee of the German party, was promptly and vigorously straightened out by the Executive Committee of the International, which upheld Thalmann and induced the majority of the German Party Central Committee to repudiate their vote of censure.

The supreme authority in the Communist International, according to its constitution, is the World Congress, a body which has been convened at irregular and steadily lengthening intervals. Four hundred and seventy-five delegates, representing fifty-eight parties, participated in the last World Congress, which sat in Moscow from the middle of July until the beginning of September, 1928. The number of delegates which each Party is entitled to send is determined on the double basis of the numerical strength of the Party and the political importance of the country which it represents.

After concluding its sessions the World Congress elected a new Executive Committee of fifty-nine members, which will function as the highest authority until the next Congress. This Committee chose from its members a smaller group of twenty-nine, the so-called Presidium, which will meet more often than the rather large and unwieldy Executive Committee. The Presidium in turn put out a still smaller group of thirteen as members of the Political Secretariat, a body which supervises much of the routine technical work of organization and administration and to a certain extent steers and directs the deliberations of the Executive Committee. The office of President of the Executive Committee, formerly held by Gregory Zinoviev, has been abolished since Zinoviev fell into political disfavor in Russia and was removed from his post. Nikolai Bukharin, editor of the All-Union Communist Party official daily newspaper, *Pravda*, delivered the leading speeches at the Congress and seems to have inherited the substance of Zinoviev's former power.

As a result of its numbers and its possession of many prominent Marxist theoreticians the German Social Democracy always played a conspicuous rôle in the pre-war Second International. By force of circumstances the All-Union Communist

Party plays an even more dominant rôle in the Communist International. Theoretically a combination of other parties could outvote the delegates of the Soviet Union on a question of tactics or policy. Between seventy and eighty of the delegates at the Congress and three of the thirteen members of the Political Secretariat belong to the All-Union Communist Party. But in practice the opinion of the All-Union Communist Party has always become the opinion of the International. The foreign Communist parties are dependent on Russia for everything, from subsidies and a political asylum to the ideological excuse for their own existence. For the programme of the International, adopted by its Sixth Congress, is nothing but a universalization of the Russian Revolution, an attempt to apply all over the world, with minor variations for individual national peculiarities, the methods and tactics of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution. Therefore, it is not surprising that every new declaration of Russian Communist policy, every change in the personnel of Russian Communist leadership, should be promptly and unreservedly approved by the foreign Communist parties. The appeals which Trotzky and other heretics of Russian Communism have addressed to the International against decisions of the All-Union Communist Party were condemned in advance to contemptuous rejection.

The iron discipline imposed by the International has produced its fair share of rebels and dissidents. Paul Levy, Ruth Fischer, and Maslov in Germany, Souvarine and Treint in France, Bordiga in Italy, Walton Newbold in England — these are only a few names of persons who played more or less prominent rôles in the Communist movements of their respective countries and ultimately left or were expelled from the ranks. Some of these former Communists were drawn into opposition by personal or political sympathy with Trotzky or Zinoviev; others disagreed with the policies which the International prescribed for their countries; but all were summarily dealt with under the strict disciplinary rules of the organization. In no case, however, have these individual seceders organized

effective rival Communist parties of their own or seriously weakened the numerical strength of the parties which they left. The explanation for this fact is fairly simple. Not only are the Ruth Fischers and Maslovs, the Souvarines and Treints, necessarily lacking in the resources of the world-wide organization of the International, but also they are deprived of one of the most effective arguments in appealing to workers to abandon their traditional Social Democratic organizations: the argument based on the real or supposed achievements of the Soviet Union. Opposition to the policies of the International almost inevitably leads to criticism of certain features of the Soviet régime in Russia; Trotzky and his foreign associates justify their campaigns of opposition on the ground that the All-Union Communist Party is yielding to capitalist influences. Criticism of this kind cannot be expected to please any large number of the more radically-minded workmen who have broken with their Social Democratic ties and have come to look on Russia as a sort of proletarian Zion.

A question that often occurs in connection with the activities of the Communist International is whether the Soviet Government may be held responsible for its programme of world revolution. Soviet officials have consistently taken the line that there is no connecting link between the Soviet Government and the International, that the latter is a private organization which enjoys the right of political asylum in Russia because no other country would tolerate its presence.

Formally a fairly distinct line of separation has been drawn between the activities of the International and those of Soviet state institutions. The International has its own staff of agents and workers, not all of whom, of course, are Russian citizens; and the men whom it delegates for special propagandist and organization missions in foreign countries are not in the foreign diplomatic and commercial service of the Soviet Government. The Russians who hold posts in the governing boards of the International, such as Bukharin, Stalin, and Molotov, are prominent in the Communist Party, but do not hold posts in the Soviet state apparatus. (One exception to this rule may be noted in the recent election of Premier Rykov as a member of the Executive Committee of the International. This was probably due to some exigency of internal Communist Party politics which for the moment took precedence over other considerations.)

At the same time every member of the All-Union Communist Party (and every high Soviet official is a Communist) is *ipso facto* bound by the resolutions of the Communist International, of which the All-Union Communist Party is an important component part. A hostile foreign minister will always be able to pick a quarrel with the Soviet Government on the issue of the Communist International.

From time to time rumors are circulated to the effect that the Soviet Government in some unspecified way will repudiate more strongly the Communist International and its works. Such rumors usually originate in ignorance of Russian conditions and Communist psychology. The Soviet Government already has gone as far as it can in formally professing its dissociation with the propagandist activities of the International and in offering to sign agreements with any country on the basis of mutual nonintervention in each other's affairs.

That the Communist Party will cease to play its present outstanding rôle in the councils of the International seems most unlikely. That the Russian Revolution is an integral part of a world revolutionary process, which may require decades and generations for completion but which is historically inevitable, is a cardinal tenet of Communist doctrine; and this belief logically imposes on the victorious Communist Party in Russia the obligation to give all practical aid to Communist parties in other countries. Moreover, while the activities of the International at times create difficulties and embarrassments in the matter of advancing Russia's diplomatic and commercial interests abroad, the institution is by no means a pure liability even from the standpoint of the national interests of the Soviet Union. In the work of foreign Communists, who in Germany and France, in Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, have a considerable measure of working-class support, the Russian Com-

munists see a guaranty of help in the shape of strikes, demonstration, prevention of troop and munition shipments, etc., in the event of any new clash between the Soviet Union and foreign countries. It was not without reason that Bukharin said at the recent Congress of the International: —

"In the present situation our Polish Party stands on a very responsible post. It is clear what a big rôle our fraternal Polish Party is destined to play in the event of war." [1]

There is no evidence to show that the Communist International receives financial support from the Soviet Government. The budget of the International for 1927 is officially stated at the figure of 1,374,944.60 rubles (about $700,000). The largest item of income in this budget (1,029,367.18) is ascribed to dues and contributions from member parties. The sum of 690,206.85 rubles was assigned in subsidies to Party newspapers and publishing houses and cultural-educational work through schools, circles, clubs, etc. The administrative expenses of the International were given as 595,059.04 rubles.[2]

Part of the appropriation for "cultural-educational work" probably goes for the upkeep of a training school for agitators and propagandists maintained in Moscow and attended by students from foreign Communist parties who are supposed to return to their native countries well grounded in the principles of Marx and Lenin. Training for future Chinese Revolutionists is provided in the Sun Yat Sen University, an institution which was founded in the autumn of 1925, when the relations between the Soviet Union and the Chinese nationalist movement were more cordial than they are at the present time. The Sun Yat Sen University is not directly supported by the Communist International; but the teaching of history, economics, and all related subjects there, as in all Russian higher educational institutions, is distinctly Marxist in tendency, and the two or three hundred Chinese students in the Sun Yat Sen University take a prominent part in all revolutionary demonstration with red banners picturesquely ornamented with Chinese characters. The problem of imparting instruction to these Chinese students at first presented considerable difficulties; lectures had to be translated from Russian into English, the most generally known foreign language in China, and then retranslated into Chinese by the students who possessed a knowledge of English. With longer residence, however, the Chinese students usually acquire a working knowledge of Russian.

[1] See Communist Party official newspaper, *Pravda*, July 22, 1928.
[2] Published in *Pravda* of March 8, 1928.

Inasmuch as they aim at the conquest of political power and domination of the state by the proletariat, or industrial working class, the Communists naturally attach much importance to spreading their ideas in the trade-unions, which are the chief organizations of the working class. The general line of Communist policy in the trade-union question, as laid down by Lenin, is not to leave or attempt to break up the existing unions, but to capture their leadership by means of the process which the American Communist, William Z. Foster, has described as "boring from within" — that is, working actively in the unions and taking every opportunity to discredit their conservative leadership. In exceptional cases the policy of utilizing the existing unions has been abandoned or modified. In America, where Communist attempts to "bore from within" have encountered a rough reception from the American Federation of Labor officials, efforts have been made to create new unions under Communist leadership in the mining and textile industries. There is a clean split in the French unions, the minority accepting while the majority rejects Communist leadership; and among the British miners, where Communist influence is especially strong because of the widespread poverty and unemployment, the struggle for control of local organizations, particularly in Scotland, is so bitter as to threaten a complete schism in the organization.

Trade-union groups which accept Communist leadership and guidance are united in the Red Trade-Union International, which, although a separate organization, works in the closest harmony with the Communist International. It is the Communist opposition to the Social Democratic International of

Trade-Unions, with headquarters in Amsterdam. The Red Trade-Union International claimed 13,862,209 members for its affiliated labor organizations in 1927. Of this number 10,248,000 belonged to the trade-unions of the Soviet Union, while 2,800,000 were members of Chinese unions which during the last year have been broken up and have ceased to function, at least in the open. In no case have the majority of the workers in a highly industrialized country given their allegiance to the Red Trade-Union International. That organization devotes special attention to work in the young labor movements of the East and of Latin-America, where it attempts to win the workers away from the conservative leadership of the Pan-American Federation of Labor, in which the American Federation of Labor plays a leading rôle.

The Soviet trade-unions have contributed liberally to the support of strikes in other countries, the contributions from Russia in aid of the British miners' strike in 1926 alone amounting to eleven million rubles. Apart from this, international committees of propaganda, created in every important industry and chiefly financed by the Soviet trade-unions, with a little aid from the revolutionary unions of France and Czecho-Slovakia, have made contributions totaling 632,990.98 rubles in support of strikes in thirty countries during the four-year period from the beginning of 1924 until the end of 1927.[1]

The relations between the Red Trade-Union International and its Socialist rival at Amsterdam have been consistently hostile. On several occasions and in various ways the Red International has made overtures for a conference with the Amsterdam body ostensibly for the purpose of restoring unity in the international working-class movement. Amsterdam has invariably rejected these proposals on the ground that they represent merely a Communist propaganda manœuvre.

For a time the Soviet trade-unions achieved a noteworthy diplomatic success by establishing friendly contact with the

[1] *Mezhdunarodnoe Profdvizhenie* ("International Trade-Union Movement"), 1924–1927. Published by Red Trade-Union International, Moscow, 1928, pp. 82–91 and 536–539.

British Trade-Union Council, one of the largest organizations in the Amsterdam International. British labor delegations toured Russia and published laudatory reports about Soviet conditions; the President of the Soviet Trade-Union Council, Mikhail Tomsky, was invited to address the British Trade-Union Congress in Scarborough in the autumn of 1925; and an Anglo-Russian trade-union committee was set up to promote closer coöperation between the labor movements of the two countries.

This state of affairs, however, did not survive the unsuccessful general strike and miners' strike in England in 1926. The Russian Communist trade-unionists regarded the general strike as a revolutionary struggle which must be fought to the bitter end and did not spare words in denouncing the "treachery" of the British labor leaders who called it off.

The British trade-union leaders, on their side, strongly resented what they considered Russian dictation in British internal labor matters; and the Edinburgh Congress of the British trade-unions in 1927 voted to abolish the Anglo-Russian Committee. Since that time the British labor leaders have been further exasperated by the Communists' attempt to undermine their leadership through the agency of the so-called Minority Movement, which unites the radical insurgent elements in the British unions. Official British trade-unionism is now thoroughly hostile to communism.

Despite their strenuous and persistent efforts, there seems little likelihood that the Communists will achieve their end of capturing the leadership of the trade-union movement in Western Europe and America. The more experienced organizers and skillful bargainers in the trade-unions of every country are most often to be found in the camp of the moderate Socialists. The inevitable political-mindedness of the Communists sometimes leads them to overlook the details of preparation which are important in labor strategy and to rush the workers into strikes where there is little prospect of success, thereby creating bitter subsequent disillusionment. Trade-unions, like parliaments, are institutions which the Communists can

scarcely hope to conquer except in the sweep of a major social upheaval.

The Communist International possesses several other subsidiary organizations, including the Communist International of Youth, a young people's organization which claims 127,232 members outside of Russia, and the Sport International, which unites the radical working-class sport clubs of Europe. Zinoviev once hailed the participants in the athletic contests of the Sport International as the future Red Guard of the European revolution. There is a Peasant International; but the influence of this body is very limited.

What are the present forces at the disposal of the International, and what are the prospects of partial or complete success in realizing its programme of world revolution? The total membership of the Communist parties of the world, outside of the Soviet Union, was stated to be 583,105 in a report submitted to the last Congress of the International. The largest of these parties are those of Germany, with 125,000, and Czecho-Slovakia, with 138,000. After these countries come France, with 56,000 Communists; China, with 30,000; and Sweden, with 17,000. There are about 14,000 Communists in America and 7000 in Great Britain.[1] In other countries the strength of the Communist parties is either negligible or, as in Poland and Italy, impossible to ascertain exactly because of the illegal conditions under which the parties of these countries carry on their work.

The events of the last decade have demonstrated the fallacy of one theory which for a time was strongly championed by Lenin and which animated the deliberations of the first two Congresses of the International: the theory that the World War sounded the immediate or imminent death knell of the capitalist system all over the world. The stabilization of capitalism in Europe to-day is grudgingly conceded even by Communists, although they qualify this admission with the adjectives "partial" and "temporary."

[1] These figures on the membership of individual Communist parties are taken from semiofficial reports published in the book, *Kommunisticheskii International pered shestim vsemirnim kongressom* ("The Communist International before the Sixth World Congress"). State Publishing Company, Moscow, 1928.

The European political horizon to-day nowhere reveals any very threatening clouds of Communist revolt. In Germany and France, in Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, as recent election returns indicate, the Communists possess the support of a substantial minority of the industrial working class. But there is little prospect that, given the continuance of peaceful and normal conditions, this minority will be transformed into a majority, and among other social classes communism enjoys little support.

The Italian Communist Party has been deeply submerged in the wave of Fascism; and the prompt and ruthless suppression of Communist rebellions in Bulgaria in 1923 and in Esthonia in 1924 indicates little chance for a repetition of the Russian Revolution in the Balkan and Baltic states, where the industrial proletariat is weak and the factor which makes peasants revolutionary, the existence of big landed estates, has been to a large extent removed or diminished by the radical agrarian legislation of the post-war period. Of all the Eastern European countries Poland has perhaps been the most susceptible to Communist agitation; the illegal Communist Party of that country mustered 850,000 votes in the last election, despite the repression of the authorities. These Polish Communist votes were recruited not only in such industrial regions as Warsaw, Lodz, and the Dombrowa coal basin, but also in Ukrainian and White Russian peasant districts, where the population is dissatisfied with the intolerant attitude which many Polish officials display toward the non-Polish nationalities. But the ranks of the Polish Communists are rent with internal factional dissensions, and the strong Polish national spirit creates a handicap for the work of a party which its enemies represent as an advance-guard of Russia.

The small size of the British Communist Party is the best indication of its failure to detach any large number of workers from the Labor Party. The results of the new Communist policy of fighting Labor candidates actively at elections, instead of giving them conditional support, as in the past, remain to be seen. Should the Labor Party continue its

evolution toward more moderate policies, a part of its more radical membership might conceivably secede to the Communists; but a very large secession indeed would be necessary to bring the British Communists to numerical equality with their colleagues in Germany and France.

The Communists of America, organized in the Workers' Party, constitute a formidable revolutionary force only in the eyes of their own more humorless members and in those of individuals and organizations inclined to conjure up imaginary "menaces" for the benefit of the credulous and ill-informed. The comparatively high standard of living of the American workers, the social fluidity which makes it much easier to pass from one class to another in America than in Europe, and the racial division which finds expression in the filling of the highly paid skilled trades with native Americans while the more poorly paid unskilled labor falls in large part to immigrants of recent arrival — all these factors have hitherto held back the development of even the most moderate forms of socialism and trade-unionism in America.

The Workers' Party has a resounding programme: To unite the workers and farmers in movements of revolutionary protest, to rouse the Negroes to cast off the shackles of racial discrimination,[1] to organize the masses of Latin-America against the imperialism of Washington and Wall Street, to fill up mighty revolutionary trade-unions with millions of America's now unorganized workers, etc. But the achievements of the 14,000 American Communists, the vast majority of whom belong to the later immigrant stocks of Eastern and Southern Europe, in carrying out this programme can only be described as microscopically slight. There is no country where communism seems less likely to play a significant rôle in the predictable future than America.

During recent years China has served as an interesting experimental field for the efforts of the Communist International to promote revolution in oriental lands. Pursuing a policy of coöperating with the Kuomintang, the Chinese Nationalist Party, the Chinese Communist Party for a time seemed to achieve a considerable measure of success, growing in numbers and organizing labor and peasant unions in the wake of the advancing Nationalist armies.

[1] Belief in the revolutionary potentialities of the Negro is deeply rooted in the circles of the Communist International. Several American Negro orators appeared before the Sixth Congress, and one British delegate suggested that a Negro Soviet Republic should be organized in the Southern States.

But this process of coöperation between the Communists and the progressive young generals, liberal merchants and business men and intellectuals, who led the Kuomintang inevitably ended in a breach. The Kuomintang leaders in the beginning were glad to have Russian generals to plan their campaigns, Russian financial experts to work out their taxation system. They found the political counsels of the Russian High Adviser, Michael Borodin, almost indispensable in building up a governmental apparatus. But when the labor and peasant unions, organized under Communist influence, began to put forward extremist demands, when the cities were tied up with strikes and the countryside in some provinces was covered with peasant uprisings, the attitude of the Kuomintang sharply changed; and in the final trial of strength in 1927 the young and weak Chinese Communist Party was decisively defeated. The Communists were expelled from the Kuomintang and from all government offices; their uprising in Canton in December 1927 was crushed. To-day they are a persecuted remnant, completely driven underground in the cities, here and there stirring up guerrilla uprisings in the more turbulent peasant districts.

Notwithstanding its failure to promote any successful revolutions outside of the Soviet Union up to the present time, it would be premature to dismiss the Communist International and its affiliated parties as a force which need not be reckoned with in the future. For there is one unpredictable factor that can upset an established social order almost overnight. This is the factor of modern war. No one in 1914 foresaw the things which the strain of the War made possible in Russia: the first socialist experiment in industry, a federation of Soviet Republics in the place of the Tsarist Empire, the Moscow Hall

of the Nobles housing the sessions of the General Staff of the World Revolution. And no one to-day can foresee with certainty what new changes might accompany another large-scale war. The Communists themselves regard war as the stimulus which will hasten the realization of their programme. Here is a significant excerpt in this connection from the programme of action adopted by the Sixth Congress of the International: —

"Imperialism with elemental force uncovers and deepens all the contradictions of capitalist society, brings class oppression to its extreme limit, sharpens to the point of exceptional strain the struggle between capitalist states, makes inevitable imperialistic wars of world dimensions which shake up the whole system of governing relations, and with iron necessity leads to the world revolution of the proletariat." [1]

And Nikolai Bukharin, ending his opening speech before the Congress, where one could see side by side Germans who fought on the barricades of Hamburg and Chinese who escaped from the shambles of Canton, American Negroes, Hindu Brahmins, French and German strike-leaders, political refugees of Eastern and Southern Europe, revolutionaries of every race and color, shouted amid applause and the strains of the familiar revolutionary hymn, the "Internationale": —

"When the hour draws near when the fighting banners of imperialism will be raised, our Communist International, all our parties, the endless broad masses of the toilers, will say their word. This word will be the slogan of civil war, the slogan of a life-and-death struggle against imperialism; it will be the victory call of the Communist International."

A fantastic boast or a prophecy? Only the next great war, if and when it materializes, can give the answer.

[1] Published in *Pravda* of September 4, 1928.

XII

THE REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION AND CULTURE

EQUALLY far-reaching and perhaps equally significant with the political and economic transformations of the Soviet Union is the sweeping series of changes which the Revolution has wrought in the fields of education and culture. The Russian school of to-day differs from its pre-revolutionary predecessor not only in general aims and ideals, but in the character of the student body and in almost every detail of pedagogical method.

The old Russian school was essentially formal and conservative; the new Soviet school is vocational and utilitarian in general tendency and offers the widest possible scope for experimentation. The old Russian school was based on strict discipline; the Soviet school has gone far in the direction of eliminating the element of external compulsion in dealing with children. The former Russian educational system, especially in its higher stages, benefited predominantly children of wealthy and middle-class families. In theory at least the Soviet schools give preference in admission to children of workers and poorer peasants; and this theory, especially so far as working-class children are concerned, is being more and more realized in practice.

What sort of provision does the Soviet régime make for the increasing hosts of children who besiege the doors of the overcrowded schools every year? Practically the entire educational system is supported, controlled, and directed by the state. There are a few private schools and special courses, but these must conform to all the rules laid down by the Commissariat for Education, which is the highest directing authority of the school system. All the universities and higher technical schools are state institutions. Schools are supported,

in the main, from local funds, but each of the principal republics of the Soviet Union has a unified and centralized plan of management.

There are a few kindergartens, designed for children between the ages of three and seven, but these accommodate less than one per cent of the children who might be admitted. The schooling of the average Russian child begins at the age of eight and lasts, in the majority of cases, for the four-year period which is the regular term of what may be called the Russian elementary school. There are also the so-called "seven-year" and "nine-year" schools, which combine the functions of the American elementary and high schools. At the top of the educational pyramid stand the universities and higher technical schools, which accommodate about ninety thousand students in the Russian Soviet Republic, which possesses about two thirds of the population of the Soviet Union. There is one serious gap in this educational chain: the seven-year school gives quite inadequate preparation for the university, and even nine years is generally recognized as too short a term of preliminary education.

The most striking and novel educational experiments are to be found in the lower and middle Soviet schools, rather than in the universities. Old-fashioned teaching methods, with every subject placed in a water-tight compartment and taught separately, have been completely discarded. The so-called complex system is very generally used with the younger children. This has nothing to do with the ideas of Freud, but consists of taking a single theme as the centre of attention and moulding all branches of instruction around it.

I witnessed a practical application of this method in a Moscow school, named after President Kalinin. The given theme was "The City of Moscow." The history lesson was based on past events in the life of the city. Some geographical ideas were imparted by taking the children to the Moscow River and showing them what are islands, shores, and peninsulas, etc. Arithmetic had its turn when the children turned out in a body to measure the block nearest the school and

TARTAR SCHOOL IN MOSCOW

make various calculations regarding its relation to the city as a whole.

The excursion is often pressed into service as a first aid to the textbook and the schoolroom. So in this school on one occasion the children were taken to the roof of Moscow's highest skyscraper, a building of some twelve stories, in order to obtain a bird's-eye view of the city. From time to time they visited factories, museums, and historical monuments. The purely scholastic method is anathema in Soviet pedagogy. Every effort is made to give the pupils some concrete and visible representation of the things which they are studying.

The complex method is found impracticable for children in the grades which would more or less correspond to high school classes in America, because here more specialized attention to individual subjects is recognized as essential. For students in these higher grades the laboratory method, a Russian adaptation of the American Dalton Plan, is widely, although not universally, in use. Under this system the pupils receive tasks in each subject, requiring from a week to a month for completion. They are then left free to carry out these tasks as they see fit.

Visiting a school where this system was in operation I found the pupils at work in various classrooms, studying and writing out their problems in composition, algebra, and elemental chemistry. Sometimes the teacher was in the room, sometimes not, but the students were left almost entirely to their own resources. The teacher seemed to function largely in an advisory capacity, giving help only when asked. If the students preferred talk or games to study, the teacher usually overlooked it. Each student was free to choose the subject or subjects on which he would work on any particular day.

This absence of external restriction is a very marked characteristic of the Soviet school. The maintenance of discipline is in the hands of organizations elected by the students themselves, and while one seldom witnesses actual rowdyism in the classroom one is also unlikely to find the strict order that usually prevails in the schools of other countries. Pupils in

what would correspond to American high school and upper elementary school classes possess a degree of liberty comparable with that enjoyed by university students elsewhere. One of the boys in the school where the adapted Dalton Plan was functioning seemed to feel that this freedom had its drawbacks. With perhaps a little of the superiority of the fourteen-year-old philosopher passing judgment on the immaturity of children of ten and twelve, he said: —

"This method is quite good for us older students, who have learned to work without control. But some of the younger pupils abuse their liberty and waste a good deal of time."

What impressions does an outside observer carry away from a necessarily cursory view of the new Soviet schools? There is little doubt that they are more interesting, both for teachers and for pupils, than formerly was the case. The excursions and outside interests, the experimental ways of working out problems, are calculated to grip the interest of instructor and student alike. The new methods tend to bring out the initiative and self-reliance of the children; and the naturally bright boy or girl, who may feel cramped under a more rigid and conventional system, has a good chance for rapid and original development.

On the other hand it seems open to question whether the radical changes in Soviet education do not place too great a burden of "self-determination" upon the sluggish or indifferent pupil. Then one is not always confident that in the restless and rather turbulent atmosphere of the Soviet classrooms a necessary minimum of exact and precise knowledge is being imparted with sufficient emphasis. To make school altogether a matter of drill and grind is an obsolete blunder from which progressive educators in every country are endeavoring to escape. But the directors of Soviet education, in a very natural and justifiable reaction against the excessive formalism and pedantry of the Russian pre-revolutionary school, seem, in rather typically Russian fashion, to have gone too far in the other direction and to have recklessly brushed aside some essentially stabilizing props.

After visiting a few Russian schools one is not surprised to learn that old-fashioned parents complain at times that their children do not write and spell correctly, even though they may hold forth with remarkable fluency on the problems of the Communist International, the topography of Moscow, the trade statistics of Persia, and other subjects unthought of in the curriculum of the old school. A high official in the Commissariat for Education, Mr. Epstein, after listening patiently to a few of the writer's tentative criticisms along these lines, replied substantially as follows: —

"Frankly, we don't attach so much importance to the formal school discipline of reading and writing and spelling as to the development of the child's mind and personality. Once a pupil begins to think for himself he will master such tools of formal knowledge as he may need. And if he does n't learn to think for himself no amount of correctly added sums or correctly spelled words will do him much good."

Mr. Epstein's argument doubtless has much to commend it and reflects the prevalent attitude in Soviet educational circles. But one can scarcely repress a lurking doubt as to whether the graduates of the Soviet schools may not feel a little handicapped when they come to grips with differential calculus and with difficult physical and chemical formulas where no amount of general mental and personality development can quite replace the need for acquired habits of hard, clear, exact thinking.

Indeed, there have already been some recessions from the more extreme application of modernist educational theory. In cases where the complex method does not afford adequate instruction in individual subjects the teacher exercises some latitude in arranging supplementary lessons in these subjects. The Soviet school is still in an experimental stage, and its final form may represent something of a blend of old and new pedagogical ideas.

Apart from defects which are perhaps inherent in the drastic innovations which have been introduced, at least in their early stages, the Soviet school system suffers acutely from lack of adequate material resources. Not that the Soviet authorities

are neglectful or indifferent in their attitude toward educational needs. Appropriations for education in the Soviet Union are already almost double the amount which the Tsarist régime spent for this purpose on the same territory; and these appropriations have been steadily increasing from year to year.

But there is still a great disparity between the comparative poverty of Russia and the great tasks of popular enlightenment which the country has set out to achieve within the next few years: the elimination of illiteracy and the introduction of universal compulsory primary education. As a result of this disparity 30 per cent of the children of school age in the Soviet Union receive no education at all, while the remaining 70 per cent are taught in schools which are usually overcrowded, some of them working in two or even three shifts. Almost all the children in the cities and towns receive some education now; but more than a third of the country children are kept out of school for lack of adequate accommodation.[1] There are half again as many children in school as was the case in pre-war times.

Lack of funds hampers the carrying out of many new Soviet pedagogical ideas. Every school has over its doors the inscription: "Working School"; but it is a standing joke that very little work, in the sense of manual training, is actually taught, because of the lack of money for properly equipped workshops. In order to function with maximum success, the laboratory method, or adapted Dalton Plan, requires a larger supply of textbooks, reference books, maps, and other school paraphernalia than the average school is rich enough to buy.

Teachers are scantily paid. P. Vikhrov, writing in the official organ of the Soviet Trade-Union Council, *Trud*, of December 25, 1928, gives the salaries of elementary school teachers as 53.75 rubles, or 76 per cent of the low pre-war figure, in the cities, and 45.89 rubles, or 66 per cent of the pre-war figure, in the country districts. Even worse, comparatively, is the plight of the secondary school teacher, who receives 73.74 rubles in the towns and 65.57 rubles in the country districts, both figures representing less than a third of the pre-war salary. Delay in paying salaries is a common complaint in the more backward rural districts. In the same article in *Trud* the statement is made that mass dismissals and transfers of teachers for such ostensible causes as failure to take part in public activity, or cherishing an "alien ideology," or representing an "anti-Soviet element" are frequent. The author suggests that, while it may be necessary to dismiss teachers who are out of harmony with the existing régime, such dismissals should be limited to individual cases and not assume the form of mass discharges or shifts.

[1] According to a recent school census, there are 11,372,507 pupils and 337,435 teachers in the Soviet primary and secondary schools. There are schools for 98.4 per cent of city school children of school age, and for 65.3 per cent of country children. There are 1194 pupils to every 10,000 of population in the urban centres and 675 per 10,000 in the country districts.

Notwithstanding the handicaps of poverty, and the problems and difficulties that are inevitably associated with the introduction of a programme of sweeping innovation, the condition of the Soviet school system is improving and its standards of instruction have unmistakably advanced, as compared with the low-water mark which was touched several years ago. Its significance as a factor in moulding the new generation can scarcely be overestimated. The Russian children to-day are being put through a process of training quite different from anything that their grandfathers, or even their fathers, ever knew. It can scarcely be doubted that education is an important factor in moulding the character of nations, as well as of individuals; and in the light of this fact it is quite probable that many generalizations regarding the Russian character which held good before the Revolution will be liable to modification after the students of to-day graduate into active life. Certainly the qualities of semi-oriental fatalism, passivity, lethargy, often associated with the old Russian character and quite possibly fostered by the strict repressive atmosphere of the gymnasium will scarcely be stimulated by the régime of extreme freedom and experimental initiative which prevails in the Soviet schools.

In the universities and higher technical schools methods of

teaching have not changed so strikingly as in the lower and middle schools. Greek and Latin have been practically abolished, being studied only by a handful of ethnological specialists. History, economics, and all the so-called social sciences are taught from a strictly Marxian standpoint. The lower schools are also supposed to impart a Communist flavor to their teachings so far as possible; but this tendency naturally becomes more pronounced with older students who are better able to grasp political and economic subjects.

In general, however, the most impressive feature of the Soviet universities is not so much the change in objects and methods of study as the transformation of the character of the student body. The pre-war Russian students were predominantly recruited from well-to-do and educated families. Children of workers and peasants were not barred from higher education; but force of economic circumstances, combined with the inadequate provision of preliminary education, kept them a small minority of the student body. There were stringent limitations on the number of Jews who might be admitted to the high schools and universities.

No racial admission lines are drawn by the Soviet universities, but some very strict class barriers have been set up, and to-day it is rare indeed for a rich man's son or daughter to enter a Soviet higher institution of learning. In this respect the wheel of fortune has swung full circle; the children of the most respected classes of the old régime, of the former nobility, of merchants and of priests, are visited with even stricter disabilities than were imposed upon Jews in Tsarist times. The offspring of the classes which come under the heading "toiling intelligentsia" — that is, engineers, doctors, teachers, etc. — receive more favorable consideration, and this also holds true for children of state employees.

But the main objective of Communist policy in the universities is to fill them up with workers and children of workers as rapidly as possible. Over the building of the Moscow University is written the slogan, "Science — for the Toilers," and the commissions which pass on candidates for entrance to the

universities are trying to carry this slogan into practice by admitting just as many red-blooded applicants who can point to a pure proletarian origin as is possible without breaking down all required standards.

The 20,865 students who were admitted to the universities of Russia proper (excluding Ukraina, White Russia, and the Trans-Caucasus) in the autumn of 1928 were divided as follows, according to social origin: workers and children of workers, 41.6 per cent; peasants and children of peasants, 26.5 per cent; children of specialists and intelligentsia, 11.3 per cent; children of employees, 19.1 per cent; others, 1.5 per cent. The proportion of working-class students admitted at this time was higher than in any previous year.

A powerful aid in this process of proletarianizing the higher schools is the institution of rabfacs, or special workers' high schools. Here students are accepted on a strictly class basis, three years of actual work in a factory or on a farm being a primary requirement. There are two types of rabfacs: day schools, which require the full-time attendance of their students, and night courses, which workers may take while they are still employed. The students in the day rabfacs receive a small money allowance from their trade-unions as a means of support during their four-year period of training.

Out of the 26,400 students in the day rabfacs and the 10,080 students in the night rabfacs come more than a third of the first-year students in the universities. Comparatively few workers' children finish the regular secondary schools; but whenever they do they receive preference in admission to the universities, provided that they pass the entrance examinations. The poorer students in the universities, especially if they can demonstrate their proletarian origin, are eligible for money allowances, ranging from twenty-five to forty-five rubles a month. These are far from munificent sums; but, together with the cheap meals in the university dining rooms, and dormitories, bare and usually very crowded, which are furnished at little or no charge, they make it possible for the students to continue their work with little or no aid from their families.

The flooding of the universities with working-class students, with little or no inherited background of culture and study, is as sweeping, far-reaching, and debatable an experiment as the introduction of the most modern educational theories in the lower and middle schools. It is really very difficult to pass judgment on its success, from the academic standpoint up to the present time. Marks are proverbially an unreliable gauge of students' ability; and Russia has no grading system.

There are few if any genuinely impartial witnesses in the case. The Communist educational authorities naturally are inclined to take the most optimistic view of the situation, to attribute failures in the work of the higher schools largely to the lamentably defective education which Russian children received during the period of blockade and civil war and the very first years of the New Economic Policy. On the other hand some of the older professors and students who belong to the pre-war propertied and educated classes are so prejudiced against the new type of working-class student that they are inclined to paint the preparation and achievements of these academic newcomers in too dark a color.

An official in the Commissariat for Education estimated that the average student requires a period of five or five and a half years to cover a four-year university course, and that 35 or 40 per cent of the students who enter the universities graduate. I do not know whether these figures compare favorably or unfavorably with similar statistics in other countries; and in any event it would be dangerous to draw any too sweeping conclusions without being able to gauge precisely the standards of required scholarship.

Very possibly the comparative success or failure of the "class policy" in Soviet education can only be determined by life itself, by the quality of work of the future engineers, doctors, economists, chemists, and other specialists who are now being turned out under the new system. One's views regarding the inherent justice or injustice of the policy must inevitably be colored by one's own class sympathies. That systematic discrimination in favor of children of working-class and, to a lesser

extent, of peasant origin often creates a bitter personal tragedy for the middle-class student who cannot get the higher education to which he feels entitled by his natural gifts is unmistakable and undeniable. Before the War a similar situation existed in regard to bright Jewish students, who often found themselves passed over in favor of duller but irreproachably Orthodox fellow subjects.

On the other hand the whole Bolshevik Revolution is based on the class principle, which in turn involves the application of the American proverb that "to the victors belong the spoils." The Communist worker feels that it is only natural justice if he, or more often his son, should receive preference over the offspring of classes which may be regarded as bourgeois, or semi-bourgeois.

The proletarian element among the students is especially strong in the institutions and courses which deal with engineering subjects. The Communist Party has set as its goal that 65 per cent of the engineering students shall be of working-class origin. There is a much higher percentage of students from other classes in the courses dealing with art, literature, and pedagogy.

Professors in the universities, like the teachers in the lower and middle schools, are poorly paid, the standard rate for six hours of teaching per week being 150 rubles a month. This leads to a peripatetic tendency on the part of a good many professors, who arrange their schedules in such a manner that they can teach simultaneously in Moscow and in one more of the provincial universities. Former professors of history, economics, and kindred subjects who cannot adapt themselves to the Marxian requirements of the present day have in many cases been replaced; there have been comparatively few changes among the professors of mathematics, science, and other subjects which cannot very well be drawn into political controversy.

There is a strong urge for higher education in the Soviet Union; and the universities cannot accommodate even half of the applicants for admission. In the Moscow universities

and higher technical schools, out of twenty thousand applicants only six thousand could be accepted, in view of the physical limitations of dormitories, classrooms, and laboratories. Efforts are being made to divert at least part of the unsuccessful candidates into technical institutes, where they are trained for the middle posts in the industrial and commercial life of the country.

Besides the basic educational institutions which I have described, the primary and secondary schools, the rabfacs and the universities and technical institutes, Russia has several types of specialized schools. There are schools directly attached to factories, where young workers between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, who are not permitted to work full time, receive training in general subjects, with special emphasis upon the trades which they may wish to learn. There are the so-called "schools of peasant youth," country high schools with a strongly vocational bent, where the peasant boys are taught to combine study with agricultural pursuits.

The various republics making up the Soviet Union give instruction in their national languages; and, as education is not one of the subjects reserved for All-Union control, Ukraina, Trans-Caucasia, and White Russia are able to carry out their programme without referring directly to Moscow. However, such features as the introduction of ultra-modern pedagogical methods, the creation of rabfacs, and the application of the class principle in selecting university students are common to all the republics. The structure of the educational system in Ukraina is somewhat different from that of Russia proper, the Ukrainians laying more stress on narrow specialization in the organization of courses.

The Soviet Union is obliged to face the problem of educating not only its children but also a very large part of its adult population. At the time of the Revolution the part of the Russian Empire which is now included in the Soviet Union was over 60 per cent illiterate. This illiteracy was unequally distributed, being least in the large cities and greatest in some of the remote Asiatic regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The Soviet Government has aimed from the beginning at the introduction of general literacy; and substantial progress has been made in this field, although an enormous amount of work remains to be done. The Red Army administers educational along with military training; and no recruit is permitted to return to his home without knowing at least how to read and write. The trade-unions instituted courses to teach their own members. A society called "Down with Illiteracy," working in harmony with the Commissariat for Education, did some general work in the same field. With the aid of these and other agencies, over seven million adults have been taught to read and write since the Revolution; the number of pupils in the primary schools greatly increased, as has already been noted; and the percentage of illiteracy is now only a little above 40.

The percentage of literacy varies for people of different ages and classes. It is highest (68.9 per cent) for people between the ages of sixteen and thirty-four, and lowest (27.5 per cent) for people over fifty. In these comparative figures one can see progress. At the same time there are more than twenty million illiterates between the ages of eight and fifty in European Russia alone. And obviously general literacy is unattainable while almost a third of the children are unable to get any schooling.

One of the most tireless workers in the cause of eliminating illiteracy is Lenin's widow, Nadyezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya. She threw out the slogan: "The Carthage of illiteracy must be destroyed." Largely under her inspiration, the Union of Communist Youth launched a "cultural drive," directed predominantly against illiteracy. Groups of Young Communists entered all the districts of Moscow and other cities and towns, making a house-to-house canvass for illiterates and instituting courses for them. Many individual members of the Union pledged themselves to teach at least one person to read and write.

The programme of the Commissariat for Education calls for the elimination of illiteracy in 1934. By that time it is hoped also to introduce general compulsory elementary education, an

obvious prerequisite to universal literacy. I am personally inclined to regard this forecast as a little too optimistic, unless much greater financial resources are made available. The task of making the Asiatic peoples of the Soviet Union and the womenfolk of the Russian peasants generally literate is nothing short of stupendous. However, it seems certain that in the course of the next decade illiteracy, if not entirely wiped out, will at least be reduced to small proportions. In this field the Soviet Union is steadily passing from Asiatic to European educational standards.

To a greater or smaller degree the Revolution has laid its impress upon every branch of Russian intellectual life. This new influence is perhaps most marked in literature. Soviet literature is nationalistic, not in any chauvinistic sense, but in the sense of being, to a considerable extent, isolated from foreign cultural trends and drawing its themes, in the majority of cases, from the revolutionary and post-revolutionary Russian life. Without a fairly intimate knowledge of the social upheaval through which Russia has passed and the new psychological types which it has created one can have only a very imperfect comprehension of the spirit, and even of the substance, of many new Russian novels and poems.

In contrast to the period immediately preceding the Revolution, when mystical and æsthetic tendencies predominated, contemporary Soviet literature is generally naturalistic in character. In variety of theme and sophistication of thought it has gained considerably since the period of civil war, although as a whole it still makes the impression of something new and unformed, rough and uncouth.

In the matter of style the Soviet writers have gone through something of an evolution. In the first years every old literary form was regarded as antiquated and even "bourgeois." Futurism reigned in poetry, and prose writers vied with one another in seeking new, strange, unusual words and phrases. Now there has been a reaction against this tendency. The classics are no longer despised as models, and even those critics who are strictest in demanding 100 per cent Communist ideology in literature are willing to tolerate old forms of writing, provided they express properly new ideas.

The Soviet authors may be divided into two camps: the proletarian writers, who adhere to the theory that literature must primarily promote the realization of Communist aims and ideals, and the *poputchiki*, or "traveling companions," who have developed under Soviet influence but who claim for themselves more individual freedom in the choice and handling of themes and characters. Being less cramped by theoretical dogma, the poputchiki, as a group, display greater freshness and range of talent, although some individual works of the proletarian school are both interesting and well written.

It is perhaps a symptom of the essential newness of Soviet culture that Russia to-day seems to possess more than the normal share of "one-book authors," of writers who fail subsequently to live up to the promise of a single outstanding work. So a very cursory review of the conspicuous achievements of new Russian literature requires the mention of more authors and fewer books than might be necessary in the case of another country.

By the sketches included in his book, *Cavalry Army*, I. Babel has established himself as an author of unusual, although somewhat uneven talent, and it is only to be regretted that he has not followed this up with anything on a larger scale. Babel, a Jewish intellectual, found himself in the ranks of General Budenny's roughriding cavalry army, largely recruited from the wild horsemen of the Cossack steppes of southeastern Russia, which was an important instrument in the victories of the Red Army over the Whites and the Poles. Without revulsion, without sentimental glorification, with the blended pity and irony that one often finds in high literary art, Babel set down his more vivid war experiences.

Some episodes in Babel's work are really unforgettable. There is the tale of the woman who appeals to the subconscious chivalry of a carload of dissolute soldiers by appearing with a baby in her arms; the deceived soldiers throw her from the car and shoot her when they find that the baby is nothing but

a bag of salt, with which the woman is speculating. There is an almost epic piece of description of how the Cossack son in the Red Army kills his captured father in revenge for his younger brother, whom the father has killed earlier. Babel does not shrink from the element of horror that is never far absent in pictures of war; but he is not obsessed or overmastered by it. At his best he may be compared with De Maupassant, working on a greater and fresher store of wilder human passions.

In contrast to Babel, whose outlook is always materialistic, stands Boris Pilniak, who carries into Soviet literature some of the mysticism so characteristic of an earlier generation. Pilniak's best-known work, *The Bare Year*, is so chaotic in form and so difficult and unusual in phrasing that it makes far from easy reading. Yet it conveys quite vividly the atmosphere of the "bare years" of famine and civil war; the author shows the elemental destructive force of the Revolution in an obscure provincial backwater.

Peasant life is a favorite theme with the poputchiki, just as scenes of life in the Red Army and in the industrial working-class homes predominate in the writings of the proletarian authors. The Russian village is shown in varied lights in the works of three of the more talented poputchiki, Lydia Seifulina, Vsevolod Ivanov, and Leonid Leonov.

Seifulina, who is half-Tartar by origin and a former village teacher, depicts in *Virinea* the stirring of the village after the Revolution, the emergence of peasant Bolshevik types who refuse to listen to mentors from the educated classes, but insist on going their own way. Some Soviet critics feel that in this novel, strong in the direct, straightforward character of its heroine, somewhat rough in style, full of close-to-the-soil muzhik expressions, the peasant, for the first time, is self-depicted, instead of being described from outside or from above.

Ivanov's theme is the partisan war of the Siberian peasants against the White government of Admiral Kolchak. His *Armored Train 14–69*, which has been successfully presented

as a play by the Moscow Art Theatre, is perhaps the most striking of his tales, reaching a climax when a Chinese who is fighting in the ranks of the peasant insurgents throws his body across the rails to halt the advancing armored train of the Whites. Along with the regional atmosphere of the Siberian forests and swamps, Ivanov interprets very effectively the undisciplined, haphazard character of peasant uprisings, swelling in some cases to formidable proportions from quite trivial original causes.

Leonov, who is one of the most cultivated of the modern Russian authors and derives more directly than most of them from classical models, describes the village from still another angle in his *Badgers*, where the peasants are shown in revolt against the Communist grain requisitions. Leonov has his own approach to the Revolution, depicting it in *Badgers* as a struggle between the conscious, organizing will of the Communists and the elemental anarchical resistance of the grey peasant masses.

A young poputchik of unmistakable talent is Constantine Fedin. If one were asked to choose a modern Russian novel which could be read with understanding without any great knowledge of the revolutionary background, Fedin's *Brothers* would perhaps be as good a selection as any. Fedin is the harbinger of a tendency which is likely to grow stronger with the passing of time in Russia, that of interpreting fictional characters in terms of universal human passions, with only incidental reference to social and political environment.

Among the works of the avowedly proletarian writers, A. Fadaev's *Break-up* must take a high place. Taking as his theme the defeat and disintegration of a Red partisan detachment in Siberia, he makes out of his figures, not pegs for propaganda theses, but genuine and convincing human beings. His broad, sweeping descriptive style has been compared with that of Tolstoy; and while that likeness holds good only with considerable reservations, he is undeniably one of the more promising of the younger contemporary novelists.

The veteran Bolshevik author Serafimovitch, in *The Iron*

Flood, commemorates an almost unknown Anabasis of the Russian civil war, the retreat of an isolated Red Army in the North Caucasus over desert country amid the greatest hardships of famine and typhus. In *Cement*, a proletarian writer, Fyodor Gladkov, shows that the problem raised in Ibsen's *Doll's House* has not altogether disappeared in Soviet Russia; the hero, a Communist worker who has returned from service in the Red Army to take over the management of a factory, finds it difficult to reconcile himself with the fact that his wife, in his absence, has developed a great variety of public interests of her own.

Modern poetry, on the whole, is less significant and interesting than modern Russian prose. The finest poem inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution remains "The Twelve," written by Alexander Blok, one of the mystical poets of the pre-revolutionary generation who felt the torrential sweep of the Revolution and paid it an extraordinary, enigmatical allegorical tribute in this poem, where the shadowy figure of Christ bearing a red flag appears at the head of the twelve wild, carousing soldiers of the Red Guard as they march through the streets of deserted Petrograd. The poem has remarkable beauty and vividness of language; and if one hears it declaimed by the great actor of the Moscow Art Theatre, Vassily Katchalov, one realizes that the Revolution has here given birth to a work of genuine genius.

Sergei Essenine, peasant, alcoholic and ill-fated lover of the dancer Isadora Duncan, who committed suicide three or four years ago, is the most lyrically gifted of the younger generation of Russian poets. In his poetry one feels the play of strong contending forces, which doubtless helped to wreck his life. On one hand Essenine feels a pull of sympathy for the Revolution; on the other hand he remains a peasant rebel; he cannot bear to think of the Russian village, as he knew it, losing its old shape and personality under the pressure of the new mechanization.

The futurist poet, Vladimir Mayakovsky, has little of Essenine's instinctive flow of melodic verse, but his work, on

the formal side, shows considerable inventiveness and originality. His influence is visible to some extent in the writings of a trio of the younger Soviet poets, Zharov, Utkin, and Bezimensky, who all strum their lyres to the tune of vast enthusiasm over the new social order.

By all means the best-known Soviet poet among the masses is Demian Byedny, or Demian the Poor, a name which may have suited him in pre-revolutionary times, but which seems a trifle inapplicable now, when he is one of the most liberally paid authors in the Soviet Union. He is an out-and-out propagandist versifier, without literary pretensions; his best qualities are perhaps a rough sense for humor and parody and a faculty for adapting quickly popular expressions. He is an indefatigable writer on topical themes, and his daily poems were regarded as a valuable aid to the morale of the Red Army in the civil war.

If there is a new school of writers in Russia to-day, there is also a new and greatly enlarged reading public. The desire for knowledge that has unmistakably made itself felt among the masses since the Revolution, the reduction of illiteracy, the organization of many workers' clubs, each with its reading room and library, the institution of much new educational work in the army, all these factors have increased the number of people who read books and go to theatres. This is clearly reflected in the statistics of book production. In 1927, 32,649 new books were published in 221,257,941 copies, whereas in 1913, in the Russian territory now included in the Soviet Union, there appeared 26,850 new books in 99,942,603 copies. The number of copies has increased much more than the number of new books, another fact which testifies to wider reading habits. The Commissar for Education, Mr. Lunacharsky, remarked to me: —

"In pre-war times a promising new novel could count on a sale of three or four thousand copies. Now editions of twenty and twenty-five thousand are not uncommon."

An investigation of the Moscow trade-union libraries revealed a few suggestive facts about the reading tastes of various

classes of the population. Workers, it would seem, read mostly Russian authors, while office employees prefer translations from foreign writers. In Russian literature the workers display more preference for the classics than do the employees, who are more inclined to read modern authors. Maxim Gorky is the most popular classical author, with Turgeniev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky following in the order named. It is quite likely that the distribution of Tolstoy's works has increased as a result of the jubilee edition of his works which was published in connection with the one-hundredth anniversary of his birth.

Among foreign authors, Russian readers prefer Mark Twain, Upton Sinclair, Jack London, and Sinclair Lewis of the Americans; Galsworthy, Wells, and William J. Locke from England; Stefan Zweig, Heinrich Mann, and Bernhard Kellermann in Germany. The study of the Moscow libraries indicated that Russian and foreign novels (the latter in translation) were almost equally in demand.

Anyone who has heard the impassioned eloquence which a bearded *izvoschik* can impart to an argument with a fellow cabman, the almost lyrical zeal with which a vendor of indifferent fish from the Moscow River cries his wares, or the infinite tonal variations with which the skilled Russian beggar pleads his cause can scarcely escape the conclusion that the Russians are a people naturally endowed with considerably more than the average share of histrionic art. And the Russian theatre to-day, as was also the case in pre-war times, is one of the best in the world.

Since the Revolution there have, I think, been two broad changes in the Russian drama, one for the better and one for the worse. There has been a wave of experimentation with new production methods, some of them crude and unsuccessful, but others containing considerable elements of interest and vitality. On the other hand the quality of the new plays has deteriorated. Looking back over the repertory of the Art Theatre in the first period of its existence, in the early years of the present century, one realizes what the Russian theatre

of to-day misses through the absence of contemporary authors of the stature of Chekhov, Gorky, and Andreyev.

Every foreign student of the drama who comes to Moscow is apt to be struck first of all by the variety of methods of dramatic representation which one may witness in the city. These methods range from the height of classical realism, achieved in the Moscow Art Theatre, to the furthest extremes of expressionism and constructivism. Space forbids me to do more than summarize what seem to be the most important tendencies in contemporary Russian dramatic art.

The Moscow Art Theatre is still an unrivaled interpreter of the Russian classics; it has also shown great flexibility in adapting itself to the demands of the new audience and the new period. It is a far cry from Chekhov's *Sea-gull*, the first play which the Art Theatre presented, to Vsevolod Ivanov's *Armored Train 14–69*, a revolutionary work abounding in the most violent sort of physical action, which represents their latest production.

The evolution of the Art Theatre toward the inclusion in its repertory of an entirely new type of drama, where external action outweighs the internal psychological elements which have always predominated in the tradition of the Theatre, has been associated with the development of a group of young actors. One cannot yet distinguish in this young group individual personalities comparable with the giants of the older generation, such as Katchalov and Moskvin; but its ensemble work leaves little to be desired.

So now one may see a comedy of Ostrovsky or Aleksei Tolstoy's historical tragedy, *Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch*, played by the "old guard" of the Art Theatre, by Katchalov and Moskvin, Luzhsky and Leonidov, sometimes even by the founder of the theatre, Stanislavsky himself, although his health is failing now. And on the following night, in the same building one may experience a sharp sense of contrast by watching the younger members of the troupe perform *Armored Train 14–69* or Bulgakov's *Days of the Turbins* to an accompaniment of shooting, of troops entering a conquered city, of a train moving

across the stage, of many other accompaniments which were quite unknown in the pre-war Art Theatre. One thing binds these two different types of production together: the vividness and fidelity of the acting.

One finds an entirely different technique exemplified in the draughty, barnlike structure which serves as the theatre of Vsevolod Meierhold. This producer, who before the Revolution was known as an ingenious, resourceful, and original stage-director, cast in his lot with the Communists from the beginning of the Revolution and carried out a series of very iconoclastic experiments which aimed to change the method and even the nature of the conventional theatre. Meierhold ruthlessly banished curtain, footlights, elaborate costumes, everything calculated to create the theatrical illusion, to separate the actors from the audience. Scenes were shifted in full view of the spectators; pulleys, ladders, and scaffolding, the symbols of an industrial age, were substituted for conventional stage background; Meierhold trained his actors to be athletes, if not acrobats, and to express every emotion through some corresponding physical gesture, in accordance with the so-called theory of bio-mechanics.

The plays which Meierhold presented with this unusual technique were mostly devoted to revolutionary propaganda and satire, although one French farce, *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, proved both amusing and lively in this novel setting. Unlike the Art Theatre, which is admired by all but the most fanatical devotees of novelty at any cost, Meierhold's Theatre has always been a centre of the most violent controversies and differences of opinion.

Meierhold has found staunch supporters among the younger generation of playgoers and critics, who regard him as a pioneer in the new field of proletarian art. Foreign theatrical students, tired of old forms of staging and acting, have also bestowed enthusiastic praise upon him. On the other hand the old Russian intelligentsia, as a general rule, regards his theatrical experiments with little esteem; and this is not altogether due to indifference or aversion to the element of political propaganda which he infuses into most of his productions. There are Communists of unimpeachable Marxian orthodoxy who are bored or irritated by Meierhold's application of the theory of bio-mechanics; and high officials of the Soviet Government, when they go to the play, are more apt to be seen in the Art Theatre than in Meierhold's dramatic experimental laboratory.

Although Meierhold is often hailed as a prophet of proletarian drama, actual manual workers are not, I think, especially attracted by his performances, and on one occasion a worker wrote to a newspaper to complain that, while his factory was well supplied with free or cheap tickets for Meierhold's Theatre, the workers would appreciate it more if they could obtain readier access to playhouses where they really enjoyed themselves, such as the State Opera House and the Art Theatre. Meierhold rallies around him rather the young Communists with advanced æsthetic views; and they came to his support recently when the unsympathetic branch of the Commissariat for Education which controls the theatres proposed to close his establishment because of the heavy deficit which it had incurred.

Another deviation from the naturalistic tradition of Stanislavsky is exemplified in the Kamerny Theatre, which is under the direction of Alexander Tairov. Here the idea that the actor, rather than the play, is the thing is pushed to its furthest limits. Tairov once summed up the guiding principle of his theatre to me in the following two sentences: —

"The Art Theatre teaches the actor to forget that he is on a stage. We teach him to remember that he is on the stage during every moment of his playing."

One naturally finds in the Kamerny Theatre a great concentration upon facial expression and gesture and upon all the external accessories of the actor's trade, such as costume, lighting, stage arrangement, etc. At times the element of artificiality seems a little too strongly developed; yet the Kamerny Theatre has unmistakably developed a very gifted body of actors, who are perhaps at their best in the more intelligent type of musical comedy or light operetta.

Limitation of space prevents me from going further into descriptions of individual Russian theatres. It may be said generally that the Soviet theatre possesses in high degree the qualities of vitality and diversification; and there are several other playhouses which, in technique, if not in originality of ideas, deserve to rank with those which have already been mentioned. Acting has been very considerably popularized since the Revolution; and a wide network of amateur theatres has sprung up around the workers' clubs, which usually possess their dramatic circles, while there are said to be twenty thousand amateur theatrical groups in the peasant villages.

There is a visible disproportion between the high average dramatic capacity of the Russian theatre and the quality of most of the modern plays which are offered for their production. One of the most popular and certainly the most controversial of the new playwrights is Mikhail Bulgakov. His *Days of the Turbins*, a drama of the civil war in which some of the anti-Bolshevik officers are represented not as dehumanized monsters, but as gallant and personally sympathetic figures, futile defenders of a lost cause, plays season after season to crowded houses at the Art Theatre, where many an old "bourgeois" family comes to shed tears over the vivid representations of terrible, heroic, and pitiful scenes, which, to the Russians, still seem close at hand. Another play by Bulgakov, *The Apartment of Zoikina*, presented by the Studio of Vakhtangov, one of the best of the smaller Moscow theatres, is rather a sharp topical satire on Soviet life; and a third production, *Deep Red Island*, is a rollicking satire on censorship, which derives special point from the fact that Bulgakov himself has had considerable experience of Soviet censors. *Days of the Turbins* had to be substantially modified before it was presented, and one of his new plays, *Flight*, a picture of the life of the Russian émigrés, is delayed pending some final decision as to whether it may be given.

The work of Bulgakov naturally suggests the whole problem of censorship in the Soviet Union. Both literature and drama

are subject to this form of preliminary control, the censoring functions in regard to literature being exercised by Glavlit, which also rules on the admissibility of foreign books and periodicals, and in regard to the drama by the Repertory Committee. Mr. Anatole Lunacharsky, who in his capacity of Commissar for Education exercises a certain amount of supervision over the general intellectual life of the country, defined the objects of Soviet censorship to me as "the elimination of everything that is counter-revolutionary, pornographic, and mystical." He added that he personally was always inclined to apply these definitions only in the most liberal sense, and that the censorship was more criticized for being too lax than for being too severe.

Certainly far more latitude is permitted in purely cultural fields than in such subjects as politics and economics, where no deviations from Marxism are tolerated. The Soviet censorship, like every other, occasionally inevitably makes itself ridiculous. Some time ago the Repertory Committee, in a burst of zeal, forbade Wagner's *Lohengrin* as "religious and mystical," took Schiller's *Mary Stuart* off the boards on the ground that it was monarchistic, and proposed to cut a scene out of Tchaikovsky's opera, *Eugen Onegin*, on the ground that it showed too idyllic relations between peasants and landlords. This elicited a sharp protest from a fairly prominent Communist, Larin, who went so far as to nominate the Repertory Committee for a humorous prize which was being offered for the discovery of the biggest Soviet fool. In this case the Repertory Committee retreated to a certain extent, because the prohibition of *Lohengrin* was rescinded, and *Eugen Onegin* is still given in unmutilated form.

Rimsky-Korsakov's opera, *The Tale of the Unseen City Kitezh*, a work of extraordinary and unquestioned musical beauty and power, excited much heart-searching in censoring circles because of its profoundly religious spirit and its numerous scenes of mass prayer. A commission of three high educational authorities was actually appointed to attend performances and gauge their psychological effect upon the audiences.

The opera was given during parts of two seasons, but has now been omitted from the repertory of the State Opera House.

In general the rule is laid down and pretty faithfully upheld that censorship must keep its hands off recognized classics. It is difficult to estimate how much censorship affects modern Russian literature, because it is impossible to judge the amount and merit of work which is forbidden. In this matter there are two conflicting tendencies, of which sometimes one, sometimes the other, seems to take the upper hand. Mr. Lunacharsky and some other prominent figures in Soviet cultural life take a sympathetic and tolerantly intelligent attitude toward the work of young non-Communist writers and protect them from persecution and hostile discrimination so far as possible, recognizing that art is likely to lose vitality if it is too tightly compressed within dogmatic limits. On the other hand there is no lack of fanatical upholders of 100 per cent Marxism in literature and art, quick to pounce on the slightest symptom of an unorthodox attitude toward the Soviet social order. A Communist publicist, Fritche, on one occasion declared: —

"A critic is not a man of learning, but a fighter, who must tear the mask from the face of the class enemy."

And P. M. Kerzhentzev, another stalwart upholder of pure proletarian canons in art, is quoted as saying in a literary discussion at the Communist Academy: —

"Literature for us is a weapon of political education. We are convinced that in regard to the great majority of the poputchiki we can exert influence by methods of ideological persuasion. In regard to those writers who are organically foreign to us, we do not renounce other methods of struggle, such as taking individual plays off the repertory, forbidding the printing of their works, etc."

As a matter of fact direct censorship probably has a less hampering effect upon the development of the non-Communist writers who come under the label of poputchiki than those "methods of ideological persuasion" to which Mr. Kerzhentzev refers. It is pretty obvious that if a man who does not think or feel as a Communist is induced in some way to write as if he

were one, both his personal integrity and his artistic creation are likely to suffer in the process. One of the secondary writers of the present day has described this problem with sympathy and talent in his short story, "The Problem of Non-partisanship."

In no field of art does the Soviet Union stand so high by comparison with other countries as in that of the moving picture. The organizing and imaginative genius of a number of gifted producers, among whom S. Eisenstein and V. Poduvkin are the most prominent, the natural histrionic talent of the Russians, the frequent choice of dramatic historical episodes for scenarios in preference to the banal and standardized Hollywood love stories — all these factors outweigh Russia's poverty and technical backwardness and place the country well to the fore, so far as kinema production is concerned.

What are the characteristics of Soviet moving-pictures? Subordination of the individual to the mass, building of productions about ideas rather than about single actors, strong sympathy with Communist principles, careful attention to the reconstruction of even minor details in historical settings — these traits are in greater or less degree common to the majority of outstanding Soviet film productions.

Eisenstein, whose "Potemkin" is perhaps the best known Soviet film abroad, carries the idea of exalting the mass at the expense of the individual to its extreme limits. In "Potemkin," which deals with an actual episode in the 1905 Revolution, one does not see naval officers and sailors as separate characters; one is shown only the revolt of one class or caste against another. The essential spirit of mutiny has probably never been so vividly and faithfully represented on the screen. Eisenstein's "October," an effort to depict the Bolshevik Revolution, is less effective than "Potemkin" because the subject is too overwhelmingly vast to be reduced within a manageable compass.

Whereas Eisenstein presents only historical figures in his "October," Poduvkin builds his film of the same period, "The End of St. Petersburg," around the story of a raw peasant lad

who from an unconscious strikebreaker develops into a president of a soldiers' committee and a revolutionary agitator. His more recent production, "The Descendant of Genghiz Khan," also goes further than the work of Eisenstein in employing the motives of romanticism and interest in an imaginary hero. Poduvkin is a master of revolutionary symbolism and irony; in his "End of St. Petersburg" one sees in quickly alternating succession the excitement on the bourse as the stocks of war industries rush upward, and the column of soldiers, herded on to a ghastly death in the trenches.

What has been the post-revolutionary development in other spheres of intellectual and artistic life? Russia has never occupied a foremost place in painting and sculpture; and while there has been a visible widening in the scope of themes chosen by modern artists (the factory and the field are very much to the fore in any exhibition of new Russian painting), there does not seem as yet to be any work so challenging as to require detailed analysis and consideration. The technical excellence in engraving seems higher than is the case in painting and sculpture, perhaps for the materialistic reason that there is always a market for engravings, whereas the collective patron in the shape of the Soviets, trade-unions, and other public bodies has not adequately replaced the wealthy art connoisseur of the past.

Russia is fairly well represented in modern music, but its two most distinguished representatives, Stravinsky and Prokofiev, live abroad; and this is also true of the composer-pianist Rachmaninov and of the great singer-actor, Fyodor Chaliapine. The performances at the State Opera House, often distinguished by the artistic quality of the stage settings, are lacking as a rule in first-rate singing. The repertory is predominantly national: there is a good representation of Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, and Moussorgsky, with a few of the better-known French and Italian operas and one or two of Wagner's for variety. Little has been produced in the way of novelty, if one excepts a spirited ballet, "The Red Poppy," which presents a series of episodes from the Chinese

Revolution as seen through Soviet eyes. The opera in Leningrad is more modernistic in tendency and has given a number of works by Ksenic, Prokofiev, and other living composers.

Scientific work in Russia was almost suspended during the time of blockade and civil war, but has now revived and in some respects even expanded, although it is still hampered by lack of the necessary facilities for contact with foreign countries. Especially significant have been the researches of the Leningrad Professor Pavlov in the field of conditional reflexes. Although Pavlov distinctly belongs to the old school in his intellectual tastes and permits himself perhaps more liberty than any other person within the Soviet frontiers in expressing disapproval of certain phases of Bolshevik theory and practice, his experiments, showing how far conduct is affected by reflexes, are interpreted by the Communists as furnishing new scientific proof of their materialistic interpretation of life. So the Soviet authorities have thus far ignored Pavlov's critical outbursts and supplied him quite liberally with funds for his laboratory.

Professor Lazarev has achieved distinction in psychophysiology, and there has been substantial progress in the scientific exploration of some of the more remote parts of the Soviet Union. The programme of intensive industrialization on which the Soviet Government has embarked places a premium upon the development of the applied sciences; and a number of experimental institutes in chemistry, physics, and other fields, which have grown up under the Supreme Economic Council, have done valuable work.

What have been the fruits of the Russian cultural revolution, which finds so many forms of expression, in the adoption of new educational methods and standards, in the change in the very character of the student body, in the post-revolutionary tendencies of art and literature? It is my impression that Russian national culture has acquired a much wider quantitative base, while sustaining a certain amount of at least temporary qualitative deterioration.

"Dark" was a favorite, expressive, and not altogether inac-

curate adjective for the Russian masses before the Revolution, with their high percentage of illiteracy and their consequent isolation from the most elementary ideas of science and culture. There are still plenty of dark corners in the Soviet Union; but the generally progressive effect of the Revolution in the field of popular enlightenment is, I think, unmistakable. Not only have the book, the theatre, the lecture on cultural or scientific themes, become accessible to far larger numbers of people; not only has there been a substantial diminution of illiteracy; but the mental attitude of the masses has changed, has become more Westernized. In the peasant districts, for instance, one can still find much ignorance, poverty, dirt; but one seldom now encounters such purely superstitious manifestations as were more or less common in Tsarist times, when the peasants would be frightened by the appearance of a new mechanical machine or would attack doctors in times of cholera epidemic on the suspicion that they were poisoning the wells.

The effect of the Revolution on the small highly educated class which inevitably exerts a determining influence upon the quality of every national culture has been quite different. The old Russian intelligentsia, with all its faults, so often depicted and satirized by Russian classical authors, was one of the most broadly cultured in the world. It is still not uncommon, among the older generation of educated Russians, to find an eminent mathematician who is also a distinguished amateur musician, or a talented writer who has received a thorough medical education.

It is perhaps too soon to judge the new Soviet intelligentsia. But, so far as one can observe, it gives every sign of being much more narrowly specialized in its interests. Superior, perhaps, to their predecessors in will and energy, the Soviet students as a rule give the impression of being inferior in breadth of erudition, in the capacities of reflection and analysis. It could scarcely be otherwise, because the first generation of a new class that has come into power can scarcely fail to be cruder and rawer, culturally, than its predecessor.

During a visit to the Ukrainian city of Kiev, the third in

size in the Soviet Union, I was struck by the contrast between the leading newspaper of pre-revolutionary Kiev and the present newspaper of the city. The old *Kievskaya Misl*, which I consulted for historical information, was a ripe, mature newspaper, comparing favorably with the best European newspapers in the quality and amount of its foreign news and literary reviews, in the philosophic character of its leading articles. The modern Kiev newspaper was largely given over to reports of meetings, propagandist articles, urging the success of this or that or the other governmental measure, local details of factory and village life. Its contact with the outside world was restricted to a few short, dry telegrams from the official Soviet Telegraphic Agency; it had little or no intellectual atmosphere.

Yet in this externally unpromising newspaper I found at least one item which seemed to reflect the progressive influence of the Revolution. It described the opening of a new evening course for workers, and told how an old night watchman had shown great interest in learning about Giordano Bruno and had carefully written down the name of this mediæval martyr of science. And a woman of the formerly well-to-do classes with whom I became acquainted remarked that her servant had asked her an unusual question: "When did the Middle Ages begin?"

Which is more important, to issue well-edited newspapers for the cultivated minority or to scatter broadcast seeds of interest in Giordano Bruno and the Middle Ages among people who most probably in pre-war days would have been totally illiterate? I shall not attempt to answer this question. But I think it may be said with safety that the process of leveling, of ironing out or at least reducing the great differences and contrasts so characteristic of Old Russia, is quite as marked in the cultural field as in the social and economic life of the Soviet Union.

XIII

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE RUSSIAN SOUL

ATHEISM has become almost a state creed in the "Holy Russia" of the Tsars. Under the Constitution the Soviet Government recognizes the two principles of freedom for all forms of religious faith and complete separation of church and state. But renunciation of religious faith is a condition of membership in the ruling Communist Party and in its junior organization, the Union of Communist Youth; and no effort of agitation and propaganda is spared to wean away the peoples of the Soviet Union from all forms of religious practice. The uncompromising hostility of Communism toward religion was expressed by Lenin in the following terms: —

"Religion is one of the forms of spiritual oppression, lying everywhere on the masses of the people, who are oppressed by eternal work for others, need and isolation. The helplessness of the exploited classes in their struggle with the exploiters just as inevitably generates faith in a better life beyond the grave as the helplessness of the savage in his struggle with nature produces faith in gods, devils, miracles, etc. To him who works and is poor all his life religion teaches passivity and patience in earthly life, consoling him with the hope of a heavenly reward. To those who live on the labor of others religion teaches benevolence in earthly life, offering them a very cheap justification for all their exploiting existence and selling tickets to heavenly happiness at a reduced price. Religion is opium for the people." [1]

Apart from this conception that religion serves to divert the masses from class war and class struggle, Communist opposition to it rests upon the unquestioned acceptance of Marxist materialism, which excludes the possibility of any supernatural or idealistic interpretation of the phenomena of life and nature. It should be emphasized that Communist hostility is directed impartially against all religions and not solely, or necessarily chiefly, against the Russian Orthodox Church. Lenin's widow, Nadyezhda Krupskaya, who is a prominent figure in the Soviet Commissariat for Education, once declared that the sectarians (as dissenters from the Orthodox Church are called in Russia), by disregarding superstitious practice and "attempting to smuggle in the idea of God by contraband means," represented a greater menace than the Orthodox believers. And this idea of Krupskaya's, voiced several years ago, is finding more and more support in Communist antireligious circles to-day.

[1] See *Thoughts of Lenin about Religion*, by Emilian Jaroslavsky, p. 10. Published by the State Publishing Company, Moscow, 1925.

This struggle for the Russian soul between the Communists, with their goal of a new society in which religion shall have no place, and the Orthodox Church, the sectarians, Orthodox Jews, and Mohammedans, each group offering some special appeal to its own worshipers, is one of the most complicated and interesting of the psychological dramas which are being enacted in the Soviet Union to-day. The struggle is symbolized in one of the main squares of Moscow, where, on a brick building, opposite the famous shrine of the Iberian Virgin,[1] were inscribed the words: "Religion is opium for the people."

In many a worker's home one can find similar evidences of this struggle. In one corner of the room the wife continues to burn candles before the traditional Russian ikons, or carved images representing Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and scenes from the Bible and the lives of the saints. In another place the Communist husband has arranged his "Lenin corner," strikingly and suggestively similar to the ikon corner in general idea, with the pictures of Lenin from childhood to death, portraits of other Communist leaders, and a few Communist books and pamphlets.

[1] Shortly after this chapter was written, this historic shrine was demolished on the ground that it represented an obstruction to traffic. In view of the more vigorous antireligious policy of recent times one might easily perceive a different significance in the demolition.

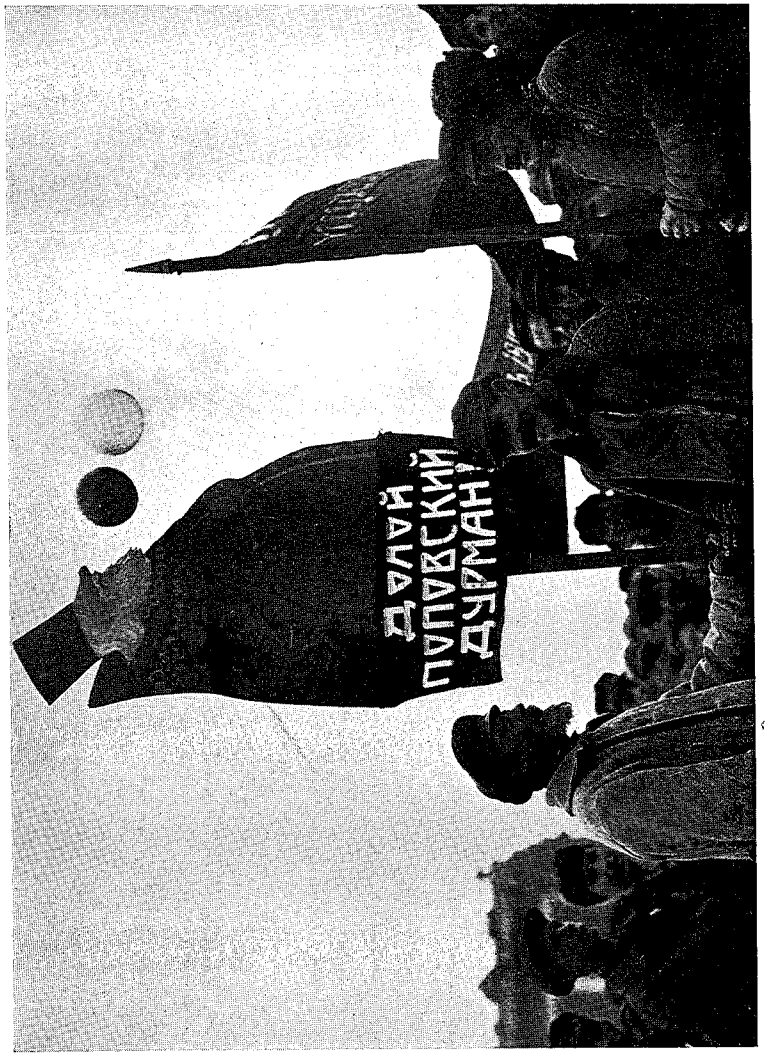
I once stood in a factory church which had been turned into a workers' club; and here again the substitution of new objects of reverence for old was very striking. Instead of pictures of the saints, pictures of Marx and Lenin. Instead of the rich decorations of the typical Orthodox church, red streamers proclaiming that with Communism would come the final liberation of humanity. An adherent of the Russian church with whom I talked once said: —

"The Communists say that religion is opium for the people. But we can say, with much more reason, that Communism is opium for the people."

Certainly in Communism, as in every strong new idea, there is an element of boundless faith, rising sometimes almost to self-hypnotism. Trotzky, in one of his most eloquent orations, delivered in 1918, depicted the future paradise which religion promises to humanity, and then, in his peroration, urged his exhausted, hungry, enthusiastic working-class audience to go out and work and fight for the true paradise, "the paradise in this world," which would come with the final victory of the Revolution.

Soviet and Communist policy in the field of religion, as in many other matters, has gone through several evolutionary stages, and it is by no means certain that the last stage has yet been reached. The first blows of the Revolution fell most heavily on the Orthodox Church, which was so closely bound up with the Tsarist system that it was almost bound to suffer materially, if not spiritually, by the violent overthrow of the latter.

Before the War the Orthodox Church had no real independence; the Tsar's will was as supreme there as it was in the state. The office of Patriarch, which existed in the mediæval Russian Church, was abolished by Peter the Great and very great power in regulating ecclesiastical affairs was vested in a lay official, the Procurator of the Holy Synod. The Tsarist Government was very intolerant in its attitude toward dissenters from the Orthodox Church, of whom, notwithstanding the restrictions and persecutions to which they were sub-



"Down with the Priests' Imposture"
A Placard Carried by Moscow Workers on the Anniversary of the November Revolution

jected, there was a considerable number. The sects ranged in character from the Khlists, who indulged in promiscuous orgies as a form of religious exaltation, and the Skopts, who practised unnatural self-mutilation, to rationalistic sects like the Baptists and Evangelical Christians, which in doctrine were not far removed from European Protestantism.

That the Orthodox Church was seriously weakened as an independent spiritual factor by its close identification with the Tsarist state system can scarcely be doubted. Attendance at church was largely mechanical, being strongly influenced by official and social pressure. The poorly paid and poorly educated village priests were often required to act as spies for the police. Perhaps the most striking commentary on the internal hollowness of Orthodoxy is furnished by the two facts that Count Leo Tolstoy, certainly one of the greatest Christian personalities in Russian history, died an excommunicate because of his radical social views, while the incredibly dissolute Siberian monk, Rasputin,[1] as a result of the hypnotic influence which he had acquired over the hysterical Tsarina, was able to exert almost dictatorial influence in affairs of church and state alike during the last years before the fall of the Romanov dynasty. This internal dry-rot in the fabric of the Orthodox Church was an important contributory cause of its weakness in the post-revolutionary period.

The Provisional Government which held power during the period between the overthrow of the Tsar and the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917 did not have time to formulate a definite and all-inclusive ecclesiastical policy. A Church Congress held in the autumn of 1917 revived the office of Patriarch, and elected the ecclesiastic Tikhon as its first occupant. The first blows of the Revolution fell on the Orthodox Church, rather than on the sectarians, who were, indeed, relieved from the disabilities under which they had suffered in pre-war times. Church property was included in the sweeping nationalization measures of the Soviet Government, and all state aid was with-

[1] There is a suspicion that Rasputin was a Khlist; and his morals, if not his doctrines, certainly suggested the influence of that orgiastic sect.

drawn from the Church, which was made dependent upon the contributions of believers. Priests, monks, and ministers of all religions were disfranchised under the new Soviet Constitution; and the Soviet Government, besides eliminating religious instruction in the schools, passed a law prohibiting in general the giving of religious instruction to children in groups of more than three under the age of eighteen.

During the Russian civil war the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church and the majority of the priests were, quite naturally, counter-revolutionary in their sympathies. The victory of the Whites would have meant, most probably, the restoration of the Church in all its old pomp and circumstance. The Patriarch Tikhon in 1918 pronounced a solemn anathema against the Bolskeviks, and many ecclesiastics in territory occupied by White armies showed moral and material sympathy for the counter-revolutionary cause. This provoked reprisals on the part of the Soviet authorities, and priests and bishops were not last among the categories of people who suffered under the Red Terror.

The conflict between the revolutionary state and the Orthodox Church reached its climax when the Soviet authorities in 1921 decided to requisition the treasures of the Church and sell them for the purposes of famine relief. There was some passive and a little active resistance to the carrying out of this measure; and ecclesiastics who were implicated in this resistance were ruthlessly punished, some being shot and many exiled and imprisoned. The Patriarch Tikhon was placed under house arrest.

The situation was somewhat changed in 1922 by the emergence in the Church of a number of groups which advocated a break with Tikhon's policy of noncoöperation with the Soviet Government and a reorganization of the Church on the basis of drastic changes in ritual, ecclesiastical structure, and social outlook. Space prevents a detailed review of the rise and fall of these groups, which ultimately merged into a single so-called Living Church organization, headed by a synod, or council, and without the office of Patriarch. Many of the more conservative believers looked on this whole movement with considerable aversion and suspicion as a device promoted by the Soviet Government to split and weaken the Church; and very probably there was some ground for these suspicions.

Seeing the Church threatened with schism and recognizing the stability of the Soviet Government, Tikhon made a confession of past error and a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet régime in the spring of 1923. The legal proceedings against him were then quashed, and he lived during the remainder of his life in the Donskoy Monastery, in Moscow, honored as Patriarch by the majority of believers who did not adhere to the Living Church movement.

After Tikhon's death in the spring of 1925 it was impossible to elect another Patriarch, because so many bishops were in prison or had seceded to the Synod that a canonical quorum could not be secured. Moreover, the Soviet Government was not disposed to permit the holding of a church council for this purpose. One of Tikhon's intimate associates, Peter, by an informal process of selection, was recognized as his successor; but he was not sufficiently compliant with certain demands of the Soviet authorities in regard to the repudiation and excommunication of representatives of the Church abroad who assumed an anti-Soviet attitude. Eventually Peter was banished. The present informal head of the former Tikhonite wing of the Orthodox Church, Sergei, has adopted a more conciliatory attitude and has been left unmolested up to the present time, although no leader of the Orthodox Church can hope to lead a very secure and unharassed existence in the Soviet Union to-day.

The Living Church has discarded about 90 per cent of its original proposed changes in doctrine and ritual, and is now severed from the Tikhonites largely as a result of personal differences among the leaders. The continued separation is doubtless regarded with favor by the Soviet Government, which prefers a weakened and divided to a united and strong Church. The nationality policy of the Soviet Government has helped to promote further disunion in the Orthodox ranks

by encouraging the emergence of nationalist churches in Ukraina and Georgia, which dispute the field with the Tikhonites and the Living Church alike.

For some time after 1923 there were no striking new developments in the Communist policy on the religious question. Abandoning as tactless and fruitless such violent means of antireligious agitation as the holding of processions in which sacred rites were parodied and the taking over of churches for clubs where this did not correspond with the will of a distinct majority of the local population, the Communists concentrated their attention upon educational antireligious propaganda. A society called the Union of the Godless took over the direction of this propaganda, issuing several magazines and sending organizers and lecturers all over the country to spread the doctrine of atheism.

In 1928, however, symptoms of a more active antireligious policy began to appear. Had the Communists been obliged to reckon only with the Orthodox Church they might have been willing to trust their cause to time and propaganda, because, while there are still enough believers to crowd the churches to overflowing on the great Russian holiday of Easter, attendance at church on ordinary Sundays shows a distinct diminution. The hold of the Orthodox Church on the peasantry has been severely shaken.[1] As far back as 1926, Emilian Jaroslavsky, Secretary of the Control Committee of the Communist Party and perhaps the most active atheistic leader in Russia, told me

[1] After a fair amount of travel in Russian peasant districts, I am convinced that the profound and overwhelming devotion to Orthodoxy, attributed to the Russian peasant by some pre-war investigators, was either greatly exaggerated or has diminished almost to the vanishing point since the Revolution. Although there is little antireligious propaganda among the peasants, I did not find a single peasant priest who did not admit a falling off in church attendance, especially among the youth, and who did not regard the future very pessimistically. True, the old customs of church weddings, burials, and christenings persist, but more from habit than from any accompanying sense of deep religious conviction. I was in a Don Cossack village (the last place where one would find active sympathy with Communist ideas on religion or anything else) on a religious holiday, and found most of the male population standing about on the village green and debating the division of the village hay, quite oblivious of the church bells which were calling them to service. It is a curious and yet psychologically not incomprehensible fact that in the cities, where antireligious propaganda is much more widespread, the churches, as a rule, seem to be better attended.

that half the industrial workers had definitely broken with religion. The two million members of the Union of Communist Youth represent a fairly large proportion of the young workers and students and a fair sprinkling of peasant boys and girls. One might not be willing to vouch that no peasant Young Communist is married in a church, but certainly no young man or woman of strong or profound religious convictions would join a society which treats antireligious agitation as one of its most important features.

But side by side with these evidences of a weakening of religion appeared another tendency, which has been giving more and more concern to the Communists and has finally led to the adoption of a more drastic and active antireligious policy. This was the steady growth of the sectarians, especially of the Baptists and Evangelical Christians. It is asserted by Communist specialists in the antireligious movement that there are now almost a million registered members of sects, about treble the pre-war number. Counting in families and sympathizers, it is estimated that several million people are in the habit of attending the sectarian services.

There were several reasons for this growth. Having experienced no favor, but only persecution, from the Tsarist state, the sectarians were not adversely affected by its downfall. They were less vulnerable to attack on the ground of identification with the autocratic régime. The War and the Revolution, coming in rapid succession, shook the traditional faith of the Russian people to its base. Many became indifferent or joined the ranks of the convinced atheists; but many more came into the state of wavering and doubt which is psychologically most favorable to apostles of a new faith. And the sectarians developed a far-flung missionary activity, of which the following note in the *Baptist*, organ of the Federative Baptists of the Soviet Union, is typical: —

"Y. Y. Vins, who was invited to work by the whole Far Eastern brotherhood of Baptists, went enthusiastically about his tasks. All felt and saw with their eyes that the cause was in experienced hands. Brother Vins carried out a complete

reorganization of the local department of the All-Russian Union of Baptists, carried out reforms which were very beneficial to the brotherhood and to the Cause of God, and in general correctly organized the evangelical activity.

"After stubborn, sometimes very difficult work, with the help of certain brethren, and, most of all, with the help of God, Y. Y. Vins achieved good results. Now in the Far East are counted hundreds of societies and groups and thousands of members." [1]

In the same number of the *Baptist* were printed group pictures of the orchestra of the Baptist society in Blagoveschensk, in Siberia, and the Baptist choir in Slavgorod, a remote Siberian town. The sectarians began to develop a network of clubs, recreation circles, mutual-aid societies, artels, or groups for coöperative labor. All this activity did not go unnoticed in the Soviet press, where it was treated as unpleasantly successful competition with the organizing efforts of the Communist Party and the Union of Communist Youth. So a writer in the newspaper, *Trud*, of February 17, 1929, prefacing his article with the observation that "in a number of workers' regions ripen the poisonous and disgraceful fruits of the activity of priests and ministers in the shape of new churches and prayer-houses," states that in such widely separated towns as Polotzk, on the western frontier, and Vladivostok, the chief Russian port on the Pacific, the Baptists are opening meetinghouses and clubs and developing propaganda among the workers. Even in such a revolutionary proletarian centre as Leningrad sectarian religious agitation in workers' districts elicited much unfavorable notice.

Several blows fell on the Baptists during the winter of 1928–1929. A group of some sixteen Baptists, Russian emigrants who had been trained in a Baptist seminary in Philadelphia, in America, and returned to Russia in some irregular fashion in 1920 or 1921, were arrested in White Russia, where they maintained a coöperative farm, and charged with counter-revolutionary agitation. Shortly afterwards a man named Shevchuk,

[1] See the *Baptist*, No. 7 for 1927, p. 26.

alleged to be in the confidence of the Baptist communities in Ukraina, where this sect is especially strong, was arrested on the Soviet-Polish border, accused of espionage and plying a contraband trade. In the spring of 1929 the Baptist training college in Moscow found itself obliged, at least temporarily, to suspend activity, although at the time of writing I do not know whether or not it has been definitely and permanently closed.

More important than these minor episodes was the new law regulating the activities of religious organizations in the Soviet Union, promulgated in the latter part of April 1929.[1] Two or three provisions of this law strike at the very heart of two main aspects of sectarian activity, the sending out of missionary propagandists from central headquarters and the extension of church activity into educational, recreational, and benevolent fields. Paragraph 19 of the law provides that "the region of activity of ministers of cults, religious preachers, messengers, etc., is limited to the place of residence of the religious unit which they serve and the place of existence of the corresponding house of worship." This is pretty definitely aimed at itinerant preachers and missionaries.

Under paragraph 17 of the law religious organizations are forbidden: "(*a*) to create mutual-aid funds, coöperatives, productive societies, and, in general, to use the property in their possession for any ends except the satisfaction of religious needs; (*b*) to render material support to their members; (*c*) to organize special meetings for children, young people, women, and for prayer, and in general to organize meetings, groups, courses, departments, etc., for Bible study, literature, manual training, and education in religion, and also to arrange excursions and children's parks, to open libraries and reading rooms, to organize sanatoria and medical aid.

"In buildings and houses of worship may be kept only books which are necessary for the observance of the given cult."

The Communist state is a jealous state. It desires to maintain a monopoly on education, social-welfare work, literary and recreational training. It does not wish to see sectarian or

[1] The full text of this law is printed in *Izvestia* for April 26, 27, and 28.

Orthodox clubs, coöperatives, reading rooms, and similar institutions developing to a point where they may win away souls from the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

Another indication of the new more active antireligious policy of the Communist Party is the movement to make the schools of the country not only areligious, as they have been ever since the Revolution, but definitely antireligious in teaching. The Commissar for Education, Anatole Lunacharsky, published in *Pravda* of March 26, 1929, an article entitled "The Antireligious Struggle in the School," the general purport of which is sufficiently visible from the following sentence: —

"Theatres, concerts, moving pictures, radio, visits to museums, richly illustrated scientific and especially antireligious lecturers, well-arranged periodical and non-periodical children's literature — all this must be set in motion, developed, completed, or created for the great objective of most quickly transforming the growing generation into an absolutely atheistic one."

Mr. Lunacharsky addresses the following significant warning to religious teachers, whom he estimates at 30 or 40 per cent of the total number of Soviet pedagogues: —

"The believing teacher in the Soviet school is an awkward contradiction, and departments of popular education are bound to use every opportunity to replace such teachers with new ones, of antireligious sentiments."

In conformity with this tendency, a number of children's parades and demonstrations against religion have been organized in the larger Russian centres.[1] Several other evidences of the strengthened antireligious policy may be noted. A

[1] Such demonstrations usually couple drink with religion as enemies of socialism. In the Communist mind the connection between alcoholism and religion is apparently very close, and the two are usually bracketed together in the speeches of Communist leaders. Orthodox holidays are invariably turned into gigantic drinking bouts, but the sectarians, as a general rule, preach total abstinence. In a textile factory I found that the head of the local Union of the Godless was also the president of the factory Anti-alcohol Society. He seemed to feel that the workers parted with their religious convictions more easily than with their drink, remarking regretfully that in the factory settlement of some seven thousand workers it was difficult to find a president of the Anti-alcohol Society who could be trusted to remain sober on all occasions.

number of articles have appeared in the press urging the printers to boycott religious literature by refusing to print it.[1] There is also an agitation against the leasing of municipalized houses to religious bodies for purposes of worship; and I have heard that private people who lease houses to such bodies are sometimes subjected to so much hostile pressure from the authorities that they find it inadvisable to continue the practice. This affects the sectarians much more than it does the Orthodox Church, which is still well provided with houses of worship. The Baptists, for instance, have 400 chapels of their own, 800 which are leased, and 3800 places of worship in private quarters.[2]

The tendency to close churches, usually turning them into clubs, schools, or other public buildings, is gaining in momentum. During 1927, 17 churches, 34 monasteries, 14 synagogues, and 9 mosques were closed; in 1928 the figures were appreciably higher, rising to 359 churches, 48 monasteries, 59 synagogues, and 38 mosques.[3] Such closings are not supposed to be carried out by purely administrative authority, but only after the local "toilers" have expressed their will on the question. It is unlikely, however, that all of these sequestrations correspond with the wishes and feelings of the congregations affected.

During the early part of 1929 I attempted to gain some further knowledge of the situation on what the Communists like to call "the antireligious front," through a series of visits to the headquarters of the Union of the Godless, the Baptists, and the Living Church wing of the Orthodox Church. The high dignitaries of the Tikhonite wing, for prudential reasons, are not disposed to talk with foreigners.

I had paid a visit to the Union of the Godless in 1926, and

[1] About a score of religious publications are permitted to appear in the Soviet Union. They appear, usually, once a month or less frequently, and are restricted by the Glavlit, the central organ of censorship, to a few thousand copies at the most for each issue.

[2] See the *Baptist*, No. 7 for 1927, p. 5.

[3] See *Workers' Gazette*, No. 2143. Only a small fraction of the churches and other houses of worship have been closed, since it is estimated that there are 50,000 functioning churches in the Soviet Union.

was impressed by the evidence of increased activity on the part of this organization. It had moved into new and larger quarters; typewriters were clicking; bundles of the society's publication, *Byezbozhnik*, or "Godless," were being prepared for the post. My informant, a tall young man who spoke with the ardor of a convinced Young Communist, summed up his viewpoint as follows: —

"Our society has more than doubled during the last year and now counts 600,000 members, organized in 12,000 branches, which work in factories, offices, and villages. Our agitation varies, depending upon the form of religion which we are combating and the class of the population among whom we are working. Our most dangerous enemies are the sectarians, because they have done away with the more silly ritualistic practices. However, their growth has been stopped recently.

"Among the peasants we emphasize the laws of natural science and show that thunder and lightning and hail are not supernatural or mysterious phenomena. Our village branches are supposed to cultivate garden plots, in order to demonstrate that good crops come, not from prayer, but from observing the rules of scientific agriculture. Among the workers we emphasize more the class character of religion as an instrument of capital enslavement. We publish a weekly journal, the *Godless*, with a circulation of 170,000, a biweekly magazine with 80,000 readers, and another journal, the *Antireligious Worker*, less popular in character and designed for our agitators, with a circulation of 20,000. We also arrange lectures and have issued twenty antireligious moving pictures. We have just opened a central antireligious museum."

A visit to this museum, which is located in the former famous Strastnoi Monastery, in the heart of Moscow, revealed an emphasis on two points: the alleged common origin of religions, illustrated by pictures and illustrations of various ancient myths and legends, and the identification of the Orthodox Church with the Tsarist system, driven home by exhibitions of manuscripts, figures about the wealth which churches and monasteries received from the imperial family and the nobility, etc.

Glancing through a specimen copy of the propagandist magazine, the *Godless*, one first noted an account of the alleged anti-Communist activity of priests, in league with the kulaks, or rich peasants, at the Soviet elections. There was a harrowing story about the "ikon of death," which people persisted in kissing, despite the risk of infection, during the great Moscow plague of 1771. A cartoon pilloried two enormously fat kulaks as "the support of the Church Council." As a light touch the magazine included a picture puzzle, a series of pictures which, when fitted together, would point an atheistic moral. Violently hostile articles about the Salvation Army and the Russian sectarian groups in Odessa, and portraits of priests participating in the funeral services for the former Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevitch, filled out the magazine.

The Baptists' headquarters was in the building of their seminary for preachers, which at the time of my visit had not been closed. Sixty-three "brothers" and nine "sisters" were studying there. One gained the impression of a religious sect that had grown spontaneously out of the masses of the people; the pictures of pioneer Russian Baptists which hung on the walls represented a collection of typical bearded peasant faces.

The spokesman for the society declared that 95 per cent of the Russian Baptists were peasants and most of the remainder workers, the society having made special progress among the miners of the Donetz Basin. In general the doctrine of the Baptists, like that of another large sect which very much resembles them, the Evangelical Christians, is quite similar to that of conservative evangelical Protestantism, being based on literal acceptance of the Bible. Baptist teaching is against smoking and drinking, against attending moving picture and theatrical performances, although concerts are regarded as allowable and moving picture representations of sacred scenes are sometimes given in churches.

The Baptists reckon 200,000 members and about 1,000,000 friends and sympathizers, counting in the families of the members. They are especially strong in the Ukrainian peasant villages. Their monthly magazine, the *Baptist*, was first

printed in 7000 copies; now this number has been cut down to 4000. At one time they were granted permission to print 25,000 Bibles; later this number was reduced to 2500, and the carrying out of the whole order seemed to be in doubt. The Baptists maintain mutual-aid funds for the benefit of their needy members. Their educational and recreational activities, even before the promulgation of the new law regulating religious organizations, had been stopped by administrative order, and they complained that they experienced great difficulty in leasing buildings for worship and that many of their rank-and-file members, besides their preachers, who are elected by their congregations, had been disfranchised.

Notwithstanding this atmosphere of actual and threatened repression, one carried away from the Baptist headquarters the same impression of fresh young strength that I have acquired in contact with sectarians in the villages. Unspoiled by prosperity the Russian sectarians have many of the qualities of faith, charitableness, and brotherly good will which one is apt to attribute to the early Christians. I shall not soon forget the impressive reply of a Ukrainian peasant lad who had just returned home from a term in prison for refusing to serve in the Red army. I asked him whether he had the right to refuse to serve, meaning to inquire whether Baptists in general were freed from the obligation of bearing arms.[1] He interpreted my question as a challenge to his action and replied, with a firm earnestness of conviction, quite equal to what one comes in Russia to associate with the more sincere and devoted Communists: —

"Of course, on the basis of the Word of God, I had the right to refuse to learn how to kill."

Most probably the Union of the Godless is correct in regarding such people as its most dangerous ideological enemies.

[1] A few very small traditionally pacifist sects are exempted from bearing arms under Soviet law, but the Baptists are not one of these groups. Probably with a view to averting friction with the authorities, the Baptists, in a national congress, decided to leave the question of bearing arms to the consciences of their individual members. The Baptist with whom I talked in the seminary declared that a considerable number of the younger members of the sect had conceived such an abhorrence for war that they were willing to endure any penalties rather than serve in the army.

One found little of the eager faith and hope of the Baptists in the magnificent ecclesiastical mansion which somehow escaped nationalization and serves as the headquarters of the Most Holy Synod, as the directing board of the Living Church wing of the Orthodox Church is called. I had been promised an interview with the head of the Synod, Alexander Vedensky, one of the leading intellectuals in the movement against the Patriarch Tikhon, but, as Vedensky was suffering from one of his chronic fits of heart trouble, I talked instead with a professor of theology. He declared that in dogma and ritual there were practically no differences between the two wings of the Orthodox Church. The Synod has introduced an innovation in permitting bishops to marry (Russian priests have always been allowed to marry), and desires to replace Old Slavonic in the church service with Russian.

"We are in favor of church reunion," declared the professor, "but the Tikhonites are stubborn and carrying on an agitation against us, spreading rumors that our ikons are not holy and will not work miracles. We hold about 35 per cent of the churches in the country. Our chief strength is in Leningrad and in the Kuban, and we are weakest here in Moscow."

The professor admitted that there had been a considerable exodus from the Church since the Revolution, some former believers giving up faith altogether, while others joined the ranks of the sectarians, whose number he estimated at several millions. While the Soviet Government is not inclined as a rule to show special favor to any religion, the Synod enjoys two privileges which are denied to the more conservative Tikhonites: to maintain theological seminaries, of which there are two, one in Leningrad and one in Moscow, and to issue a publication, the *Messenger of the Most Holy Synod*, which is filled with theological articles and polemical attacks on the Tikhonites and the sectarians.

I have devoted most of the chapter to a consideration of the position of the Christian religion, because most Russians adhered to it in pre-revolutionary times and the Communist campaign has naturally been largely concentrated against it. Neither of

the two largest non-Christian faiths in the Soviet Union, the Mohammedan and the Jewish, however, has escaped its share of the attack. Mohammedanism is a regulated system of life, rather than an intellectual creed; and antireligious propaganda in the Mohammedan centres of Central Asia and the Caucasus, the Crimea and the Volga-Tartar Republic, is inextricably bound up with the Soviet effort to remould its Asiatic population along more modern lines.[1] Cautious at first about offending the traditional habits of the Mohammedan peoples, the central and local Communist organizations, as the Soviet power has become more firmly established, have taken bolder and bolder steps in this direction. The number of murders of women who have discarded the veil indicates that there is still a strong psychology of resistance in the Soviet East, and that the mullahs, or Mohammedan priests, still retain substantial influence, at least in some places.

While Russian Orthodox Judaism has never been actively counter-revolutionary in the sense that many bishops and priests of the Russian Orthodox Church were counter-revolutionary (the threatening spectre of pogroms was sufficient to keep even the most conservative Jews, as a general rule, from desiring or working for the violent overthrow of the Soviet régime), Judaism is also "opium for the people" in the eyes of the Communists, and is exposed to much the same forms of hostile agitation and pressure. Almost simultaneously with the closing of the Baptist seminary in Moscow a Jewish rabbinical seminary which had existed semi-legally in Vitebsk Province was shut down. Jewish Communists are most active in urging their co-racialists to forsake religious practices; and synagogues, like churches, have been turned into workers' clubs. The general effect of this on Jews and Russian Christians has apparently been very similar: the lukewarm and indifferent fall off, but those who remain loyal are strengthened and deepened in their faith.

How will it end, this first conscious effort to make a large nation atheistic, this struggle for the Russian soul, or, as the

[1] More details of this effort are given in Chapters IX and XVII.

Communists deny the existence of either personal or national souls, this struggle for the moulding of Russian thought and character? In my opinion the issue depends largely upon how far religion is the product of such mechanical influences as habit, authority, tradition, early training, and how far it is a spontaneous psychological and spiritual need of human nature.

Obviously, so long as the Communist policy toward religion remains unchanged (and there is no reason to anticipate any abatement of the fundamental hostility, although there may be alternations of mildness and severity of method) religion will have no external basis of support. The influences of state, school, and society, which in other countries are generally either favorable to religion or at least neutral, will be cast solidly against it.

But in so far as religion is a matter of mature individual faith it will quite probably be strengthened rather than weakened by the period of trial and official disfavor through which it is passing. The Russian philosopher Soloviev described his countrymen as a "God-seeking people." And it will not be surprising if among those who turn away from the promised Communist "paradise in this world" old religious tendencies, both mystical and rationalistic, will be strengthened and new ones will arise.

XIV

YOUNG RUSSIA

Not the least important fact about the Russian Bolshevik Revolution is that a whole generation has now grown up under its influence. This interposes between the middle-aged and the young a gulf considerably wider than that which ordinarily exists between parents and their children. Even when there is no sharp difference of political and intellectual viewpoint there are almost certain to be striking differences of character and taste and temperament between the father, educated in the pre-revolutionary school, where everything tended to repress the individuality of the pupil and to discourage the formation of societies, and his son, who has passed through the two large Communist youth organizations, the Young Pioneers and the Union of Communist Youth, and who has been brought up in the Soviet school, where formal discipline is almost nonexistent.

What sort of younger generation has been forged in the revolutionary crucible? Here, as everywhere, generalizations are dangerous. In Russia, as in other countries, the strongest and most gifted personalities often swim against the current of their times; and it is not inconceivable that the Soviet epoch in Russian history will be remembered for some individuals who stood out against the mass tendencies.

But, if one deals in terms of general averages, it may safely be said that of all the qualities which were formerly regarded as characteristically Russian the Soviet youth retains only loquacity. Fondness for extended speech making is a common bond that unites Russians young and old. Apart from this the typical young Russian of to-day affords a good illustration of the fact that human and national character can be changed, and

decisively changed, as a result of drastically altered educational and environmental conditions.

Initiative and forwardness are among the most marked qualities of the Soviet school pupils. That these qualities are not always balanced by a corresponding amount of exact knowledge is made abundantly clear in N. Ognev's *The Diary of Kostya Ryabtzev*,[1] which, although a work of fiction, is based on first-hand observation of the new Russian school. Kostya, the hero, is brimming over with life and new ideas; the first episode in the book shows that these ideas are not always well rooted in facts. Kostya (the Russian diminutive for Constantine) is dissatisfied with his name because he is under the impression that "Constantine was some sort of Turkish Sultan"; he wished to change it to Vladlen, one of the new revolutionary names compounded out of the first syllables of Vladimir and Lenin.

Another symptom of the change in the character of Russian children is their present habit of parading and demonstrating on all sorts of occasions. Many children's demonstrations are directed against drinking by their fathers. The lead in such affairs is taken by the Anti-alcoholic Society, the local branch of the Union of Communist Youth, or some other public organization. A host of children in a working-class district surround a factory at closing time, carrying banners and placards with anti-drinking slogans; they "besiege" the factory and refuse to let their parents go without signing a pledge to stop drinking. How far this children's agitation is really effective in checking the instinctive Russian love of vodka is perhaps doubtful; but the very fact that children really venture to make such demonstrations marks a significant break with the past.

Young Russia is athletically and mechanically minded, two characteristics which certainly did not hold good for the traditional Russian student of the past. Association football is widely played, and visiting teams from British ships are sometimes surprised to find themselves beaten at their native game

[1] Translated into English under the title, *The Diary of a Communist Schoolboy*, and published by Payson and Clarke, New York.

by the Russians. The winter sports which are promoted by the Russian climate, such as skating and skiing, are as popular as ever and attract a large number of participants. Summer vacation trips of organized groups, involving a good deal of dusty hiking and some mountain-climbing, acquire a wider scope every year, and more and more interest is shown in trips into the wilder parts of the country, such as Daghestan, the Altai Mountains of Siberia, and the Pamir plateau.

The increased interest of the present-day youth in mechanical things finds expression in a number of ways. There is proportionately greater registration for scientific and engineering courses than for those dealing with other subjects. Radio has a growing number of enthusiastic devotees, despite the fact that the cost of appliances is prohibitively high. Along with this concentration on the practical and mechanical aspects of life goes a certain contempt for the philosophical and metaphysical discussions in which pre-revolutionary Russian students loved to indulge.

"We don't need Dostoevsky; he 's out of harmony with the spirit of our times," one very dogmatic and self-assured young Communist once said to me. During the last few years, however, a certain change has manifested itself in the attitude toward Russian classical literature. In the years immediately after the civil war it was the fashion among the Soviet younger generation to decry any literary production that antedated the Revolution; to-day Tolstoy, Gogol, Pushkin, even the contemned Dostoevsky, who is especially suspect in Communist circles because of his mystical tendencies, again command a wide and respectful audience.

Partly because of the greater emphasis upon sports and organized educational and recreational activities, partly because they come largely from classes to which education itself is a new and thrilling adventure, the contemporary Soviet students are less introspective, less inclined to brood and fall into the state of melancholia which sometimes leads to suicide, than were their predecessors of a generation ago. One cannot be too sweeping in statements of this kind; the peasant-poet,

Sergei Essenine, who alternated between writing verses of considerable lyric beauty and indulging in terrific drinking bouts and ended by hanging himself, leaving behind a farewell poem written in his own blood, attracted many admirers and some imitators, in his excesses, if not in his poetic talent. But by and large, energy and optimism are probably as characteristic for the majority of the present-day Russian students as passivity and pessimism were for their predecessors.

A good deal has been written, both in Russia and abroad, about the unbridled looseness of sex relations among the Soviet youth. Russia has never been a puritanical country, and the new freedom which was associated with the revolutionary upheaval, the removal of all social inhibitions on irregular sex connections, and the complete absence of any parental control over the modern students were all factors contributing to greater freedom in the relations between men and women. Several novels which were published in 1926 and 1927, such as Pantaleimon Romanov's *Without Sentimentality* and Lev Gumilovsky's *Dogs' Street*, give a vivid picture of frequent and rapid changes of partners by students of both sexes.

Something of a reaction against this has set in, however, partly because the psychological element of satiety has begun to assert itself, partly because Communist moralists are beginning to employ against sex excess the same argument that has long been used against overindulgence in alcohol — that it is wrong not from any moral or ethical considerations, but because it unfits a Communist for the strenuous work which he must perform. This viewpoint found expression in a speech delivered by President Kalinin on the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Union of Communist Youth, on October 28, 1928. He said on this occasion: —

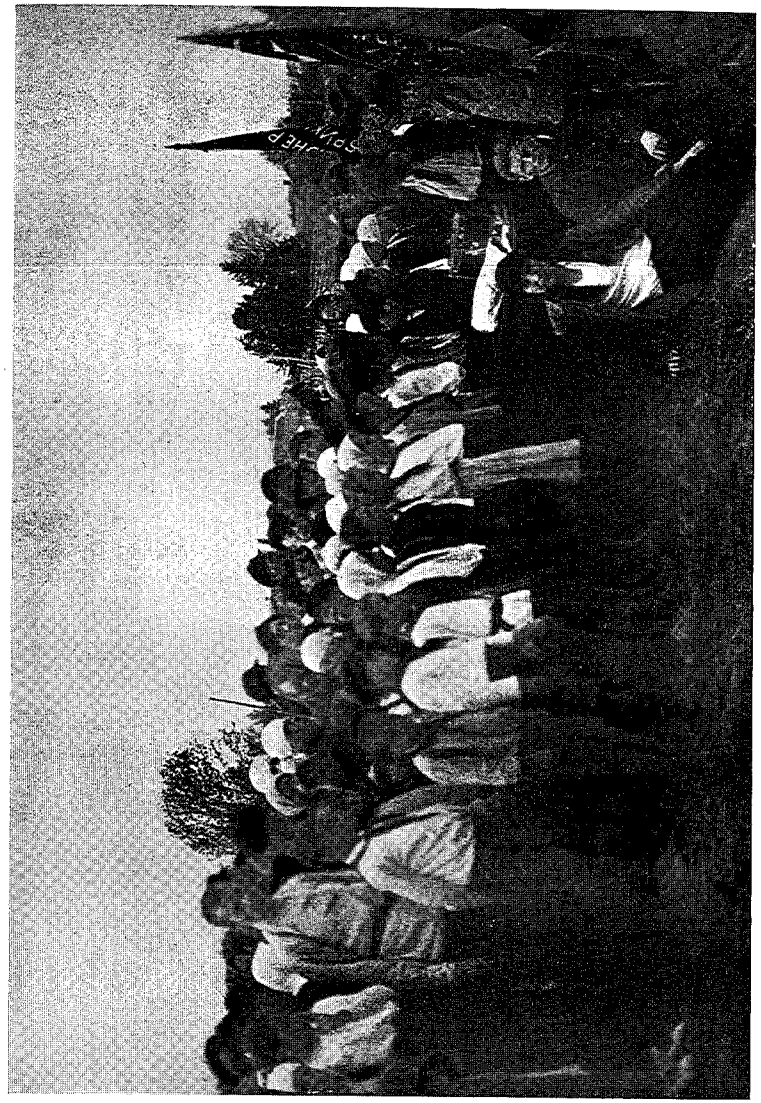
"Very many of us, especially among the youth, like to talk about new life, painting it in completely distorted form, especially in relation to women. Is it really permissible in the new society that a man should marry six or seven times in the course of ten years? Don't we see that a girl who has been disillusioned in a young lover is a broken human being, at least

for a year or two? Must n't there be responsibility in relations between man and woman? In this respect, in establishing really human relations between the sexes, the Young Communist organization can and must do much."

Despite these occasional monitions from Communists of the older generation, "free love" is still probably the rule rather than the exception among the city youth. However, in the daily life of Moscow and other Russian cities there is far less pornographic incitation than one would find in the shops and theatres of most large American and European cities. Sex in Russia is a very matter-of-fact affair, equally removed from the traditional sanctities and inhibitions of monogamic marriage and from the artificial voluptuousness that has been strengthened all over the world since the War.

Many Communists see in the children who have been brought up under the influence of the Revolution the chief hope and guaranty for the ultimate success of their cause. Two large mass organizations exist for the purpose of guiding as large a number of the youth as may be possible into the pathway of collectivist life. These are the Young Pioneers and the Union of Communist Youth.

One often sees detachments of Young Pioneers, children between the ages of ten and sixteen, with red scarves around their necks, marching through the streets to the beat of the drum, which is their favorite instrument, or going out to the summer camps, of which there are a considerable number in the vicinity of Moscow. In many ways the activities of the Pioneers are similar to those of Boy Scouts in other countries, with the difference, of course, that they are crammed with Communist doctrine from an early age and trained to carry out various functions (distribution of leaflets during Soviet elections, participation in various "drives," against absence from work, against celebration of religious holidays, etc.) which tend to shape their thinking. The organizers of the Pioneers also assert that, while the Boy Scouts rely largely on the individual leader of each group, the Pioneers aim to foster a collectivist group spirit.



YOUNG PIONEERS OF THE VILLAGE PAVLOVSKORE TAKE THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE REVOLUTION

There are about two million Pioneers in the Soviet Union. They are under the general direction of the Union of Communist Youth, which appoints monitors for each Pioneer group. Sixty Pioneers constitute a detachment, and each detachment is divided into six so-called "links," of ten members. The link elects its chief, and representatives of the links constitute the Soviet, or council, of the detachment. Among the rules of the Pioneers the following may be noted: —

> The Pioneers are faithful to the workers' cause and the commandments of Ilyitch [Lenin].
>
> The Pioneer is the friend of the children of workers all over the world.
>
> The Pioneer aims at knowledge.
>
> The Pioneer watches out for his health and cleanliness and neither smokes nor drinks nor swears.

While workers' children are preferred as members of the Pioneer organization, class lines are not drawn so strictly as with older people; even children of the pariah disfranchised classes may join, although these would stand little chance of admission into the next-higher organization, the Union of Communist Youth.

The Young Pioneers have their clubs, post up their wall newspapers, and in various other ways follow in the footsteps of their elders. The precocity and initiative which are generally noteworthy in Russian children to-day, especially in the cities, are doubtless fostered by the influence of the Pioneer organization, which, besides giving its members some training in physical exercise, woodcraft, gardening, and simple trades, encourages them to write articles, deliver political reports, make speeches, etc. This precocity unquestionably has its disadvantageous sides. Medical investigations usually reveal a higher percentage of nervous diseases among the Pioneers than among the other school children, and all the outside activities of the Pioneers probably exert a detrimental effect upon the health and studies of children who are not especially gifted or energetic. The position of an active Pioneer in a religious or

conservative family must be difficult for parents and child alike, but probably not a very large proportion of the Pioneers are recruited from such families.

Below the Pioneers, for the benefit of children who by their own volition, or that of their parents,[1] wish to get an even earlier start in public life, exist the "Octobrists," made up of children from eight to ten. Above the Pioneers stands the Union of Communist Youth, with something over two million members between the ages of fourteen and twenty-three.[2] Conditions of admission to this body are less strict than those required by the Communist Party, but more severe than in the case of the Pioneers. Young workers and poor peasants may join without any question. Sponsors and a period of probation are demanded for employees and more prosperous peasants. The Union of Communist Youth is a sort of junior division of the Party, quite identified with the latter in programme and principles, but with a broader basis of membership, designed to ensure Communist influence on the growing youth of the country.

While many Young Communists subsequently enter the Party, promotion of this kind is by no means automatic. About a million members of the Union are peasants, and very few of these are admitted to the Party, which, as was pointed out in an earlier chapter, designedly keeps its contingent peasant members rather small. About half the young workers and a large and increasing number of students belong to the Union of Communist Youth, which publishes sixty newspapers and twenty magazines.

[1] Some parents in the Soviet Union wish to influence the future fate and career of their children from the cradle by giving them novel revolutionary names. Foreign relief workers found in a country hospital a baby with the piquant name of "Anti-Christ." So far as I know this was a unique instance, but it is not uncommon for parents to name boys Vladlen (for Vladimir Lenin) or Ninel, Lenin's name spelled backward, while girls have been started in life with such appellations as Barrikada ("Barricade") and Elektrifikatsia ("Electrification"). The most ingenious name of this kind was perhaps Diamata, which, as the proud parent of the girl baby to whom it was attached explained, stood for Dialectic Materialism.

[2] As may be noted, the age limits of the Pioneers and the Union of Communist Youth overlap, and the eligibility of a boy or girl for the latter society depends on the candidate's precocity and on whether he is working in a factory, which is permissible in Russia from the age of fourteen.

The organization of the Union is very similar to that of the Party, ascending from the basic unit, the *yacheika*, or cell in factory, office, or village, to the Central Committee. It takes its instructions on all important political questions from the Party.

There is a military flavor about the Communist Youth, emphasized by the belted khaki uniform which is more and more worn by members in the cities, although its use is by no means universal. Military training is practised by all units, and even in more peaceful tasks, such as a campaign for literacy, the terminology is always of a martial character, with "mobilizations," "fronts," and "drives." Campaigns or "drives" for the achievement of special ends have become almost as common in Russia as in America, where so many days and weeks are set aside for special objectives, and Young Communists are supposed to take an active part in all these movements.

In the winter of 1928–1929, for instance, there was a strenuous effort to round up illiterates in the towns and cities and enroll them in classes. Every city was divided into districts, and a house-to-house canvass was carried out, every Young Communist undertaking an obligation to teach at least one illiterate. Then there was a "scrap-iron week," when, due to the shortage of metal in the country, every patriotic citizen was expected to collect any unused iron which might be lying about and turn it in to the central authorities.

Apart from these special campaigns, Young Communists, especially among the students, are required to perform a certain amount of so-called "social work," which may take the form of reading lectures in factories, helping to organize circles in workers' clubs, carrying on agitation for better farming methods in their native villages, etc. Complaints are not uncommon that this social work, combined with the hard and crowded living conditions and the difficulty which many proletarian students experience in concentrating on abstract thinking, lowers the scholastic standing of the Young Communists, as compared with the non-Party students. So far it has appar-

ently been impossible to work out a balanced system under which the student's activities would be supplemented but not unduly hampered by his "social work."

The *Komsomolskaya Pravda* ("Young Communist Truth"), central organ of the Union, is one of the most interesting of the Soviet newspapers because of the light which it casts upon the struggle between old and new habits and modes of thought. On one occasion a Jewish girl wrote to the paper to ask whether it would be proper for a *komsomolka* (girl member of the Union) to assist in baking unleavened bread for the Feast of the Passover. The answer, of course, was an uncompromising negative, coupled with a series of injunctions regarding the duty incumbent on all Young Communists not to participate in religious practices or ceremonies, whether Jewish or Christian.

A Jewish boy laid another problem before the paper. His sister was in love with a Ukrainian boy, both being Young Communists. But the old mother of the girl threatened to commit suicide if her daughter married a *goi*, or Gentile, and called on the writer of the letter, as the oldest son, to decide whether the marriage should take place or not. He was unable to make the decision himself and asked for advice. The newspaper insisted that the marriage should take place, that there should be no concessions to racial prejudice, and a number of contributors published letters relating their own experiences and declaring that mixed marriages, although they might evoke protests from the older people at first, usually ended quite satisfactorily.

Another subject of ethical discussion was the propriety of the conduct of a certain Comrade Zezior, who, after joining the Union, gave up drinking and all bad habits, began to earn high wages and to accumulate property, simultaneously losing all interest in social activity. He was roundly condemned, not for his moral reformation (habitual drunkenness, although not drinking, is a frequent cause for expulsion from the Union, as from the Communist Party), but for the "petty-bourgeois attitude" which he had developed toward life. Comrade Zezior, incidentally, is no isolated case. Again and again one may read, or notice in life, that the young worker who acquires a

skilled trade, enabling him to earn high wages, visibly loses interest in world revolution and the triumph of communism, simultaneously adopting a rather contemptuous attitude toward his less skilled fellows. This is one of the strongest reasons why skeptics may doubt the imminence of the establishment of a fully communist social order in Russia.

Another lively discussion raged around the propriety of the practice, apparently not uncommon among male Young Communists, of demanding that their brides bring them substantial dowries, if not in money, at least in such material things as samovars, cushions, and household furnishings. This highly bourgeois attitude toward marriage flourishes side by side with the casual attitude toward sex relations which was described earlier in the chapter, and represents still another of the contemporary Russian contradictions.

How many of the holders of a membership card in the Union of Communist Youth are sincere champions of a new social order and how many have joined merely for the sake of the loaves and fishes, or, more concretely, because the Young Communist enjoys some favor in securing admission to the university and obtaining a job? Naturally there are no reliable statistics on this delicate question. That both types, the enthusiast and the careerist, can be found in the ranks of the organization is indisputable, and there are also many intermediate types.

One of the most lively and popular modern Russian comedies, *The Squaring of the Circle*, presents four young people, all students and members of the Union, but of distinctly different tastes and characters. Of the two boys one is an energetic and resourceful fellow, who might have been a class president in an American university; the other is a meek and sober youth who follows more or less passively in his comrade's wake. One of the girls is an earnest devotee of Marx and Lenin; the other is an unmistakable Soviet flapper.

I know of one young man who takes his Communism with most deadly seriousness and broke off completely with his parents on the ground that they were "petty bourgeois."

When his mother was sick and wanted to see him, he replied with some well-known lines of the young Communist poet, Bezimensky, which read, in rough translation, as follows: —

> The factory is my father; the Party branch is my home,
> My family books, labor, and comrades.
> We live in Communist Youthland,
> A great and rich country.

The father of this young man deplores what he regards as his son's wrongheaded fanaticism, but recognizes the absolute sincerity of his beliefs. At the same time I have met more than one peasant Young Communist who declared with engaging frankness that he joined the Union to have a better chance of being admitted to high school or university. Under a different social system such people would join nationalist or Fascist societies just as readily and for just the same reasons.

However, while certainly not every Young Communist is animated by purely idealistic considerations, there is no reason, I think, to doubt the fundamental loyalty of the organization to the Soviet order. There is a visible *esprit de corps* among these groups of Soviet youth, real children of the Revolution, as they march through the streets singing the refrain of their most popular song: —

> *"Mi molodaya gvardiya rabochikh i krestyan"*
> ("We 're the young guard of the workers and peasants.")

The fact that most of them come from working-class and peasant families (about half the young workers belong to the organization) and that many of them are being trained for posts of consequence and authority gives them a distinct stake in the Soviet state. Recently the Young Communists of one of the Moscow districts were subjected to a test. They were mobilized and told that they must take up arms and immediately march out to fight an invading army. Some of the careerists hastily resigned their tickets of membership, and doubtless cursed themselves heartily later on, when the mobilization was shown to have been merely a trial. But the majority responded eagerly, dropped their tools for rifles, and moved out

of the city in fighting array. Most probably this is the way in which the organization would respond in the event of a genuine emergency.

The present-day Soviet youth is, I think, more standardized in character and world outlook than its predecessors of twenty or thirty years ago. And this is quite natural, if one considers that the Tsarist Government was almost exclusively repressive in its influence on the younger generation, whereas the Soviet régime is both repressive and formative. The policy of the pre-revolutionary Russian authorities was to nip in the bud any publicly expressed thoughts or actions which might endanger the security of the autocracy. There was very little successful effort to create either in the masses or in the intelligentsia any sentiment of active loyalty toward or participation in the existing state order. Soviet policy, on the other hand, has been directed not only toward the merciless repression of "dangerous thinking," whether along Menshevik, anarchist, monarchist, capitalist, or Trotzkyist lines, but also toward the awakening of active enthusiasm for the new society. So, while in former times the individual student was apt to go his own way, read his own books, develop his own *Weltanschauung*, the Young Communists of to-day in all parts of the Soviet Union read the same articles, even though they may be printed in different national languages, hear reports on the same subjects, couched in practically identical language, read the same books on *politgramota* (or Soviet civic training), and in general develop mass rather than individual consciousness.

Young Russia is definitely materialistic in outlook, not necessarily in the unfavorable sense of this term, but rather in the sense of being primarily interested in scientific and technical progress. No generation in Russian history has been more divorced from what some foreign observers have regarded as the essentially Russian trait of mysticism. There is much talk of the need for a cultural revolution in Russia. But the essential elements in this cultural revolution, when its advocates come down to specifications, are not so much literary and æsthetic as practical and hygienic; wider use of the toothbrush, for

instance, more canals, better roads, more motor transport, more electrification.

This urge toward material progress, unmistakably characteristic of the present era, even if it is often thwarted and mocked by Russia's technical backwardness, by its isolation from the world economic system, by the hardships and deprivations involved in the policy of directing domestic output and foreign imports with a view solely to the interests of promoting industrialization, with little consideration for the needs of the consumer, is by no means solely a result of Communist propaganda. The same tendency is visible in the nationalist and Westernizing revolutions which have affected in greater or less degree every Asiatic country from Turkey to China. The modern East — and in many aspects of its material backwardness Russia belongs to the East rather than to the West — is perhaps more keenly sensitive to the advantages which may be wrought by steam and electricity than the modern West, which is beginning to be sated with the fruits of intensive industrialization.

Young Russia has not forgotten how to dream. But its dreams are mostly of material things: canals linking up the country's rivers and irrigating tracts of desert land; a larger network of radio stations knitting the country closer together; whole industrial regions operating on power generated from central electrical stations. That these dreams are sometimes in almost ironical contrast to actuality is nothing new in Russian history; it is only a sign that psychological continuity between the present and the past has not been entirely broken.

Another proof of this same thing is the almost mystical faith of this materialistic and unmystical younger generation in the big, unfamiliar-sounding foreign words which are so often heard in Russia to-day: "technique," "electrification," "rationalization," "efficiency" (there is, significantly enough, no precise equivalent for this last word in the Russian language). The Young Communists of to-day, at least those of them who take a serious interest in public questions, believe in these things as passionately and unreservedly as their grandfathers and

sometimes their fathers believed in wonder-working ikons and miraculously preserved bones of saints. It seldom enters the mind of a typical contemporary young Russian that something might still be lacking for human happiness if Russia, plus the Soviet system, could enjoy American standards of productive efficiency.[1]

In short, Russia is still a young country; in fact, youth is one of the impressions which even a casual observer of the Revolution could scarcely fail to carry away. It has the faith of youth; if it destroys old gods, it creates new ones which it worships with equally uncritical intensity. Utterly alien to its spirit is the most striking characteristic of old civilizations, the mellow skepticism which weighs conservative and revolutionary values in the balance and finds them equally lacking. Of course, such skepticism does not generate violent revolutions.

One may venture to predict that the Russian youth which has grown up under the direct influence of the Revolution will be more distinguished in action than in thought. Exploits like the rescue expedition of the icebreaker "Krassin" and the daring exploration of the peaks and glaciers of a remote section of the Pamir region, in Central Asia, are quite in harmony with its spirit. When the initial difficulties of introducing formerly uneducated classes to higher education are overcome it will be surprising if many competent practical engineers and organizers of industrial construction do not appear, because it is along these lines that the interests of Young Russia run. One should not perhaps expect such significant achievements in the literary and cultural fields, because here the qualities of subtlety, many-sidedness, and reflection, in which I should judge the Russia of the Communist Youth to be most deficient, are required more than the elements of energy and decision which are present in superabundance.

In the psychology and spirit of contemporary Russia, with its campaigns and "weeks" and restless energy and absence of tradition, there is a strong flavor of Americanism, notwith-

[1] Stalin once declared that the Communist should combine Russian revolutionary scope of outlook with American practical efficiency.

standing the extreme differences in the political and social systems of the two countries. If one were to sum up briefly the contrast between Young Russia of 1929 and Young Russia of 1909, or 1889, it would perhaps be accurate to say that the tragi-comedy of the latter had its roots in the predominance of the faculty for reflection over the faculty for action, whereas the satirist or dramatist of to-day or to-morrow is likely to find much of his material in the precisely inverted balance of these faculties.

XV

THE TRAGEDY OF THE RUSSIAN INTELLIGENTSIA

"REVOLUTION is a storm, sweeping aside everything that stands in its path." So reads the present-day inscription on the former building of the Moscow City Council. And the Bolshevik Revolution, which to some classes brought an exhilarating, intoxicating consciousness of emancipation and new-found power, for others has meant bitter suffering and profound disillusionment.

To be uprooted and displaced by a social upheaval to which one is indifferent or hostile (the fate of the old Russian aristocracy and bourgeoisie) is, of course, painful and disconcerting to the persons affected. But to be swept aside by a revolutionary storm which one regarded, in anticipation, with sympathy, or even helped to raise (the fate of the Russian radical and liberal intelligentsia) — here is surely material both for tragedy and for irony. Madame Roland, guillotined by her revolutionary associates of yesterday and dying with her last bitter apostrophe to liberty on her lips, is a figure of more historical dramatic pathos than Marie Antoinette, who perhaps wondered up to the last why the people, if short of bread, did not resort to cake. And to-day the Russian intellectual who formerly considered himself a revolutionary, who perhaps experienced prison or exile or persecution under the Tsar, but who now finds the Soviet experiment in building up socialism something quite alien, is a more tragic if less spectacular figure than the former prince who has become a chauffeur or the pre-revolutionary countess who may be selling cigarettes.

Generalities are always dangerous, and most of all in dealing with a class. It would be quite exaggerated to lump the whole pre-war intelligentsia together as out of sympathy with the

Soviet régime. One finds some old university students and graduates in the ranks of the Communist Party. Another and larger part of the former educated and propertied classes, while not Communist in outlook or Party affiliation, is outspoken in its support of the Soviet Government, on the ground that it represents the best, indeed the only, system of organized administration which Russia can hope to enjoy at the present time, and that it is the duty of scientists and professional men, in any case, to devote their best efforts to the service of their country, regardless of what government may be in power. And, of course, not every educated man in pre-war Russia was in favor of a revolutionary upheaval. Among the highly paid engineers and more prosperous specialists generally, conservatism and tepid liberalism were the most common tendencies, so far as they took an interest in politics at all.

But, making full allowance for these facts, the number of intellectuals who fifteen or twenty years ago would certainly have counted themselves among the opponents of the Tsarist system and who to-day are skeptical and negative in their reaction to the Soviet structure is large enough to call for explanation. The history of the revolutionary movement in Russia during the nineteenth century coincided very closely with the progress of Russian enlightenment. The leaders of the Dekabristi were poets and philosophers, men who had been touched by the double liberating influence of Western culture and the French Revolution. A very large number of the Narodniki, the revolutionaries of the latter half of the century, were men and women of high education; not a few of them acquired distinction as scientists or linguists even after they had been banished to the most inhospitable wastes of the Tsarist Empire. The early leadership of all the modern revolutionary parties, including the Bolsheviks, was largely recruited from the intelligentsia. The question naturally arises: what produced the schism between the Revolution, in the form which it finally assumed, and the majority of the Russian intelligentsia, the class which certainly contributed more than any other to the awakening of conscious revolutionary spirit in the masses?

Everyone will answer this question according to his own class sympathies and predilections. The orthodox Communist answer, an answer which has now crystallized and become stereotyped in dozens of books and plays, is that the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia (its small Communist minority, of course, excepted) was a wavering, irresolute class of people, radical in words rather than in deeds, and bound to prove impotent and unreliable under the test of revolutionary crisis. The working class, according to this viewpoint, captured and held power in spite of the timidity and sabotage of the intelligentsia. One of its chief tasks now is to forge its own intelligentsia, its own class of doctors, engineers, and teachers, which will be fully in sympathy with the new social order.

The unreconciled intellectual would argue that neither the ideal nor the material conditions of the new society, as envisaged by the pioneer Russian revolutionaries, are realized in the Soviet Union. He would repudiate the idea that in failing to participate actively in the Bolskevik revolution he had been untrue to his former principles.

Each of these answers has its elements of truth; neither, I think, contains the whole truth. Some of the pre-war Russian intelligentsia, as anyone familiar with the writings of Turgeniev and Chekhov must recognize, had more than the average human being's share of spiritual flabbiness. Some of the Communist methods of getting and keeping power are more easily defensible on grounds of practical expediency than on those of moral idealism. But the fundamental explanation for the deep rift between the revolutionary order in Russia and the class which, a generation ago, prided itself on its revolutionism lies outside the peculiar qualities either of the intelligentsia or of the Communists; it is to be sought rather in the very nature, the inevitable nature, of the Russian revolutionary process.

Probably the best picture of the poignant tragedy of the intelligentsia in the period of the Russian civil war, a picture that is all the more true and convincing because it reflects some of the author's own experiences, is to be found in the novel,

V Tupike, by V. V. Veresaev.[1] The novel is prefaced by the beautiful lines from the *Divina Commedia* in which Dante depicts the plight of the angels who were neutral in the struggle between God and Satan, and who were, consequently, rejected by Heaven and not accepted by Hell. The fate of these angels is the fate of all moderates in historical clashes of extremes; it was certainly the fate of the Russian intelligentsia.

The heroine of Veresaev's novel, Katya, with her father, an old doctor, Ivan Ilyitch, whose radical and humanitarian ideas have often brought him into conflict with the Tsarist authorities, lives through the Revolution in a village on the southern shore of the Crimean peninsula. A feeble anti-Soviet government is overthrown in the early part of the book, and most of the action occurs while the village is under Soviet control, although there is a brief episode of White restoration at the end.

Old Ivan Ilyitch is consistently anti-Bolshevik; he will not compromise by one iota his two chief dogmas, sanctity of human life and freedom of speech, neither of which is much respected by a revolution in the making. But Katya, younger, more impressionable, and receptive to new ideas, wavers, as many honest Russian intellectuals must have wavered, during the tortuous course of the civil war. She feels the mass strength of the Revolution, she can see its beautiful and heroic side as well as its excesses and cruelties. She admires and sympathizes with her sister, Vera, a Communist of the most devoted and self-sacrificing type, who is never so happy as when she lays down her life before the rifles of a White firing squad.

But whenever Katya feels impelled to take her stand definitely on the Communist side (she never cherishes seriously the idea of joining the Whites, with their thinly veiled programme of political and social reaction) some new extreme of the ruthless civil class war drives her back to a position of neutrality. And in the end she goes away and disappears, "no one knows where."

Veresaev once told me that some of his Communist friends urged him to alter the ending and make Katya, in the last account, turn Communist. But he adhered to his own climax,

[1] This novel has been translated into English under the title, *The Deadlock*.

which is not only psychologically more true and convincing, but more symbolic of the actual reaction of the Russian intelligentsia to the Revolution.

One can scarcely read *V Tupike* without feeling that Katya's experience is more than a reflection of the tragedy of the class to which she belonged, of the people who desired and worked for a revolution, and then could not accept it when it came. It is a projection of a world-tragic theme: the invariable gulf between human aspiration and human realization. One of the most illuminating passages in the book is an argument between Katya and her cousin Leonid, who is himself an active Communist. Katya points bitterly to the contrast between some of the abuses of the new Soviet régime and the ideals which she and Leonid, as hunted revolutionaries under the Tsarist régime, had both cherished. And Leonid's reply, convincing, I think, to one's logic, if not to one's feelings, was much to the following effect. The early Russian revolutionary movement was the handiwork of a small number of people of exceptional moral and intellectual idealism, many of whom broke directly with selfish personal and class interests for the sake of their conceptions of justice and liberty. It is obviously impossible to expect that the standards of such a movement, condemned to practical failure by the small number of its participants, will be preserved when the revolution passes from theory and romantic, ineffectual personal exploits of individuals into the stage of action, deriving most of its explosive force from the feelings of hatred and revenge that awaken in classes which are rising against long oppression.

This touches one of the most difficult psychological problems of the Russian Revolution, and indeed of every big movement that has its first conscious direction in a band of enthusiastic idealists, conquers masses through the fervor of their conviction, and then finds itself threatened with deterioration because its quantitative growth has exceeded its qualitative extension. Even the most impractical intellectual of Chekhov's or Turgeniev's imagination would probably shrink from the *reductio ad absurdum* involved in the proposition that the

revolutionary movement should remain "pure" by remaining isolated and thereby condemning itself to the fate that overtook the Dekabristi and the Narodniki: the best leaders on the scaffold or in exile and the Tsar still firmly on his throne.

Yet even the most convinced Communist, granting that he be sincere and intelligent, can scarcely fail to be painfully struck at times by the abuses committed in the name of communism, largely as a result of the penetration of such huge organizations as the Communist Party, the Union of Communist Youth, the trade-unions, and the Soviet officialdom by corrupt and careerist elements.

The difference between the Leonids and the Katyas, between the sincere Communists and the doubting intellectuals, in actual life comes largely down to this. The Communists, absorbed in intense personal activity and confident in the ultimate triumph of their cause, regard the abuses as things which will sooner or later be overcome or outlived, whereas the instinctive attitude of the intellectual is much more skeptical.

This touches another element in the tragedy of the Russian intelligentsia. A basic doctrine of communism is justification by works, or rather, perhaps, by work. If one were required to name the dominant characteristic of the active Communist or of the non-Party man or woman who is whole-heartedly absorbed in some branch of Soviet or trade-union or coöperative work, one would probably say boundless, restless energy and activity. Passive and reflective by training and temperament, the typical old-fashioned intellectual is as ill adjusted to this sort of life as Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, would be to the atmosphere of a noisily and consciously growing American mid-Western town. Quite possibly against his own will he is stranded and isolated from the main currents of the bubbling, boiling new Russian life. He turns to such inconspicuous clerical work as he may obtain, and finds expression and a certain measure of consolation by exchanging with his acquaintances the latest "anecdote," or satirical joke.[1]

[1] These "anecdotes" are a constant source of amusement to the classes of the population which cannot be reckoned among the enthusiastic admirers of the new order of things. Originating in the most obscurely anonymous sources, they pass rapidly from mouth to mouth, and are almost as quickly forgotten and pushed out by new ones. Curiously enough, many Communists repeat these products of contraband humor with evident relish; more than one of those which I append here came to me from Party members in good standing. To the earnest Communist the telling of an occasional "anecdote" brings the same sense of relief and relaxation which the believer in the mediæval Church experienced when he was permitted, on certain occasions, to indulge in frolicsome mockery of the most solemn rites and doctrines. The following little series of these stories illustrates their general tendency and varied character.

A prominent Soviet official is haranguing a group of workers, who complain that they are inadequately supplied with clothes. The official tries to console them by declaring that other races, notably the American Indians, wear much less. Whereupon an old worker remarks, "Well, they probably had the Soviet system much longer than we did."

Three men, a Russian, a Frenchman, and a Jew, are sentenced by some revolutionary tribunal to be executed. They are asked to state their last wishes. The Frenchman asks for a bottle of champagne. The Russian pleads to be inscribed as a member of the Communist Party. This extraordinary request arouses some amazement, and the Russian clarifies it by adding, "So that there may be one less scoundrel in the world when I am dead." The Jew puts in a request for a dish of strawberries. "But it's winter, and there are no strawberries," he is told. "Well, I can wait," is his rejoinder.

A Nepman, or private trader, goes to a store and asks for pictures which he may display in the window of his shop to prove that he is a loyal Soviet citizen. Portraits of Rykov, Kalinin, and the whole Council of People's Commissars fail to attract him, but he brightens up when he sees the picture of Lenin lying dead in the state tomb. "Could n't you show me a picture of the whole Council of People's Commissars lying dead?" he ventures.

A concert is announced, but with the unusual condition that tickets of admission cost ten rubles, but that a hundred rubles will be paid to any of the audience who professes dissatisfaction with the last number. The hall is crowded with people seeking to win a hundred rubles easily; the concert is a miserable affair; but when the last number proves to be the "Internationale," played by the band of the Gay-Pay-Oo, or secret police, no one feels in the mood to claim his hundred rubles.

Difficult material conditions also help to estrange the intelligentsia from the new social order. If the worker is better off, as a general rule, than he was before the Revolution, the average middle-class professional man, the doctor, lawyer, teacher, or engineer, is distinctly worse off, especially if he stands near the head of his profession. Not only is his money remuneration smaller, but he usually lives under much more crowded and uncomfortable conditions. I have visited the office of a Russian medical scientist of international reputation whose bed stood in his reception room.

These material hardships are exacerbated by various psychological irritants. The harassed and overworked doctor at the head of a hospital naturally feels a certain amount of resent-

ment if some *delegatka* (the term for the working-class or peasant women who are sent to inspect and study public institutions) gives him a lecture on how his hospital should be managed. Engineers often complain that their initiative is seriously curbed and their work generally hampered by the constant interference of the factory committee or the local branch of the Communist Party. Professors of the old school feel personally hurt if one of their number is roughly called to account and threatened with the loss of his post for contributing a scientific article to some foreign publication to which, perhaps without his knowledge, Russian émigré scientists have also contributed.

It is only fair to say that for every one of the typical intelligentsia grievances which I have mentioned there is a more or less convincing Communist counter-case. Hospitals in Russia sometimes are mismanaged; and the efforts of the delegatkas or other public-spirited citizens to bring about reforms, provided that these efforts are guided by an intelligent regard for facts, may be useful and beneficial. While there may have been some weak points in the state's case in the great trial of fifty engineers and technicians, accused of corruption, sabotage, and deliberate mismanagement in the mines of the Shachti region of the Donetz coal basin, there was enough evidence to show that a whole group of these Shachti engineers, by misusing their posts and taking bribes from the former owners, made themselves partially responsible for the atmosphere of strain, friction, and suspicion which one sometimes senses between the new Communist masters of the Russian factories and the old technical specialists. Every new revolutionary government is violently hostile to its émigré opponents; and no doubt it is the part of discretion for Soviet scientists and professors to avoid even the possibility of contact with their former colleagues who are now outside the Soviet frontiers.

But, while an outside observer may recognize the two or more sides of every controversial case, it is only natural that persons living in Russia should view matters from the standpoint of their own class, of their own conditions of work. And while

the theory and practice of proletarian dictatorship, as I have shown in an earlier chapter, are like a heady stimulant to the more active-minded workers and, from that standpoint, a source of strength to the Soviet régime, in other classes of the population, and not the least among the intelligentsia, this theory and practice create a sense of discriminatory treatment, if not of oppression.

This feeling of class resentment occasionally even penetrates into the ranks of the Communist Party. I heard of an instance when a Communist, not of proletarian origin, who had received a post which called for considerable technical preparation, was more than a little indignant when some fellow Communist raised the stereotyped question whether this post should not have been given to a worker. "Where will you find an actual manual worker who knows several languages and has the other technical qualifications for the position?" was his inquiry.

Much of the tragedy of the old intelligentsia lies in the fact that it is a perishing class. Not that education or educated people are disappearing in Russia. As I pointed out in a previous chapter, the Revolution has greatly widened the educational facilities of the masses, and no doubt, as the country becomes materially richer, the qualitative standards of the schools and colleges will steadily be raised. But the new Soviet intelligentsia that is growing out of the rabfacs and the proletarianized universities is so different from the old in everything, from class origin to cultural and political standards and ideals, that one can scarcely fail to note here a sharp break of continuity.

Two ceremonies which I attended in Moscow helped to emphasize this impression of a vanishing class. One was a meeting in honor of V. V. Veresaev, the author of *V Tupike*. While the ideology of that book, as I have indicated, is not Communist, the Commissariat for Education took part in honoring Veresaev, who had been a sturdy fighter against Tsarism for decades before the Revolution. Vera Figner, one of the heroines of the Narodnik movement, a woman of beauti-

fully classic features, very erect despite her advanced age and long term of years which she spent in the dungeons of Schlüsselburg, spoke eloquently of Veresaev's life and work. The audience was unusual, if not unique; here one could recognize the most typical figures of the old intelligentsia, teachers and doctors and coöperative workers, people who knew Veresaev for his writings before the Revolution, many of whom, no doubt, had found a mirror of their own problems in *V Tupike*.

Over the whole occasion brooded an atmosphere that suggested Daudet's famous story, "The Last Class." Very few young people were there; both in the speakers and in the audience one sensed a feeling that here was a class which collectively was experiencing the tragedy of dying childless, without a sympathetic younger generation to inherit and perpetuate its ideals and tastes and habits.

Something of this same spirit was visible at the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Moscow Art Theatre. Here again one was conscious of the presence of an audience that was unusual in contemporary Russia. It was more formal than the gathering in honor of Veresaev; many a figure in the pre-revolutionary social life of Moscow had taken out and put on his long-disused frock coat for this special occasion. But if there were here many former members of the class which is habitually and disparagingly referred to in Soviet Russia as the bourgeoisie, they were certainly representatives of the more cultured and educated bourgeoisie, who rallied around the Art Theatre and supported it from the moment of its inception.

Amid the throng of people who paid tribute to Constantine Stanislavsky on behalf of various organizations, one magnificent old gentleman in a high collar achieved special distinction when he strode to the centre of the stage, laid down his wreath, and pronounced the two words, "*Staraya Moskva*" ("Old Moscow"). He was a delegate of the society, "Old Moscow," which carries out archæological researches in the city. But his words were so symbolic and struck such a

responsive chord in the audience that applause lasted for several minutes after he had vanished from the stage.

Here indeed was a gathering representative of the better side of "old Moscow." And here again was the tragedy that comes from a sharp break of cultural continuity. True, as I have pointed out in an earlier chapter, the Art Theatre still holds an honored and significant place in Russian theatrical life. It performs before crowded audiences, and high Soviet officials prefer to attend its "first nights" rather than those of the playhouses which lay more claim to proletarian purity of artistic conception. But the new Art Theatre that gives the action plays of Vsevolod Ivanov is not the old Art Theatre that excelled in interpreting Chekhov and Dostoevsky. And one suspects that in the attitude of the older actors of the original Art Theatre toward the very competent and brilliant younger troupe which appears in the more modern plays there is something more than the inevitable slight element of regret with which age yields place to youth. There is the sharper twinge that comes from the feeling that the old tradition of the Art Theatre, just because of the strong new cultural influences which are at work, will not be carried on, that no actor of the present generation in Russia, however great his natural ability, is likely to deliver Ivan Karamazov's soliloquy in the manner of the incomparable Katchalov.

The old Russian intelligentsia belongs to history. Its faults are well known, and not the least through its own writers and satirists. Even before the Communists came with their theory that the intelligentsia, with few exceptions, represented the "waverings of the petty-bourgeoisie," any student of Russian literature was familiar with the Oblomovs and Rudins, with the types in whom action was drowned in a flood of words, in whom introspective self-analysis paralyzed the faculty of decision.

But perhaps the virtues of the intelligentsia are less widely known. Anyone who is even slightly acquainted with Russian history, who has lived in Russia and come in contact with the survivors of this vanishing class, must, I think, recognize two

qualities which are more characteristic of the Russian intelligentsia than of the educated classes of other countries.

First, there is the high social idealism that prompted so many men and women of the propertied and aristocratic classes to forsake their own personal interests and to throw themselves into what must then have seemed a hopeless struggle against the colossus of Tsarist autocracy. No purely materialistic interpretation of life and history can quite account for the Kropotkins, the Tolstoys, the Sofia Perovskayas, who, with all avenues of political and social preferment open to them, deliberately chose the road of protest and revolt that could lead only to persecution, exile, or the scaffold.

While the Russian intelligentsia probably supplied a larger proportion of people who broke with their selfish interests for the sake of their ideals than any class of any other country, only a minority of them, perhaps, could be reckoned as politically active. Even more characteristic than this social idealism was the very broad and rich personal culture which one comes from acquaintance to associate with the Russian scholar, writer, scientist, or artist. Hair-splitting pedantry is not a common Russian fault; and this is largely due to the fact that the Russian scholar or scientist is not, as a rule, a narrow specialist. Kropotkin, for instance, attained a fair measure of distinction as historian, explorer, philosopher, and natural scientist. Veresaev, like Chekhov before him, was a graduate doctor before he acquired fame as a writer. It is not unusual to encounter a mathematician with more than an amateur's talent for music, or *vice versa*. In this range and scope, broad as the Russian land itself, lies much of the indefinable charm of old Russian culture.

It is inevitable that the rôle of the intelligentsia in the Revolution and civil war should be harshly judged by active combatants on both sides. In the eyes both of victorious, Red, Soviet Russia and of defeated, White, émigré Russia the radical and liberal intelligentsia, taking little active or voluntary part in the struggle, must seem almost deserters in a life-and-death conflict where desertion was an unpardonable crime.

Certainly the academical and theoretical strain in the character of the intelligentsia made them unfit, as a general rule, to ride the revolutionary storm, where quick, decisive action was the first requirement. Yet it may be that their humanitarianism, their aversion to bloodshed and terrorism, regardless of the cause for which such means were invoked, had as much to do with their inactivity in the great Russian social convulsion as their familiar historical weaknesses of irresolution and wavering. They were not the sort of people to build Schlüsselburgs or Solovyetzky Islands.

History has its own laws of relativity; and noncombatants in periods of passionate stress and struggle are not always the chief sufferers from the application of these laws. Few people in any country now regard the pacifists of the World War with the indignation and contempt which were visited upon them while hostilities were in progress. And future generations in Russia, viewing the Revolution in broader perspective, may regard the tragic dilemma of the intelligentsia, who followed in the footsteps of Dante's angels and failed to place themselves on either side of the barricades of civil war, with more sympathy than can reasonably be expected from the combatant generation which fought through that war.

XVI

RUSSIA AND WORLD CAPITAL

POTENTIALLY the Soviet Union represents an enormous field for the activity of foreign capital. Actually its commercial and financial contacts with the outside world are much slighter than was the case before the War.

A few facts and figures may help to illustrate the gap between possibilities and realities in this connection. Cut off from its normal import requirements ever since the beginning of the War, and committed to an ambitious programme of industrialization, Russia to-day could absorb indefinite quantities of industrial and electrical machinery and equipment, tractors and other agricultural machinery, and raw material, which either cannot be produced within the country or are produced in insufficient quantities. But the foreign trade of the Soviet Union is still a little less than half of the pre-war volume. Before the War Russia contributed 3 per cent of the world's trade turnover. To-day this share has shrunk to a little less than 1½ per cent.

The same discrepancy exists in the matter of concessions, or industrial, agricultural, and commercial enterprises which are leased to foreign capitalists for exploitation over a term of years. As a comparatively undeveloped country, which is attempting to enlarge its industrial equipment and increase its output at a very rapid rate, the Soviet Union would unquestionably benefit by the importation of considerable sums of foreign capital in the forms of loans or concessions.

The natural resources of the country are sufficiently extensive to constitute a genuine inducement for the foreign investor. Russia has two billion acres of forest land — the largest timber reserve in the world. It has 35.1 per cent of the world's oil

reserves;[1] and while the largest two oil fields of Baku and Grozny are reserved for state exploitation, there is a rich untapped oil district in the neighborhood of Emba, northeast of the Caspian Sea, in addition to other promising and unexplored oil resources in Central Asia and in the North Caucasus. Large potash deposits near Solikamsk, in the Urals, huge deposits of iron ore in Kursk Province, and the vast coal reserves of Siberia, which are estimated to exceed by more than five times those of the largest working coal field in the Donetz Basin, are only a few among numerous examples of valuable natural wealth which the Soviet Union has not yet been able to develop with its own resources.

Only recently an imposing list of possible concessions in almost every field of Russian economic life, to a total estimated value of three and a half billion rubles, was published in the Soviet press. But the actual investments of foreign capital in concessions are very small, amounting to approximately 45,000,000 rubles, whereas it has been estimated that before the War foreign capital was flowing into Russia at the rate of 80,000,000 rubles a year. Foreign capital accounts for less than one per cent of the industrial output of the Soviet Union at the present time.

No doubt the strongest factor in obstructing the inflow of foreign capital into Russia has been the controversy centring around the policy of the Soviet Government in repudiating the pre-war foreign debts of the Russian Government and the Russian municipalities and nationalizing foreign industrial properties. The sum total of Russian liabilities under these heads has been estimated at 13,823,000,000 rubles,[2] divided as follows: —

Pre-war state debt	3,850,000,000 rubles
Guaranteed loans	870,000,000 "
Municipal bonds	422,000,000 "
Industrial investments	2,000,000,000 "
War loans	6,681,000,000 "

[1] *Soviet Union Year Book, 1928*, page 65.

[2] See Pasvolsky and H. G. Moulton, *Russian Debts and Russian Reconstruction*, p. 21.

As against these foreign claims, the Soviet Government, besides upholding the juridical validity of its decrees repudiating foreign debts and nationalizing foreign property, holds in reserve large compensation claims for damage suffered as a result of the policy of blockade and intervention pursued by the Allied powers during the period of the Russian civil war. At the same time it has repeatedly intimated its willingness to consider the debt and property compensation claims of the foreign creditors, on condition that any payments in this connection be directly linked up with the question of granting new credits to Russia.

Hitherto the opposed viewpoints of the foreign creditors in demanding unconditional recognition of their claims and of the Soviet Government in requiring new credits as a prior condition to considering compensation claims have led to something in the nature of a deadlock. The Soviet Government has paid no compensation and has received no new loans and very scanty long-term commercial credits. Two of the most important of these credits have been the 300,000,000 marks advanced by German banks with a partial guaranty from the German central and state governments, and the contract, concluded in 1929, under which the American General Electric Company granted a five-year credit and abandoned its claims in connection with the sale of $26,000,000 worth of electrical equipment to the Amtorg, the Soviet trading organization in America.

In addition to the deadlock on the pre-revolutionary debt and credit question, other factors which have hindered a resumption of more normal commercial relations between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world are prejudice against the political character of the Soviet state and unfamiliarity with the new organization of Russian foreign trade, which is a strict state monopoly, regulated by the Trade Commissariat. A plan regulating the country's imports and exports is drawn up at the beginning of each new business year; and no important import or export operation can be carried out without the knowledge and approval of the Trade Commissariat,

although certain organizations, such as the consumers' and agricultural coöperatives and the buying organs of such large state industries as the oil and textile trades, are granted a certain amount of autonomy in foreign market operations.

Notwithstanding credit and other difficulties, Soviet foreign trade has been gradually reëstablishing itself, although its pace of recovery has been notably slower than that of other branches of Russian economic life. The Soviet foreign trade turnover for the year which ended October 1, 1928,[1] was 1,722,900,000 rubles as against 2,894,000,000 rubles for 1913. If the rise in world prices is taken into consideration the volume of foreign trade is still below 50 per cent of the pre-war figure, although some allowance should be made for the loss of trade involved in the separation of Poland, Finland, the Baltic States, and Bessarabia from the territory of the former Russian Empire.

Soviet exports for 1927–1928 reached the figure of 768,100,000 rubles, with imports at 944,800,000 rubles, thus yielding an unfavorable trade balance of 176,700,000 rubles. In 1926–1927 the corresponding figures for exports and imports were 770,543,000 rubles and 712,691,000 rubles.

While final figures for the year 1928–1929 were not obtainable at the time of writing, it seems that a small favorable trade balance in the neighborhood of 25,000,000 or 30,000,000 rubles was created, as against the unfavorable balance of 175,000,000 rubles in 1927–1928. The change was achieved in about equal measure by curtailment of imports and expansion of exports, oil and lumber being among the principal items of export which yielded a marked increase.

Besides diminishing in quantity, Soviet export has changed radically in character, as compared with pre-war times. In 1913 Russia exported over 10,500,000 tons of grain to a value of almost 600,000,000 rubles. Grain was the backbone of the country's export trade. At no time since the Revolution have Russian grain exports reached a third of the 1913 figure, and in 1927–1928 grain almost vanished from

[1] The Soviet business year runs from October to October.

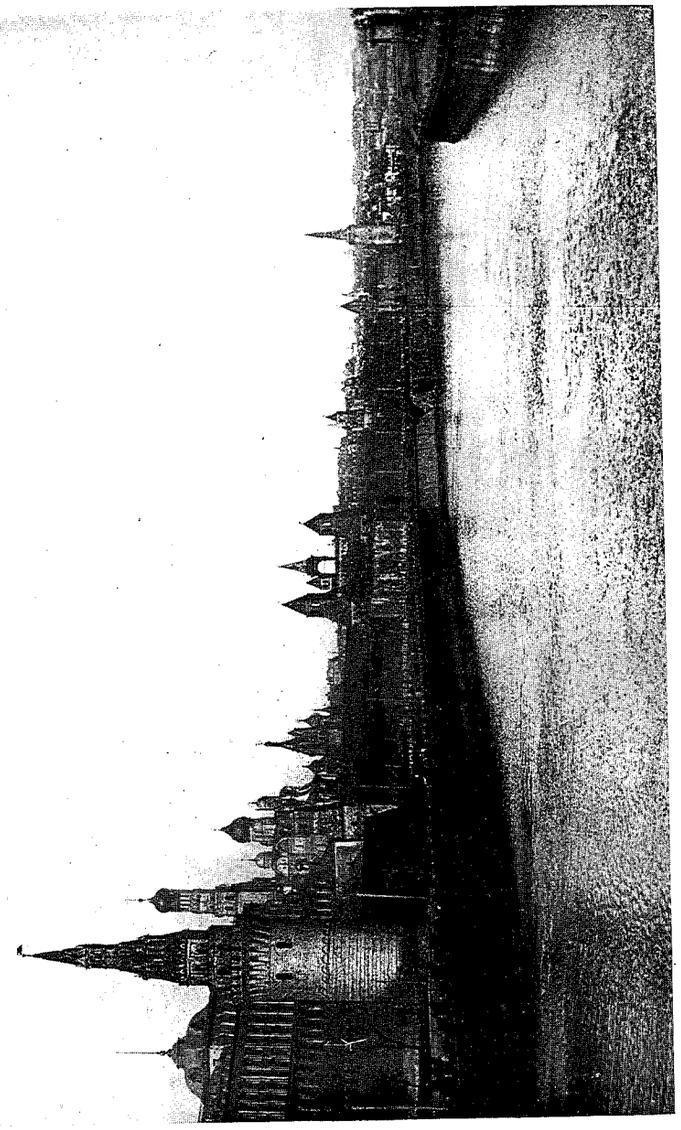
the list of export items. Exports over the European frontier amounted to a little over half a million tons to a value of 51,510,000 rubles; but these were half offset by imports of wheat to the value of 26,969,000 rubles. The causes which have led to Russia's temporary elimination from the ranks of the world's grain-exporting countries are numerous and complicated, and are discussed in detail in another chapter.[1] It may be sufficient to observe here that resumption of grain exports on a large scale within the next year or two seems unlikely, while the development of grain export in a more distant future depends on comparatively unpredictable factors, such as the agrarian policies of the Soviet Government and the character of the weather.

Flax is another article of agricultural export which has declined very heavily. In 1913, 272,440 tons of Russian flax were sold abroad for 86,818,000 rubles. In 1928, 29,967 tons brought in 21,505,000 rubles. Increased domestic consumption and lower yield of flax per acre account for this falling off. Butter and eggs are growing items in the Soviet export list, but they are still far below the pre-war level. Eggs realized 90,648,000 rubles and butter 71,558,000 in 1913. The corresponding figures for 1927–1928 were 40,462,000 and 39,119,000.

Lumber yields much less in the export budget of the country than was formerly the case. The Soviet Union exported about 90,000,000 rubles' worth of timber products during 1927–1928, as against 164,930,000 rubles' worth in 1913. Despite the fact that it boasts the largest forest reserves in the world, the Soviet Union exported 5,000,000 cubic metres of lumber during 1927–1928 as against 10,000,000 for Finland and over 11,000,000 for Poland.

On the other hand the export trade in furs and oil is distinctly above pre-war figures. Furs have acquired the place of honor as the most valuable item on the Soviet export list, realizing about 120,000,000 rubles, as against 17,052,000 rubles in 1913. Oil products reached a value of about 105,000,000 rubles, compared with 50,086,000 rubles in 1913. In volume

[1] See Chapter VIII, "Karl Marx and the Peasant-Sphinx."



KREMLIN FROM THE MOSCOW RIVER

the export of oil products has practically trebled the pre-war amount.

One marked feature of Soviet export at the present time is the shift in the centre of gravity from agricultural to industrial products. Whereas before the War agricultural products accounted for almost three quarters of the export, to-day industrial products, among which lumber, oil, and textiles (sold to the neighboring Asiatic states) are most important, slightly outweigh the very strongly decreased volume of agricultural products. An article published by the Soviet Commissar for Trade, Mr. A. Mikoyan, in the *Encyclopœdia of Soviet Export* (Volume I, p. 19) indicates Russia's decline as a producer of agricultural goods for the world market. Over the five-year period 1909–1913 Russia exported 18.1 per cent of its wheat, 31 per cent of its barley, 27.7 per cent of its corn, 31.1 per cent of its eggs, 80.5 per cent of its flax and tow, and 15.6 per cent of its hemp. The percentages for the same articles in 1926–1927 (before the disappearance of grain from the Soviet export balance) were as follows: wheat, 6.5; barley, 8.5; corn, 9.6; eggs, 9.6; flax and tow, 12.9; hemp, 1.1. The pre-war Russian export of food products was unquestionably carried out to some extent at the expense of the undernourishment of the population, and there is no doubt some truth in the claim of the Soviet economists that the peasants now have more to eat. Other factors in the situation would seem to be absence of stimulus for the peasant to throw his surplus produce on the market, owing to the shortage of manufactured goods and the annihilation of the estates and large farms which were formerly the chief producers for the foreign market.

The character of Russian import has also changed, although not quite so strikingly as in the case of the export. Different as the two systems were in most other respects, Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union both aimed at the rapid development of the country's industries; and the lion's share of imports, both in 1913 and in 1927–1928, consisted of machinery, equipment, and industrial raw material. This so-called productive import was about 66 per cent of the total import for 1913 and

about 85 per cent in 1927–1928. This difference is explained by the fact that, taking advantage of its foreign trade monopoly, the Soviet Government, so far as possible, excludes all luxury articles and also clothing and goods of everyday consumption, making limited exception only for such popular dietary articles as tea and herrings and rice.

The Soviet Government in 1927–1928 spent abroad 247,885,000 rubles on industrial and transport equipment and 330,038,000 rubles on raw material, cotton (134,886,000 rubles), colored metals (64,730,000 rubles), and wool (42,582,000 rubles) being the leading items in this category. One is rather impressed by the small amount (37,282,000 rubles) spent on agricultural equipment. It may be noted, however, that the internal production of agricultural machinery is increasing from year to year. So, 54.2 per cent of the agricultural machines used in 1913, 69 per cent in 1925–1926, and 80 per cent in 1926–1927 were made within the country.

A study of Russia's foreign trade according to countries indicates a sharp decline in commerce with England during the last year, accompanied by a rise in the trade turnover with Germany and the United States, the latter country ousting England from second place in Russian trade. In 1926–1927 the volume of trade carried on between the Soviet Union and Germany, England, and America amounted, respectively, to the following sums: 289,885,000 rubles, 274,691,000 rubles, and 139,266,000 rubles. For eleven months of 1927–1928 Soviet trade with Germany increased to 394,533,000 rubles, and Soviet trade with America reached the figure of 182,401,000 rubles, whereas the commercial turnover with England declined to 174,297,000 rubles. Russian purchases from Great Britain decreased by more than half (from 94,228,000 rubles to 41,396,000 rubles), clearly indicating the decision of the Soviet Government to place as few orders as possible in England after the police raid on the headquarters of the Soviet trade mission and the severance of diplomatic relations between the two countries in the spring of 1927. The increased trade with Germany was due in some degree to the use of the credit

for 300,000,000 marks which was advanced for the purchase of German industrial goods in 1925.

Despite the decline in the total volume of Soviet foreign trade and the absence of any sort of formal political or economic agreement with America, the volume of commercial transactions between the Soviet Union and that country, as measured in dollars, has more than doubled since 1913. Russian-American trade turnover in 1913 amounted to $52,286,000, while Mr. Saul G. Bron, chairman of the Amtorg (the chief Soviet trading organization in America), estimated the total value of Soviet-American trade in 1927–1928 at $120,000,000, as against $92,600,000 in 1926–1927. The balance of trade between the two countries is heavily favorable to America, Soviet purchases of cotton alone exceeding by almost three times the value of the furs, casings, and minor articles of export which Russia sends to America.

These purchases of cotton represent the chief factor in the striking increase of Russian-American trade, amounting to $42,713,000 in 1926–1927, as against $6,432,000 in 1913. Formerly Russia purchased a considerable amount of American cotton through European brokers; now 96 per cent of the cotton is bought directly in America. The Soviet trade organizations are also buying considerable quantities of mining and industrial equipment and machinery in America, and most of the thirty thousand tractors which are working on Russian fields originated in the factories of Henry Ford. The credit of $26,000,000 recently extended by the General Electric Company over a period of five years doubtless will increase Russian purchases of electrical supplies in America; and the Soviet metal and chemical industries are hungrily waiting for similar credits in order to expand their buying operations.

The most complete and detailed commercial treaty signed by the Soviet Government was concluded with Germany in 1925. Besides regulating the commercial relations between the two countries on the basis of the "most favored nation" principle (with certain exceptions for nonindustrial Asiatic countries), this treaty covers a wide range of general economic

points, including navigation, trade arbitration, taxation, and defense of industrial property. Germany's high hopes of finding in Russia an almost unlimited field of commercial expansion have not been altogether realized; German business firms have been disappointed by the failure to make any breach in the iron wall of the Soviet foreign trade monopoly; and German commercial experts, when asked about the status of Soviet-German trade relations, are apt to shake their heads and point out that Russia's trade with Germany in 1927 was less than 3 per cent of the total German foreign trade. However, Germany cannot afford to neglect a yearly business of $200,000,000; and the contest for the Russian market in the immediate future seems to lie largely between Germany and America. The former country has the advantages of greater familiarity with Russian conditions, geographical proximity, and regular consular service; America, on the other hand, has vastly greater financial facilities for granting long-term credits.

The Soviet Government has two commercial policies: one for the nonindustrialized countries of the East and one for the West. In commercial dealings with China, Afghanistan, Persia, and Turkey the strict application of the foreign trade monopoly is relaxed, and more latitude is granted to the activities of private merchants. These Eastern countries supply various forms of food and raw material, such as dried fruits, wool and cotton, tea and rice, while the Soviet Union finds there a market for textile goods and timber, oil and glass products.

In the case of Western countries the principle of state monopoly of foreign trade is enforced in all its rigor; and inasmuch as this monopoly is considered one of the "commanding heights" of socialized economic life, there is no likelihood that it will be abandoned, notwithstanding the complaints of foreign firms which feel handicapped in dealing with state organizations, rather than with their direct customers, and the less audible grumblings of the Soviet state trusts and syndicates, which sometimes chafe under the restrictions which the monopoly imposes upon their operations. The chief criticism

of the state foreign trade monopoly is that it involves a certain amount of red tape and delay. Its advantages, from the Soviet standpoint, are obvious. It permits large-scale manœuvring with import and export orders on foreign markets and makes it possible, whenever political or economic considerations render this advisable, for the Soviet Government to shift its custom rapidly from one country to another. While standing for the maintenance of the principle of a unified monopoly on their side, Soviet commercial circles manifest keen resentment whenever there are suggestions of a national or international combination of firms dealing with Russia with a view to keeping prices at an agreed level.

Unless there is an improbably rapid revival of agricultural export, it seems unlikely that Soviet foreign trade will reach pre-war dimensions for several years. At the same time there is a full realization of the desirability of increasing, almost at any cost, the export, which is Russia's chief and almost only means of paying for her imports, which in turn are an important if not decisive element in determining the speed and success of the industrialization of the country. The peculiar Russian currency situation makes it possible in some cases to export at a loss with profit, if such a paradoxical expression is permissible. The Russian ruble is not exchangeable at par value, or anywhere near it, outside the Soviet frontiers; and in fact exportation of rubles is forbidden by law, with a view to checking currency speculation. So forced exports, even at a loss in rubles, may be economically defensible, in so far as they realize foreign currency, which in turn strengthens the commercial link with the outside world.

So one may anticipate strenuous efforts to increase the exports of oil, which has conquered a secure place for itself in the markets of Europe and the Near East, of furs and timber, and of a number of dairy products and secondary articles. Russia's import requirements, especially in the field of machinery and certain kinds of raw material, are almost unlimited. How far these requirements may be satisfied depends first on the volume of exports and second on the credit

facilities which Soviet buying organizations may obtain in foreign markets. So far as payment of commercial debts is concerned, the element of business risk is less in the case of Russia than in that of some other countries, because the state is a direct participant in every large import operation, and the Soviet régime, while repudiating responsibility for pre-revolutionary Russian obligations, has always been scrupulously accurate in fulfilling its own.

How large a commercial debt the Soviet Union could carry safely is a question which for some time will probably possess theoretical rather than practical importance. The answer probably lies in the degree to which a liberal credit policy on the part of foreign business firms would hasten the development of Russian export trade up to and beyond the pre-war level and facilitate the increased production of gold and other precious metals within Russia itself. As yet there is no indication that the Soviet Union is likely to receive more credit than its natural wealth and resources would enable it to repay.

After foreign trade, concessions constitute the most important commercial link between the Soviet Union and the outside world. The number of concessions in operation fluctuates from time to time with the withdrawal of some concessionaires and the conclusion of new agreements with others; but during the last year it has generally been in the neighborhood of a hundred, only a few of which could be said to possess large-scale economic significance. According to a list published by the Soviet Main Concessions Committee, as of June 1, 1928, Germany was first in the number of concessions held by its citizens, with thirty-one, America was second, with fourteen, and England third, with ten. Twenty-eight of the concession agreements were for technical aid, twenty-four affected manufacturing and mining enterprises, the remainder being distributed among such fields as forestry, agriculture, fishing, building, transport and communication, trade and finance.

Concession agreements are negotiated between foreign capitalists and the Soviet Main Concessions Committee, which

works directly under the Council of People's Commissars. While each contract naturally has its own special provisions, there are certain features which are common to practically all concession agreements and which may be said to define the concessions policy of the Soviet Government.

Concession enterprises are not held as absolute property, but are leased for varying terms of years. Ten and fifteen years are customary terms for manufacturing undertakings with a quick turnover; on the other hand a mining concession which requires extensive preliminary work may be granted for as long a time as fifty years. At the expiration of the term of the lease the whole undertaking reverts to the Government, the concessionaire receiving agreed compensation for improvements which he may have installed during the last years of the functioning of the contract. The concessionaire is required to fulfill a definite production programme and to pay to the Government a rental for his lease, in cash or in kind, as the contract may specify. He is also liable to an excess-profits tax when his enterprise is unusually profitable.

So long as he fulfills the terms of the contract and complies with the labor laws of the country the concessionaire may operate his enterprise as he sees fit. He is assured against confiscation or requisition of his property. His profits may be converted from rubles into foreign currency at the official rate of exchange. Disputes relating to the interpretation of a contract may be submitted to the arbitration of a board consisting of representatives of the Government and the concessionaire, with an impartial chairman. One of the large mining concession agreements provided for the inclusion in the arbitral board of a scientist on the staff of the State Mining Academy of a European country other than that of the concessionaire.

Concessions in the Soviet Union do not involve any abrogation of national sovereignty, and according to the precedent set when the grant of the provisional concession in the island of Sakhalin to the American Sinclair Consolidated Oil Company was set aside, the Soviet economic authorities may sue in the

Soviet courts for the annulment of contracts when the concessionaire is accused of failing to carry out his side of the bargain. The guaranty for the activity of the foreign capitalist in Russia lies not in any extraterritorial arrangements but in the sense of self-interest of the Soviet Government, which is anxious to attract foreign capital, and would, therefore, be unlikely to alienate it by harsh or oppressive measures.

The largest concession now operating in the Soviet Union is held by the Lena Goldfields Company, which is incorporated in Great Britain but which draws some of its capital from American sources. This company has already invested about 18,000,000 rubles in a large mining enterprise which calls for the immediate development of the placer gold deposits of the Lena River, in Siberia, and for the exploration and ultimate exploitation of copper mines in the Ural Mountains and lead and zinc deposits in the Altai Province of Siberia. The Lena Goldfields Company is already producing about a quarter of the total Russian gold output. Part of its concession runs for thirty years and part for fifty years from the date of signature in 1925.

Some manufacturing concessions which have benefited by the very high Russian internal price level have proved very profitable for their holders. Among these may be mentioned a pen and pencil factory, operated by a Russian American, Mr. A. Hammer, and a factory for the production of ball bearings, which has been leased to the Swedish company "SKF." The regular airplane communication between Moscow and Konigsberg and Berlin is maintained by a mixed company, the Soviet state aviation lines and the German Luft-Hansa Company sharing the capital investment and the profits.

Japanese capital is gradually penetrating into the Russian Far East. The restitution to Soviet sovereignty of the northern half of the island of Sakhalin, occupied by the Japanese during the period of intervention, was quickly followed by the granting to Japanese firms of long-term concessions, of forty-five and fifty years, for the development of part of the coal

and iron resources in which Northern Sakhalin is rich. A comparatively small royalty is paid to the Soviet Government for every ton of coal and oil extracted from these Sakhalin concessions. This oil concession is of special importance to Japan because it provides a cheap and accessible source of fuel for the Japanese navy. Japanese firms have also acquired forestry and fishing concessions, together with the right to operate fish-canning factories in the Kamkatcha peninsula.

The so-called technical-aid concessions represent an increasingly popular form of coöperation between Soviet industries and foreign capital. Perhaps the most significant of these is the engagement of Colonel Hugh L. Cooper, the well-known American hydroelectric power plant construction engineer, as chief consultant for the building of the $100,000,000 combination dam and electrical station which is being erected on the River Dnieper. The American engineering firm of Stuart, James, and Cooke is working in an advisory capacity in the Donetz coal region. The Freyne Engineering Company of Chicago has undertaken a contract to project the construction of a new steel plant in the Telbess district of Siberia. These are only a few of the agreements by which the Soviet Government has endeavored to enlist the most modern foreign technical skill in its programme of industrial reconstruction. Such contracts almost invariably operate to the general advantage of the foreign trade of the country with which they are concluded, because as a rule engineers are apt to recommend for use the machines of their own country, with which they are most familiar.

A large concession for the exploitation of the manganese fields of Chiatouri, in the Caucasian Republic of Georgia, granted in 1925 to the W. A. Harriman Company of America, was liquidated in 1928 by mutual consent. The Harriman Company apparently signed this contract in the expectation that it would enjoy practically a monopoly of the world's manganese, with consequent high prices; the development of new manganese areas in Brazil and Sierra Leone destroyed the prospect of such a monopoly, and the concession proved unprofitable. The

Soviet Government has agreed to compensate the Harriman Company for its invested capital through an issue of bonds payable in ten years and bearing 7 per cent interest.[1]

If every foreign concession now operating on Soviet territory should be terminated overnight the effect on the economic life of the country would scarcely be more than a mild ripple. The following three figures illustrate as clearly as possible the negligible contribution of foreign concession enterprises to the volume of Soviet industrial production: 45,000,000 rubles of invested capital, an annual production to the value of 112,000,000 rubles (out of over thirteen billion rubles of total industrial production), 26,000 employed workers (as compared with more than 2,500,000 workers in the state industries).

In the latter part of 1928 the Soviet Government inaugurated a more active concessions policy. Instead of waiting for offers from foreign capitalists, the Main Concessions Committee published a long list of enterprises in almost every field of national economic life which may be leased on a commission basis. It was semiofficially intimated that the delays and red tape which hitherto have impeded the progress of many negotiations for concessions would, so far as possible, be eliminated. Mr. Ksandrov, head of the Concessions Committee, told the writer that one of the features of the new concessions policy was to offer no enterprise for lease which would not yield a reasonable profit to the foreign capitalist. When asked to define the term "reasonable profit" Mr. Ksandrov declared that in Russia, in view of the newness of the field, the foreign investor might expect a somewhat higher return than the average rate of profit in other countries. The head of the Foreign Department of the Supreme Economic Council, Mr. S. I. Aralov, made the following statement in this connection: —

[1] A $110,000,000 contract for the construction of cement plants, grain elevators, flour mills, and miscellaneous industrial enterprises throughout the Soviet Union was obtained on November 11, 1929, according to a Moscow dispatch to the Associated Press, by the MacDonald Engineering Company of Chicago in competition with foreign engineers. A staff of forty-five American engineers will direct and supervise the work. Several million dollars' worth of American machinery will be used.

"We fully understand that under new conditions even the most well-established foreign capital will come to us, especially in the beginning, only on condition that there is a prospect of considerable profits. We reckon with this fact and we have no objections against it, provided that this profit will be drawn from values created by the new investments and the technical skill of the concessionaires." [1]

The estimated value of the objects listed in the number of possible concessions offered by the Soviet Government reaches the imposing figure of three and a half billion rubles. One should not, however, make the assumption that foreign industrial investment will quickly expand to that figure, or anything like it. In the first place, it takes two to make a bargain, and the offering of a concession by the Soviet Government does not mean that a capitalist will be found to take it up. Secondly, the list of projected concessions is of an optional character and is avowedly designed to give foreign capital a wide range of choice. If, for example, one or two very large agreements should be concluded in forestry, metallurgy, or any other field, the Soviet Government might decide to withdraw its other offers in this particular branch of economic life.

The list of suggested concessions indicates that the Soviet Government is most anxious to attract foreign capital into pioneer enterprises and also into the development of such industries as mining and metallurgy, where supply in Russia conspicuously fails to meet demand. Factories and mines which are functioning to full capacity under state control are not placed on the market; but to the concessionaire is given a wide range of undeveloped or inadequately developed undertakings from which to take his choice. The list of possible concessions includes oil fields in the Emba district, northeast of the Caspian Sea, in Central Asia, and in the North Caucasus; coal mines in the Donetz Basin; iron mines in the Krivoi Rog district of Ukraina; more than 30,000,000 acres of forest land; 400,000,000 rubles' worth of public utility works, either in the form of new construction or of reëquipment, etc.

[1] See *Izvestia*, No. 234 of October 7, 1928.

There are two respects in which Russia differs from most of the countries where foreign capital operates on a concession basis. It has a strongly organized labor movement and an elaborate set of labor laws, observance of which is obligatory for every concessionaire. Looking for political support first to the industrial working class, the Soviet Government could not be expected to permit workers in concession enterprises to accept worse conditions than those which prevail in state factories. Wages are not high in the Soviet Union, as compared with Western Europe and America; but the labor laws impose on the employer the obligation to pay insurance and other contributions which may come to about 15 per cent of the sum paid out in wages. The prospective concessionaire should bear this fact in mind in calculating his future working costs. A second point which also should be considered with a view to averting misunderstandings is that Russia possesses a centralized economic system under which every import operation is under state control, and supplies of raw materials, when there is a shortage, cannot easily be bought in the free market, but are largely rationed out to enterprises in proportion to their supposed utility, from the standpoint of the state. In view of this situation it behooves the concessionaire to insert into his contract some protective clauses which either guarantee him his essential supplies from state sources or permit him, in case of necessity, to import them from abroad.

Russia's need for foreign capital grows from year to year. With the increase of industrial production beyond the pre-war level the problem of new construction comes very much to the fore, and the need for foreign machinery and equipment, foreign raw material, and foreign technique is intensified. It is questionable whether the more ambitious Soviet projects of rapid industrial expansion within the near future can be realized fully unless economic ties with the outside world, in the shape of foreign trade, are broadened and strengthened.

Moreover, the Soviet Union, despite its comparative poverty, represents an inevitably expanding market, for countries with highly developed machine-building industries, and a potentially rich field for the daring prospector in mining and other forms of industrial pioneer development. Making every allowance for the difficulties which hitherto have hindered the restoration of normal economic relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world, and which to some extent still exist, it seems probable that Russia's significance in the world economic system will substantially increase during the next few years. Just how quickly the Soviet Union will assume the place in international commerce to which it is entitled by size, population, and natural wealth depends on several more or less incalculable factors: on Russian need for foreign capital, on the world's need for the Russian market, and on the willingness of both sides to make the compromises and adjustments which are necessary if there is to be coöperation between two radically different economic systems.

XVII

DAUGHTERS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

I FIRST met Olga Chernisheva at a session of the Vutsik, or All-Ukrainian Soviet Executive Committee, in Kharkov, seven years ago. A rather slight and spare figure, with typically Russian high cheek-bones and blue eyes, with a kerchief cast over her head, she might have been any one of the numerous working-class and peasant women who lend proletarian color to every Soviet Congress and then disappear into the obscurity of their factories or native villages.

But Olga Chernisheva had her own very strong and distinctive personality; as one became better acquainted with her it was impossible to escape the impression that here was a new and interesting type of character, a true daughter of the Russian Revolution. She was born and brought up in a poor peasant family in Tver Province. There was no revolutionary influence in her childhood; she knew only the traditional simple life of the peasants, with its habitual poverty and grinding toil and its occasional outbursts of rough merry-making at weddings and holidays.

After a little schooling she was sent to work in a textile factory. When she was eighteen years old her patriarchally-minded father gave her away in marriage to a village suitor who brought a variety of the gifts customary on such occasions, not the least appreciated being a hogshead of vodka. Then, with her husband, she went to Petrograd, where both found employment in a factory. Up to this time there had been no trace of radicalism in Chernisheva's life; in fact, she was quite religious and made frequent pilgrimages to churches and monasteries. It was the World War that brought a decisive change for her, as it did on a much greater scale for her country.

Her husband perished at the front and she found her meagre wages insufficient to provide for her young daughter. So she went to the Tsar's daughter, who headed a commission for the relief of soldiers' wives, and asked for help. But her plea was rejected; it seems that her husband's record for discipline had not been good.

Chernisheva left the Tsar's daughter crying: "If my child had been a kitten or a puppy you would have done more for it." From that time she was drawn into the underground conspirative circles which the revolutionary agitators managed to keep alive even in time of war and severe police repression. After the fall of the old régime in March 1917 she joined the Communist Party, or the Bolsheviks, as they were then called, under the persuasion of a fellow worker who for a long time had been active in the revolutionary movement.

The one-time peasant girl, who had formerly been so religious and crossed herself before every saint's image, now threw herself into the whirling storm of revolution with all the ardor of her character. Knocked down and bruised in the street demonstrations which preceded the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917, her existence after November was a kaleidoscopic series of varied and strenuous activities. The huge impersonal organism of the Communist Party took her, as it did many others, and cast her from one turbulent scene to another.

First she was at the front against the Germans in the short-lived period between the Revolution and the Peace at Brest-Litovsk. Later she found herself in a village in the remote Don country, where she was supposed to carry on Party propaganda and educational work. This experience was abruptly interrupted when the Cossack cavalry of General Denikin broke through the Red front in this region and Chernisheva barely escaped and made her way to Kiev. From that city she returned to Petrograd, just at the moment when it was threatened by the advancing White Army of Yudenitch. Here she sat as a member of one of the revolutionary tribunals which, as in the days of the French Revolution, dealt promptly and sternly with suspected enemies.

"It was useless to give people prison sentences in those times," said Chernisheva, "because they thought Yudenitch might come any day and release them. In order to create a deterring impression the tribunals had to order active counter-revolutionists to be shot. Lighter cases were punished with forced labor."

There was no hint either of pity or of bloodthirstiness in Chernisheva's voice as she recalled the heroic and terrible period of the Revolution. Serving on the revolutionary tribunal was simply a piece of Party work, like any other. And in the same disciplined, matter-of-fact spirit she was carrying out the work to which she was assigned at the time when I met her, as a member of the board of management of a textile factory near Kharkov. She knew little of the technical side of the industry; but as a Communist and a former working woman she was supposed to act as a sort of bridge between the old engineer, whose skill could not be dispensed with, and the workers, who disliked him because his son had been in the White Army and his own views were far from revolutionary.

Now she has been transferred to another post as head of the Leningrad branch of the union of textile workers, which includes a very large number of women workers. Here she is grappling with those prosaic but difficult problems which occupy much of the attention of the highly proletarianized "women's movement" of Russia: to enforce the rule of equal pay for equal work, to give the women workers, usually less skilled than the men, special craft training which will enable them to earn higher salaries, to establish and push forward the nurseries and large central laundries and public dining rooms which will help to set women free from household cares and give them more time for education and public activity.

In looking back at the part which women have played in Russian society in the past one finds striking contradictions. Four empresses, Catherine I, Anne, Elizabeth, and Catherine II, ruled the country with despotic authority during the eighteenth century. Women have always been identified

more or less prominently with the revolutionary movement. The poet Nekrasov in his "Russian Women" commemorated the wives of the Dekabristi, who shared with their husbands the hardships of exile in what was then the wilderness of Siberia. A colonel's daughter, Sofia Perovskaya, was the soul of the conspiracy which led to the assassination of Alexander II. The girl student is a familiar figure in revolutionary reminiscences and literature; and every group which worked for the overthrow of Tsarism numbered its heroines and its martyrs. Western ideas, first of gallantry and politeness, then of equality in the relations of the sexes, made their way among the propertied and educated classes of pre-revolutionary Russia.

But the attitude toward women among the Russian masses has always savored of orientalism; it finds expression in the popular proverb: "A chicken is not a bird, and a woman is not a human being." Wife-beating was common. The peasant girl passed from the almost unlimited authority of her father to that of her husband, or rather, what was perhaps still more oppressive, of her husband's family. Law supported tradition and custom in giving woman an unequal status. Manhood suffrage prevailed in the limited legislative bodies which existed before the Revolution. The peasant woman was not entitled to a share of land in her own right. The husband was legally regarded as the head of the family, and his wife was obliged to follow him wherever he might go.

Among the Mohammedan people of Eastern Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus the subjection of women was even more strongly emphasized. The Tsarist Government did not interfere with the operation of the Shariat, a book of Mohammedan law and custom in which it is written: "Woman has no right to study, orate, and agitate; she has no right to be a judge or a priest. The testimony of a woman before the court is equivalent to half the voice of a man." Among the Eastern peoples, as a rule, women went veiled and were kept in the strictest seclusion.

The Bolshevik Revolution was nothing if not thorough in

its handling of the problem of sex equality. Lenin's statement that "we do not leave one trace of the old Tsarist laws which placed woman in a subordinate and humiliating position" is borne out by the facts of Soviet legislation. One may comb it from end to end without finding any evidence of discrimination between the sexes, unless a certain amount of protective legislation for women employed in industry is to be construed in that light. There is no office in the land for which women are not eligible, from membership in a backwoods village Soviet to the presidency of the Council of People's Commissars. The peasant woman is now entitled to her own equal share of land, which she brings to her husband when she is married and takes away when she is divorced. Neither party to a Soviet marriage contract has any legal right to dominate the actions of the other. Finally, there is a persistent effort to organize and educate the tens of millions of women all over the Soviet Union (a good half of whom are illiterate, while almost all are lacking in any experience of public life), to persuade and push them into actually assuming their newly granted rights of citizenship.

This effort is under the direction of the Women's Department of the Communist Party Central Committee. Lenin once declared that "every cook must know how to manage the state"; and, whether or not this ideal may be realizable in practice, the *zhenotdel*, or Women's Department, spares no effort to reach the cooks and the working and peasant women of the country with its summons to political activity.

With headquarters in the office of the Central Committee in Moscow and branches all over the country, the zhenotdel, which is under the direction of a former working woman, Mrs. Artyukhina, fulfills a multitude of functions. It issues eighteen women's magazines, with a circulation of 670,000. (These publications are not at all similar to the brightly illustrated German women's journals which appear side by side with them on the Moscow news-stands; political articles and literary stories heavily predominate over fashion notes and household suggestions.) Its organizers gradually communi-

SERVANT GIRLS LEARN THE A B C'S IN A SCHOOL FOR ADULT ILLITERATES

cate to peasant women the idea that their husbands should not beat them. These organizers ride about in peripatetic tents, preaching to the Kirghiz nomadic women the new gospel of washing their children's faces, and try to convince the Calmucks, who dwell in the Astrakhan steppes, that the custom of having the head of the family sleep in a bed while the women lie about his feet is not a proper domestic habit.

The zhenotdel recruits and marshals Russia's army of *delegatkas*, or women delegates, now between 600,000 and 700,000 strong. These delegatkas are elected at general women's meetings on a basis of one to every five for working women and servants and one to every twenty-five for office employees, housewives, and peasant women. They are then attached to some institution, to a hospital, a school, or a public office of some kind; they are supposed to offer criticisms and suggestions about the work of their institution and to make periodical reports to the women who elected them.

The office of the delegatka can scarcely be regarded as an unmixed blessing, either by the women who fill it or by the organizations which they are commissioned to observe and criticize. The harassed doctor at the head of a crowded hospital does not usually appreciate the amateur suggestions of a woman who has just come from her factory branch or kitchen pots; and the delegatkas themselves often complain that their work is made very hard for them, that they are jeered at and kept from learning anything about the actual functioning of their institutions, while their absorption in public activity leads to quarrels with their more conservative husbands.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks and defects, the women's course in practical civics represented by the delegatka system has doubtless helped many of the 150,000 women members of village Soviets and the twenty-odd thousand women in the city Soviets. Six hundred and eighty-three of the village Soviets (a little less than one per cent of the total number) have women presidents, but no Russian city has yet acquired a woman mayor. Two provinces, Smolensk and Kaluga, have women presi-

dents of their Soviet Executive Committees; several women have been elected members of the Communist Party Central Committee, but there is at present no woman Commissar, although Mme. Alexandra Kollontai, ardent feminist and advocate of free love, has successively filled the posts of Commissar for Social Welfare and Ambassador to Norway. On the whole the proportion of women in political executive posts in the Soviet Union is not very different from what one would find in Western European and American countries where equal suffrage prevails.

Representatives of the women members of city and village Soviets from all over the country met to exchange experiences at the congress of working and peasant women, held in Moscow shortly before the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the November Revolution. Apart from the dramatic element in the spectacle of nine hundred women from the poorer classes of the country, some with shawls and kerchiefs over their heads, others in the long gowns and picturesque headdresses of the East, meeting in the Kremlin palace of the Tsars, the congress provided an interesting forum at which women from the textile factories of Ivanovo-Vosnessensk, the fields of Ukraina, and the desert lands of the Mohammedan East could state their views and problems.

Although it is one of the dogmas of Communist faith that women have no separate problems, apart from the all-embracing one of the liberation of the working class, there was more than one expression of robust feminist consciousness. Complaints that male workers and peasants showed little disposition to help their sisters on the pathway of new political life were fairly frequent, and one speaker elicited laughter and applause when she spoke of this attitude and added: —

"Perhaps the men are afraid that the time will come when we shall go to the offices with portfolios and they will stay at home and cook the cabbage."

The same speaker, Mrs. Sukhareva, of Leningrad, protested against the policy of dismissing women as soon as they were married, on the ground that they had found a provider and

that single women should have the first chance of employment.

"The husband is not the provider under our present-day conditions," she declared. "Every capable woman must earn her own living, if she is n't held back by any cause."

A peasant delegate said that her fellow villagers were willing to elect her to the board of management of the coöperative store, because they felt this fell within woman's sphere, but showed great reluctance before choosing her as their representative in a credit coöperative. Another, struggling with her unaccustomed duties as a member of the local land commission, declared that the muzhiks did not want to listen to her.

Mrs. Ivanova, from the far northern region of Murmansk, the country of long summer days and long winter nights, described the peculiar customs of the local tribes, where it was formerly the practice to avoid and boycott a woman at the time of childbirth and where a mother still falls under public censure if she gives birth to a daughter. Murmansk was also the scene of a curious domestic difficulty. A Chinese resident of that region who had married a Russian wife returned from his native country with a Chinese spouse, to whom he had been betrothed in infancy. Confronted with this baffling problem, the community handed down a Solomonic judgment to the effect that the Chinese should live one week with his Russian and one week with his Chinese wife.

The voice of criticism was freely heard at the congress; one gained an impression both of the poverty and backwardness of many parts of the country and of the manifold questions which the new women Soviet rulers are called on to solve. A Ukrainian delegate called for the building of more barracks for agricultural women laborers. Comrade Baskakova, from the town of Kostroma, pointed to the danger of letting children run with street gangs, and urged the establishment of more and better vocational schools, saying: "Now, if a woman bears an extra child, she is afraid that she may give Russia an extra hooligan." A woman from the Ural mining district spoke vigorously of the hardships of living in crude barracks,

which housed forty families and were flooded with water every spring. Unemployment as a cause of prostitution among women was mentioned more than once.

But, if there was much plain-spoken criticism, there was also a sense of power and achievement in these nine hundred women members of the Russian ruling class, and one sometimes caught a note of almost touching faith in the new Soviet gospel, as when a Tartar woman declared that, despite the fact that all her property consisted of two acres of land and a cow, she had put down a subscription for all the works of Lenin, "in order more easily to follow in the footsteps of our chief."

In general it was the women of the Mohammedan East who were most unqualified in their expressions of enthusiasm for the changes which the Revolution had brought in their lives; and this is quite understandable in view of the state of ignorance, isolation, and semi-slavery from which they are now beginning to emerge. Nowhere is the zhenotdel doing more interesting or picturesque work than in Central Asia and the Caucasus, the old strongholds of Mohammedan patriarchal tribal life. In many respects the process of emancipation in these regions is quite similar to what is taking place in Kemalist Turkey and, to a much smaller extent, in Persia and Afghanistan.

The wearing of the veil is the central point of the battle between old and new customs among the women of the Soviet East. The veil that is worn in Central Asia and the Caucasus is not a filmy, gauze-like creation, but a heavy horsehair covering that not only hides the face but shrouds the whole figure. It seems to symbolize the whole weight of old Mohammedan tribal law and custom.

In Uzbekistan, the largest Central Asiatic Soviet republic, 170,000 women have already cast off these veils. At one celebration of Women's Day, which is observed annually in Russia on March 8, forty thousand veils were cast into bonfires. It is neither safe nor easy for the oriental woman to break with family tradition in this way. Eastern feminism has its martyrs, its scores of women who have been murdered

by husbands and relatives in response to the incitations of the more fanatical mullahs, or Mohammedan priests. Many of them have been driven from their homes and forced to shift for themselves. But the new spirit of the time and the constant missionary work of the zhenotdel seem destined to prove stronger than the passive forces of Asiatic conservatism. In the ancient city of Derbent, in Daghestan, where the Caucasus Mountains sweep down to the Caspian Sea, a husband struck his unveiled wife dead. Immediately a large number of other women cast off their veils as a sign of protest.

In Bokhara, where mediæval Mohammedan theologians worked out the doctrine that woman has no soul, the crusade for unveiling has proceeded with such success that now only a few of the older women retain their horsehair shrouds. Traveling in the interior of Crimea, the old seat of a Tartar khanate, I visited a remote mountain village, where one would not have expected any especially rapid development of modern ideas, and found the Tartar women going about unveiled as a matter of course. Stopping in the hut of a philosophic old Tartar, who seemed more concerned over the low price which the state paid for his tobacco than over the new freedom of his womenfolk or the decreased attendance at the village mosque, I asked his wife whether she preferred the new status or the old.

"I might just as well have remained veiled," she replied with some bitterness. Further questions brought out the fact that although this Tartar woman had parted with her veil she had not been able to rid herself of the inhibitions which were connected with wearing it. She still shrank from going to the village market or even from being seen unveiled on the street. But her daughter had grown up without the veil and went quite freely and self-confidently everywhere, even to the neighboring large town.

Several institutions have been created for the benefit of these women who are in the transitional stage between abandoning the veil and gaining full freedom of movement. Two hundred and eighty-three Eastern women's clubs have been

founded, and some of these, notably one in the big oil centre of Baku, are quite large organizations, with thousands of members and visitors. Their activity combines the functions of a women's club and a social centre in England or America. In these places, where, as a rule, no men are admitted, the newly unveiled women lose some of their shyness, become acquainted with each other, and receive instruction in reading and writing, household affairs and sanitation. In one case it is reported that the sight of a picture of Lenin on the wall created a panic among the more timorous women, who feared that to appear unveiled even before the portrait of a man might bring some sort of bad luck; but in general the visitors to the women's clubs have emerged from the first extreme stage of self-created fear of the outer world.

Finding that some women, even after they had cast their horsehair coverings on the feminist bonfire, were loath to go to the market, the zhenotdel in Uzbekistan took the initiative in establishing fifty-seven coöperative stores, managed and served entirely by women. These stores also represented a convenience for the women who had not yet discarded their veils, since they could make purchases without fear of being seen by men.

The two customary methods of obtaining a wife in the Russian East are by purchase and by violence, real or feigned. The institution of *kalim*, or purchase money for a bride, is deeply rooted in the Caucasus and Central Asia, where a comely and desirable wife may command a price as high as fifty camels. When an avaricious parent sets his terms for kalim too high, or when the girl secretly favors a poor suitor, an abduction often takes place. Sometimes the abduction passes off smoothly and with general satisfaction, but it may lead to one of the blood feuds which are common among the Caucasian mountaineers. Both the purchase and stealing of brides are now forbidden under severe legal penalties. In the Soviet East, as in new Turkey, polygamy is interdicted by law, so that the Soviet Government here plays the rôle of a champion of the Western monogamic system.

An enormous amount of ignorant and malicious nonsense has been written on the subject of the Soviet marriage laws and regulations. Ten years ago a story gained currency abroad that women in Russia had been "nationalized," and despite innumerable denials and refutations this idea simply would not down. As a matter of fact Soviet legislation, which in general abounds in restrictive and regulating features, has left the matter of marriage entirely to the free will of the parties concerned. A simple process of registration before a civil bureau establishes the fact of marriage; and a marriage contract may be formally dissolved, at the desire of either party and without previous notice, by a declaration before the same bureau. A marriage accompanied by religious rites is permitted but has no binding legal sanction. In making marriage terminable at the desire of either partner the Soviet law simply follows along lines marked out in the legislation of Norway on the same subject; but the Soviet law is the more radical of the two, because it permits the instantaneous dissolution of marriage, without any period of preliminary waiting.

The principle of sex equality holds good in Soviet matrimonial legislation. An unemployed husband or wife is entitled to support by his or her spouse on the same basis over a limited period of time. Alimony in Russia may be claimed only for the support of the children. The provision that a man may be called on to pay up to one third of his income for the support of his children acts as something of a deterrent on reckless remarriage, or at least on reckless procreation.

Divorce is probably more prevalent in Russia than in any other country, yet in view of the extreme laxity of the law it is perhaps surprising that the proportion of separations to marriages is not even higher. According to the figures of the Commissariat for the Interior there were 526,692 marriages and 126,280 divorces in European Russia during the first half of 1927. This was a ratio of a little less than one divorce to every four marriages, whereas in America, despite the strict laws of individual states, the relation of divorces to marriages

in comparatively recent years has been estimated at about one to six.

The city of Moscow, with 9973 divorces and 12,825 marriages for the same period, was substantially ahead of the country as a whole in the lightness of its marital ties; and this is quite natural, because the peasant homestead is held together by much stronger bonds, both traditional and economic, than those which apply to the population of the cities. Apart from the fact that the peasant woman still usually demands a church wedding and feels the personal and social stigma of a child born out of wedlock more keenly than her city sister, a divorce, with consequent division of land, stock, and property, is a serious matter for the peasant farm, and brings impoverishment to both parties.

Some efforts have been made by supplementary legislation to correct certain obvious abuses which grew up in the working of the Soviet marriage law. It is now a punishable offense for a man to marry a woman and immediately divorce her, if it can be proved that his marriage was nothing but a pretext for the gratification of passing sex desire. Legal steps have also been taken against the habit of taking "summer brides," which developed in certain country districts. With a view to evading the payment of social insurance and other difficulties connected with the employment of hired labor, the rich peasants sometimes "married" strong girls at the beginning of the harvest season, divorcing them as soon as the press of work was over.

It is plain that the Revolution has produced a far-reaching shake-up in family relationships; it is probably too soon to gauge the effects of this shake-up on individual happiness and social welfare. One familiar literary figure, the woman whose subsequent life is darkened by social obloquy incurred in connection with an unfortunate love affair, is almost inconceivable in the Soviet Union to-day, at least in the cities. Soviet law recognizes no distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children, and the woman who lives with a man without registering the fact at the proper bureau is not likely to lose either her

position or her friends as a result of this fact. A Muscovite of the younger generation once remarked to the writer: —

"The tragedy of Tolstoy's Anna Karenina scarcely seems real to-day. A Soviet Anna Karenina would simply make a trip to the Zaks [the abbreviated term for the marriage and divorce bureau] and the whole matter would be settled."

This, I suspect, is rather too short and simple a view of the situation. Crimes and suicides as a result of disappointed love and jealousy are far from uncommon in Russia to-day. Two recent moving-picture productions in Moscow tried to point the moral that the husband should forgive and forget when his wife has a child by some other man; but such indifference is the exception rather than the rule, especially among the masses of the people. In short, while the more or less artificial social barriers which other countries have tried to erect around monogamy have largely been swept away, individual tragedies arising in complicated love affairs occur in Russia very much as anywhere else.

While commercialized vice persists in the Soviet Union, it is less obtrusive and probably less prevalent in Moscow and Leningrad than in most large European cities. On the other hand casual sex affairs between friends or acquaintances are probably entered into more lightly in Russia than in most other countries.

While the *byezprizorni*, or shelterless waifs — most of them orphans of war and famine — who formerly haunted markets and railroad stations in great numbers are now gradually being placed in children's homes and farm colonies, there is a new class of *byeznadzorni* (literally "children without care") who are growing up as child delinquents and give no little concern to the Soviet social organizations. The conservative in family relations might contend that these children on the city streets are a product of the loosening of parental responsibilities and the absorption of women in work and activity outside the home. The radical might reply that a fuller provision of nurseries, kindergartens, and supervised children's playgrounds would do much to eliminate this problem of the byeznadzorni.

Probably there would be a certain measure of truth in both explanations.

One of the most visibly beneficial social reforms which Russia has experienced under the Soviet régime is the large-scale provision of free nurseries for the children of working women and the enactment of a number of laws for the benefit of the working woman who becomes a mother. Every large factory where women are employed in any considerable number now has its clean, well-kept nursery, where the mothers may leave their children during working hours, instead of being obliged, as in former times, to tie the children to a table leg or leave them to the doubtful care of some neighbor's child. Several thousand summer nurseries have been established also in the country districts, so that peasant women will not be compelled to take their babies to the fields with them in the heat of harvest work. These nurseries, like most forms of social work, as yet cover the needs of the peasants very inadequately.

The only serious criticism which seems to be made against the factory nurseries is that the cost of upkeep is abnormally high. According to Mrs. Artyukhina, head of the zhenotdel, the maintenance of a child in a nursery costs the state thirty rubles a month, which is equal to the monthly wage of many unskilled workers. Moreover, not all children of working women can be admitted to these nurseries, which have accommodations only for 26,000 or 30,000. Still, they have been of very definite social benefit, especially in connection with the laws which guarantee eight weeks' vacation before and an equal amount of time after childbirth for factory workers, and six weeks for office workers. Moreover, the working mother is permitted to feed her child for half an hour every three or four hours, and receives a payment from the state social insurance funds for feeding and clothing the child in the first months of its existence. All this has helped to reduce infant mortality in Moscow from 26.3 per cent in 1913 to 13.4 per cent in 1926. Soviet Russia may justly be proud of the fact that the child death rate in Moscow, which was

70 per cent higher than in Warsaw in 1912, is now 13 per cent lower.[1]

Present-day Russia is interesting for its points of contact, as well as for its differences with the West. Russian women are now living under a régime which has given legal effect to most of the demands of advanced feminism. The actual degree of sex equality, to be sure, is far short of the theoretical rights which Soviet women should enjoy. Still, whenever a peasant begins to exert his formerly unquestioned masculine right to beat his wife he never can be quite sure that he will not precipitate the domestic revolution which some nameless peasant heroine, who never had heard of Aristophanes or his *Lysistrata*, launched in a backwoods village of Smolensk Province. Rebelling against her own ill-treatment, she organized all the other women of the village, who united in refusing to

[1] The following table of infant mortality in the Soviet Union is based upon figures of the Health Commissariat supplied to the International Bureau of the League of Nations.

PERCENTAGE OF INFANT MORTALITY

YEARS	LENINGRAD	MOSCOW
1911–1915	23.9	26.8
1924	16.9	17.7
1925	14	13
1926	14.2	13.4
1927	17.15	13.88

Infant mortality in the European territory of the Soviet Union: —

1913	1924	1925	1926
27.3	21.9	22.7	19.1

According to Dr. Benstock, *Infant Mortality of Nursing Children in Petrograd for the Past Ten Years* (Petrograd, 1917), infant mortality in Warsaw was: (1911) 17.9 per cent; (1912) 16.4; (1913) 16.1. In the *Bulletin of the Leningrad Oblast* (Department of Statistics), No. 20 for April–June 1927, Professor Paevsky says that infant mortality for 1927 was 16.7 in Leningrad, 14.8 in Warsaw, and 13.9 in Moscow. Professor Paevsky takes his figures for Warsaw from *The Statistical Yearbook of the German State*. The authority for the statement that infant mortality in 1926 was 13 per cent lower in Moscow than in Warsaw is contained in a booklet published by the Women's Department of the Communist Party.

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hold any communion with their spouses until written promises of reformation were forthcoming.

This Smolensk Lysistrata won her battle, and she is a portent for the future. The unveiled woman of the East, the bustling delegatka, the occasional Chernisheva or Artyukhina who rises to a high post in state, trade-union, or other public work, have all come to stay.

XVIII

LIBERTY IN THE SOVIET STATE

SEVERAL years ago an American came to Moscow for the purpose of studying the state of civil liberty under the Soviets. This evoked an outburst of uncontrolled amusement from a Russian acquaintance, a former Social Democrat, who had suffered the not uncommon fate of being a political prisoner both under the Tsarist régime and under the Soviet Government.

"Civil liberty in the Soviet Union," he laughed. "Soon some historian will begin to investigate the status of civil liberty under Ivan the Terrible. He will find just as much there as your American student will discover here."

Certainly the things which the average Western European or American associates with the phrase "civil liberties," freedom of speech and press for all citizens, freedom of political organization, guaranties against arbitrary search and arrest, are completely nonexistent in Russia to-day.

Not only is there no opposition press in Russia; but every newspaper or periodical dealing with political questions is under Communist control and voices in news and editorials alike only the orthodox Communist viewpoint. There are no privately owned newspapers in Russia; every organ of the press is issued either by a Soviet, by a local or national Committee of the Communist Party, by a trade-union, or by some other public institution or organization; and in every case the direction of the newspaper's policies by a responsible Communist is ensured.

The writ of habeas corpus does not run in Russia. Anyone suspected of a political or economic offense may be arrested, held in prison for an indefinite period and finally exiled, sen-

tenced to a term of imprisonment or even, in rare and extreme cases, executed, simply by the fiat of the all-powerful Gay-Pay-Oo, or political police.[1] No one has ever been able to secure any official statistics regarding the number of persons who are in prison or in exile for political offenses in the Soviet Union; but the free use which the Gay-Pay-Oo makes of its sweeping powers of arrest makes it certain that this figure is one of the highest in the world.[2]

No meeting may be held in Russia without a permit; and such permits are practically never given for gatherings where even the most indirect forms of political criticism might be voiced. I can recall only two exceptions which tend to prove this general rule. The anarchists held a meeting to honor the memory of the pioneer figure in Russian anarchism, Mikhail Bakunin, in the summer of 1926; and some of the speakers here uttered more or less veiled attacks on Communist theory and practice, from the anarchist standpoint. In the autumn of 1928, during the celebration of the Tolstoy centenary, a Tolstoyan suggested the disbandment of the Red Army, the abolition of capital punishment and the sale of vodka. Such episodes, however, are extremely infrequent.

During the civil war a few Mensheviks contrived to get themselves elected to Soviet Congresses; but the last of these feeble voices of political opposition were stilled in 1920 or 1921. Any non-Communist political parties and groups are regarded as counter-revolutionary organizations, liable to summary suppression by the Gay-Pay-Oo. As was pointed out in an earlier chapter, while the Soviets include a certain number of non-Party members, they do not provide any forum for the

[1] The full formal title of this institution is United State Political Administration. It is usually shortened in Russia to Gay-Pay-Oo, which is a combination of the first three letters of the Russian words for State Political Administration.

[2] There was a huge round-up of political suspects after the breach of diplomatic relations with England and the murder of the Soviet Ambassador in Warsaw, Volkov, in the spring of 1927. Most of the persons arrested were released after a period of interrogation, but a number credibly estimated at little less than a thousand were exiled or imprisoned. A laconic note in the Soviet press in January 1929 announced the arrest of a hundred and fifty members of the underground Trotzkyist organization. The vast majority of political arrests in Russia are never reported in the press.

expression of views which are at variance with the official Communist programme.

Academic freedom also does not exist in Russia. Any professor who lets drop any unguarded word critical of the existing régime or who holds in history or economics, philosophy or science, non-Marxian or idealistic views at variance with the prevalent dogma of materialism is likely to be dismissed.

The severe regimentation of political thought and activity is by no means confined to individuals and groups committed to a capitalist outlook or to the non-Communist interpretations of socialism held by the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists. Beginning with the autumn of 1927, when arrests of Trotzkyist adherents began, the Gay-Pay-Oo has directed more and more of its activity against the Trotzkyists and other dissident Communists.[1] It is an amusing and suggestive fact, illustrative of the varying conceptions of political liberty which prevail in Russia and in Western Europe, that German, French, and British Communists, avowedly aiming at the revolutionary overthrow of the governments of those countries, have been free to publish daily newspapers and books advocating their views, whereas no Russian Communist group which disagrees with the Party leadership is permitted to make its views known to the Party masses through similar means.

The Gay-Pay-Oo, the chief agency for maintaining this system of rigorous controls, is probably the most powerful and extensive secret police system existing anywhere in the world. It is the direct lineal successor of the Chekha, the grim secret police which struck such terror into the enemies of the Revolution during the period of civil war. The Gay-Pay-Oo really enjoys most of the rights of the Chekha, including that of inflicting death sentences.[2] In practice, however, it makes

[1] Membership in the Communist Party has never been a guaranty against arrest for views and activities which are regarded as subversive in relation to the Soviet state. So in 1923 two secret groups, the Workers' Truth and the Workers' Group, both consisting mainly, if not entirely, of Communist Party members, were broken up by the Gay-Pay-Oo.

[2] The right of the Gay-Pay-Oo to function in the triple rôle of policeman, judge, and executioner is clearly brought out in Premier Rykov's reply to the protest of some British Labor Party leaders against the prompt execution of twenty alleged counter-revolu-

much more sparing use of this right. Whereas the executions by the Chekha during the years of desperate civil war ran well into thousands, the annual lists of persons shot by order of the Gay-Pay-Oo could probably be reckoned in scores, or, at most, in hundreds.[1]

The Gay-Pay-Oo has its own regiments, reserved for employment in special emergencies when it might be inexpedient to employ regular troops. Its original head was Felix Dzerzhinsky, organizer of the Chekha and one of the strongest personalities of the Revolution; his successor is another Pole, Menzhinsky. Although it is not formally a Commissariat, its head has the right to attend sessions of the Soviet Cabinet. It has six sections, or departments: the operative, which exercises general supervision over the workings of the organization and directs the troops' movements; the foreign, designed to ferret out cases of counter-revolution and economic espionage originating abroad; the economic, which keeps an eye on state industry and trade and punishes such offenses as smuggling and counterfeiting; the transport section, which maintains order on the railroads and inspects travelers' passports; the military, which watches out for symptoms of disaffection in the army; and the secret service, which deals with

tionists in reprisal for the murder of the Soviet Ambassador, Volkov, in the spring of 1927. Rykov stated in this connection: "The sentence of the Gay-Pay-Oo is characterized in your telegram as 'executions without legal trial.' This is not the case. According to the law of our state the collegium of the Gay-Pay-Oo is competent in all cases when it is necessary to take energetic action against the counter-revolution; in these cases it then has all the rights of a revolutionary tribunal."

[1] A veil of impenetrable secrecy is drawn over the precise number of Gay-Pay-Oo executions during the last few years, since no official statistics have been published, and there is no rule that executions must be reported in the press. Mr. Roger Baldwin, in his book, *Liberty under the Soviets* (published by Vanguard Press, New York, p. 221), declares that Menzhinsky, in conversation with members of an American labor delegation which visited Russia in 1927, gave the figure of 1500 for executions ordered by the Gay-Pay-Oo between 1922 and 1927. I have nothing to add in proof or disproof of this second- or third-hand testimony. The largest number of executions on any one occasion in the Soviet Union during recent years took place after the short-lived uprising of the Georgia Mensheviks in August 1924. Two correspondents who visited Georgia after the uprising, Herr Paul Scheffer of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and Mr. Louis Fischer of the New York *Nation*, were told by responsible Soviet Georgian officials that several hundred of the participants in this uprising were executed, and popular rumor set the figure still higher. It is not clear whether these Georgian executions were included in Menzhinsky's total figure.

counter-revolutionary activities and tendencies in Russia. It is this last section that inspires most fear in the classes which are chiefly exposed to the supervision of the Gay-Pay-Oo. A survey of the special prisons and places of exile maintained by the Gay-Pay-Oo would doubtless reveal an extraordinary collection of types who had landed in its far-flung net from the greatest variety of causes. There would be priests and sectarian leaders whom the priests themselves would have been quick to denounce in pre-war days; kulaks and speculators and Trotzkyists who thought the Party was not sufficiently ruthless in dealing with kulaks and speculators; Mensheviks, Social Revolutionists, Georgian Nationalists, and old Tsarist officers and officials.

The Gay-Pay-Oo makes most of its arrests by night and heightens the terror which surrounds it by operating with a maximum degree of secrecy. Its chiefs almost never give interviews; one would scarcely know of the existence of the organization by reading the Soviet press. Ordinary criminals arrested by the Gay-Pay-Oo are often handed over to the regular courts; political offenders are almost always dealt with by the secret administrative process of imprisonment, banishment to some remote part of the Soviet Union (the northern regions of Siberia are often used for this purpose, as was the case under the Tsar), or a milder form of exile, which consists of prohibition to live in the six largest cities of the Soviet Union. One of the most dreaded places of confinement under charge of the Gay-Pay-Oo is an old monastery on Solovyetzky Island, in the White Sea. Several years ago some disorder among the political prisoners there led to the killing and wounding of a number of them by the prison guards; and in 1925, possibly as a result of the intensive agitation which was carried on in the foreign émigré press, it was decided that all political prisoners should be removed to places of confinement on the mainland. The term "political prisoner" is rather restricted in its application, however; it apparently does not cover ecclesiastics, for instance, although many of them are certainly confined on political and semi-political

charges; and it appears that some Georgian Nationalists were left on the island. Most of the inmates of Solovyetzky Island now, however, are criminals of the hardened type and persons charged with speculation and other economic offenses.

Inasmuch as no foreign observer has been able to visit Solovyetzky Island, it is impossible with any assurance to strike the balance of factual truth between the stories of overcrowding, ill-treatment, bad labor conditions, and high death-rate which are told by persons who have been confined there and the reassuring denials of the Soviet Commissariat for Justice. It is certainly a place from which the average Russian very strongly desires to keep away.[1]

How many of the persons who fall into the hands of the Gay-Pay-Oo are really guilty of offenses against the Soviet state, and how many are victims of suspicion or false denunciation? In view of the complete secrecy which shrouds the proceedings of the organization, it would be as impossible to give an authoritative answer to this question as to state with any certainty how many of the people consigned to the Bastille under the *lettres de cachet* system practised in France under the Bourbons were enemies of the existing régime and how many were imprisoned by accident or mistake.

With its army of spies, agents, and informers and its sweeping powers of arrest, the Gay-Pay-Oo has every reason to be a well-informed secret police; and it has unquestionably broken up

[1] A moving-picture film displayed in the autumn of 1929 depicted conditions in a fairly favorable light. Of course, it was impossible to judge what aspects of life in the concentration camp were not chosen for photographic representation. But one could see that the camp is at least provided with such appurtenances of a modern progressive prison as a library and reading room and a hall for concerts and theatrical performances. Some forms of the work to which the prisoners were assigned, such as loading stones and lumber, cutting peat, and making roads through the boggy forests, looked strenuous and difficult; but it was stated on a caption that an eight-hour working day was observed, while some of the pictures showed a medical examination, designed to establish the working capacity of the prisoners. While a spectator could not, of course, feel absolute confidence that the moving-picture production told the whole story of the Solovyetzky camp it did furnish some visual refutation of the wilder rumors which represent the island as a howling wilderness, devoid of the most elementary facilities for humane treatment of the inmates. It also showed that a certain amount of new building, both of quarters and of small factories and workshops, has been going on during the last few years.

many plots and unearthed many economic offenses. One of its most brilliant feats of detective work was the luring into Russia in 1926 of the Monarchist émigré, V. V. Shulgin, and the escorting him about the country on a sort of Gay-Pay-Oo personally conducted tour, introducing him to many "Monarchists" who were really its own secret agents.

But any arbitrary police system is bound to make mistakes, especially when, as in Russia, the welfare of the state is considered infinitely more important than the security of the individual. The fear of meeting foreigners is very prevalent among the old bourgeoisie and old intelligentsia, and one cannot say in the light of existing conditions that it is unfounded. Foreign residents in Russia are kept under fairly close surveillance by the Gay-Pay-Oo; but, aside from the handicap of being socially isolated from many Russians of the classes which are most exposed to suspicion, and the minor annoyance of occasionally receiving letters which have obviously been opened in transit, they have no harsh treatment to complain of. The Gay-Pay-Oo method of summary arrest on suspicion is for domestic application only. Looking back over more than seven years' residence in Russia, I can recall few cases of arrests of foreigners and still fewer where these arrests were followed by serious consequences in the shape of banishment or long-term prison sentences.[1] Even the right to expel "undesirable aliens," asserted by every government, is sparingly exercised in the Soviet Union.

[1] The two cases of arrests of foreigners which aroused the greatest stir both, curiously enough, affected citizens of Germany, the country which has been most consistently friendly in its official relations with the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1925 three German students in Moscow, Kindermann, Wolscht, and Von Dittmar, were arrested and placed on trial before the Supreme Court of the Union, charged with a rather fantastic plot to assassinate Stalin and other Soviet leaders. The chief witness for the state was Von Dittmar, who was hotly denounced in Germany as a "pathological liar." Death sentences were passed on the students, but were promptly commuted; and shortly afterwards these three young men, along with several other German citizens, were exchanged for a mysterious Russian who went by the name of Skobelevsky and was under sentence of death in Germany for alleged participation in the Communist disturbances in the autumn of 1923. The other case was the arrest of several German engineers and mechanics in the Shachti sabotage case in the spring of 1928. The engineer and two mechanics who were actually brought to trial were all acquitted; but the whole episode created a bad impression in Germany and is not likely to be repeated.

The amount of freedom enjoyed by foreign press correspondents, while it affects a very small number of persons directly, is obviously of some importance in determining the value of information sent out from Russia. Technically the situation in this field has not changed for a number of years. All news telegrams must be stamped in advance by an official in the Press Department of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. There is no preliminary examination of articles sent by post; but a correspondent who endeavored to evade the censorship by sending through the mails items of information which did not pass the telegraphic censorship would most probably find his permission to stay in Russia speedily terminated.

Since the latter part of 1925 there have been no repressive measures against foreign journalists. A few correspondents who have been in Russia are barred from revisiting the country because of writings and speeches which were regarded by the Soviet authorities as unfairly biased in a hostile direction.

The news censorship is not severe, as censorships go, and shows a slow but steady tendency toward giving the foreign journalist increasing latitude in conveying impressions as well as facts. One rule of the censorship is that anything may be telegraphed which has appeared in the press; and, while this might seem a hollow concession, in view of the fact that the newspapers are all under Communist control and are sent abroad anyway, so much unfavorable material is printed in them, especially in connection with the campaign of "self-criticism," which will be described later on, that many of the uncompromisingly hostile correspondents who send their Russian news from Riga and other foreign centres find much of their ammunition in the Soviet press.

In normal times the censorship is little more than a routine process incidental to sending a telegram; it tends to become tighter in periods of severe economic or international stress or acute internal Party dissension. Sometimes it is not the substance of a dispatch but the manner of phrasing it which excites critical attention; and friendly philological discussions

as to the precise meaning and implications of certain adjectives and phrases between the correspondents and the censor are not uncommon.

No journalist likes to work under a censorship; but given the peculiar combination in Russia of a government that controls every line of its own press and a foreign press that is not, to put it mildly, overfriendly to the Soviet régime, some arrangement for the control of outgoing news is probably inevitable; and it is better, under the circumstances, that this control should be open than that it should exist in secret form. I can recall very few important pieces of news which have been completely suppressed by the Soviet censorship during the last few years, although some items have undoubtedly got out in delayed and weakened form. I think a comparison of the news despatches from Moscow and those sent about Russia from Riga, Helsingfors, Berlin, and other places outside the country would demonstrate beyond any doubt that, despite the handicaps which are implicit even in the mildest censorship, Russia can be reported more reliably, more accurately, and more intelligently from Moscow than from any foreign city.

The assertion is often made that correspondents and foreigners in general in Russia are so subjected to official supervision that they are unable to make any independent investigation or to form any correct idea of actual conditions. I am convinced from personal experience that this assertion is baseless. Of course, under a dictatorship there are always difficulties in correctly gauging popular sentiment which do not exist in countries where people of all shades of opinion feel free to express their views openly. Many of the old propertied and educated classes make a point of avoiding foreigners, although a very few contacts with these classes are sufficient to give an adequate idea of their views and feelings.

But for the correspondent who wishes to take the time and trouble, working-class and peasant Russia, the Russia of 90 per cent of the population, lies open to explore as he wishes. Except for Soviet Central Asia (which was also a restricted zone for foreign travelers before the War, on account of the

proximity to India and the fear of British spies), one can travel anywhere in the Soviet Union. I have repeatedly struck off the main lines of communication to visit factory settlements and peasant villages and talked freely with the people without encountering any evidences of official espionage or obstruction; in fact it is a general rule that the farther one goes away from Moscow the less one sees and hears of the Gay-Pay-Oo.

It is true that some individuals and delegations have turned in reports about the Soviet Union which suggest not so much what an impartial outsider might think of the workings of the Soviet system as what the Soviet Government thinks about itself. But I think this is due, not to the existence of any insuperable barriers placed in the way of free investigation, but to the fact that the individuals and delegations in question were either naïve and credulous in their approach to the problem or came to Russia with preconceived ideas which they were glad to have confirmed. I should not wish to suggest that all the superficial and incompetent observation is through favorable spectacles; the visitor who comes to Moscow with a strongly unfavorable bias can pick up enough hostile gossip, most of it exaggerated and much of it quite untrue, to fill up a book in record time.

Passing through a Russian provincial town, I recently saw a Soviet election placard which cited Lenin as the authority for the statement that "the Soviet state is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic." Against the background of political repression which is incarnated in the Gay-Pay-Oo this claim may seem so strange as to be almost ironical. Yet there can be no doubt that Lenin was perfectly serious when he made it and that Russian Communists are convinced that their system provides more liberty than exists in other countries.

Their first argument in this connection is that the private capitalist system itself involves the oppression and economic exploitation of a wage-earning majority by a propertied minority. Therefore, by abolishing or greatly limiting private capitalism through the nationalization of industry and transport, banking and the land, the Communists, in their own judgment, have taken a stride in the direction of fundamental economic liberty which enormously outweighs the limitation of individual liberties involved in the present system.

A second line of argument is to the effect that these restrictions are class restrictions, directed against numerically small classes which will vanish altogether in the future Communist society. It is further argued that every great social revolution involves a period of ruthless suppression of the sympathizers with the order which has been overthrown.

Finally it is contended that the so-called civil liberties of democratic countries are fallacious and unreal, because the possession of superior resources of wealth enables the richer classes to control the press and the schools, to influence, directly or indirectly, the procedure of the courts and the issue of elections.

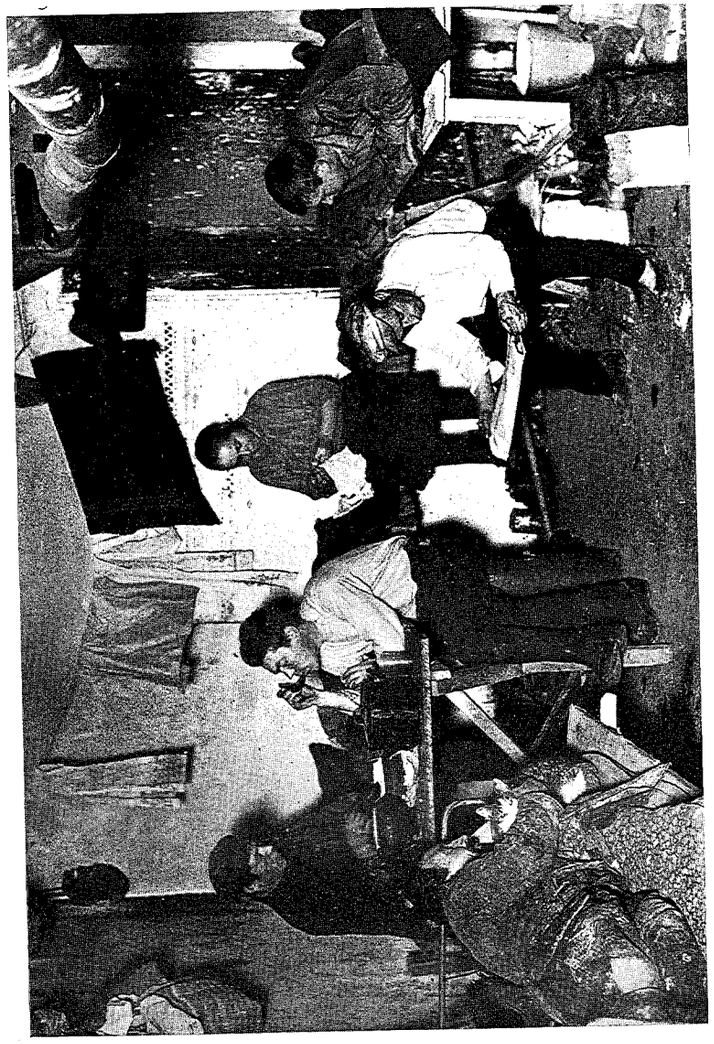
Whatever one may think of these arguments, it is only fair to note that the Russian Revolution, while sweeping away even the poor crumbs of civil liberty which existed under the Tsar (a pale and almost powerless parliament, elected on a narrow franchise, a few newspapers which might very cautiously criticize the official viewpoint, etc.), has brought certain social liberties which to the uneducated or scantily educated masses of the people are probably more valuable than the right to vote for rival parties in elections or to write theoretical critical articles. In judging the effect of the absence of civil liberties on the mood of the Russian people it should never be forgotten that the vast majority of these people have not the slightest conception of what these liberties are; that they are not so far removed from the insurgent soldiers who followed the Dekabristi, shouting, "Constantine and Constitutsia!" ("Constantine and a Constitution!") under the impression that "Constitutsia" was Constantine's wife.

What are the social liberties which are associated with the Revolution? First of all, the disappearance of "superior" social classes, based on wealth and birth. The worker does not have to cringe before the "red director" of the Soviet factory as, in pre-war times, he cringed before the private

owner of the factory. He can write letters to the press complaining of conditions in the factory and suggesting changes, something which a worker would scarcely do with impunity even in democratic capitalist countries, where factories are private and not public concerns.

A peasant once remarked to me: "After the Revolution there was more freedom; I got land." To him freedom meant, not the opportunity to vote for a parliamentary Peasant Party, but the possession of a slice of the landlord's estate. And this identification of land with liberty is a very traditional attitude of mind with the Russian peasantry. It was no accident that one of the revolutionary societies of the nineteenth century called itself "Land and Liberty." It is true that most peasants have not been singing any very loud hymns to liberty since the Communist Party went over to its more radical agrarian policy in the winter of 1927–1928. To the peasant the pressure exerted to make him sell his grain at low fixed prices seems quite as definite an infringement of liberty as the extortion of high rent by the grasping landlord of pre-revolutionary days. But the big landlords have gone forever; it is rather unlikely that the semi-requisitioning methods which have been used in purchasing the peasants' grain during the last two years will last very long.

In general the common man in Russia to-day has the sense of release, of social liberty, that comes with the disappearance of classes which are visibly above him in wealth and opportunity, culture and social status. When I called on the Soviet governor of an important industrial province, a man who had held high office in the trade-union movement and accompanied a diplomatic delegation to England, I found him in his office wearing the high boots and colorless blouse that constitute part of the distinctive costume of the Russian worker. Walking on the streets or riding on a train he would have been indistinguishable from the textile workers of the province. He certainly represented a different type of official from the decorated "high excellency" who would most probably have held the corresponding post under the Tsar.



Basement Occupied by a Worker's Family

Whether the plebeian leveling which characterizes so many fields of Russian social and cultural life is an unmixed blessing is highly debatable. But that it gives to the masses, at least to those of them who have absorbed some of the revolutionary propaganda, a sense of liberty which they did not possess in former times is, I think, undeniable. In earlier chapters I have described other liberties which have come with the new social order: greater freedom for women, more humane treatment of the soldier in the Red Army, recognition of the right of racial minorities to use freely their own languages, greater liberty for children in the schools, although this last form of freedom, it must be said, is less in evidence where teachers and professors are not in hearty sympathy with the new régime.

One must also note the practice of "self-criticism," very widely developed in some spheres of Soviet life, sharply limited or nonexistent in others. Following the Shachti trial and the detection of some scandals in local Party organizations, the Communist Party Central Committee in 1928 issued an appeal urging the Party and trade-union members to subject to merciless criticism abuses in the state administration and management of industry. The result of this was a veritable flood of letters and articles in the press, revealing real or alleged abuses. For a vivid first-hand picture of the defects of the Soviet civil service and the socialist management of industry one has only to turn to the columns of the Soviet press. In some cases, with the Russian tendency toward exaggeration, the criticism was really overdone, and one had the curious spectacle of a press, published under the strictest control of a ruling party, representing some conditions as worse than they actually were.

Of course, there are important and substantial limitations on this practice of "self-criticism." It never touches the activities of the Gay-Pay-Oo, for instance. The basic policies of the Communist Party are never subjected to critical discussion; and one can scarcely imagine a Soviet publishing house issuing a book entitled *The Man Who Knew Stalin* and animated by the same spirit of satire that characterized Mr.

Sinclair Lewis's *The Man Who Knew Coolidge*. A shrewd Ukrainian peasant once gave me what I should consider a fair appraisal of the amount and character of popular criticism permissible under Soviet rule. He said in substance: —

"If our local Soviet president is a drunkard and a grafter, we have more opportunity to complain and more chance of getting him removed than we should have had in putting out a bad official under the Tsar. But suppose we think the whole Communist agrarian policy is wrong, that they ought to stop forcing us into collective farms and give us the right to develop as individual farmers. We have n't much chance to express thoughts of that kind."

Liberty is always a relative and personal conception; and in the wake of a great social upheaval it is inevitable that what is one man's freedom should be another man's tyranny. The outlook of two personal acquaintances helps to illustrate this point.

Vladimir Nikolaevitch was the son of an educated family of moderate means. From his student days he was a revolutionary, a member of the Social Democratic Party. The Tsarist Government sent him into exile. His reaction to 1917 was that of the typical radical intellectual. The cruel and destructive sides of the Revolution bulked largest in his mind; he expressed his ideas rather freely and was clapped into jail. He was released after a comparatively short detention, because of old friendships with influential Communists, and during the last few years has led a fairly unmolested life. But to him the Soviet régime is slavery of the worst kind, slavery of the mind as well as of the body. He can only do some kind of mechanical clerical work. He cannot publish a book or article, even on a nonpolitical subject without the risk of having the censor stop it for some heterodox expression. He cannot even state his ideas in conversation, except to a small circle of trusted friends.

Ivan Ivanovitch before the War was a worker in one of the large Moscow metal factories. He joined the Bolshevik Party in the big revolutionary upswing of 1917, took part in the fighting in the streets of Moscow in November, and was one of the first volunteers to join the Red Army. He fought on one front after another, was captured by the White Army of General Yudenitch, and his teeth were knocked out by a brutal jailer; but he thought himself lucky to escape with his life. After the civil war he went back to work in the factory, where he is now the secretary of the Communist local branch. This activity keeps him quite busy, but he still finds time to attend courses at an evening rabfac, or workers' high school, where, besides a firmer grounding in the tenets of Leninism, he gets his first acquaintance with Russian literature and some of the elementary facts of science. To him the Revolution has been a great liberating experience, and he would simply regard it as axiomatic that the Soviet state, being a workers' state, is the freest in the world.

One could vary the human types and multiply the evidence on both sides indefinitely. I should think it probable that the number of people in Russia who consciously feel liberated as a result of the Revolution probably exceeds the number who feel more oppressed than they were under Tsarism. Therefore, while there is a strong and justified sense of repression among the former propertied and educated classes, it would, I think, be a mistake to assume that the whole Russian people feels itself repressed.

It would scarcely seem that there is any likelihood of serious modification or relaxation of the system of political control exemplified in the Gay-Pay-Oo and its methods. In the latter part of 1927, Stalin, in the course of an interview granted to an American labor delegation, likened the Gay-Pay-Oo to the Committee of Public Safety in the French Revolution and declared: "The Revolution needs the Gay-Pay-Oo, and the Gay-Pay-Oo will live with us to the terror of the enemies of the proletariat."

This stringent police system grew up during the period of civil war and intervention; and its maintenance for a time was habitually defended by Communists on the ground that the security of the newly established Soviet state must be protected at all costs against plots and uprisings. Now, since the security of the state is taken for granted, the line of argument has changed to the effect that forces of discontent in

Russia, however feeble, always have international connections and support from outside, and that the Gay-Pay-Oo is needed for defense against this alleged external danger. Inasmuch as this danger will presumably only be removed when there are Communist revolutions all over the world, or at least all over Europe, the Gay-Pay-Oo seems to be about as permanently entrenched as any Soviet state organization.

The Russian and Communist attitude toward civil liberty cannot be fully appreciated and understood unless one constantly bears in mind the fact that Russia lay almost entirely outside the influence of three movements which probably contributed most to implant the ideal of respect for individual consciousness, thought, and judgment in the Western mind — namely, the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the French Revolution. Unless he be a Communist of the most stalwart brand of faith, a Westerner, the more or less conscious cultural heir of Milton and Voltaire and John Stuart Mill, will never feel quite at home under the proletarian dictatorship. It is significant that Western-educated Communists are most apt to become implicated in Trotzkyist and similar heresies and to kick over the traces of Party discipline.

But it would be a grave mistake to assume that Western psychology coincides with Russian in this matter of the importance of individual liberty. Just as Bolshevik Russia has attempted to leap from a rather early and undeveloped form of capitalism into socialism, so it is attempting to realize social and economic liberty without any preliminary background of individual liberty. The experiment is full of interest and contradictions.

Assuming that Russia for some time enjoys a peaceful and normal course of development, there are, I think, two factors which may tend to extend the sphere of liberty and democracy and to reduce the consciousness of repression. The spread of popular education will tend almost inevitably to make the Soviet and Party and trade-union elections more real and to give the masses a larger effective voice in the management of everyday affairs.

Then the generations which grow up reading Soviet newspapers, attending Soviet schools, deriving their ideas from Soviet books, will most probably contain fewer active and passive rebels and dissidents to invite the attentions of the Gay-Pay-Oo. Will this gradual making over of the people into the Communist and Soviet mould be the final flowering of the social and economic liberty which Communists hold up as their final goal? Or will it be simply an amazing triumph of regimentation of the ideas and habits of a large passive majority by a small active minority? I shall leave this question for the metaphysicians.

XIX

WHITHER RUSSIA

BEFORE attempting to forecast Russia's future lines of development one should endeavor to establish with some definiteness where the country stands to-day. What is the historical significance of the sweeping political, economic, social, and cultural changes which I have described in the preceding chapters?

The Russian Bolshevik Revolution is so vast, complex, and many-sided that one could offer a dozen interpretations of it from varying angles, each containing a certain element of truth. The full-flowing German beard of Karl Marx is very much on display in pictures and statues in Soviet offices and public squares; and the proletarian side of the Revolution is Marxism carried to its logical final extremity of armed revolt and the effort to create a new social order in which the working class shall be political and economic master.

Less in public evidence, but no less important as a symbol of another side of the Revolution, is the shaggy Russian beard of Emilian Pugachev, leader of the mighty peasant rebellion which for a time cast its shadow of smoking palaces and manor houses over the gilded court of Catherine the Great. Pugachev was caught and caged and executed; but his spirit triumphed in 1917 when the peasantry, only two generations removed from serfdom, drove the landed nobility forever from the Russian countryside in a final fierce *jacquerie*.

There are not a few points of contact between Bolshevism and the modernizing nationalist movements which have made themselves felt, with greater or less success, all over Asia, from Turkey to China. Not only has the Soviet East gone side by side with Kemalist Turkey in abolishing polygamy, urging women to cast off the veil, introducing the Latin alphabet and

many other innovations; but the spirit of the Bolshevik Revolution is not unlike that of the new Turkey, which, while rejecting the political and economic hegemony of the "imperialistic" Western powers, is eagerly attempting to adopt the latest Western scientific and technical devices, to acquire a Western mentality and psychology. The Communists are determined that the European influences in Russia shall finally and definitely prevail over the Asiatic.

Ever since the Revolution, Russia has been a country of *ochereds*, or queues, and *paioks*, or rations. This is partly due to the economic difficulties through which the country is passing, especially the chronic shortage of manufactured goods and the recent slowing down of agricultural supply. But it is also one of the symptoms of a very deep-rooted instinct of the Revolution: that no man, or at least no "toiler," should have more than another.

Bolshevism is the greatest leveling broom that ever swept over any country. This leveling tendency has its roots both in Marxist doctrine and in the traditions of the old Russian peasant community, the mir, where by continuous redistributions of land and other means the ambitious, enterprising peasant was held down very much on the same level with his fellows. It was strengthened by the extremely sharp contrasts of pre-revolutionary Russia, where a small class of landed proprietors owned almost a third of the land, where the wealth of the big merchants and manufacturers stood out in comparison with the poverty of the workers because of the weakness of the intermediate middle class, where a small, highly cultured intelligentsia stood in helpless counterpoise to a vast deadweight of popular illiteracy and superstition.

To-day the first thing which impresses the casual visitor to Moscow is the uniform appearance of the crowds in the streets. Such private wealth as exists is hidden instead of being flaunted. Dress has ceased to be any criterion of occupation or social status. The gulf between the Soviet President and the masses, between the "red director" of a factory and the workers, between the "red commander" in the army and the common

soldier, whether measured by income, by outward show, or by external signs of respect, is immeasurably slighter than that which separated the corresponding classes of people in Tsarist times.

The same leveling tendency makes itself felt in education, where there is a systematic effort to make literacy and elementary education universal and at the same time to give preference in admission to the universities to children of the classes which in former times were kept furthest away from cultural opportunities, workers and poorer peasants. Naturally this cannot be done without detriment to the children of the former educated and propertied classes; and the results of flooding the universities with students who are at a great disadvantage in inherited and environmental educational advantages are not always very happy. But the leveling impulse, working both downward and upward, is too powerful to be withstood. Not the least of the psychological factors in the downfall of Leon Trotzky was the fact that he was a little too obviously above the mass of Party officials in cultural background and literary capacity, and a little too self-conscious of this fact.

The Soviet social order suggests many varied influences and comparisons. The summary Gay-Pay-Oo method of dealing with political opponents and critics is simply a continuation of the psychology of such autocrats as Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, supplemented by the infusion of the fanaticism which is the motive power of every great revolution. In the rough social democracy of Soviet life, in the widespread conviction that the common man, assuming that he is a worker, is not only as good as the man of education or former social prestige, but very much better, one sees more than a trace of likeness to the same tendency in American life, which is associated with the name of Andrew Jackson and is still sufficiently alive to give the scantily educated "man of the people" an unmistakable advantage over the "highbrow" in elections to state and municipal offices.

The impartial observer of Bolshevism must be constantly struck by the strange contrasted blending of elements which

are heroic with others which are repellingly mean. From the standpoint of conventional morality the boundless devotion which Communists of the more sincere type display in pursuing an idealistic cause seems ill matched with such acts of petty cruelty as hounding people out of employment, not for disloyalty or incompetence, but merely because they formerly belonged to the propertied classes, or starting a press campaign against the Art Theatre because its directors maintained a small private fund out of the receipts from the sale of some boxes, out of which relief was paid to such people as the widow of Savva Morozov, a merchant who was one of the first patrons of the Art Theatre.

Yet in this apparent contrast there is no real contradiction. *Væ victis!* is a typical slogan of social revolutions. Two marked psychological traits of Bolshevism are boundless hatred for the Russian past and boundless faith in the socialist future; and of course such faith easily generates a sentiment of absolute ruthlessness toward persons and classes regarded as hostile to this future.

In one of the most brilliant passages of his *Elizabeth and Essex* Lytton Strachey envisages Philip II of Spain on his deathbed, wondering whether he had burned enough heretics to ensure his safe entrance into Paradise. I do not know whether Felix Dzerzhinsky, organizer of the Chekha, had any time for deathbed thoughts before the heart attack which seized him after he had delivered a vehement attack on the Trotzkyist opposition, in the summer of 1926, carried him off. But, knowing the iron absorption of the man in his cause, one may be sure that if he had any apprehensions they were not that he had executed too many counter-revolutionists but that he had executed too few to make Russia safe for Communism.

Out of the conglomerate mass of impressions, as striking and bewildering as a tangle of jagged mountain peaks, which one gains from long study of Soviet Russia, it is possible, I think, to extract four definite results of the Revolution, which seem destined to endure, no matter what political and economic vicissitudes the future may hold in store. These are:—

(1) The annihilation of large-scale landlordism in agriculture. The big estates of the former landed nobility have passed forever into the possession of the peasantry. How the peasants will use this land, whether they will develop along individualistic or collectivist lines, is another question — the most important question, incidentally, which stands before Russia to-day. I shall discuss its implications later in the chapter. But the expropriation of the 200,000 families of the landed nobility in favor of the 25,000,000 peasant homesteads is an accomplished fact which can never be undone.

(2) The substitution of state for private control and operation in industry and transport, banking and trade. The Soviet socialist economic system has yet to prove to the Russian consumer that it can produce goods as cheaply and efficiently as they were produced under capitalism. It is certainly capable of improvement in many technical details. But it is now so firmly rooted and established and taken for granted in the future plans for the development of national economic life that one can no more imagine its replacement by private capitalism than one could imagine the introduction of communism in America. For good or evil Marxist economic ideas are to receive a long-term, thorough, practical demonstration in Russia.

(3) The cultural autonomy of the non-Russian nationalities. The Communists deserve credit for not only recognizing theoretically that the Soviet Union, with a population almost 50 per cent non-Russian in origin, is a federation of nationalities, but for practically carrying out the policy of giving every people the freest use of its native language. "We are the only state in Europe that encourages the use of a diversity of languages within our frontiers," a Communist once boasted to me. And, while Switzerland might represent a minor exception, this claim could, I think, be generally upheld. Nothing is likely to induce or compel Ukrainians, White Russians, and the varied peoples of the Caucasian Mountains and the Central Asiatic deserts and steppes to begin to speak Russian again.

(4) The emergence of a new spirit of what may be called plebeian democracy, based on the smashing of the former privileged classes and the working of a social system under which workers, and to a much smaller extent peasants, are given preference in political and educational opportunity. This spirit is not always easy to analyze; but one has only to leave Russia for some other country in order to recognize its existence. To the traveler from Russia the little sign, *Aufgang nur für Herrschaften* ("Entrance only for Gentlefolk"), so common over the doorways of German homes, inevitably produces an impression of strangeness. The only place in Russia where such a sign might conceivably be found would be in one of the prisons or detention camps of the Gay-Pay-Oo.[1]

Communists regard the Russian Revolution as the introduction to the world revolution.[2] Conservatives in every country regard it as an international menace. But, notwithstanding this weight of diverse authority, I am inclined to believe that Bolshevism is a Russian rather than an international phenomenon. Tsarist Russia presented an uncommonly favorable combination of circumstances inviting social revolution of the most sweeping kind. The industrial working class was sufficiently advanced to be responsive to revolutionary agitation without having reached the point of the more highly paid European worker, whose revolutionary ardor is often dampened by his savings-bank account. The majority of the peasants were so poor and land-hungry that they completely lacked the normal peasant instinct of respect for private property, at least so

[1] An English Liberal newspaper on one occasion published a leading article which moralized at length on what it regarded as the extraordinary procedure of the Communist Party leadership in publishing letters exchanged between members of the opposition. Such letters, the newspaper correctly surmised, were most probably obtained by tampering with the mails, and the writer of the article could not repress his amazement at this fact. This little incident merely illustrates the futility of judging one country by the moral and social standards of another. That the mail of persons suspected of political disaffection should be read by the authorities is regarded in Russia as the most natural thing in the world. On the other hand the display in Russia of an *Aufgang nur für Herrschaften* sign would arouse a storm of indignation comparable with what the British Liberal editor would probably unloose if he discovered that the Scotland Yard officials were in the habit of reading his personal correspondence.

[2] One of the first signs greeting the traveler at Nyegoreloe, the Soviet border station on the Polish frontier, reads as follows: "Long live the World October, which will turn the whole world into a Union of Socialist Soviet Republics."

far as the landlords' estates were concerned.[1] There was further explosive material in the repressed national minorities. Furthermore, the Romanov autocracy, by curbing at every point the activity of even such conservative institutions as the Duma and the zemstvos, left the Russian middle class quite unschooled in political organization and even more helpless in the face of the revolutionary storm than it might otherwise have been.

No country to-day bears even a remote resemblance to Tsarist Russia in its social and economic structure. In the agricultural states of Eastern Europe the peasants already own so much of the land that a general peasant uprising against landlords is scarcely to be anticipated. In Western Europe a conservative peasantry and a numerous middle class represent two powerful bulwarks against radical changes of the social order. The majority even of the manual workers are Social Democratic in their political and trade-union allegiance. Still another reason for believing that the inevitable struggle of interests between labor and capital in Western Europe will remain within more or less peaceful and constitutional bounds lies in the fact that countries like Germany and England, unlike Russia, simply could not stand the isolation from the world economic system which violent social revolution entails. Shut off from foreign loans and long-term credits, denied any large inflow of foreign capital, and with a foreign trade shrunk to half the pre-war volume, the Soviet Union can somehow struggle along, because it is a self-supporting agricultural country, although in this connection the shoe is beginning to pinch pretty tightly. But Germany and England under similar circumstances could not hold out for a year, to say nothing of a decade, because the very subsistence of a large part of their urban population depends upon the maintenance of foreign markets, which in turn requires foreign financial connections.[2]

[1] This instinct came out very strongly when the Communists began to requisition their grain, and is by no means extinguished at the present time.

[2] All these considerations might lose their validity in the event of a new international conflict, comparable with the World War in extent and duration. Such a war could scarcely fail to bring in its train the most serious social upheavals. However, it is by no means certain that communism would emerge as the sequel. In several countries Fascism, in some form or other, would be at least an equally likely issue.

RUSSIAN PEASANT BOYS

In some respects the East is a more favorable field for Communist propaganda than the West. The Chinese or Indian coolie certainly satisfies Marx's definition of the proletarian, as the man with nothing to lose but his chains, much more accurately than the American, British, or German workman. Foreign rule in India and the national resentment which it generates, continuous civil war in China, are potential revolutionary factors which Communist agitators in those countries are not slow to utilize. But the East has its distinctive obstacles as well as its favorable points for the missionaries of the Third International. The industrial working class in China and India is much more backward educationally than the corresponding class in Russia in 1917. It is numerically a weaker element in the population and hence less capable of playing a leading revolutionary rôle. The East is still in the grip of family and religious systems which do not easily harmonize with the tenets of Bolshevism. In short, it seems likely that, while Communism is and will be an important contributory cause of unrest in China and India, it will not succeed in remoulding those countries along Russian lines.

What of the possibility of a Communist crusade against the infidel world, offering the alternative of Marx and Lenin or the tank and the machine gun? In my opinion, this is so small as to be scarcely worth discussing. The analogy which might be drawn with the series of wars which followed the French Revolution breaks down at several most important points. France in the eighteenth century was a leading military nation; Russia has never been successful in wars with Western powers. Technique plays a great part in modern warfare; and the Soviet Union here would be at an obvious disadvantage in a clash wherein France would become involved, as it almost certainly would become involved in a Soviet-Polish or Soviet-Rumanian war.

The Soviet Government, I am fully convinced, has not the slightest intention of attacking any other state and lives in a state of chronic, if somewhat exaggerated apprehension that other states will attack it. Incidentally, nothing the Soviet

Government has ever done has probably excited such general approval among the Russian population as its efforts in the direction of peace and disarmament.

Moreover, the Communists, in their five-year plan of national economic development, have discovered something in the nature of a psychological equivalent for war. The energy unloosed by the French Revolution found expression in the tramp of Napoleon's armies through almost every European capital. The dynamic force of the Russian Revolution seems destined to find more peaceful outlets in covering the country with a network of electrical stations and new factories, wrestling with knotty problems of cost and quality of production, experimenting with large scale state farming and, generally, attempting to duplicate, on a socialist basis, the stage of rapid industrialization through which America, Germany, and Japan, in their time, have all passed.

As there was only one "Great French Revolution," which took place in France, there will probably be only one Bolshevik Revolution, which has already occurred in Russia. The ideas of the French Revolution certainly shaped very considerably the development of the nineteenth century; and reflections of the ideas of the Bolshevik Revolution may already be seen in the most varied places. The sweeping agrarian legislation, transferring much of the land formerly held in big estates to peasant proprietorship, in several countries of Eastern Europe after the War was a form of insurance against an agrarian revolution on the Russian model. The curiously complicated committee form of government adopted by the Chinese Nationalists is in several points a rather muddled copy of the organization of the Communist Party in Russia. No doubt the influence of communist ideas and the Soviet state will be felt in various forms throughout the present century. But efforts to bring about a stereotyped reproduction of the Russian Revolution in countries where the social, economic, and psychological background is entirely different are foredoomed to tragi-comic fiasco.

Certainly at the present time the walls of the world capitalist

Jericho seem too high and solid to be blown down by the trumpet blasts of the Communist International. The idea, which Lenin himself for a time clung to with fanatical intensity, that the World War heralded the impending downfall of capitalism all over the world is slowly and reluctantly being abandoned by the most ardent hot-gospelers of communism. The stabilization of capitalism is recognized now even in the official manifestoes of the Communist International, although this stabilization is qualified by such grudging adjectives as "partial" and "temporary." The great technical improvements which have been carried out in the industrial organization of America and Western Europe, which are usually lumped together under the term "rationalization," do not suggest a system which has outlived its productive utility or which is in the last stages of decay. The capitalist trusts and syndicates of America and Germany have no reason at the present time to fear comparison with the socialist trusts and syndicates of Russia in such points as production costs and quality of output.

What future course of development is marked out for Russia? Two or three years ago I should have answered that question more confidently and positively than I should be inclined to do at present; but my answer, as it happens, would have been completely wrong. In 1926 or 1927 most competent observers would have agreed, I think, that the Soviet social order had entered upon a phase of relative stabilization, with socialism as the predominant form in industry, transport, banking, and trade, and individualism as the dominant form in agriculture, and that the pressure of internal and external circumstances was more likely to force the country to the right than to the left. This viewpoint would seem to have derived additional confirmation from the elimination of the Trotzkyist opposition, which claimed to represent Simon-pure "revolutionary Leninism" and accused the Party leadership of making "Thermidorian" [1] concessions to foreign and domestic capitalist tendencies.

[1] This word, very often used in Russian internal Party controversies, is associated with a date in the French Revolution, the Ninth Thermidor, when Robespierre was overthrown and a more moderate period of development set in.

But, in typical Russian paradoxical fashion, the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party, which marked the elimination of the Trotzkyists, also marked the beginning of a distinct leftward course of Communist policy, pivoting around a new attitude toward the agrarian question. Beginning with the "extraordinary measures" of practical compulsion which were used to compel the recalcitrant peasants to part with their grain in the spring of 1928, the new policy broadened out into a campaign to crush the kulaks, or more prosperous individual peasants, and to extend socialism from the cities to the villages by a sweeping extension of the network of state and collective farms. Soviet policy in other fields also took a leftward turn, conditioned more or less directly by the bitter class struggle which had been kindled in the peasant districts. There was a substantial intensification of antireligious agitation; conformity with the dogmas of Communism was more rigidly demanded in the universities; in the Communist International Russian influence was exerted in behalf of a more activist and uncompromising policy, which found various forms of expression, ranging from the appearance of a number of Communist candidates in vigorous opposition to the Labor Party in a number of industrial constituencies during the British general election of May 1929 to the Communist May Day demonstration in Berlin, held in defiance of police prohibition and ending in the use of firearms on both sides[1] and the loss of more than a score of lives.

It is no exaggeration to say that a new epoch in the history of Russian revolution began with the Fifteenth Communist Party Congress, which adopted the fateful resolutions calling for the rapid socialization of agriculture. It is an epoch of sharp struggle between the disciplined will of the Communist Party on the one hand and the propertied instinct of the well-

[1] The fact that not a single policeman was killed or seriously injured during these disturbances would seem to suggest that more shooting was done by the police than by the Communists. However, the Social Democratic Prussian Minister of the Interior, defending the action of the police, in the Prussian Diet, asserted that a number of persons had been arrested with arms in their hands and that some of the victims of the affray were shot not by the police but by the rioters.

to-do peasants on the other. The truce represented by Lenin's proclamation of the New Economic Policy is at an end. It is now a fight for a final decision of the question whether Russia shall or shall not remain half socialist and half capitalist.

I stumbled on a striking instance of the human side of this struggle in a remote Cossack district on the River Don in the summer of 1928. The President of the District Soviet Executive Committee, Lebedev, was a Communist of the most devoted, fanatical, and uncompromising type, far above the general level of Soviet rural officialdom both in character and in ability. Weakened by years of service in the Red Army, suffering from incipient tuberculosis, he worked at his post day after day, year after year, taking no vacations, and faithfully carrying out his difficult task as a missionary of Communism in a decidedly unappreciative heathen population. (The Cossacks in this region of the Don fought almost solidly on the side of the Whites during the civil war.) Lebedev had the agricultural statistics of his region at his fingers' tips and ran over them in rapid outline in the course of a talk with me. I was struck by the decline in the planted area by comparison with pre-war times.

"Would n't you get an increased planted area and a larger harvest if you gave the richer peasants, who own more horses and machinery, greater opportunities in the way of leasing and farming land?" I inquired.

Lebedev's face grew more tense and his tired eyes flashed as he shot back: —

"Yes, perhaps we should. But then these richer peasants would grow in wealth and influence like bloated spiders until they had the whole district in their power. We did n't fight through the civil war, we did n't beat the White generals and landlords and capitalists, and the Allied troops who came to help them, for this, to let capitalism creep back in veiled forms. Our policy is to unite the poor and middle-class peasants in coöperatives and collective farms and raise the living standard of all the peasants gradually, instead of letting a few grow rich

while the rest remain poor. As revolutionary Communists that is the only policy we can and shall pursue, no matter how many obstacles we shall have to overcome."

I left Lebedev's office and went into a neighboring Cossack village, which had suffered so severely during the civil war that 30 per cent of the homesteads were farmed by women. And one of these Cossack women, burned almost black by the fierce glare of the summer sun over the Don steppes, quite unconsciously gave me the individual peasant's answer to Lebedev.

"What does the state mean by trying to make us all byedniaks [poor peasants]?" she burst out. "We can't all be equal, because some of us will always work harder than others. Let me work as much land as I can with my own arms and I'll gladly pay rent and taxes to the state for it, and sell my grain too, if I get a fair price and some goods to buy with the money. But nothing will ever come out of this idea of making us all byedniaks and calling everyone who is a capable hard worker a bloodsucker and a kulak. That sort of thing keeps us poor, and keeps the state poor too."

Here, in a nutshell, are the two viewpoints which are competing for mastery all over the Russian countryside to-day. So far it is impossible to predict with any certainty which will prevail. There has been no relaxation of the Communist drive for the socialization of agriculture; larger and larger credits and appropriations are being poured into the development of the state and collective farms; the agitation against the kulak is as vigorous as ever.

Against the tremendous political and economic pressure which the Communist Party and the Soviet state can bring into play against him, the individualistic peasant has one simple but very effective weapon: he can cut down his planted acreage and threaten the cities with what the Russians picturesquely call "the bony hand of hunger." There are several signs that this weapon is being brought into use. From 1922 until 1928 the bread supply of the Russian cities was quite normal. The first year of the extremist agrarian

policy, 1928, brought with it a general introduction of bread-cards.[1]

To offset this sullen discontent, which certainly prevails among the more well-to-do peasants and is occasionally expressed in efforts to cut down the planted area and in acts of arson and murder, one may cite three facts which at the time of writing (September 1929) seem to provide some solid basis for Communist optimism regarding the possibility of ultimately making socialist forms prevail in agriculture.

First, the planted area for 1928–1929 increased, despite desperate resistance on the part of the peasants who suffered most from the state policy of forcibly collecting grain at fixed prices.

Second, the active expressions of peasant dissatisfaction have been confined as a rule to terrorist acts by individuals and small groups. There has been nothing comparable with the large scale peasant uprisings in Ukraina, Tambov, and Siberia which occurred in 1920 and 1921 and were not the least of the factors which brought the Soviet Government to the declaration of the New Economic Policy.

Third, and probably most important, the Soviet Government to-day possesses and is every year expanding the mechanism for collective farming through an increased output of tractors and large agricultural machines of various kinds. Being complete master in the fields both of production and of distribution the Soviet Government is able to direct this stream of modern machinery exclusively into the state and collective farms. This gives the latter such an overwhelming advantage over the individual peasant homestead as may well outweigh the initial psychological distaste of many peasants for collectivist farming.

The strained situation with food in the cities and with raw material in the factories during the winter and spring of 1928–1929 left little doubt of the fundamental importance of the

[1] The Russian rationing system is far less severe as yet than those which prevailed in Germany during the War or in Russia during the civil war. The cards simply limit the amount of bread which may be bought in state and coöperative stores at fixed prices. It is both legal and possible to buy bread in the open markets at substantially higher prices.

agrarian problem in the ambitious Soviet schemes of economic development. The summer of 1929 brought a certain alleviation of the situation with the basic Russian food product, bread. Nature proved friendly, and favorable climatic conditions by July indicated a crop of at least average yield, without the drought areas which had complicated the problem of food supply in 1928. Whereas the autumn-sown area showed a decline, the strenuous spring-planting campaign, carried out under the leadership of the Communist Party, brought a substantial increase of the sown area, which is estimated to have increased by 5 or 6 per cent as compared with the preceding year.

According to the official reports, whereas the more well-to-do peasants cut down their planted area, the poorer peasants increased theirs, and the state and collective farms increased their crops very substantially. The Communist press interpreted the success of the spring planting and the improved harvest outlook as a clear proof of the correctness of the new collectivist policy in agriculture. While recognizing that the problem of agrarian supply at the present time (July 1929) seems better than it was a few months earlier, an impartial observer must feel that many questions in this field have not received their final answer. The kulaks who have reduced their acreage have hitherto provided the largest marketable surplus, and this fact may make itself felt unpleasantly in the new grain-collection campaign. Despite the improved outlook for this year's crop, it has not been found possible to dispense with the system of rationed sale of bread and some other food products in the cities or with the forcible measures of compelling the kulaks to part with their surplus grain which were reintroduced in the spring of 1929. The stability of the new collective farms, which have sprung up like mushrooms, in view of the privileges in respect to land, taxation, credits, and machinery which have been bestowed upon them, has yet to be proved. In short, while the chances of socializing agriculture are certainly brighter now than they were in the period of so-called military Communism, when the country was economically quite ruined, a much longer period of trial will be required before one can pronounce judgment on the struggle between conscious Communist collectivism and instinctive peasant individualism.

The agrarian problem, which in my opinion dwarfs every other issue in contemporary Russia, derives added sharpness from the fact that the peasant has thus far paid a large share of the cost of the socialist experiment in industry. One of the leading theorists of the Trotzkyist opposition, Eugene Preobrazhensky, developed a theory to the effect that the peasantry represented a colony, which the socialist industry must "exploit," as Marxists conceive that industrialized countries exploit their colonial possessions. Of course Preobrazhensky is an oppositionist, and his theory, which would have been politically very inexpedient to proclaim in a country where four-fifths of the population consists of peasants, has been solemnly condemned by bell, book, and candle as rank heresy.

But, while the peasant knows little of the niceties of Marxian theories of colonial exploitation, he is keenly conscious of the fact that his direct taxes are heavier, as a general rule, than they were before the War, and that the price relationship of industrial and agricultural products has altered very much to his disadvantage.[1] His resentment in this connection, prompting him to withhold his grain from the market, was not the

[1] In opposition to Preobrazhensky's theory of "colonial exploitation" a whole school of official Communist economists rises to assert that the peasant is less heavily taxed than he was before the War. This viewpoint, I must say, receives no support from any peasant with whom I ever talked. The whole business of comparing present with pre-war burdens is difficult and complicated, because of the changed relationships. It is, I think, indisputable that the peasants (with the possible exception of some 38 per cent of the very poorest, who are exempted from Soviet taxes, but who certainly could have paid little or nothing before the War) pay considerably heavier direct taxes to the state than they paid before the War. On the other hand the burden of rent payments to the landlords, estimated at 250,000,000 gold rubles a year, has been lifted from their shoulders. Of course this burden of rent was unevenly distributed, because large estates were much more common in some parts of the country than in others. The peasants who did not have to pay rent before the War naturally feel the increased taxes much more keenly than those who did. Soviet statisticians make much of the fact that the peasants paid much more in indirect excise taxes before the War than they do at present. But this is an unconvincing argument regarding the weight of the peasants' burden, because prices of city goods, indirect taxes and all, were vastly below the present level. The peasant knows only the prices which he must pay for his nails, boots, textile goods, etc.; he neither knows nor cares how much of this price is an indirect tax.

least of the factors which drove the Soviet Government on to its policy of hastening the socialization of agriculture at any cost.

I can envisage two alternative lines of development for the Soviet Union, one in the event of the success of the Communist agrarian policy, and the other in the event of its failure. Success and failure are, of course, relative terms, between which lie an indefinite number of conceivable shades of compromise. Victory for the Communists on what they like to call the agrarian front is likely to be a more gradual and imperceptible process than defeat. It depends primarily upon the Government's ability to coax enough grain out of the middle-class peasants to provide for the internal supply of the country until the state and collective farms begin to play an important rôle in supplying the market, as it is hoped they will do within the next two or three years. A fair proof of the success of the collectivist agrarian policy and of the restoration of equilibrium between industry and agriculture would be the resumption, on a stable and increasing scale, of grain exports over a period of two or three years and the removal of the restrictions which now exist on the sale of such food products as bread, butter, meat, sugar, etc. Victory will mean nothing short of a new economic revolution, a transformation of the peasant from an individualistic producer into a member of a huge coöperative system, another cog in the socialist organization of the country. If agriculture is socialized, even the most obstinate believers in a capitalist rebirth of Russia will be obliged to paraphrase the supposed last words of the Emperor Julian and say: "Ye have conquered, Marx and Lenin." Because with the disappearance of the independent peasant producer no serious element of private capitalism will remain in the country.

Defeat will be more definitely and clearly registered than victory, because the Communist Party will not admit defeat until and unless it is confronted with a crisis comparable in seriousness with that which preceded Lenin's "strategic retreat," embodied in the New Economic Policy of 1921. Even should

the agricultural situation develop as unfavorably as the most pessimistic observers in Russia are inclined to predict and the Party leadership find itself obliged to sound the call for a new "strategic retreat," I do not believe anything in the nature of a violent overthrow of the existing social order is possible. A nation does not go through such a tremendous upheaval as was represented by the Bolshevik Revolution and then indulge in an upheaval of similar magnitude in a contrary direction within the brief span of a single generation.

As I have shown in preceding chapters, the Revolution has struck deep roots; and so many classes are interested in the perpetuation of the Soviet régime that external continuity of development seems assured. (One need only think of the hosts of "red commanders," "red factory directors," proletarian students, to say nothing of the large mass organizations of the Party and the Communist Youth, to realize that, quite apart from its Special Guard, the Gay-Pay-Oo, the Soviet Government would have no lack of defenders should it be menaced by open counter-revolution.)

Émigré Russia is cut off from contact with the realities of the Soviet Union and practically dead. Such changes as may take place in Russia will grow out of response to specific Russian conditions and will be achieved through the existing Communist and Soviet political organizations and not through any plots hatched by émigré groups in Berlin or Paris or Prague.

Should Communist agrarian policy lead to an impasse, something in the nature of a "Newest Economic Policy" will probably become necessary. The corner stone of such a policy would be the definite and final recognition of the peasant's right to develop as a small capitalist. There would be no more requisitions of his grain at fixed prices, whether veiled by such euphonious descriptions as "measures of social persuasion" or not. There would be a modification of the rigid policy of producing almost entirely for the industrial requirements of the country, and more account would be taken of the peasant's needs as a consumer. Soviet policy would most probably become more accommodating to foreign capital, which would be doubly

necessary to rescue the country from the difficult economic plight to which it would necessarily be reduced before the Communist Party leadership would be willing to beat a retreat. Instead of turning into a closed economic system, with every form of production under socialist or coöperative control, which will be the result of a victory of Communist agrarian policy, the country will retain a more open form of economic organization, in which there will be room for private initiative not only in agriculture but also quite possibly in trade. The state monopolistic operation of large-scale industry, transport, and foreign trade will, in my opinion, survive any modifications of agricultural policy.

Defeat on the agrarian front would usher in a new era of Soviet development which, if people are determined to construct inevitably partial and misleading analogies with the French Revolution, might be called the Thermidorian era. The Thermidor in France did not, it should be carefully noted, involve either a sharp break in the continuity of French revolutionary government or a restoration of the feudal system or a return of the émigrés or a handing back of the land to the ousted nobility.

An American social student, making the customary rapid impressionistic tour of Russia, once demanded of me a plain answer to a plain question.

"Look here," he said, "is this Soviet experiment succeeding, or is n't it?"

An easier question to ask than to answer! Was the downfall of the Roman Empire a "success"? And for whom? The Bolshevik Revolution did not spring full-panoplied from the brain of Lenin and his associates; it grew very largely out of the disintegration of the Romanov régime. Historians and philosophers, according to their tastes and sympathies, still debate hotly the values and defects of such movements as the French Revolution and the Protestant Reformation. How, then, is it possible to pass a definitive judgment on the Russian Bolshevik Revolution, which by its magnitude demands a perspective of decades, if not of centuries, when it is still in process

of transformation, when the passions which it aroused and arouses are hot and burning, when some of the outlines of the new social order which it inaugurated are dim and obscure?

One of the pioneers of the communist idea was the Frenchman, Gracchus Babeuf, who proclaimed the slogan: "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." The French revolutionary government, in its Thermidorian stage, found Babeuf a trouble-maker and sent him to the guillotine. The Russian Communists honor his memory and have named a candy factory after him. But if Babeuf could visit this factory he would find that there was still a long way to go to the realization of his ideal. The red director and the engineer receive higher salaries than the skilled workers; the skilled workers receive more than the unskilled. Not payment according to need, but payment according to productivity, is the rule which economic necessity imposes in the Soviet state industry to-day. Absolute equality of material recompense has not been found practicable even within the ranks of the Communist Party. It exists only in the projected utopian society of the future, as outlined in the Programme of the Communist International.

But the existence of inequalities, while undeniable, is not, I think, a point on which the Russian Communists need fear very much criticism. Their process of leveling, while not complete, has certainly been pretty thoroughgoing. The most valid criticism of communism up to date in Russia, in my opinion, is not that it distributes the good things of life unequally, but that it does not produce enough of the good things of life to go around. Lord Balfour's ironical gibe, inserted in a diplomatic note to Chicherin, to the effect that Bolshevism, while an excellent means of making rich men poor, is a dubious means of making poor men rich, still challenges attention.

The Communists, with all the ardor of apostles of a new faith, insist that all such gibes can be and will be conclusively disposed of as soon as a triumphantly achieved series of *pyatiletkas*, or five-year plans of national economic development, place them

in a position to rival the technical achievements of Germany and America.

One cannot, I think, judge the Communist achievement fairly without taking full account of the stupendous obstacles which stood in the way of its realization. In a backward, semi-Asiatic peasant country, shattered by war and social upheaval, the Communists introduced a completely new system of economic administration, bound, in its first stages, to be accompanied by costly and discouraging blunders. And they installed as the ruling class of this complicated new social order the Russian workers, who were to a large extent shut out from the limited cultural opportunities afforded under the Tsarist régime and who, while full of militant revolutionary spirit, were inferior to West European and American workers in general and technical education.

If one keeps a firm mental grasp on these two facts and their manifold implications, it will be recognized that the real cause for wonder in Soviet Russia is not that so much is amiss but that so much has been achieved. Whether it was wise to aim at such difficult goals is another question.

Apostles of a new creed seldom reckon with obstacles. And no view of Russia's present and future would be complete and well rounded if it did not take full account of the passionate absorption of the convinced Communist in his cause. I do not mean to suggest that a majority of the Russian people, or even a majority of the formally registered members of the Communist Party are dominated by this sentiment. But there are enough enthusiasts, with a devotion to their cause comparable with that of adherents of a fresh, young, crusading religious sect, to leaven the whole mass and furnish leadership and direction for the waverers and the indifferent.

Although the intellectual appeal of Communism is based upon an uncompromisingly materialistic interpretation of life, its strength at the present time, in my opinion, is to be measured not so much by its concrete achievements as by such imponderable factors as the new spirit of emancipation, class pride, and class consciousness aroused among the workers,

and the faith in "building socialism," sometimes cherished with equal intensity by the Communist official in some high government office and by the simple workman in the factory. These "imponderables" tend to make the prospects for the stability and continuity of the existing social order better than they might seem to be if one took into account only the unmistakably grave economic difficulties with which the country is confronted.

Now something in the nature of an Armageddon, of that "final struggle" which the Communists sing of in the "Internationale," is in progress between the organized will of the Communist Party and the deep-rooted individualistic psychology of the small peasant proprietor, a psychology which the Communists are determined to make over in the image of Marx and Lenin. Is it possible to "build socialism" in a peasant country without a large, perhaps a fatally large, alloy of concession to the peasant instincts for self-enrichment and private property? This question is bound up with the riddle of Russia's future. And the answer to that riddle lies with the Peasant-Sphinx.

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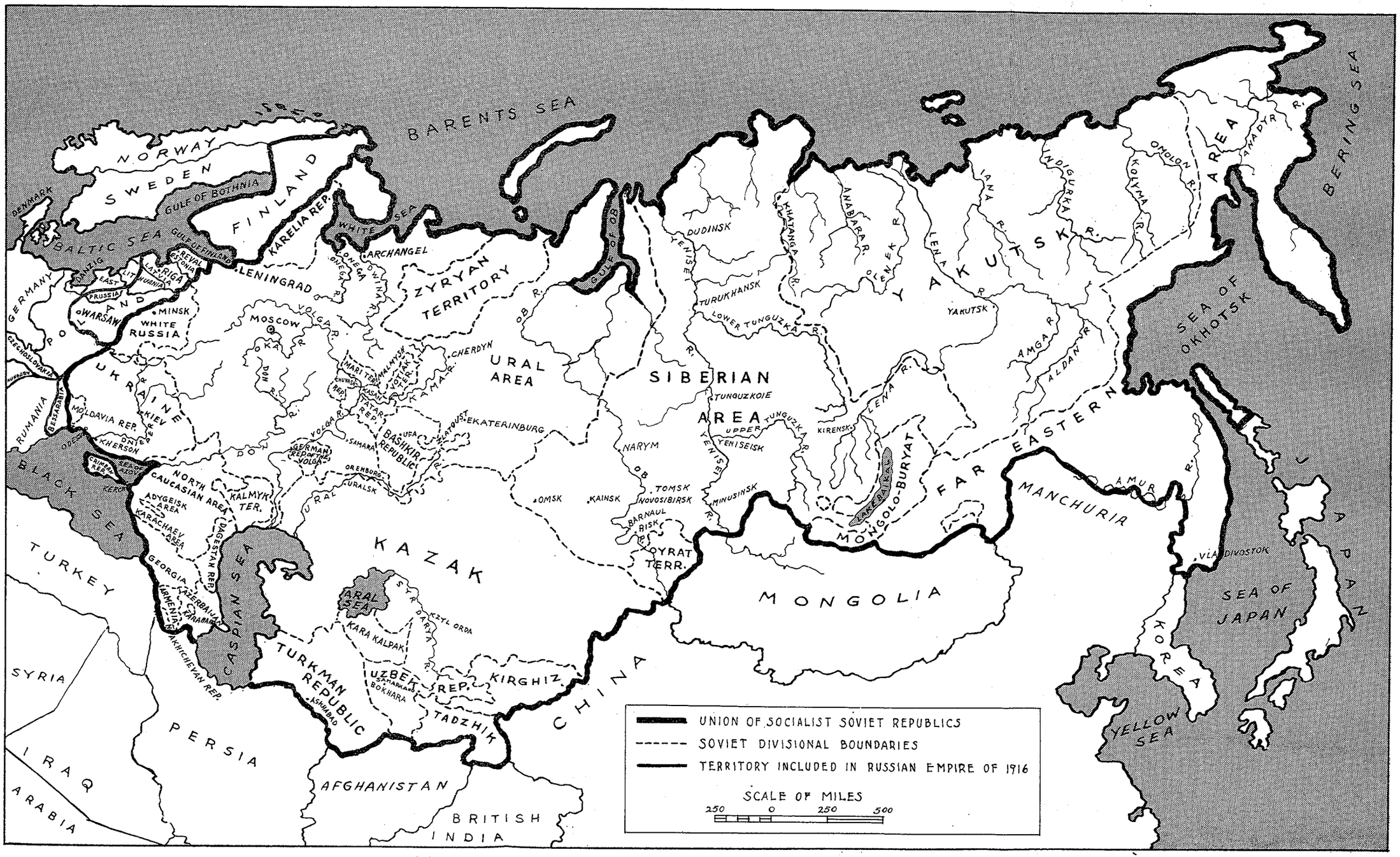
INDEX


BARENTS SEA
NORWAY
SWEDEN
FINLAND
GULF OF BOTHNIA
KARELIA REP.
WHITE SEA
ARCHANGEL
ONEGA
DVINA
ZYRYAN TERRITORY
LENINGRAD
BALTIC SEA
GULF OF FINLAND
REVAL
ESTONIA
RIGA
LATVIA
LITHUANIA
DENMARK
GERMANY
EAST PRUSSIA
POLAND
WARSAW
MINSK
WHITE RUSSIA
MOSCOW
VOLGA R.
OKA R.
DNIEPR R.
CZECHOSLOVAKIA
HUNGARY
RUMANIA
BESSARABIA
MOLDAVIA REP.
UKRAINE
KIEV
ODESSA
KHERSON
CRIMEA REP.
BLACK SEA
BLACK SEA
KERCH
NORTH CAUCASIAN AREA
ADYGEISK AREA
KARACHAEV AREA
KALMYK TER.
VOLGA R.
GERMAN (REP. OF THE VOLGA)
SAMARA
ORENBURG
URALSK
URAL
DON
MARI
TATAR
CHUVASH
VOTYAK
KAMA R.
CHERDYN
URAL AREA
OB R.
GULF OF OB
YENISEI R.
DUDINSK
KHATANGA R.
ANABAR R.
OLENEK R.
LENA R.
YAKUTSK
INDIGURKA R.
KOLYMA R.
ONOLON R.
ANADYR R.
ANADYR AREA
BERING SEA
SEA OF OKHOTSK
TURUKHANSK
LOWER TUNGUZKA R.
YAKUTSK
AMGA R.
ALDAN R.
SIBERIAN
TUNGUZKOIE
AREA
UPPER TUNGUZKA R.
YENISEISK
KIRENSK
LENA R.
NARYM
OB
TOMSK
NOVOSIBIRSK
KAINSK
OMSK
MINUSINSK R.
BARNAUL
BISK
OYRAT TERR.
LAKE BAIKAL
MONGOLO-BURYAT
FAR EASTERN
AMUR R.
MANCHURIA
VLADIVOSTOK
SEA OF JAPAN
JAPAN
KOREA
YELLOW SEA
MONGOLIA
CHINA
KAZAK
ARAL SEA
SYR DARYA R.
KZYL ORDA
KARA KALPAK
CASPIAN SEA
TURKMAN REPUBLIC
ASHKHABAD
UZBEK REP.
SAMARKAND
BOKHARA
KIRGHIZ
TADZHIK
TURKEY
SYRIA
IRAQ
ARABIA
PERSIA
AFGHANISTAN
BRITISH INDIA
GEORGIA
AZERBAIJAN
ARMENIA
NAKHICHEVAN REP.
UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS
SOVIET DIVISIONAL BOUNDARIES
TERRITORY INCLUDED IN RUSSIAN EMPIRE OF 1916
SCALE OF MILES
250 0 250 500