

SOCIALISM IN THE USSR

(This is the second part of a two-part series on socialism in the USSR.)

EDUCATION

We found that everyone gets the equivalent of a high school education and upon graduation has had at least a basic education in Political Economy and Dialectical and Historical Materialism. In college there is a two year requirement to study Marx's *Capital* and to study Marxism-Leninism in general.

As far as Marxist-Leninist material being available, we found Kalinin along with Marx, Engels, Lenin and other material available at the newsstands in the streets of Estonia. Wherever we went in the streets, we found all the basic Marxist material readily available—so available that it is impossible not to see communist material. Also, more important and hard to get used to, is that the people are avid readers. Whenever we got on the Metro at least 2 out of every 3 people would be reading a newspaper or text-

book. Many people line up in the street waiting for a bookstore to open—not just any bookstore but ones that deal with Marxism.

TRADE UNIONS

While on the trip we had a chance to talk with the Central Council of Trade Unions as well as meet with the leaders of the Leningrad Dockworkers' Union. We learned that the trade unions play an important role in running the country. It was pointed out that they are the main organization in the transition to communism. They are completely voluntary, mass organizations which play an important role in the development of the country. All working people are members and it is through the unions that they are mobilized to discuss and fulfill the 5 year plans. The aim is to get the workers as active as possible and reveal their talents. Everything in the trade unions is done with the purpose of raising the standard of living of the people.

A SOCIALIST COUNTRY

We came fully convinced that this was a socialist country, a country where production is geared to the needs of the people, where the wealth of society is used for the people. There was no sign anywhere of exploitation. Police had the main function of picking up people who were drunk and regulating traffic. There was no sign anywhere of harassment or repression.

WAR

I guess the strongest feeling we came away with was that the Soviet people hate war more than we can imagine. In Leningrad, we went to a graveyard of 2 million people who had died in that city during the years 1941-

44. During the Nazi siege, people had collapsed from starvation and frozen in the streets. When spring came, to prevent wide-spread epidemic, the Communist Party called on the people to rally their strength and clean the city. Out of necessity people were buried in mass graves; and today you can see rows and rows of block-long graves for each year of the war. We saw little children putting flowers on the tombstone of the year when perhaps their grandfather died and older people coming with tears in their eyes. We went through a small city outside of Moscow where there was not a single household that had not lost at least one person in the war.

The Soviet people fought with extreme bravery and played the main role in defeating Hitler's armies, but they also suffered tremendously and they know the horrors of war. I have never met so many people, young and old alike, who hate war so much. Even their circus starts out with moving pictures of WWII and a modern dance to Shastakovich symbolizing the workers' fightback against the fascist onslaught.

REVISIONISM

When we left the USNA we had some preconceived notions about how the Soviet people would react to questions concerning Comrade Stalin, since Brezhnev and his revisionist clique have tried to downplay and distort Stalin's leadership. We found the Soviet people were surprised at our apprehension at asking question about Stalin. Stalin's writings are not sold in bookstores; they have been relegated to the library only. Yet the older people remember Stalin as their military leader who defeated the Nazis and as their leader during the crucial

period of the development of socialism.

Stalin stood for the oppressed nationalities in the USSR, never forsaking the internationalist spirit of a Communist. The Brezhnev clique has helped foster the division in the socialist camp, putting its own national interests in the forefront. They have tried to soak the Soviet people with their own treacherous nationalist sentiment.

For example, one woman from Estonia we spoke with told us, "The leaders of China are like fascists," and that if there was war between the USNA and China she didn't know which side the Soviet people would be on—that would have to be decided by diplomats.

Brezhnev's more covert betrayals are a continuation of Khrushchev's counter-revolutionary tactics.

But just as Khrushchev was unable to hold back the revolutionary process in the Soviet Union neither will Brezhnev be able to, for a revolution is an objective process that will be carried out by the Soviet people. In the same manner, Teng's outright treacherous moves will in the end only spell his own removal. The Soviet and Chinese people have been immersed in Marxist-Leninist literature and their love and defense of socialism shall surpass the obstacles conjured up by the Brezhnev and Teng revisionist cliques.

As our trip came to an end, we concluded that our best expression of friendship toward the Soviet people, the best service we can do for mankind, is to work for the destruction of imperialism, to do away with the economic system which breed wars and fascism, and by fighting for socialism here to contribute to worldwide peace.

NOTICE

It has come to our attention that the Communist Labor Party has been incorrectly listed as a co-sponsor of the National Hard Times Conference, to be held January 30-February 1. This announcement appeared in the December 17 issue of the *Guardian*. We are not a co-sponsor of this Conference.