

THE NETWORK

Information Bulletin on European Stalinism

Copyright 1945
Ruth Fischer

This bulletin is devoted to the analysis of The New Stalinism succeeding its Hitlerite and Fascist forerunners, which is now emerging in various areas outside Russia. Its activities and organizational form deserve close study and relentless exposure. The Bulletin makes no claim to completeness since the task of describing and analyzing the rapidly growing Stalinist movement in Europe, in Asia, and here in the United States is far beyond the capacity of only a few persons. Therefore, the bulletin is confined especially to news items concerning the Free German Movement and its inter-relationship with the other Moscow controlled Free National Movements and Governments in Europe and with the various outposts among the political emigrants all over the world.

T a b l e o f C o n t e n t s

Post Fascist World -- New Tasks Page 1

WORLD AFFAIRS

The Stalin Crisis 2
The Nuremberg Show Trial 6
European Elections 7
British Communists vs. Ernest Bevin 8
The Asiatic Conflict 10

GERMAN AFFAIRS

Russian Occupational Policy in Germany 11
Zhukov Announces a Five Year Plan for Germany 15
Exit General Walther von Seydlitz and Paul Hagen 15
Briefs 16
+ + +
Letter from Berlin 18
+ + +

CURIOSITIES

The Lesson of Germany: a Guide to her History
By Gerhart Eisler, Albert Norden, Albert
Schreiner 24
The Adoration: German Poet Johannes R. Becher's
Hymn to Stalin 24
+ + +

POST-FASCIST WORLD -- NEW TASKS

Two years ago, at the peak of the Teheran confusion, we started our information bulletin on Stalinism to expose the neo-Stalinist activities, their organizational forms, and "fronts" -- the multi-national "liberation movements", and especially the Free German Movement.

In the meantime, our analysis of these ramifications of the Russian State Party has been completely confirmed by the events after Hitler's defeat; in Europe as well as in Asia, the Stalinist Party now supplants its Nazi forerunners. The Free French, Free Jugoslavs, Free Italians, and Free What-Not Movements, so highly praised during the period of the "anti-fascist alliance", are unveiled and show their real colors -- multi-national branches of the Russian State Party and its N.K.V.D., exposed and attacked almost unanimously by the American press. Some of our particular objectives, for instance, the Free German outfits in Moscow and New York, have vanished from the scene or have taken new forms.

We feel that the complete change in the situation makes an adaptation to the new conditions of the post-fascist world necessary. Therefore, we consider that, with this concluding issue, one definite job has been completed -- the exposure and analysis of the Free Movements as auxiliaries of the Big Three.

We are now entering a new phase of world politics. The Fascist and Nazi episodes of the totalitarian trend in politics reached their end in the catastrophic collapse of the German and Japanese enterprise. The "anti-fascist" phraseology has become threadbare; "anti-Stalinism" now becomes a catchword very similar in function to the late "anti-fascism", combining heterogeneous partners for homogeneous purposes.

The "Third World War" has, in fact, already begun -- and that in a more acute form than the beginning of World War II with the Manchurian incident in 1931. In all corners of the world, the Western Powers are in open conflict with the Russian Expansion; there are no forces in existence which can halt this trend.

In this crisis, we must assign ourselves new tasks more adequate for the new situation than the mere exposure of Stalinist technique; exposure and analysis of world trends in this preliminary stage of the approaching conflict, whatever their forms may be. And we may start, within a new framework, to cope with the new problems.

+ + + +

The September issue of BOLSHEVIK, Russia's most important theoretical journal of "Marxism", contained an amazing confession: The Central Committee had recently found serious political mistakes in the BOLSHEVIK; which had not devoted enough space to doctrinal questions of "Marxism" and "Leninism". Therefore, the editors of the magazine have been instructed to "correct their errors immediately". It was said that the BOLSHEVIK was only Bolshevik in name, and should make a serious attempt to present studies worthy of its emblem.

One of the recent sins mentioned in the Central Committee's criticism was an article in memoriam of George Plekhanov as a Marxist pioneer in Russia. The Politburo severely admonished the BOLSHEVIK for not having stressed sufficiently the differences between the Menshevik Plekhanov and the Bolshevik Party.

Similar trends can be seen everywhere; a "Plenum" of the American Communist Party, held in November, was rich in rhetorics, in numerous references to Marx and Lenin. Stalin's Holy Name was scarcely mentioned.

Stalin himself has become a mysterious anchorite. On the day of his greatest triumph, the celebration of the October Revolution after Hitler's defeat, he did not emerge from his solitude to address the Army parade in Moscow's Red Square. A few days later, an outbreak of "wanton hooliganism" was discussed by Attorney-General Constantin Gorschenin, who urged prosecutions against large scale banditry and crimes, committed either by teen-age youths or by "criminals" who received amnesty during the war and were permitted to join the armed forces. Drastic measures were considered to quell the "crime wave". On December 2nd, an entire cavalry division was transferred to Moscow to patrol the streets at night.

"Wanton hooliganism", committed by the Red Army, occupying large areas in Europe is reported from all Russian controlled and occupied countries. In addition to the various reports by American journalists, a great many private letters written by former German Communists or fellow-travellers are circulating in New York, which give detailed descriptions about the living conditions under Russian occupation in Berlin and Vienna. These personal observations by Socialists are of special value, as the writers were favorably disposed to receive the Red Soldiers as liberators from Fascism.

These three facts -- Stalin's silence on November 7th, the disintegration of the Red Army abroad and of the displaced, suffering millions inside Russia, and finally, the curious "resurrection of Marxism and Leninism" -- indicate a pending Russian Party crisis of great scope.

This crisis is brewing within the party hierarchy proper, and is not simply a split between the Army and the Party. In the American press, however, the old game, once played against the Hitler regime, begins again: namely, to differentiate between the "Army policy" and the "Party policy", presenting the Red Army as the more conservative and cooperative force with which a working agreement could be more easily achieved. That was never correct for Hitler Germany, as has

been proven by the facts. Even in the midst of disaster, Field Marshal von Witzleben was not able to organize a successful conspiracy on July 20, 1944, against the Fuehrer. However, in this presentation of different policies between Hitler and the German Army, there was a heavy grain of truth: the German Officers Corps, unbroken in its tradition of the Kaiser's times, represented a much more conservative wing of German Nationalism that did the new hierarchy of the Nazi Party. The fusion between party and army hierarchy was never completely achieved in Germany, as the old pattern of German society had never been thoroughly and totally destroyed by the Nazi system.

The Red Army is quite another phenomenon. The Czarist Army was completely disbanded after the October Revolution; the reorganization of the Russian Army took place after a revolutionary interlude of the greatest importance for the life of the country, in which Red Guards, Workers Militias and Partisans played a decisive role. The integration of Czarist officers in the new Red Army organized by Trotsky was, from the outset, a completely different process from the integration of Nazi militants in the Reichswehr. The Red Army leaders followed closely the development of the Russian State Party. All changes of leadership within the Politburo were reflected by changes within the leadership of the Red Army; the Red Officers Corps was thoroughly purged and reorganized several times. The Tukhachevsky trial was not the last purge of the Army. In 1938, following these Show Trials, about 10,000 students of military schools were rapidly promoted, ending their training courses in June instead of the usual October term, opening to them opportunities for quick advancement. The greatest shift, however, within the Red Officers Corps, took place during the German-Russian War, in which a group of commanders was removed from office and court-martialled behind closed doors for incompetent leadership in the first period of the Nazi campaign. During the war, the best party militants were sent into all ranks of the Army; the party organizers themselves donned uniform and got military titles and medals in abundance. The fusion between the Army and the Party was perfected during the war; that was an easy process, as the Russian State Party is a political organization of military character and discipline in which the soldierly duties of blind obedience and readiness to sacrifice blood and life for the Socialist Fatherland and the Leader are prominent features. All outstanding commanders are new types of generals, nurtured during the Civil War and developed during the German-Russian War, party militants specializing in military skills.

Marshal Zhukov, the Commander of Germany, is an excellent example of this new type. He entered the Communist Party in March 1919, having been a Private in the Czarist Army; that means he was a young soldier at this time, returning from the war, under the spell of Bolshevik propaganda. He organized a cavalry division of the Red Guards, and fought in the Far East against Admiral Kolchak; returning to Moscow, he was discovered by Mikhail Frunze, successor to Trotsky, and sent to the Frunze Military Academy. In 1936, Zhukov was the Soviet Chief Military Observer in Spain; this was a political assignment as well as a military one.

Beria, the Chief of the N.K.V.D., was lately promoted to Marshal by Stalin; there is not one important N.K.V.D. chief without high military rank and corresponding privileges. Despite the many divisions

in the lower brackets between the special N.K.V.D. troops and the regular Army, there is unification of command between party organizers, N.K.V.D. chiefs, and Red Army Commanders, who form the ruling hierarchy of Soviet Russia today, and call themselves the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Conflicting policies will express themselves on vertical lines through these groups, and not by mechanical splitting of its different elements. Even a coup d'état by the Red Army Command would be nothing less than the revolt of one party group against another.

The Politburo's admonitions of leading Soviet publications on "Marxism" and "Leninism" may indicate growing rebellion against Stalin. Lenin's name is put in the forefront mainly to emphasize Lenin's role as the analyst of "the epoch of world imperialism and world wars". Translating these cabalistic letters into plain English, the emphasis on Lenin's ideas on world imperialism means simply, opposition to the Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam policy within the Russian government. The major issue of how to deal with the approaching "Third World War" divides the ruling circles of the Politburo, the N.K.V.D., and the Army.

The growing antagonism between the United States and Russia is at the bottom of this crisis. The temporary technological superiority of the United States, its present monopoly of atomic energy, and its close collaboration with Great Britain (and Canada), has created a veritable nightmare within the Russian State Party. Seen from Moscow, Truman and Attlee have succeeded in establishing an "atomic bloc" within the United Nations. The premise of the UNO was a World New Deal between Russia and the United States in which the respective living space should be neatly delineated. There is no doubt that when Earl Browder praised the potentialities of a harmonious understanding between the Soviet Union and American monopoly capitalism, which would jointly police and exploit the world for bigger and better industrialization, he was the mouthpiece of the Russian Politburo and especially of Stalin.

This grandiose world neo-NEP has been blown to bits long before the explosion of the first atomic bomb, and in Moscow, every illusion has now disappeared that the extermination of Germany would allow the Soviet Union twenty years of unhampered expansion. Churchill's statement of "four or five years" as the maximum time for Anglo-American monopoly of the atomic bomb, sharply illustrates that the Russian State Party now lives on borrowed time.

"What opens up now, in reality, is not simply a race to develop atomic energy; it is a race to fight the Soviet Union before it fully recovers from this war."
(Joseph Starobin, Daily Worker, Nov. 17, 1945)

The Kremlin is applying strong pressure to overcome its handicap and come to a close finish of the race before the five-year head-start is over.

An enormous simplification of world affairs is the result of the Nazis' exit. The political and diplomatic game has come to a definite end. In this game, the Soviet Union was especially adept. The Russian Party State survived by skillfully exploiting the numerous

conflicts between the European countries, playing German Nationalism against French aggressiveness, and supporting democratic France against aggressive Prussianism. British-Russian relationship during the two world wars is one of the most amazing political duels, in which the Kremlin, by a combination of supporting the British Empire's fight for survival and of propping anti-British tendencies all over the world, had the last word in 1941. This period has come to an irrevocable end, and there are now only two plain policies open for decision: To retire behind the great Russian wall once more, isolate the Socialist Fatherland behind N.K.V.D. barriers, and make political concessions in all corners of the world to the United States. (The frenzied transfer of machinery from Central and Eastern Europe to Russia is illustrative of this trend.) That was Stalin's policy when he made the deal with Chiang Kai-shek, sacrificing the Chinese Communists. That was Stalin's policy when he declined substantial support to the Japanese. That was Stalin's policy when he let the Greek Communists fight alone, partially supporting them with men and weapons from Bulgaria, but shrinking away from open intervention. That was Stalin's policy when the offensive against Turkey was broken half way down and did not lead to the occupation of Kars and Ardahan, the border provinces, minimum Russian claims in preparation for the coming battle of the Near East. And last but not least, the Spanish uprising was not organized at the most propitious moment, in the hour when Maurice Thorez had his most brilliant triumph and when the French Communists would have been able to give substantial support to their Spanish comrades. Now the French Communist Party itself has had to yield to De Gaulle in a foul compromise. In a few months, the situation in Europe has changed to the disadvantage of the Stalinist organizations; many good opportunities have already been lost.

Seen from the Kremlin, the last period represents a chain of disasters, of irreparable defeats, producing one major danger spot after the other for the Soviet Union. For the defeats of the Communists in China and the Nationalists in Java create a state of affairs which cannot be changed by the Kremlin's interference short of a civil war of such dimensions that it would necessarily lead directly to World War III.

Thus, the alternative Russian policy against Stalin's neo-NEP can now only be "aggressiveness", military interventions under various disguises as quickly and as effectively as possible, enlarging the security belts around the Soviet Union as far in Europe and Asia as could be achieved.

"For there is only one defense against the atom bomb, that is MAN himself, the aroused and organized Man, (our emphasis - Ed.) whom Hitler too, underestimated. Man who smashed the nucleus of the atom will either be smashed by the atom madmen or will take atomic energy away from them." (Starobin, Ibid.)

In such an aggressive policy by the "aroused and organized Man", the Russian Red Officers Corps may take the lead; the Red Army has conquered many countries, administers and rules them; appetite grows upon what it feeds. The most conservative among Russian leaders today is Stalin, who wanted to build "Socialism in one country", and is now faced with the terrible problem, either to gain world control or to perish.

The "aggressivists" will gain considerable strength by the serious trouble on the domestic scene. The far-reaching disintegration of the Red Army troops in the European environment demonstrates the colossal crisis dividing the Russian people; these boys, developed in the iron discipline of the sub-standard existence of Stalinist Russia, have gone wild at the first opportunity, as they are bound together only by empty propaganda and by living, since their early childhood, in a social vacuum. Looting and rape on such a mass scale is a serious symptom of a disintegrated social system. The same trend is evident in Russia itself. The results of the migration of millions from one area to another, the destruction of thousands of cities and villages, the weakening of the Russian administration during the German occupation, have led to demoralization which might even have articulated expression corresponding to the totalitarian style of Stalin's Russia. In this respect, the above-mentioned statement of Attorney-General Gorschenin on amnestied criminals during the war is most noteworthy. It seems that an undercurrent of liberated forced laborers, drafted for the armed forces, or disbanded by the approaching German armies, form a considerable part of the discontented millions. Since the economic destruction is disastrous and will not be overcome by large scale import of American machinery and commodities, and not merely by dismantling the factories of the conquered countries, the Common Man in Russia faces a new period of hardships. It is in such a domestic setting that the pendulum again swings to "Leninism".

+ + + +

THE NUREMBERG SHOW TRIAL

The idea, to put in the defendant's dock representatives of all groups of the German Party State and to accuse them of mutual conspiracy against the world, is completely alien to Western standards of legal procedure. In so doing, in accepting the Stalinist initiative, the United States and Great Britain's action brilliantly illuminates how much World War II has destroyed the fundamentals of all forms of diplomatic and political relationships between independent states and nations, and of all notions of non-interference into the internal affairs of another country.

The opening address at Nuremberg reads like a diluted Stalinist "anti-fascist platform". This refers especially to the glaring omissions to all references of Russian and Western collaboration with the Nazi state; however, these omissions of basic facts will prove ineffective; the Munich agreement, legalizing the annexation of the Sudetenland, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and the exclusion of Russia from the League of Nations after the invasion of Finland, are all too recent events which cannot so easily be pushed aside.

Justice Jackson has added genuine Stalinist flavor to his "opening address" in introducing ten Russian traitors sent by the Japanese on January 31, 1939, across the Caucasus Mountains frontier, with instructions to "kill Stalin". This fantastic item, for which evidence could only be supplied by the N.K.V.D., transforms the entire Nuremberg show into a Moscow Grand Opera in which the world conspiracy had but one aim -- the assassination of the world's greatest man, the Father of all Peoples, Stalin.

It is a peculiar feature of the present confusion that this Japanese plot has been obviously introduced to intervene in the Pearl Harbor investigation to support Roosevelt's policy at the Nuremberg Court by demonstrating the joint conspiracy of the Japanese and the Nazis against the venerable but absolutely immaterial person of "World Peace". Thus, disintegration of the ruling cadres of the United States serves well the Stalinist cause.

To round out the picture, the Berlin Communists under Marshal Zhukov's auspices have set up a mock Nuremberg Trial in Berlin. More than 1,500 anti-Nazi Germans held their own "Court of Justice" for the Nuremberg defendants in Berlin's huge broadcasting building and returned a unanimous verdict of guilty. This Communist mock trial emphasizes the futility of the American efforts to produce a new international law, and colors the purely political character of the Nuremberg debates with crude blacks and whites. The group of complete fools expecting the de-Nazification and re-education of the Germans by this technique becomes very small indeed. When the first Moscow Show Trial started against Zinoviev, Kamenev, and fourteen other defendants on August 18, 1936, and when its verdict was accepted as correct by British and American jurists, it was obvious that from then on, these trials would be the model for future discussions on matters of foreign policy. For the accusation against the Nazi State Party and its terrorist minority rule, exterminating all oppositions, could be as well applied to the Russian Party State. Thus, the new feature of Nuremberg is equally a preliminary discussion on world affairs between the survivors of World War II, and therefore a direct introduction and preparation for World War III.

Most far-reaching in this preliminary phase of "World War III" is Jackson's statement that --

"all other methods, persuasion, propaganda, economic competition, diplomacy -- were open to an aggrieved country, but aggressive warfare was outlawed."

+ + + +

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

Hasty generalizations about the recent election returns in the European countries may be of comfort for wishful thinkers; but neither the substantial success of the small Landowners Party in Hungary, nor of the newly reconstructed Catholic Party in Austria, can change the given balance of forces, which resulted from the Yalta and Potsdam agreements. For well-functioning plebescites in the Stalinist style, a longer period of synchronization, indoctrination and terrorization is needed. Hitler always spoke about his fourteen years of struggle, and not without truth; Stalin needed approximately the same time for the perfection of his system, from 1923 to 1937. It is true that now, the Stalinists have an immeasurably better starting point than Hitler; however, even sham democratic techniques present certain obstacles.

"Democracy cannot be measured simply by votes in countries which are half a year removed from Hitler's domination. Democracy is a revolutionary thing. It can only be

entrenched by provisional governments which lead decisive sections of the people in a revolutionary way. We are far from that in either Hungary or Austria. We are nearer to it in Bulgaria and Finland."

(Joseph Starobin, Daily Worker, Nov. 28, 1945)

If interpreted against this background, the elections are interesting from quite another point of view. No doubt, in Europe, a strong current against Stalinization appears and becomes articulate. This current, best represented in the French and Austrian models, embraces today all oppositionist trends, or, to define it briefly, all those strata, in countries formerly under Nazi control, who so far have escaped destruction and are organizing for continued resistance. It is obvious that the remnants of all Nazi forces and their ramifications must now take cover in the newly-formed organizations, Left as well as Right. The characteristic feature of the recent European elections is, however, the fact that the survivors of the Nazi organizations lean far more to the non-Russian controlled parties and groups and join therewith the Western front against Russia in Europe.

+ + + +

BRITISH COMMUNISTS VERSUS ERNEST BEVIN

The annual convention of the British Communist Party in London on November 25th concentrated on a campaign against Ernest Bevin. General Secretary Harry Pollitt declared, "There are bigger things in the world than Ernest Bevin", and attacked him for his attitude toward Soviet Foreign Commissar V. M. Molotov at the London Conference of Foreign Ministers.

The British Communist Party has only two representatives in Parliament. It would be, however, completely misleading to judge the strength of the party by its parliamentary representation. At this moment, the London Daily Worker's circulation is about 110,000 copies daily; a big campaign to raise the circulation to half a million, and to increase publication to 250,000 copies daily as soon as newsprint rationing permits, has begun. The British Communist Party is traditionally bound by two decades of unaltered Comintern policy, to concentrate on infiltration into the Labor Party. Such a policy is ineffective in times of stability, but it might be of the greatest decisiveness in the profound crisis now shaking the British Empire to its foundations.

One of our correspondents in London writes on this subject:

"The eagerness of the Labor Party and trade unions to compromise with Moscow on political and organizational questions has made it virtually impossible to prevent Communists and Communist sympathizers from infiltration into the local Labor Parties. There is no dividing line, created by the terms of the party program, between advocates of the unity of the working class, well-wishers of the peaceful development of the Soviet Federation, protagonists of Soviet planning, and "cultured" champions of radical class struggle regardless of the danger for the whole of British democratic society and the normal Labor membership. This was already the case when the Labor Party, turning away from its pacifist appeasement policy towards Hitler Germany, threw

itself into the propaganda for the support of Republican Spain, of help for Czechoslovakia, and for Poland. As long as the Communist Party stood for the democratic alliance of all the anti-fascist powers against Hitler and Mussolini, Transport House (the Labor Party headquarters) had to disaffiliate every week another local Labor Party for adopting a purely Communist program or for effecting the wholesale affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labor Party. 'Disaffiliation' means, in British political language, enforced dissolution.

"In the two recent election campaigns, the Communists conquered again a number of local Labor Parties which was particularly easy because of the peculiar structure of the organization. They hardly ever won over the majority of the individual members, but they were able to fill the leading offices of a number of affiliated bodies, of local trade union groups, cooperative guilds (the local organizations of the Cooperative Party), and of ward organizations. By astute manoeuvring, they could place their candidates in the leading offices of the constituency Labor Parties. Moreover, as the individual membership of the Labor Party represents the most active element of the whole movement, and also the most vocal part of it, its radical demands and illusions color Labor propaganda, and at the same time, befog the minds of the individual members themselves. They see the Communists most acceptable as active and eager helpmates in the fight for a Socialist Britain ...

"The former role of the Independent Labor Party has largely been taken over by the Fabian Society ... When the intelligentsia discusses politics, it does it in a spirit of complete irresponsibility, in an atmosphere of wishful thinking, and without any obligation to practical verification of its hypotheses. In a time like the present one, this means that, except for the most critical, complete subservience to ideological fashions. Therefore, the Fabian societies and other similar groups are hotbeds of enthusiasm of planning for planning's sake, of unwarranted optimism about the governmental chances of Labor, of pro-Soviet servility and of vicious attacks on the present foreign policy of the Labor Government. Naturally, there are also to be found many active agents of the Communist Party within these discussion groups ...

"Unions that are almost entirely under the domination of Communists are the National Union of Journalists, the National Union of Teachers, the Clerical and Administration Workers Union, some local Miners Unions, and parts of the two biggest of all unions, the Amalgamated Engineering Union, and the General and Transport Workers Union. The latter has even sent a Communist Party delegate into the General Council of British Trade Unions."

At the last congress of the Labor Party, the Communist application for affiliation was rejected by a narrow margin, about 1,300,000 against approximately 1,200,000. The crisis of the British Empire will be reflected by growing crises within the British Labor Party.

+ + + +

THE ASIATIC CONFLICT

The first tangible success of Soviet policy in Asia is the establishment of an autonomous Azerbaijan, in Northern Iran. The National Congress of Azerbaijan, focused at Tabriz on November 20th under the shield of the occupying Red Army, is the first counter-measure of importance against setbacks in the Far East. The strong points of Soviet policy are visible in Iran in sharp contrast to the shortcomings of Soviet policy in Central Europe. The peasantry is discontent and desires the landowners' estates, rejecting reforms such as the sale of government land to those who can pay for it. The Tudeh Party has, without doubt, organized many Iranian small peasants and tribesmen into various organizations of unions and peasant societies, and has published, under Communist auspices, much critical literature against the Teheran government. Supported by newly organized unions in the oil regions, the Azerbaijan population leans towards its mighty Russian neighbor, whose cultural level is higher than its own and therefore attractive.

Should the open intervention of the Red Army later be restrained by Soviet diplomacy, it may be symptomatic of the present conflicts within the Moscow Politburo. The Soviet offensive in Iran is supported by the Kremlin's move for a "free and independent Palestine", which takes advantage of the severe clashes between British troops and Jewish organizations. There is no doubt that the British intervention in Palestine has antagonized Jewish nationalism all over the world; Jewish nationalism, embittered by the terrible sufferings under Nazism, and supporting Great Britain as the valiant warrior against Hitlerism, is today another trouble spot in the general unrest. The Soviet proposal to create a Jewish-Arabian autonomous state within the framework of a federated Palestine appeals to both Jews and Arabs, as obviously, a Jewish state in Palestine is unrealizable in the Arabic world. This unrest in the Near East strengthens the Soviet position in the principal area where the two giants meet, between Cairo and Constantinople. The period of "democratic elections" in Rumania, Bulgaria and Jugoslavia is now past; the united Soviet Balkan Federation will be used as the springboard of Soviet power towards Constantinople.

The British Empire has been forced to apply modern warfare technique against the Javanese. R.A.F. planes wiped out Java broadcasts with rocket fire; Sherman tanks fought in Batavia and Surabaya; and the nationalists in Java, vainly calling for Stalin's help, have been defeated. However, this British victory already has profound repercussions in India; the severe riots in Bombay on November 24th are only a forerunner of the approaching Indian crisis. "A very dangerous period" is ahead for the British authorities; the elections to the Central Legislature, now taking place and continuing for about six weeks, will certainly result in a heavy majority for the Congress Party. Indian nationalism, backed by these elections, increasingly turns to the idea of the primary importance of Asiatic revolutions, the diminishing importance of Europe and America, and the necessity of parallel independence movements of India with other countries in Asia. British-American power in Asia is closely bound to Chiang Kai-shek's success in his extermination campaign against the Communists. Despite Chiang's brilliant military advantages in the last period and of the considerable weakening of the Yen-an forces, the danger of a comeback remains. Withdrawal of American troops from Iran, and the China crisis of the State Department expressed by the sudden resignation of Ambassador Patrick G. Hurley, illustrates the impasse of American policy in Asia.

GERMAN AFFAIRS

RUSSIAN OCCUPATIONAL POLICY IN GERMANY

I. The final aim of the Russian occupation policy. Without firm control of Germany, Russia's security belt in eastern and southern Europe -- especially in the Balkans -- might be endangered; a Germany independent of Russia must enter into a federation of Western European countries which is hostile to the Kremlin per se. Western Europe without Germany would be limited to its fringe -- Spain, Italy, France, the Lowlands, Belgium and Scandinavia; even this chain of independent states could not long resist Moscow's influence if the Kremlin would be firmly entrenched on the Rhine. Therefore, Germany is the key to Russia's domination of Europe.

II. The Russification of Germany. In spite of the complete breakdown of the German state -- national conscience, social system, political, scientific and social institutions -- the majority of the German people resist silently this Russification for varied reasons, but with the innate stubbornness which will be visible only in the later phases of the occupation. This silent resistance has roots in all strata of the population and far-reaching historical causes. The Kremlin is fully aware of this state of German affairs and has prepared alternative policies to break this resistance. Therefore, apart from all considerations on the present nature of the Soviet system, a rapid "Sovietization" of Germany was, from the beginning, out of the question; "Sovietization" would mean today equal rights of the German citizens with the Russians, and as poor as these rights might be, from a non-totalitarian point of view, Sovietization would, among other consequences, give the German Communist Party representative weight within the Russian party system. Such a "Sovietization" would not be the beginning of the new phase of German development, but its end.

III. However, in spite of the expected resistance, the Russian occupation authorities find more favorable factors for carrying through their plans in Germany than anywhere else in occupied Europe. These factors, briefly enumerated, are:

a) Thorough destruction of social structure, first by Hitler, then by the war, and now by the occupation. Germany is the first big industrial country thoroughly destroyed as a political, social, and economic unit; in this respect, it is the model of the new technique of social engineering. This decomposition is basically different from the Nazi policy carried out, for example, in France, in which, in spite of the extermination of selected groups of the population, the social structure as such was not touched by the Nazi intervention. This is even true for the Nazi policy in Czechoslovakia and in the Balkans, where the rural population suffered with the others under the Nazi yoke without being fundamentally uprooted. (Poland is a case in itself.)

b) The partition of Germany into four occupational zones and the long range occupation plans, sharpening the destruction process.

IV. Forms of Russification:

a) De-Germanization. The backbone of Russian policy is the effective weakening of Germany. The dissection of East Prussia and Silesia is not a temporary measure; these regions are to be actually depopulated of German natives and re-populated with Slav settlers. This

policy is conceived along the old-fashioned geo-political pattern to establish a Slav protection belt around Russia as deep in Europe as possible.

The particular interest of the Kremlin in Austria tends towards the same line of de-Germanization policy. Austria shall, in the future, cooperate with the Soviet-Balkan bloc, to which Hungary and Czechoslovakia shall be joined. The incorporation of the Saar into France is now a settled affair; Germany, in any case, will have a much smaller base from which to reorganize. This part of Russian policy is in full accordance with American and British policy and has been relatively easily carried out.

b) The Kremlin is firmly opposed to any annexation of Rhine-Ruhr regions by France, which would make France too strong industrially under the now factual partition of Europe between the Anglo-American powers and Russia. Moscow's opposition to a Western bloc is based upon the assumption that, in the event of war, France's role might be that of a non-combatant ally of Britain and the United States, contributing industrially to their war effort. For the same reasons, Russia would resist any incorporation of Western Germany into a British-controlled group of countries. Therefore, the Russian policy concerning the Ruhr aims first at the destruction of Ruhr industry as far as possible; they ask for the dismantling of the Krupp steel works and for the dismantling of the Blohm and Voss shipyard at Hamburg, reasoning that Russia's industries have been much more crippled than industries in other Allied countries.

"The United States and Britain have all the steel plants and shipyards that can be operated satisfactorily and profitably at the same time. Russia's need is greater; industry was largely destroyed in Stalingrad, Russia's Pittsburgh, and was badly crippled in other Soviet centers. If Russia is willing and able to move the needed equipment, she ought to have it." (Daily Worker, Nov. 10)

The Kremlin will resist the creation of a separate administration for the Rhineland; in case such a plan goes through in one or another form, Russia would ask for an important place in the Ruhr Administration, and the garrisoning of Russian troops in the Ruhr -- "Internationalization of the Ruhr".

c) In both respects, Russian policy aims at a far-reaching de-industrialization of Germany, not for its final agrarianization, but for present political expediency. De-industrialization cannot be carried out in any form other than in the dismantling and removal of heavy industrial equipment. Apart from the general trend of Russian occupational policy all over Europe to transport valuable heavy industrial equipment safely behind the Russian borders, the destruction of German heavy industry aims specifically at the destruction of any remnants of social groups which might be reorganized under American or British auspices. The rehabilitation of German industry could lead either to a partial incorporation of German industry into the western system, or to the resurrection of well-organized German labor organizations; both possibilities are undesirable from the Russian point of view. Therefore, the de-industrialization process completes the general political plan of basically weakening Germany's potentialities.

V. However, the policy of genuine and thorough destruction is only the first phase of social engineering. The second phase is the reconstruction of a purged Germany after the Russian pattern. The de-Nazification, as it is handled now, is the powerful weapon for thorough Russification. The emphasis in the de-Nazification must be, of course, laid on the collective war guilt of the German people from which only the Communists are exempt. As Russian foreign policy for two decades was based on the concept of a general war conspiracy for the destruction of the Soviet State, the de-Nazification is a historical confirmation of the correctness of Russia's foreign policy and, related to it, of Russia's domestic policy. "De-Nazification" argues merely against the Nazis and excludes any critical exposure of the Russian type of totalitarian rule. De-Nazification, carried out under Russian auspices, blocks all sincere investigation into the historic causes and conditions which made Hitler's rise to power possible; in presenting German Big Business and the Army as perpetual conspirators against all other powers, and especially against Russia, the analysis of the decay of Germany and the corruption of its anti-totalitarian forces by Stalinist influence and intervention, is hopelessly blurred. In this field, the Kremlin has all advantages over the West, as the war alliance against Germany has cut out, at least for the present, all sincere analyses of Germany's development; you can criticize the totalitarian policy of Russia in Britain's House of Commons, and in the American press, but you cannot compare Nazi totalitarian methods with their Stalinist forerunners in Germany proper without immediately being labelled "Nazi", and later being purged. The accusation document at the Nuremberg trial presents an unworkable compromise between Western and Eastern policy.

VI. The division of big estates presents the slow but inevitable adaptation of Germany's agriculture to the Russian pattern. In destroying the big estates, the Russians have fulfilled an old program of German Democratic and Left circles. The Osthilfe scandal, the subsidies for the big landowners in the East, welded the Hindenburg group of German nationalists to the Nazis. However, as the small settlements created in Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, Saxony and Thuringia are, under the present conditions of economic chaos, completely dependent on state help, and unable to achieve more than bare subsistence, it is entirely in the hands of the Russian occupation forces to collectivize these small settlers in grouping them for more effective agricultural methods, access to better agricultural machinery, and marketing possibilities. Such a collective regrouping of the settlers might take place only if the process of Russification in the industrial centers has reached a certain level.

VII. Finally, it may be mentioned that the Russification is carried through by manifold cultural activities in the German language, exactly duplicating Russian propaganda methods.

VIII. From the beginning of the occupation, the Kremlin has put the German Communist Party in all the key points of the new administration. Here too, the Kremlin possesses a considerable advantage over its Western competitors. The German Communist Party is the most perfect Fifth Column in comparison with all other Communist parties, well-prepared to play its role. The German party was the first Communist mass party in Europe under the direct guidance of Stalin, and several times seriously purged of all anti-Russian elements; this party has gone through a series of crises which had no roots in the conditions of German Communism proper, but were all artificially implanted from the outside, and had

as the final result the repeated shifting of all personnel on all levels of the organization. The German Communist apparatus has been conditioned -- the climax of this process was reached during the Moscow Show Trials of 1936-37 -- to the Russian forms of thought and action. A German Communist is a Russian party member of German origin, with lesser rights and stricter discipline. These tested cadres, welded together by common experiences of terroristic methods, as for instance, the Spanish Civil War, where the German Communist group set up a German N.K.V.D. division on Spanish soil, have been enlarged during the war by considerable groups of newly-trained German war prisoners.

IX. However, this élite of Russian agents on German soil has another advantage of considerable proportions. Since the turn towards a People's Front Policy at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern in 1935, and in spite of the period of confusion 1939-41, the German Communist Party has been able to organize a united front with the German Social Democratic Party, except for a few dissident groups abroad. This point is of decisive importance as the German Social Democratic Party, in spite of its political shortcomings during the Weimar Republic, has not lost its attraction for important groups of German anti-Nazis. In the first period of the occupation, before the entry of the Allied troops into Berlin, a four-party system was organized under Marshal Zhukov's command -- Communists, Social Democrats, Democrats, and Christian Socialists -- of which the united front between the Communists and the Social Democrats was the kernel. In organizing trade unions, in this first period, the Russian occupation has further the considerable advantage of controlling the original nucleus of the new German trade unions. As the trade union policy is now the major infiltration method of the Kremlin into the Western zone, for example, the World Trade Union Congress in Paris -- these German trade unions are of the greatest importance if and when the barriers between the four occupied zones fall. The British-American resistance against the Russian organization of German trade unions from above cannot change this general trend, as all European trade unions are, in their overwhelming majority, today under Russian control. Whatever other small changes in the original setup may be made, the general attitude of the future German trade unions in an international organization will be controlled by the Russian advisers as long as they are united with the Communists.

X. The Russian occupation authorities are promoting a unified German administration under Allied control in the conviction that such a central German administration will be advantageous to them. The Kremlin has withdrawn, for the time being, the Seydlitz-Paulus Free German Committee. The central German administration, under Russian auspices, will be modelled after the pattern of Marshal Zhukov's four-party bloc in Berlin; if and when the German Communists are able to develop and strengthen their effective control within this new setup, a change in Russian occupational policy would come to the fore. Re-industrialization in the form of planned and state-owned industries would be carried out in accordance with the new Russian five-year plan; Germany's new industries, probably machinery, tools, optics, and textiles, would be so planned that they would fit into Russia's plans. Such a plan, however, is unworkable, because the partition of Europe will permanently reproduce a chaotic situation.

XI. Finally, the general trend of Russian policy in Germany will be directed against the United States, the "atom democracy", which will be accused of planning the restoration of the Nazis by making a divided and disunited Germany a war bastion and a new battlefield against Russia.

ZHUKOV ANNOUNCES A FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR GERMANY

The heads of the German administration in the Soviet zone received an order from Marshal Zhukov on November 4th to draft an all-embracing economic plan for the coming year. The "Taegliche Rundschau", the mouthpiece of the Red Army in Berlin, interpreted this order by emphasizing that "the Russian system of planning is applicable to Germany and would prove to be a most valuable method of solving the serious problems of German economy". Zhukov's order asked for the "establishment of maximum production quotas".

Some days later, Marshal Zhukov held a three-day conference of Russian and German administrators; the most important figures of the Soviet Military Government were present, as well as the German Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the five provinces and twelve departments of the German government in the Russian-occupied zone. At this conference, the German representatives were treated "on terms of equality", and not as delegates of a vanquished nation. They were even allowed to share the highest pleasures of Russian hierarchical life, "a concert followed by a banquet".

In his concluding speech, Marshal Zhukov emphasized again Stalin's famous declaration, that the German people would not be destroyed, and then the Marshal himself proposed a toast to the "reconstruction of a free, democratic Germany".

+ + + +

EXIT GENERAL WALTHER VON SEYDLITZ AND PAUL HAGEN

The Council for a Democratic Germany, founded in January 1944, has ended in confusion and reciprocal bad feeling. After several individual resignations during its two-year existence, Paul Hagen and his group made an exodus because of disagreements on the Potsdam decisions. With Hagen went the ambitious former Police President of the City of Magdeburg, Horst von Baerensprung, Dr. Baerwald, Professor of the Catholic Fordham University, and Hein Mueller, Secretary of the "Unitarians" in Boston. The Communist agents remained alone with Professor Paul Tillich of the Union Theological Seminary, Jacob Walcher, leader of the late S.A.P., S. Aufhäuser, former German trade union official, and several minor stagehands.

Paul Hagen, in one of his recent meetings in New York City, reported on the split and complained of the disloyalty of the Communists, who opposed all criticism of Russian policy and who wanted to transform the "council" into an instrument for the fight against Western imperialism.

The Council never even achieved mere propaganda results. It was founded at the peak of Big Three unity, under the star of Tcheran, promoting the illusion of a permanent unity of mankind against the "fascists". However, at the summit of Big Three unity, this grotesque idea did not work even among American liberals; the poor Council found no supporters for its Democratic Germany.

Now Hagen steps out as the crisis between the Western powers and the Kremlin takes on dangerous proportions. It is now obvious what

we said from the beginning -- that defeated Germany would be one of the major objectives of the conflict, and not a democratic partner marching forward to enlightened progress by Hagen's revolution from above. His resignation at this time is partly due to his genuine German nationalist feelings, the most genuine element in his eclectic combinations of traditional Social Democratism and totalitarian Stalinism. Hagen and his friends are, without doubt, sincerely impressed and shocked by the numerous reports on Russian methods and Russian behavior coming from occupied Germany through the vast undercurrent of personal letters much more impressive than the official press reports. However, Hagen's break with his old Communistic friends now is characteristic also for his undecided personality, and the policy for which he stands. If he considers Stalin's planned political system as basically "socialistic", Hagen should precisely defend, through thick and thin, the Russian cause, for it is evident that the Russian expansion is reaching the point of open conflict with the Western Powers; it is, after Hiroshima, even more evident that the technological superiority of the Western world endangers the very existence of Stalin's power setup. The Communists are completely understandable if they bitterly attack Paul Hagen and similar figures as rats who leave the endangered ship.

To us who never shared the illusions of "working class unity", the end of the New York comedy has a different significance. The world struggle has reached a climax in which conciliatory attitudes will no longer be possible. This marks the end of a long period of epigonic Socialism for which Conciliator Hagen's life history, and his group, Neu Beginnen, are an excellent example. For the participants in the political game of the day, there are only two ways open, namely to join one or the other camp.

The same trend is visible in the disappearance of General Walther von Seydlitz and his Moscow-sponsored National Committee Free Germany. Under the many combinations at the disposal of the Moscow Politburo for its German policy, Wilhelm Pieck without Seydlitz was finally selected. Seydlitz is conserved on a Russian shelf. The attitude of the German Army expressed the silent but stubborn resistance of the majority of the Germans to Russian totalitarian rule, instead of their own totalitarian Nazi brand. Therefore, "combination Pieck" seems to be at the moment wiser and safer for Marshal Zhukov; no experiments with broad "fronts" are adviseable; the German division of the N.K.V.D., in other words, the German Communist Party, is put in control and is assigned to organize its associates and affiliates. This, too, expresses the preparation for the political battle for Germany now in the making between Washington and Moscow.

+ + + +

B R I E F S

SAXONY MINES NATIONALIZED

In Russian occupied Saxony, the provincial government nationalized the coal mining industry under a State Mining Administration. The industry now employs about 20,000 miners; the nationalization was effected at a conference of workers, owners, and government representatives.

SAXON LABOR WANTS UNITY

The Social Democratic and Communist Parties of Saxony in a three-day joint convention called for the establishment of a single German Workers Party. (Daily Worker, December 4th.)

+ + + +

UNIVERSITY OF JENA CLOSED BY THE RUSSIAN OCCUPATION

The University of Jena was closed by the Russian occupation after an incident between a professor and some students, a few weeks after its reopening on October 15th with an enrollment of 2,000. The Berlin University has thus far not resumed classes.

+ + + +

COMMUNISTS IN BAVARIA

The Communists in Bavaria tried to get one of their key men, Richard Scheringer, former Lieutenant in the Reichswehr who joined the Communist Party in 1930, into the provincial government. The AMG refused this proposal, and also nominations of two other Communists presented by Social Democratic President Hogner. However, the Communist organization in Munich under Bruno Goldhammer, the Secretary of the Communist Party of Munich, is growing rapidly.

+ + + +

FRANZ DAHLEM VERSUS SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

At the Berlin broadcasting station, Franz Dahlem, member of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party, attacked the Social Democratic politicians who wanted to create an independent Social Democracy in Germany's western zone. Dahlem emphasized that the German Communists would not collaborate with Social Democratic leaders and organizations not approved as "reliable" by them. He rejected arguments of Berlin Social Democrats naive enough to pretend that the policy and leadership of the Social Democratic Party are "internal affairs", exempt from Communist control.

In Austria, during the election campaign, Dahlem's Austrian colleagues attacked the double-talk of the Social Democrats and the proposal of Sweden's Social Democratic Premier, Albin Hansson, who advocated a restoration of the Second (Socialist) International. Such a body would include British, French, Dutch, Belgian, Norwegian, Finnish, Danish and Swedish Social Democrats; Hansson expressed special interest in later participation of Austrian Social Democrats.

+ + + +

TRENDS IN THE GERMAN TRADE UNIONS

In the first period of shop steward elections, the Communists got substantial votes in all zones; at Blohm and Voss, 5 Communists, 3 Social Democrats, and 2 non-party members were elected. In twenty-eight Ruhr mines, Communists got 14,182 votes; Socialists 4,845, and Catholics 4,083 votes. In Munich shop steward elections, 81 Communists, 73 Social Democrats, and 21 Christian Social union members were elected.

LETTER FROM BERLIN

We publish the following letter from a former German Communist, who returned to Germany during the war disguised as a French worker, because of its great interest. Names of persons and places have been abbreviated.

August 1945.

In the middle of February 1943, I arrived in Berlin. At first, I was working as a construction engineer in an aircraft factory in Tempelhof. My flat was in Wilmersdorf. Already then, war morale was in noticeable decay. In the construction offices -- we were building the "Stukas NN." -- the main occupation consisted in sleeping. Even in the construction offices, 80% of the staff were foreigners. After about a week, I found the first communist. There was no organization, but also in isolation he stuck with unshakeable firmness to his proletarian creed. After hardly a month had passed in Germany, the Gestapo arrested me. A French fascist had reported me for "anti-German" activities. Still as a Frenchman, I went from the Gestapo quarters in Burgstrasse to the concentration camp at H. I was able to talk myself out of the charge -- for which the punishment was death -- and got a close shave with 56 days KZ. This was not an ordinary KZ, but a special camp where "intensity was calculated to replace the length of the punishment period". In the main, recalcitrant foreigners got their treatment here. We were about one thousand men from all possible countries. Our mortality rate, in Summer, was twenty men per day, in winter about double. Daily we had to do eight hours of heaviest railway work. A three hours' march daily to and from the "S-Bahn" (fast Suburban railway), building site N., and rollcalls every morning and evening extending over four hours, in every weather. We received extra rations for heavy manual workers, but especially the rollcalls exhausted the men completely. Beatings and murders were perpetrated, in principle only by the Ukrainians and Poles whom the SS selected for this task. The corpses were thrown into a large pit. The building contractors received laconic informations, e.g. "workman X. died from pneumonia" or from "appendicitis".

The death certificates were already filled in, in stock with the medical orderly. Only the name had to be put in. The air attacks were the most terrible things, because we were locked up in the huts and in case of a hit the men offered a chance for flight. The maximum punishment for a "European" was 28 days, for the Russians and Poles, 56 days. (As a "political", I was an exception and had also 56 days.) As the SS was incapable to run the complicated camp administration themselves, they appointed some German communists who were already imprisoned for years and who ran the show. I shall never forget these fellows. Their morale was entirely unbroken, and they ran the camp in model fashion. Their morale and physical cleanliness contrasted impressively with all the other prisoners.

After about four weeks of extremely heavy work, for which, however, my navy and foundry work at F. had been an inestimable training, I fell ill. When that happened, the communists took me into the office, because they, as I did myself, assumed that I would remain in camp until the war was over. (Nobody knew my "time".) Daily, they read smuggled newspapers, and they were informed about the London broadcasts. There were serious valuable political discussions. The communists were of the age-groups between 30 and 40 years. Ideologically, they had nothing in common with the filthy "party line".

In November 1943, the heavy English air-raids on Berlin began which later on, devastated the whole West of Berlin by fire. In spite of the tremendous material destruction, these raids, naturally, could not bring about the revolution. The effect on the factories was almost insignificant. People suffered the inevitable, and life went on.

The leave regulations had been changed, and I could not return to L. before February of 1944. There I heard of E.'s arrest. This had made all our plans futile. Shortly afterward, I returned to Berlin.

There, I worked then for X., who built Panzers, and later I was transferred to Y., where important engine parts were made. Although this work had Priority No. 1, sabotage in this factory was rife. A precision raid by the Americans caused heavy destruction in this factory, and from that time nothing ever went right there. The demanded amount of labor was 72 hours per week. But that was only paper. We sat there, but we did not work. The regulations about secrecy were carried out in such a way that we could take away all the blueprints from the factory, if we wanted. Everybody was fed up. I could observe a general "Je-m'en-foutisme" (Let them all go and hang themselves) Nevertheless, everybody was subjected to an iron military discipline. SS with bloodhounds were in command of the works security guard. At the most, 10% of the workmen were Germans. The air-raids had changed their tactical character from February 1944. The Americans attacked in daylight precision attacks, mainly industrial targets. Civilian casualties in Berlin were relatively few. But when they attacked the city proper, the effect was devastating, so for instance, in the heaviest air attack on the area of the City of Berlin on February 3, 1944. On that day, from Gesundbrunnen in the North to the Hallesche Tor in the South, the whole East of Berlin was reduced to rubble. The Americans dropped mainly heavy explosive bombs. Within three-quarters of an hour, at least 50,000 people died. The streets were reeking for weeks with corpses, and this smell is still in my nose.

From the Winter 1943-44, hardly anybody seriously believed in victory. Almost everybody listened to the BBC. Anti-fascist feeling was widespread. Because there was no organized expression of this feeling, all the countless individual actions failed. From the beginning of the war, the number of special tribunals had been raised from one to seven. They worked without stopping. In general, a miserable travesty of justice. I have listened to some of the trials. The main form of anti-Nazi activities was about like that: Whispering propoganda with BBC slogans. (The Moscow Radio, because of its monotony was practically not listened to at all.) Canny, absenteeism, actual sabotage, passive resistance. Desertions from civilian and military services were already considerable. A tremendous impression was made by the first sign of the nearing storm, the fall of Italian Fascism. The Nazi badges suddenly vanished from the buttonholes. The NSDAP had to issue a party order which threatened everyone who did not wear the Swastika with expulsion from the party. In the dustbins in Wilmersdorf SS-Uniforms were found which had been thrown away. Far into Nazi circles the SS had the name of bloodhounds. The most-hated man in Germany was without doubt Heini (Himmler). What actually happened in the KZ's, however, the masses ignored. Also I was carried away by the general feeling and I anticipated a coup d'état (a putsch) of the Right after the Italian model in winter.

Once again, everybody was seized by feverish expectations when the generals made their putsch in Summer 1944. At that time, I lived near

the Landwehrkanal, off the Bendlerstrasse (where the German War Ministry was). At night, one heard the shootings. The feeling of the people during the following days is best characterized by the oft-heard word "T'is a pity". From this time onwards, life in Germany degenerated unbelievably quickly. Practically, there was only one punishment left: Death. Also for petty criminal infringements, according to the so-called "Law against persons harmful to the people's interest". Children under sixteen could be sentenced to death. Every soldier had the right to shoot at sight persons whom he only suspected of treason. Sexual morals were corrupted. Everybody who could only creep was armed. Women and girls were forced by the Labor Exchange to man the A.A. and searchlight batteries. The most dangerous profession was to belong to a police or Wehrmacht patrol because anybody who had reason to fear them fired at them immediately.

When the Russians stopped, in February 1945, on the Oder, we believed that the Gestapo would still gather enough force in order to deal with those elements they thought dangerous. Indeed, the assassination of former leading members of working class organizations in the working class quarters grew more numerous. Gestapo gangsters bumped them off in this easy way. From February 1945, I never went out unarmed. A doctor who was friendly with me issued sickness certificates to me, and I went to work no more. We knew that Himmler had issued the order to "liquidate" all KZ-prisoners and ex-prisoners, when the retreat from the East had started.

From February 1945 onwards, each night there was a raid of the RAF with two-tonners. The warning went out about 10 P.M., the All Clear came towards 4 A.M. The people went already to the shelters habitually before the raids started. In addition, there were the American daylight raids. Everybody heard with great relief of the breakthrough in the West. This could only be the end. Before the Russians had got going with their assault, the Americans had crossed the Elbe between Magdeburg and Wittenberge, but they then stopped. Already for several weeks, Berlin had had gas and electric power only for a few hours daily. The sirens sounded usually only after the first bombs had announced the presence of enemy planes. On April 21st was Adolf's birthday. On the 22nd, we heard for the first time Russian gunfire in the East. At the same time, the first Stormovniks came. The Berlin Radio announced, the Berlin's AA-batteries would only be used now against ground targets. In the meantime, the Gestapo, the S.S. and Co. had already fled. But about 7,000 barricades had been erected. The next day, Russian guns bombarded the Alexanderplatz. Two days later, the Russians held already the ring of Autobahnen round Berlin. That meant that the city was entirely surrounded. The whole carnage I observed from the house of my girl in the Brandenburgische Strasse in Wilmersdorf. Now, day and night, Hell was let loose and never stopped. In broad daylight, the Russians bombarded the center of Wilmersdorf from Wanssee-Nikolassee. Although many shells exploded in the middle of the long queues of women waiting for food, the survivors went on queuing, forced by their hunger.

Now there was no gas, no electric power, no light and also no water. There was also no German Army left. From sergeant-major up to generals, everybody roped in his handful of soldiers in the streets. A motley crowd of marines, Luftwaffe and army soldiers, of police, Volkssturm, SA and SS formed the so-called "combat group". Their armament was very poor. Most of them had "Panzer fists".

The house in which I stayed was fought for during five full days and nights. At first, a German obsolete Panzer defended it which, after twelve hours, had used up all its ammunition and therefore rolled away. Next morning a Russian "T 34" advanced against us. At a distance of 22 yards they fired into the neighboring building, where the police were entrenched. Then a young fellow shot it up from the next building. As usual, he cracked the "T 34" open with the Panzer fist. When the Panzer started to burn, several houses went up in flames too. After that the Russians tried to soften us up with heavy mine throwers. The effect of these things is only to be compared with the heaviest bombs. During that time, we played Skat (a German card game) in the cellar. Soon after this, the Russians sat in the houses opposite us. Some SS-men threw them out again in a counterattack. In one of the houses, the women had welcomed the Russians and had given them hot coffee. A young SS scamp, thereupon, shot all the inhabitants of the house. "Traitors of the people". Already before, an army private had been hanged on a balcony as a warning. In this absolutely hopeless situation, the power of Nazi terror was once again demonstrated. The Nazis had the cheek to spread the slogan in the cellars: "we need only hold on for a few more days. The relief army is on the march. It stands on the Avus (the automobile race-track between the West End of Berlin and Wannsee)". In the meantime, our flanks had been turned. The Russians advanced through the Uhlandstrasse, and they fought already for the Zoo-shelter where the Fuehrer's staff was. All the houses opposite us were gutted. The house on our left burnt out. Behind us, the Russians already in our block. Uninterrupted infantry fire. Then, the roof of the house beside us is set on fire by hits. Our own roof is catching fire. We had only one way out -- to the right, before our house is burnt to the ground. With some bold men, I am rushing on the roof, and in a hail of shells, we are extinguishing the blaze. I had to take over the practical command, and we decided to close up the breakthrough to the neighboring house, that means to brick up all exits and to hoist the Red Flag. After a debate of several hours with the NSDAP boobies, I had to withdraw with the others, otherwise the SS would have liquidated me. In the evening, in the midst of battle, it was May 1st, we left the house. Towards night, the infantry fire subsided. Under cover of night, we looked for shelter. It was an eerie sight. The flames of innumerable fires plunged the town in a weird blood-red hue. Now and then, a patrol crept from the shadow of the houses and examined us sternly. We were taken in an ordinary basement where gravely injured persons lay around. All the other soldiers drank until they were senseless. But all of them were fighting on. The next morning, somebody shouted "Urri" through the cellar. The Russians had arrived. The first thing which they did was to take away all the watches ("Urri"-- Uhren -- watches).

Berlin fell after exceedingly hard fighting. The superiority of the Russians in numbers and materiel was enormous. Nevertheless, the Russians here lost quite a lot. The combat tactics was fighting from house to house. Nowhere did the Russians attack with cold steel as I saw it so beautifully filmed in the Paris newsreels. With snipers, they worked from building to building and advanced slowly. They had Panzers for support. But since the appearance of the Panzer fist, the Panzer has become a very vulnerable weapon in street fighting. In the first days after the fighting was over, I could see the proofs of this. Hundreds of shot-up "T-34's" were lying about. In Berlin, the Red Army has lost thousands of Panzers. Almost all of them fell to the Panzer fists. I have seen only very few destroyed German Panzers, that means that the Nazis had almost none left, and they had also very

little heavy artillery. In the Panzer fist, the Nazis have created an excellent weapon for civil war. The equipment of the Red Army was very good. Very great numbers of A.A. and light guns. Heavy ones I have hardly seen. Every Red Army man who was in the fighting line had a tommy gun which, however, was much heavier in weight than the German model. The trucks were almost all Studebakers. The officers were clean, but the soldiers very filthy and unappetising fellows. Generally, they were peasants. In the fighting for Berlin, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish and also Mongolian troops participated.

When we returned, our house was fortunately still standing. Russian soldiers were just starting to loot everything. With us were two Ukrainian girls who could make themselves understood. Therefore, they first stopped looting. We were still living in the cellar. It was May 2nd. Berlin did not fall before the next day. Relieved, and without any idea of what was to come, we wanted to sleep in the cellar. But soon one of the two Ukrainian girls came to my wife in an absolute panic and told her to make herself invisible at once, unless she wanted to be raped in the night by messieurs the officers. The girl had heard such warnings. I did not want to believe it, but my wife became scared. The small Ukrainian cried and implored us to go away. As "Frenchman" I asked an officer who understood some German whether I could leave. He said: "Without woman." Then I knew what was coming. We organized a regular escape through a hole in the wall and went to the flat of an acquaintance in Schmargendorf. There the Russians had already been for a week, and we thought that it might be quieter there. In the street, I met a woman with her young daughter who pushed a pram. She was shedding bitter tears. "My daughter has just been raped five times". What I saw later in Schmargendorf was horrible. Without ever stopping, the Russians searched all the houses for "arms" and always found only women. These were not regrettable incidents, but literally the common behavior of the whole Red Army in Berlin. Immature children and old women -- as unbelievable as it may seem -- had to atone for the Nazi crimes. It was not rare that individual women were raped up to thirty times. Execrable mutilations of women. An epidemic of suicides began to spread. The rapes were so common that nobody would ever believe if there happened to be a young woman who said that she had not been ravished. Dozens of my own friends, women, have gone through that, so that everybody can believe me without fear. A girl friend asked my wife whether she had also been violated. Because I had saved her from that, the other one asked quite astonished: "What, you haven't had to do that? Does such a woman exist? I never!" Generally, it can be asserted that about half of all the women of Berlin were raped. The city itself was robbed completely clean. There was no exception with foreign workers, or their wives, or prisoners of war. She who refused was shot. When the Russians captured Berlin, there were two and a half million inhabitants left. The rest of the four million people had run away with a bad conscience. Those who remained greeted the Russians as liberators. The disappointment was cruel. Many communists, on the first day, had donned red armllets. After they had seen that their wives and daughters were ravished with the others, they threw the armllets away again. For days on end, unbroken chains of laden trucks were rolling eastwards from the Hallesche Tor. Not only watches and valuables were stolen, but especially the few household goods that poor workmen had saved from the air-raids. The Russian trucks were crammed with mattresses, crockery and clothes. For the Russians who did not know the still relatively high standards of German workers, there was simply nobody else but "Bourzhuis" left in Berlin.

On principle, looting and raping was prohibited in the Red Army. At least, the proclamations said so. Practice, however, was different. In Stalin's proclamations and manifestoes Berlin was painted to the Red Army men as the citadel of German Fascism. The bureaucracy simply incited them. The officers, in most cases, took part in the excesses. Exceptions were the rare white ravens. However, there were exceptions. Significant for the attitude of the Russian authorities was the following incident. On the second day after the end of the fighting, the 2,000th woman had been treated in the St. Gertrauden Hospital. Naturally, the doctors also procured abortions. Then the order came from above that only internal ablutions against venereal disease were allowed. Abortion of the foetus was -- without doubt out of tenderness for the sacred feelings of the woman -- prohibited. I am sorry that I once believed that to be an atrocity story of Goebbels' propaganda, and that I advised women to stay in Berlin. What I have seen I shall never be able to forget. I was shaken to my depths. I know the same of Frenchmen who returned from Poland and Austria.

Politically this produced a catastrophe. All those who had waited to be able to wring the necks of the Nazis were as paralyzed, all of them, Germans and foreigners, were treated alike. These Russian idiots succeeded in achieving a tour de force which the Nazis were never able to bring about. There arose something like national solidarity among the Germans. Why report the neighbor as Nazi, if they rob you in the same way as him? Everybody tried to save his own skin. In the general chaos, nobody molested the Nazis, and they could go underground. A communist whom I knew told me: "When the SS saw that all was lost they quite comfortably shed their uniforms, burned their SS military passes, and changed into Wehrmacht uniforms. (They all had forged duplicate military passes.) I have not reported one of them." Why, you will now understand.

When the new city administration was organized (the Nazis had destroyed all the files), the gang of smart petty bourgeois bargain-seekers from the Kurfuerstendamm at once pressed to the front ranks. Honest elements gave the new jobs a wide berth. Nazis were fairly numerous in the new administration. Typical was the case of one of the most active people of the C.P.-line in Berlin. He was fed up. The working class elements were openly cold-shouldered. The Nazis had to report themselves, but most of them, of course, did not do that.

After the fighting had stopped, the town looked entirely desolate. Berlin is a single heap of debris. Some parts of the city got off more lightly, other ones are completely gone. Steglitz, Zehlendorf and Neukoelln are not entirely destroyed. There the Nazis have been disarmed by the population, and the district burgomaster handed over the district. The Reichsrundfunkhaus (Reichs Radio Headquarters) was surrendered at secret orders, as well as all telephone and telegraph cable works. The inner city is absolutely wiped out, and is now a desert of stones. All public traffic facilities went to the devil. The North-South underground railway (S) Bahn was blown up by the SS in a place where it crosses the Teltow Canal. This happened during the battles when many thousands of people had sought shelter in the tunnels. Many people lost their lives.

At once the Russians started to dismantle the industrial plant, for instance Siemens, A.E.G. etc. Also the S-Bahn (suburban railway) was dismantled, as well as several trunk railway lines.

A distressing picture. This winter, famine is inevitable under those Russian masters of organization. Under these circumstances, the "Wehrwolf" has gained some importance. "Wehrwolf" is the reaction to these indescribable humiliations. Already in Berlin the killing of Red Army men was a common occurrence. Usually, the Hitler Youth also set fire to houses with incendiary torches. In Wittenberge, we were billeted in a barrack of an A.A. Regiment. In it, there was an ammunition dump. In broad daylight, the Hitler Youth blew it sky-high.

Greetings

+ + + +

C U R I O S I T I E S

THE LESSON OF GERMANY, a Guide to her History

By Gerhart Eisler, Albert Norden, Albert Schreiner

International Publishers, New York 1945

This guide to Germany's history is intended for the indoctrination of the German people with Stalinism and to prepare American public opinion for swallowing the Stalinist interpretation of German history. It is a boring and lifeless combination of Communist theses of the German past; the weak spots in the inter-relationship between the Russian State Party and the German anti-Nazi opposition, the 1925 Hindenburg election, the collusion with the Nazis from 1929 to 1933; the Stalin-Hitler Pact, force the authors to make lengthy and artificial explanations. These parts deserve a more detailed study, as they offer opportunities of resisting the Stalinist indoctrination of the Germans, and are therefore important for the new educational setup in Germany today. The book, published by the American Communist publishing house, may have a very limited circulation here; it should, however, be read carefully by those who are interested in the molding of the German mentality under Stalin's domination.

+ + + +

THE ADORATION

German Poet Johannes R. Becher's Hymn to Stalin

The June-July issue of the INTERNATIONALE LITERATUR, German magazine printed in Moscow, has just been received. The first three items are devoted to panegyrics to Stalin: Becher, "Victory Appears to Us"; Leonid Leonow, "The Name of Joy"; N. Ochlopkow, "Hymn to the Man".

The Russians express their adoration of Stalin in prose; the Germans, however, must say it in verse. A few excerpts from Becher's poem follow:

When in the rebuilt workshops
The wheels again begin to turn,
Their song will be one we all will understand --
Thank you, Stalin, thank you -- will be the hymn.

When the peasant goes into the free cornfields
To sow his seed,
He will pause and look at the horizon,
And Stalin's name will be his prayer.

When in the dawn the worker leaves for his work,
Before he departs from his room
He will look at His picture,
Who, in the early light, already lives in his heart.

Reliable sources report that Becher has plagiarized the last
verse from Robert Ley, who admonished the Germans to think of Hitler
before beginning their day's work.

+ + + +

=====

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

Our plan for further publication will
be presented in a subsequent letter.

THE EDITORS

=====

.....
Regular Subscription.....\$6
Six months Subscription.....\$3
Single Copy.....\$.50
(Please make checks payable
to Ruth Fischer)

Enclosed is my subscription of

\$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Editors
Ruth Fischer
Heinz Langerhans
Adolph Weingarten

THE NETWORK
124 W. 85 St. (Apt. 4A)
New York 24, N. Y.
TR-7-0793