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Approved For Release 2000/08/27 : CIA-RDP78-03061A000100050010-6

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ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY COMMUNIQUE ON THE CPSU CONGRESS

Following is the translation of a document issued by the Secretariat of the Italian Communist Party in the Italian-language daily newspaper l'Unita (Unity), No. 330, Rome, 28 November 1961, pages 1, 9-10. Part I deals with the international significance of the CPSU Program; Part II is concerned with de-Stalinization and personality cult; Part III discusses the unity of the International Communist Movement, the autonomy of individual Communist Parties, and ideological development; and Part IV treats the present and future tasks of the Italian Communist Party.

Rome, 27 November 1961 -- Following is the text of a document approved by the Secretariat of the Italian Communist Party on the instructions of the Party Directorate at the recent meeting of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission.

The decisions adopted and the political and theoretical problems raised by the 22nd CPSU Congress have given rise to thorough and lively debates by party organizations and by the democratic movement.

Such debates are a proof of the significance of those decisions, of the political interest shown by our comrades, of our Party's maturity, and of its firm intention to become politically and ideologically stronger and to march forward.

The basic theses, subjects, and objectives of those debates are the following:

- 1) The need to fully understand and to explain to the popular masses the meaning and the significance of the decisions of the 22nd Congress, and, at the same time, rejecting all attacks by class enemies and revisionists, by overcoming sectarian obstacles, and by linking ourselves to the positive expectation shown by public opinion and by large democratic groups with regard to developments concerning the Communist Movement and our Party line;

- 2) The effort which must be made to identify the new problems that must be faced at present by the national and international democratic and workers' movement;

3) The need to achieve further progress in the fields of our ideological and political outlook, of a united development of our Party in the country at large, of an increase in its influence, and of a political and organizational strengthening and regeneration.

The debates should therefore take place within the framework of open-minded and concrete self-criticism which -- by using our past achievements as a stepping stone -- will also be successful in identifying mistakes, weaknesses, and deficiencies and in pointing out the right way to deal with the new problems facing us today in a constructive and positive way. The more we are able to reject firmly all defeatist and destructive influences, all social-democratic tendencies, and all attempts to reject the basic tenets which make up the unity, development, and active strength of our Party, the more we will be able to achieve that result.

The Central Committee will hold a meeting in December to deal with the problems of enlisting Party support and a membership drive. One of the tasks of the Central Committee at that meeting will be to draw preliminary conclusions from the current debates insofar as our practical objectives are concerned.

#### I

1. The great significance of the 22nd CPSU Congress lies above all in the approval of the program concerning the establishment of a Communist society.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the Soviet people have been able -- by overcoming tremendous obstacles and by struggling against powerful enemies -- to build a new Socialist society, to open the way for the establishment of a Socialist State system, thus affording powerful assistance to the liberation movement of oppressed peoples. Today, and during the next 20 years, the Soviet people will try to build the technical and material foundations and the key features of a Communist society on the basis of past victories and achievements.

In such a society, all men will be equal and free; each man will give according to his ability, and will receive according to his need. This is a hard task indeed, because an egalitarian society must be built on a high standard of living, such as is demanded by a Communist society. To this end, a further steady and progressive development of productive forces is of foremost importance.

During the next 20 years, industrial production should increase six-fold above present levels which -- with the exception of the US -- already are the highest in the world. In the area of agriculture, present obstacles and delays should be overcome so as to guarantee an overall production increase of 3.5 times compared to present production levels.

This Program of economic development will be executed during the present phase of the Soviet Socialist economy in an entirely new and more complex fashion, namely by reducing costs and increasing productivity through maximum use of technical and scientific resources and the inventive and creative abilities of the working masses. At the same time, the work-day will be reduced to six hours during the first decade of the Program's operation and will be reduced further during the second decade.

The Program foresees a substantial increase of goods and services for the next ten years, first of all in the housing construction field which -- in spite of a great increase in the number of housing units built during the last few years -- is still the most backward. Wages will be increased swiftly so that -- within 20 years -- the workers' real income will be 3.5 times higher than their present income. Social security benefits -- such as medical assistance, hospitalization, special institutions for children, free communal services, etc. -- in one word, that part of national income which is shared by all members of society on the basis of their needs and independently of the quality and quantity of their work, will be extended progressively. New steps will be taken to achieve real equality for women by simplifying their work and by better organizing family life and children's education.

Undoubtedly, these and other objectives represent a big, complex and difficult task. Success in this area is subject not only to the preservation of peace, but to a new, original, and adequate development of political and theoretical principles, to an increase of the creative initiative of both the Party and the working masses, to the spreading of Socialist democracy, to profound organizational changes and to a new and vigorous revolutionary spirit.

During the first 60 years of this century, the CPSU and the Soviet people have been able to achieve the goals they had set for themselves. In particular, the progress achieved during the last few years in the economy, in correcting errors, in overhauling the organization of production, and in improving managerial and work methods represent a solid starting point for such a demanding Program.

By the adoption of such a Program -- which represents an original development with the 20th Congress -- Communist society's objective is linked to present-day work, struggles, and conditions by means of intermediate and planned stages and goals. By this method the final end of a Communist society can be progressively realized. In such a society, there will be a gradual elimination of conflicts between classes and nations, between city and countryside, between physical and intellectual work, and between the social position of man and woman. In such a society, war will be banished forever from the life of mankind, and the State as a constrictive organization will gradually wither away. This will transcend Utopian dreams and scientific speculation and will enter the world of politics, i.e., of feasible and practical realizations.

2. A policy of peace and maintaining peace is obviously linked to such a program to the end of preventing an outbreak of war which would destroy human civilization. Today, the only way to achieve such an objective lies in a profound change of the present international situation by the establishment of a system of peaceful coexistence.

This system of peaceful coexistence must be founded on the principles of mutual respect and cooperation, nonintervention in the internal affairs of other countries, full acknowledgement of and respect for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of all States, and repudiation of war as a means of settlement of international disputes. A stable peace can most effectively be guaranteed by complete and general disarmament under international control, and, in particular, by the outlawing and destruction of all atomic weapons.

The 22nd Congress has reaffirmed the basic theoretical thesis advanced by the 20th Congress, namely that the main problem of the contemporary era is the problem of war and peace, and that today war is no longer inevitable. Today, the concerted efforts of the powerful Socialist camp, the peaceful non-Socialist States, the international working class, and all those who are fighting for peace are able to prevent a new world war against a kind of imperialism which is by nature aggressive, which threatens mankind with a thermonuclear war, but which at the same time is no longer the predominant world force and can no longer do whatever it pleases.

The growing superiority of the forces of Socialism over the forces of imperialism and of the forces of peace over the forces of war creates a situation which implies the real possibility of eliminating open warfare from the life of society in spite of the survival of the capitalist system in one part of the world and in spite of the fact that Socialism has not been successful as yet in establishing itself all over the planet. The worldwide victory of Socialism will ultimately eliminate the reasons for war. Communism's historical mission is to eliminate wars and to establish an everlasting peace in the world.

The 22nd Congress has reaffirmed that coexistence is the basis for peaceful competition between Socialism and capitalism on a global scale, and that coexistence brings about more favorable conditions for political and economic construction in Socialist countries, working class struggles in capitalistic countries, and struggles for liberation and independence in colonial countries. The struggle for peace and the conditions of peaceful coexistence and competition affords the possibility of making distinctions within the bourgeoisie and the imperialist world and isolating and defeating the most aggressive, reactionary, and war-minded extremist forces.

The 22nd Congress has also contributed to an immediate relaxation of tensions in the international arena by advancing objective proposals which offer the great Western powers an opportunity to solve the most serious and

urgent problems through acceptable compromises. Problems such as the German situation, in fact, are the reason for the present dangerous international tension.

While the insoluble and organic contradictions of capitalism and imperialism are becoming more severe, and the capitalistic world is unable to solve the problems concerning economic development, democracy, social progress and peace, the 22nd CPSU Congress has advanced a program and a policy of peace, justice and freedom, social and democratic progress, and brotherhood among men and peoples.

3. The Program of the 22nd CPSU Congress is not a list of attractive utopian dreams. It is a program of practical struggle implying further revolutionary developments.

An integral part of such revolutionary tension is represented by the struggle inaugurated by the 20th Congress and reaffirmed by the 22nd Congress against the errors made in the past in relation to Stalin's personality cult, and against conservative and dogmatic obstacles raised against the 20th Congress. Such obstacles have hampered -- and are hampering -- a full implementation of the decisions taken by that Congress. The fearless condemnation of those errors and aberrations, and the severe and even ruthless criticism and self-criticism cannot be separated from the struggle for peace and from the adoption of a line appropriate to the transition to Communism.

4. Five years ago the Italian Communist Party was one of the first to greet the 20th Congress as a great event which would strengthen and develop not only Soviet society but the International Workers' Movement as well. The decisions taken by the 20th Congress implied a confirmation of our Party's policy and of our struggle for Socialism within the framework of the objective situation of our country.

The 20th Congress also encouraged our Party to correct certain errors, to formulate its own more appropriate political line, and to foster activities leading to internal renovation and further strength. The Italian Communist Party has tried to offer an active contribution on the level of international relations among Communist parties in favor of the soundness and historical importance of the 20th Congress. Today, our Party expresses its support of the decisions adopted by the 22nd Congress which reaffirm and develop all the theses advanced by the 20th Congress and represent a further contribution to the progress of the International Communist Movement.

II

5. The 22nd CPSU Congress has leveled precise accusations against a group of old and conservative Party and State leaders who had rejected the policy of regeneration adopted by the 20th Congress, who had tried to prevent its implementation, and who finally organized themselves in a factional group and tried to take over the Party leadership by surprise and to nullify the decisions reached by the Congress. The 22nd Congress has justly condemned the activities undertaken by that group against the Party. The political significance of the attacks leveled during the Congress at this group is clear and we support it without reservations.

From a more general viewpoint, it must be said that it is impossible to set for oneself tasks such as those concerning the transition to Communism without changing at the same time part of the previous structure and methods. This means that there must be a change and an adaptation of the work methods by the Party, the trade unions, the soviets, and all agencies of soviet democracy. There must be a change in the relationship between the Party and the masses, in the way the party fulfills its leadership role vis-a-vis State and social organizations and cultural undertakings, at a time when Socialist democracy and the creative initiative of the masses will be in full development. All this implies by necessity a firm struggle against the heavy burden of dogmatism, existing bureaucratic methods, and political obstacles, and makes a clear-cut break with the past a sine qua non for the establishment of a new process of regeneration.

The harsh condemnation of governmental and administrative methods which flourished under Stalin, i.e., methods which eliminated the principle of collective leadership and made Stalin the sole authority not only in the political but also in the theoretical field -- with all the attendant abuses and tragic violations of Socialist legality -- should be viewed, and therefore justified, from the viewpoint of that urgent need to open up a new road. Those evil and unacceptable methods had brought about an increasingly more serious contradiction between the basically democratic substance of the new society grounded on a Socialist type of economy and on the power of the soviets, on the one hand, and an authoritarian and constrictive type of leadership coming from the very top of both Party and State on the other hand, which prevented the development of Socialist democracy and ideological and cultural innovations, and which made the buildings of a new society increasingly more difficult.

The denunciation and condemnation of such errors and methods is needed not only to raise an impregnable wall against them, but above all to break the fetters which are jeopardizing the process of development of Soviet society.

It must, however, be said that the problems does not consist simply of a denunciation of Stalin's errors and negative qualities -- together with an acknowledgement of his undeniable merits. The problem is much more complex. Above all, it raises the question of how it was possible for such errors and distortions to take place during the construction of a Socialist society and of how a repetition of the same mistakes can be avoided.

To be able to answer such a question it is necessary to undertake a more thorough study to investigate (1) the objective conditions and processes related to the construction of the first Socialist society in a country such as Russia, (2) the circumstances and situations under which such abuses could take place, and (3) the methods and procedures that were followed during the establishment of Socialism in a single country. The need for a thorough historical investigation is based not only on reasons of historical interest, but also and above all on concrete political reasons, namely on the fact that the masses of Communists, workers, and democrats who have been shocked by the gravity of those revelations are asking for more satisfactory answers.

On the other hand, the fact that such errors and distortions could be placed within the framework of a particular historical period -- which has also been an era of great struggles, of heroic deeds and of very important victories for the defense and progress of human civilization -- cannot be accepted as a satisfactory justification. Those errors and distortions, in fact, have nothing to do with the unavoidable harshness of a revolutionary process. Indeed, they have hampered the development of the revolution,

6. It is certain that a thorough examination of those problems would imply a careful study of the situations and methods under which the building of the foundations of Socialism took place during the first few years; this is a task toward the achievement of which our Soviet comrades could contribute significantly. Some general -- but cautious -- remarks, however, can be made already.

Under Lenin's and Stalin's leadership, the CPSU made some great historical choices and drew the main lines of action which were of key importance for the construction and the victories of Socialism, for the defeat of Fascism, and for maintaining peace. History has already witnessed the soundness of those choices and basic trends, such as the revolution and the taking of power, the soviets as the foundation of the new State, and the success of Socialism in a single country after the defeat of the revolutions that were either carried out or attempted in Central and Western Europe, and so on.



A series of events brought about by the harshness of the class struggle on the internal and international level required the centralization of decision making in the hands of the Bolshevik Party to enable its leaders, first, to deal with the reaction, civil war, and imperialist intervention, and, second -- following the New Economic Policy, which implied the need to approach a more advanced stage of the class struggle -- to prevent a resurgence of capitalism and to start the reconstruction work on new, Socialist foundations. This meant the need for the development of Socialist heavy industry, collectivization of agriculture, and the execution and implementation of the early Five-Year Plans. All of that made it necessary to fight deviations of the left and right and -- due to Lenin's premature death -- to undertake a difficult struggle to guarantee a unity of goals, leadership, and action.

Accurate and thorough research, would be required to determine whether the first signs of a tendency that evolved into the predominance of top-heavy bureaucratic party and State apparatus due to the peculiar features of Stalin's personality could be detected at that early stage. It is certain, however, that most problems solved, not by following the usual practices of proletarian democracy, but by the imposition from the top of decisions which were being taken by an increasingly more restricted group of leaders.

It must be acknowledged that those great and just political choices by necessity put a tremendous pressure on all proletarian, popular, and national energies, and brought about a high degree of power concentration in a country which found itself in the unique situation of being the first and only country in the world where Socialism was being built. The key mistake made at the time was probably the failure in the part of the Soviet leaders to recognize that the need to centralize decision-making implied a concomitant need to develop proletarian democracy; that is to say, that democracy and centralization are not contradictory terms for a revolutionary movement, but, on the contrary, they are closely interrelated and complementary.

What happened was that -- once the more difficult stages of Socialist construction had been overcome -- those unusual leadership methods were not only retained, but were rationalized, extended, and even given theoretical justification. Thus, the just and well-motivated fight against Trotskyite and rightist opposition degenerated into the impossibility for any members to offer any new political theses. A disproportionate praise for the successes achieved, a formalistic idea of Party "monolithism," and the practice of the personality cult became increasingly more important.

This was very serious because it was taking place at a time when -- in spite of mistakes and undue haste -- the First Five-Year Plan had achieved extraordinary results by establishing Socialist heavy industry and by changing the social make-up of the countryside. A new era had been inaugurated! New and unavoidable contradictions and difficulties were the

logical result of those changes. They should have been acknowledged openly in order to summon the working masses to deal with them more effectively through their conscious cooperation.

The consequences of those errors are well known. The tendency to consider any and all difficulties as the result of sabotage by class enemies or counterrevolutionists was of particular gravity. Stalin rationalized this tendency and developed it into the well-known mistaken thesis that the further Socialism progresses, the harsher the class struggle becomes.

Hence, in reacting against the sabotage that was being carried on by real enemies, any ability to discriminate and separate the good from the bad was lost. A comrade and an honest citizen could not be distinguished from a real enemy and saboteur, and objective work mistakes, contradictions, and obstacles could not be distinguished from truly hostile actions. Unheard-of violations of Socialist legality followed; these finally took the form of criminal and repulsive actions. Thus, serious damage was done to the entire revolutionary movement and to the Marxist-Leninist theory, above all in the USSR; but also on a worldwide scale.

And yet -- at the same time -- the movement achieved victories of truly historical importance. The structure of old Russia was changed radically. Tremendous progress was achieved in all mass economic, technical, and cultural fields. In spite of all the mistakes made, a new force activated numberless masses of men, created new productive forces and brought about a new consciousness by releasing latent powerful human energies.

The years which witnessed the most serious manifestations of errors, repressions, and distortions were also the years which saw the Seventh Communist International Congress condemn severely all sectarian tendencies and adopt a united democratic platform against Fascism. At the same time, the Soviet Union was developing its policy of peace and laying the foundations of the great anti-Fascist front. Later on, during the Great Patriotic War [World War II], thanks to the heroism and to the moral and political unity rallied around the Party and Government banner on the social foundation of Socialism, the Soviet peoples repulsed the aggression and struck a deadly blow at Nazism, thus gaining the admiration and the gratitude of all progressive people.

Following the war, the conflict between the masses' initiative and spirit and bureaucratic and constrictive practices grew even more serious at a time when heavy sacrifices were required by the struggle to maintain peace against an aggressive imperialism which had a monopoly on atomic weapons. It was also a new era characterized by the formation of a number of Socialist states, the victory of the great Chinese revolution, the liquidation of colonialism, and the enthusiasm and self-assurance of Communists and the Soviet people who had won the war.

Errors and distortions, however -- no matter how serious -- have not jeopardized or damaged heavily the profoundly democratic substance and foundations of Socialist society. In fact, the forces that brought about the turns of the 20th and 22nd Congresses sprang forth from the very bosom of that society and of the Communist Party.

7. The problem concerning safeguards for the future was debated amply at the last Congress. A number of steps intended to expand and guarantee democracy at all levels of Soviet organization have been proposed, adopted, and partly realized. The Party statutes have been amended, reforms have been adopted in the field of economic planning by expanding the functions of the soviets, trade unions, and the other workers' organizations, and by devising new legal safeguards to ensure personal freedom.

When the State power is in the hands of the working class, the best guarantee for freedom lies in the development of a democratic life in all its organizations, in economic and social progress, and in the development of culture, education, and the political and civic activities of all citizens.

The problem of institutional safeguards of Socialist legality and of development of democracy must be placed within this framework. In dealing with this fundamental problem, one should realize the real developments made by democracy in the Soviet Union, and also realize that democracy in the Soviet Union cannot possibly develop -- as our antagonists and certain Socialist leaders would seem to think -- in a fashion similar to bourgeois democracy, but that it must be realized within the mainstream of soviet democracy.

At the same time, it should be acknowledged that this problem cannot be settled once and for all. Due to its institutions, contents, and objectives, Socialist democracy is profoundly different from bourgeois democracy, not simply from the viewpoint of its historical developments in the Soviet Union and in the other Socialist countries, but also from the viewpoint of its future possible developments in new countries, even though it may follow patterns and forms which today are typical of bourgeois democracy, such as the parliamentary system, party pluralism, the existence of a majority and a minority, etc.

This is so because Socialist democracy -- in spite of the different forms it may take -- must always be based on real and direct participation by the workers and the people in the study and solution of all problems related to their life and future, starting from the basic production trends and advancing toward an ever greater improvement of the cultural and material conditions of workers, of their human and professional dignity, and of their place within society.

The transition from Socialism to Communism will afford the realization of these goals at an even higher level by freeing man from future needs and fears and by freeing society from all limitations imposed from above. This is the meaning of the steps indicated by the 22nd Congress to progressively reduce the State and to increase the role played by voluntary associations of citizens.

The CPSU Program states that in this area the dictatorship of the proletariat has already fulfilled its mission in the USSR and that during the transition phase from Socialism to Communism the State will turn increasingly into a State of all the people. Within such a State, the Communist Party will play the role of the leading organization in the social and economic life of the country. Communist society, in fact, cannot be an anarchistic society but -- on the contrary -- a highly organized society based on a solid technical and economic foundation and on the spontaneous support of popular organizations by all citizens who will perform directly the role which at present is performed by the State.

8. Following the 20th Congress and the denunciation of the tragic mistakes of the Stalin era, the issue of the political responsibilities of other Communist Parties, including our own Party, together with the negative influences of the personality cult on their development, was raised openly. With regard to this problem, we did not -- and will not -- simply reject our enemies' attacks by throwing back at them the dung with which they are trying to cover the Italian Communist Party and its leaders. That would be much too easy!

All attempts to defame the Italian Communist Party have always achieved a result which has been the opposite to the one intended. The Communist Party, in fact, by its correct policy and struggle and by its self-sacrifice and honesty has always been a key force in the fight against Fascism, for democracy and for the regeneration of the country.

However, while fighting against such attacks and, even more, against the corrupting and insidious actions inspired by the Social-Democrats and the petty bourgeoisie, we have also tried, following the 20th Congress, to carry on a severe self-criticism and to correct our actions accordingly.

Our Party did not ignore but accepted the harshness of the revolutionary process as it was carried out in the Soviet Union and was aware in part of the tense internal struggles of the Soviet Party and of certain painful events.

What our Party did not know and did not realize was that some of that harshness was in no way justified by the need to defend the revolution from hostile activities, but on the contrary it was simply the consequence of errors and abuses. This was due to a large extent to our lack of knowledge of specific events, unavoidable under the very difficult and particular

circumstances of the anti-Fascist struggle and conspiracy, political emigration, the Spanish War, and the need to face the Nazi aggression united.

On the other hand, the very system of government established by Stalin made it impossible for all other parties to know exactly what was going on within the CPSU. Our responsibility lies in two objective errors which we were able to identify and acknowledge during our Seventh Congress. The first error was the supine acceptance of Stalin's groundless thesis concerning the unavoidable and ever-increasing harshness of class struggle within the Soviet Union corresponding to an increasingly more solid establishment of Socialism. This thesis was based on a profoundly personal and sectarian interest, but we were unable to identify and reject it. And yet, it was that very thesis which made us accept and justify the huge repressive actions such as the great purge trials, which had already been made public.

Our second error was that, following the USSR practice, we steadily and unilaterally over-estimated our successes and went from an understandable acknowledgement of the ability and merit of a statesman and revolutionist such as Stalin to an exaggerated exaltation of his personality and role. Furthermore, we did not reject certain noneducational and rhetorical forms of propaganda which were opposed to the true nature of Socialism. This took place in spite of the fact that the prevailing trend, mentality, and attitude of our Party had always been oriented toward the goal of equipping the party with the ability to carry out objective analyses and to develop effective propaganda, free from rhetoric and superficiality.

Substantial progress has been achieved and new initiatives have been undertaken since our Eighth Congress, such as the tour of Socialist countries made by our research and study teams and the publication of books, articles, and special reports leading to a more objective and rounded evaluation of problems and situations existing in Socialist countries. It should be acknowledged, however, that the progress achieved in this area is still unsatisfactory.

Yet the basic problem is a different one. It concerns the autonomy which the Party must enjoy in its struggle in order to achieve Socialism by an original, democratic, and national way, while practicing the kind of international solidarity which has always existed between our Party, the Soviet Union, and the International Communist Movement.

The bonds of proletarian internationalism were never imposed on us by anybody. They are the natural expression of the class and international character of our movement, of an identity of ideals and revolutionary principles, of our great political goals, and of the enemies we have to fight. This ideological and political interrelationship and solidarity with the Soviet Union and the International Communist Movement has always been a basic source of strength for the Italian workers' movement and for our Party, and a key factor in achieving the right revolutionary posture.

Since October 1917, during the most trying moments of the struggle against Fascism, during the war of liberation and the struggle for peace and democracy in Italy, internationalism has helped our Party in the search for a revolutionary road consistent with the national situation and with the grand design of democratic unity against Fascism and in favor of a democratic and Socialist regeneration of the country. When we made a choice based on our solidarity with the Soviet Union, throughout the various stages of development of the international and soviet policy, we made a conscious and political choice whose historical and political soundness we wish to reaffirm in full.

Proletarian internationalism is and will be one of the main pillars of our policy, together with a profound attachment and adaptation to the national situation and to a search for new methods grounded on the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

It should, however, be acknowledged that our Party's autonomy -- which no one has hampered intentionally -- was nevertheless limited by the supine acceptance of the above-mentioned theses and propaganda methods and by the fact that our original political experience and outlook was not always used in a logical and consistent way, namely, in a way which could have afforded our party a sounder perspective and greater spirit. The recognition on our part of such defects is of basic importance for a more creative political and theoretical search in order to carry on our struggle with enthusiasm and in order that our Party may contribute as much as possible to a greater political and theoretical unity of the International Communist and Workers' Movement.

The more we are able to react against any kind of Social-Democratic and antagonistic influence, the more we will be able to achieve full and concrete autonomy, to strengthen the international consciousness of our Party, and to disseminate among popular and working masses more knowledge of, and support for, the Soviet Union.

### III

9. The 22nd CPSU Congress has also dealt with the problem of guaranteeing -- in the present stage of development -- the unity of the International Communist Movement. Attention was focused on this problem by conflicts that broke out openly between many parties and the Chinese Communist Party with regard to the just and severe public condemnation of Albania's trend toward a kind of degenerate authoritarianism which implies serious violations of democracy and international solidarity.

It would be a serious mistake to interpret such contrasts and other differences of opinions that have taken place or may take place on other occasions between Communist and Workers' Parties as a sign of lack of unity

and solidarity on a worldwide basis of the Communist Movement, or to see in such contrasts the start of a series of serious splits and conflicts.

In spite of all contrasts and differences, even on important problems concerning the strategy and tactics of the workers' movement and the overall evaluation of the international situation, there is among all Communist Parties a basic identity of common principles and objectives. If such a common basis were to break up, there would be very serious consequences for the movement as a whole and for the development of its individual member-parties. No party can therefore shun the responsibility and the fundamental duty of defending and strengthening the international solidarity and unity of our movement.

Yet, it should be realized that today this problem presents profoundly new aspects and characteristics. In particular, it should be kept in mind that:

a) At present, the Communist Movement has reached an unprecedented expansion and includes branches in all parts of the world which operate under sharply differing conditions. There are parties that are leading the Socialist and Communist construction in a host of countries having very different historical traditions and socio-economic levels of development. Two consequences of this situation should be emphasized.

First of all, there must be a choice of the most appropriate way to Socialism in the various countries. Second, there must be a gradual elimination of objective contrasts and differences, even of national character, which still exist and will unavoidably persist for a long time during the political and economic phase of construction. Even in capitalistic countries there are great differences of objective situations and in the development of Communist Parties.

Side by side with some great and politically advanced mass parties there are other parties which, due to objective and subjective reasons, have thus far been unable to play an important role in the political life of the workers' movement and of their countries.

Finally, there is an ever increasing number of young parties which have been organized during the last few years in colonial countries and in countries which have achieved their independence only recently. These parties find themselves at the very outset of an autonomous political and ideological development. This peculiarity of the present situation of the Communist Movement makes the existence of a single guide-party or State, or of a heavily centralized direction of the World Communist Movement, impossible -- as we have stated several times.

The present situation calls for an increasingly greater adaptation of our movement to individual situations and for a full autonomy of individual parties. This is the only way for individual parties to mold their ideological principles, political objectives, and external organization to different national situations and to gain the ideological and political strength to achieve a position of political significance in their countries.

b) There are today, as there were in the past (and, in some instances, more than there were in the past), certain problems and needs which are commonly shared by the entire Communist Movement. Their solution calls for the cooperation and support by all parties. Problems such as the struggle against imperialism and reaction, for peace and coexistence, freedom for all peoples, and further development of the workers' Socialist and democratic struggle which will be more in keeping with the conditions of capitalist countries are no doubt problems which each party should pursue in accordance with specific national situations. Yet they also demand that every effort be made to overcome contrasts, to agree on and strengthen a common evaluation of the international situation and a common strategy of the workers' movement at large.

10. At present, a very serious problem shared by the whole movement consists of the need to insure new creative developments in Communist ideology and of its ability to cope with the new problems created by the profound and complex changes of the world structure and of class struggle, both on a national and international level.

It must be acknowledged openly that the great expansion undergone by our movement during the last 10-15 years, the great successes achieved, and the growing influence of Communist policies and ideals on contemporary life have not been paralleled by a similar progress and expansion of our ideology. This serious delay is mainly due to the dogmatic fetters and distortions introduced by personality-cult practices into many phases of Marxism-Leninism. Together with other objective reasons based on the development of European and world history of the last decades and on the conditions of the workers' movement in Europe and in other countries, this has slowed down and hampered the creative development and adaptation of Marxism-Leninism.

Even from this viewpoint we considered the 20th CPSU Congress an event of international significance and the beginning of a new turn for the Communist Movement as a whole. Our Party has already progressed along the road which was opened by that Congress, and has redefined its positions and adapted its relations with other parties accordingly.

It should be said, however, that the international meetings of 1957 and of 1961 [sic] did not entirely meet the need for a further development of our theoretical and political positions. It is therefore necessary to



march forward and to eliminate all dogmatic influences, so that the work for ideological and political research may advance. In particular, it is necessary to carry on the struggle for a greater role and influence of the workers' democratic movement in Europe and in the capitalist West.

Hence, the principle of autonomy of each party -- and of respect for the autonomy of other parties -- should not in the least be understood as national-minded indifference to the worldwide class struggles for problems of ideological development concerning the movement as a whole. Only a multiplicity of ideological and political contributions can afford a positive solution to these problems, even though one should always avoid expressing small-minded, hasty, and presumptuous opinions in public concerning the complex life and policy of other parties, because such opinions cannot possibly be based on all of their experiences, nor on the circumstances under which they must operate.

A new set of rules governing interrelationships among Communist parties should be set up on the basis of those manifold and complex needs. The new system should envisage, first of all, bilateral contacts and meetings between parties operating under similar circumstances, such as the Rome meeting of November 1959 of 17 parties of capitalist Europe, and similar meetings which have taken place in other parts of the world.

General conferences of all parties will also be useful under certain conditions to reach common evaluations on the international situation and general agreements on the world Communist policy line. We believe, however, that it is not necessary to reach an agreement every time on all problems, because such agreement would most likely be a formal agreement only. On the contrary, within certain limits, one should allow for differences of opinions which obviously should not develop into irreparable conflicts and political breaks. Furthermore, insofar as the great problems concerning the development of our ideological and political line are concerned, one should hope that our internal debates, opinions, and theses be carried on even in public within the framework of true spirit of brotherhood and sense of responsibility.

Our party will move forward by relying on these foundations. We are conscious of the fact that we should contribute as much as possible to the progress of the movement as a whole and to the solution of present problems. The more we contribute, the more we will be able to strengthen our own policies and activities in our country. But we also realize that our experiences should be compared particularly with those of parties in western capitalist countries so as to reach a sounder and more general knowledge of common problems.

Finally, it is necessary that our party organizations be better informed on debates concerning the great ideological and political issues of the Communist Movement.

IV

11. Our present Party debate must keep in close touch with the Italian political situation, with the repercussions of the 22nd Congress on various other political groups, and more generally with present problems and perspectives.

All reactionary and conservative forces are trying to use the criticisms and denunciations made at the 22nd CPSU Congress to discredit Socialism's ideals and achievements. This attack is accompanied by an attempt -- made in a cunning way particularly by revisionists, Social Democrats and others -- to infiltrate the workers' movement and even our Party with ideas foreign to the proletariat's revolutionary ideology and principles. It is essential to realize that such an attempt is linked to a more general effort to enlarge the breaks and conflicts existing within the Italian workers' movement, and to increase Social Democracy's influence.

It should not be forgotten, however, that those attacks and attempts also reflect a number of democratic and regenerating efforts based on the lively interest and positive expectation large groups of public opinion and democratic people are showing with regard to the Communist Movement and to our problems as a result of the 22nd Congress. Both these aspects should be kept in mind to avoid serious mistakes on our part.

Therefore, our Party is faced with the task of repulsing the enemy's political and ideological attack and the infiltration of revisionist, Social-Democratic, and petty bourgeois ideas and influences and -- at the same time -- of overcoming sectarian and dogmatic obstacles. At the same time, the Party must associate itself openly and effectively with democratic efforts based on renewed interest in our policy by increasing contacts and relations with other forces and by developing a united action and autonomous initiative throughout the country.

Above and beyond any impractical, mechanical, and unimaginative relation between our Party and the 22nd Congress, our real task is utilize the regenerating charge that the 22nd Congress has imparted to the whole Communist Movement and the present political reawakening of our organizations in order to insure further progress in every field without losing sight of the situation of both party and country. The struggle will be carried on two different fronts.

The chief problems and tasks that the Party will have to face today and in the immediate future are, on the whole, the following:

- 1) To redefine the Party political line by relating it in a more organic way to world Communist strategy, in particular in the more advanced Western Capitalist countries. At present, in fact, the problem of the

advancement of the working class and of its political alliances in order to defeat the great capitalist monopolies and to achieve new social and political institutions is more acute than ever.

2) To insure a fuller and more consistent execution of our line by all organizations, and therefore to emphasize the unity-minded position of the Party on the great issues of peace, democratic development, and struggle against monopolies and in favor of structural reforms.

3) To mobilize the Party for a vigorous and thorough Communist membership drive and to enlist new supporters.

4) To channel the present reawakening of interest in our ideology and strategy in Italy and in the world toward a study of the classical works of Marxism-Leninism, Italian history and conditions, and the political experience of our Party.

5) To proceed further on the road leading to a renovation and strengthening of the Party in order to exert greater political influence on our comrades and organizations; to extend and consolidate the concrete unity of the Party around the Party line; to reach and define political platforms which are more in keeping with the changes Italian society is presently undergoing; to adapt organizational structures and leadership and work methods; to win the support of more workers, young people, and women; to promote new forces to leadership positions in our organizations.

12. The achievement of the above tasks calls for further development of the Party's internal democratic life.

To reach this goal any attempt leading to a change in the nature of our Party as a Party based on active struggle, or implying an alteration of the basic features acquired during many years of work, should be rejected firmly. Thought and action, political line, and practical organization, are to us something which cannot be separated, but must be taken together as a whole. Furthermore, one should never forget that the starting and ending point of all of our debates is the acknowledgement of a common basis and the search for a theoretical and operational unity of the entire Party. This implies the inadmissibility of organized factions and trends within the Party which would bring about a progressive disintegration of the Party's democratic life.

The development of this democratic behavior does not exclude but implies a more extended and increasingly more conscious participation by the Party members in the Party's political life, a free manifestation and expression of opinions and even contrasts during debates and votes which will take place in accordance with the wording of our Party Statutes. The practice by all of an attitude based on understanding and tolerance must prevent mere contrasts from developing into open breaks and disciplinary actions.

After debating all problems freely, and agreeing on a given line, there must be full support of the decisions taken, and of their fulfillment, by all comrades and organizations.

The Leninist principle of democratic centralism which -- together with all other rights and duties -- is embodied in our Party Statutes should be held as a guarantee that the Party's internal democratic practices and ability to function will be strengthened, and should be used as a means to encourage an increasingly larger and more active participation by the members in Party Life, and to correct bureaucratic distortions and small-minded methods and procedures.

- END -

# Khrouchtchev ne réhabilitera pas Trotsky

**A**INSI donc, peu à peu, Khrouchtchev confirme toutes les accusations portées par Léon Trotsky contre Staline. Toutefois, et cela est d'importance, Khrouchtchev prend bien soin de ne pas même mentionner le nom du fondateur de l'Armée Rouge. De tous les crimes de Staline il ignore le plus ignoble. Mais peut-il l'ignorer ? Evidemment non.

Cela mérite quelque réflexion.

## Les limites de la destalinisation

Il serait stupide de ne pas apprécier à sa valeur — mais à sa juste valeur — l'effort entrepris par Khrouchtchev dans la voie de la destalinisation. En effet ce qu'il a accompli — le peu qu'il a accompli — pour réhabiliter quelques révolutionnaires victimes du régime stalinien n'a guère satisfait les hommes mis en place par Staline et que Khrouchtchev a conservés. On en sait quelque chose en France puisque Maurice Thorez est toujours là, au poste qui lui a été affecté par Staline lui-même.

En U.R.S.S. une certaine destalinisation de l'appareil du Parti a été réalisée. Il ne pouvait en être autrement puisqu'il s'agissait pour Khrouchtchev et ses amis d'une question de vie ou de mort. C'est ainsi que Béria, la principale créature de Staline (Béria qui n'était même pas membre du Parti Communiste), si l'on en croit les révélations faites par Khrouchtchev mais qui devint cependant le chef de l'Inquisition) a été « liquidé physiquement » et quelques autres aussi. Mais à la tête de tous les Partis Communistes, dans les démocraties populaires ou ailleurs, demeurent les autres créatures de Staline.

Depuis les premières accusations portées par Khrouchtchev contre Staline, tous les Thorez de l'appareil s'étaient enfermés dans un silence hostile. Or, depuis le dernier congrès du P.C. de l'U.R.S.S., les hommes de Staline... destalinisent. C'est-à-dire qu'ils déboulonnent quelques statues du Chef génial ou débaptisent des rues. Mais qu'ont-ils changé au fonctionnement des partis communistes ? Rien.

Il apparaît donc que Khrouchtchev a choisi non pas de nettoyer radicalement la maison, en épurant l'appareil des complices du bourreau, mais au contraire de convaincre ces derniers de la nécessité de l'aider dans sa tâche. Et ils y ont apparemment consenti. Dans ces conditions, on peut se demander quelles sont les limites de la destalinisation entreprise par Khrouchtchev. Et ces limites sont imposées par la nécessité de maintenir à tout prix l'appareil actuel en place. Et non seulement l'appareil, mais bien entendu les méthodes du stalinisme en les réformant quelque peu, en les « humanisant ». C'est ainsi qu'il a été convenu en U.R.S.S., d'après les révélations faites par « K », que les minoritaires du Bureau politique (les « déviationnistes ») ne seraient plus assassinés. Il faudrait être fou pour ne pas reconnaître que c'est un progrès. Mais convient-il, pour des révolutionnaires, d'en féliciter Khrouchtchev ? Assurément pas.

Si nous avions vécu un siècle plus tôt, aurions-nous applaudi Napoléon III quand il conduisit le régime de l'Empire Autoritaire à l'Empire Libéral ? Nous aurions été évidemment avec les Républicains qui redoublent leurs attaques pour faire chanter l'Empire.

## Pourquoi Khrouchtchev destalinise

Si Napoléon III « libéralisait » l'Empire, c'était parce qu'il y était contraint. Son trône chancelait et il estimait que seules des concessions pouvaient le sauver. Bien entendu, il ne fit pas appel aux Républicains pour cette « libéralisation » mais aux Bonapartistes. Il s'agissait de barrer la route à la République. Khrouchtchev ne demande pas le secours des révolutionnaires pour « destaliniser » mais des Staliniens car il s'agit de barrer la route à la Révolution. Or, la réhabilitation de Trotsky si-

gnifierait tout simplement la fin de tous les Thorez, qu'ils soient Russes, Allemands, Français ou autres. D'ailleurs, Khrouchtchev s'est exprimé très clairement sur les limites qu'il entendait voir respecter pour l'opération de destalinisation. Car en Hongrie ce ne sont pas les Thorez qui ont déboulonné les statues de Staline, mais le peuple au premier rang duquel les militants ouvriers du Parti Communiste. Et Khrouchtchev a tiré au canon dans le peuple. Il faudrait tout de même s'en souvenir.

L'opération Khrouchtchev consiste à sauver tout ce qui peut être sauvé du stalinisme. En restant figé sur les positions du stalinisme intégral, Khrouchtchev risquerait d'être balayé par la révolte de ceux qui, en U.R.S.S., ont eu un père, un frère, un mère, une sœur, un cousin, un mari, un ami assassiné par l'équipe Staline-Béria. Ils sont des dizaines de millions. Et si Khrouchtchev a décidé de verser des pensions aux veuves et aux orphelins des victimes des « purges », c'est parce qu'il lui fallait jeter un peu de baume sur les plaies.

J'ai pu recueillir le témoignage d'un camarade qui se trouvait dans un camp soviétique au moment de la mort de Staline. Dans ce camp, où il y avait 200.000 prisonniers, la révolte éclata. Le signal en avait été donné par un vieux bolchevik, un des premiers adhérents du Parti de Lénine, membre de l'opposition de gauche (trotskyste) et un des rares rescapés de la « vieille garde ». Il avait lancé l'insurrection seulement après avoir obtenu — grâce à une liaison établie par des cheminots — des renseignements parvenant de Moscou lui laissant croire que la situation était mûre pour le déclenchement de la Révolution. (Les cheminots avaient rapporté un tract IMPRIME appelant les ouvriers à se révolter pour en finir avec la dictature.) Bien entendu, l'analyse faite par ce vieux révolutionnaire était faussée puisque la Révolution n'a pas éclaté. Mais il y a eu des troubles sérieux en différents points de l'U.R.S.S.

Khrouchtchev est beaucoup mieux renseigné que nous sur ces événements. Il sait fort bien, lui, pourquoi il fallait « lâcher du lest ». Il n'est pas douteux que sa tactique s'est révélée intelligente et qu'il a même acquis, de cette façon, une certaine popularité. Toutefois il n'a pas encore gagné la partie. Les communistes Italiens expliquent que Khrouchtchev a été contraint d'agir ainsi sous la pression des jeunes du Parti. Ils ont certainement raison mais il faut ajouter que la pression venue des masses est encore plus inquiétante pour lui.

Les milliers d'étudiants qui ont applaudi un jeune poète révolutionnaire, lors de l'anniversaire de la mort de Malakowsky, veulent la destalinisation totale. Ils ont ovationné ce jeune poète qui dénonçait les crimes antisémites commis en U.R.S.S. et appelé à lutter contre le régime de Khrouchtchev, pour un gouvernement démocratique des ouvriers et des paysans. Ils l'ont porté en triomphe. Dans l'histoire de toutes les Révolutions, on retrouve de telles manifestations d'étudiants, annonciatrices de la révolte ouvrière. On peut facilement imaginer que Khrouchtchev a fait comprendre à tous les Thorez : « Ou vous m'aidez dans la voie que j'ai choisie en « destalinisant », ou nous serons tous balayés ensemble ».

## Aussi éloigné du marxisme que Franco

Lorsque Nathalie Trotsky a demandé la réhabilitation du compagnon de Lénine, elle s'adressait en fait au peuple soviétique et non pas à Khrouchtchev. Elle voulait démontrer précisément que Khrouchtchev, en refusant cette réhabilitation, était resté le complice de Staline. Car Khrouchtchev ne peut prétendre avoir ignoré les crimes de Staline, ce qui serait un aveu d'incapacité qui n'est pas concevable. C'est toute la direction stalinienne qui est responsable de l'assassinat de Trotsky et des millions de révolutionnaires jetés dans les camps de concentration. Nathalie Trotsky a précisé d'ailleurs qu'elle considérait l'actuel régime soviétique « aussi éloigné du marxisme et de la révolution prolétarienne que celui de Franco en Espagne ». Et elle a ajouté : « La terreur policière et les es-

limés de Staline n'étaient que l'aspect politique d'une lutte à mort contre la révolution, menée par l'ensemble de la bureaucratie. On ne peut donc attendre le rétablissement de toute la vérité que de l'effacement de cette bureaucratie par la classe ouvrière qu'elle a réduite à l'esclavage. Je n'espère rien du parti russe ni de ses imitateurs foncièrement anticommunistes. Toute destalinisation s'avérera un leurre, si elle ne va pas jusqu'à la prise du pouvoir par le prolétariat et la dissolution des institutions policières, politiques, militaires et économiques, bases de la contre-révolution qui a établi le capitalisme d'Etat stalinien. »

## Quand Khrouchtchev parle pour Debré

D'ailleurs, si Khrouchtchev réhabilite Trotsky, imaginez-vous Thorez ouvrant les rangs du P.C. pour y faire entrer tous ceux qui, trotskystes d'hier ou d'aujourd'hui, ou simplement antistaliniens, l'ont dénoncé comme fossoyeur de la Révolution Socialiste ? Il suffit d'annoncer cette hypothèse pour en souligner l'absurdité. Le problème est identique en U.R.S.S. à cette différence près, toutefois, que les trotskystes, là-bas, ont été assassinés. Mais il y a des morts qui font encore plus peur que les vivants.

Khrouchtchev a des préoccupations d'un autre ordre, répétons-le : endiguer le mécontentement. Cela est si vrai qu'il n'a pas craint, dans un discours prononcé le 14 novembre à Tselinograd, de se référer à Debré (sans le nommer il est vrai) pour répondre à un ouvrier mécontent. Il s'agissait d'un conducteur de tracteur qui se plaignait de l'insuffisance des salaires. Et K. a répondu : « Le niveau des salaires doit répondre à celui de la production et du rendement. Le rendement de la main d'œuvre doit toujours dépasser l'augmentation des salaires. » Debré et Khrouchtchev, placés devant les mêmes revendications, emploient les mêmes arguments pour y répondre. Mais en U.R.S.S. la question posée par le tracteuriste a un caractère révolutionnaire et la réponse de K. est un avou cynique des positions réactionnaires de la bureaucratie qui s'allège sur la C.N.P.F.

Parmi les autres problèmes qui se posent en U.R.S.S. il faut noter la prolifération des scandales. Le dernier en date mérite d'être rappelé : des chefs d'entreprise ont escroqué 150 MILLIARDS de francs en vendant du tulle pour des rideaux de fenêtres. Il y a eu 54 arrestations de personnages appartenant tous à l'appareil dirigeant de la société soviétique. Si l'on comprend bien, chacun de ces personnages a fait un bénéfice de l'ordre de deux milliards de francs. Et ils s'achetaient des villas à la campagne et des automobiles « Volga bleues » (le grand luxe soviétique). On ne fait pas mieux en régime capitaliste.

Mais n'est-ce pas là le signe de la pourriture d'un régime ? Et le fameux Plan soviétique, comment fonctionne-t-il donc ? Comment des escrocs peuvent-ils bâtir « clandestinement » une usine leur appartenant, et une usine prospère puisque rapportant 150 milliards de BÉNÉFICES, sans que les planificateurs s'en aperçoivent.

Si le Père UBU présidait aux destinées de la planification soviétique il n'en traiterait pas autrement.

Le magnifique de l'histoire, en effet, c'est que si l'escroquerie a pu réussir, c'est parce que les escrocs ont pu donner satisfaction à un besoin (des rideaux de fenêtres) que la bureaucratie, elle, avait négligé.

Malheureusement, les escrocs n'ont pas trouvé le moyen de suppléer aux déficiences de la bureaucratie dans le domaine alimentaire : s'ils pouvaient fabriquer de la viande, du beurre, du sucre, ils seraient tellement populaires que les voles du pouvoir leur seraient toutes grandes ouvertes.

Mais ce n'est pas ce genre de « destalinisation » que nous souhaitons. La nôtre, c'est celle qui a été réclamée par les étudiants de Moscou et par le tracteuriste de Tselinograd.

Marcel BRIAND

DECEMBRE 1961

# DES IDOLLES BRISEES ET DES YEUX QUI S'OUVRENT

CETTE fois-ci, les choses n'ont pas traîné : les fleurs de Chou En Lai étaient à peine fanées que déjà, le cadavre de Staline était déménagé vers un endroit discret, loin de l'adoration des foules. Alors qu'en 1956, et selon l'humeur des dirigeants ou la pression des masses, on avait timidement déboulonné une statue par ci, rebaptisé une avenue par là, il s'est produit, depuis la fin du XXIIe Congrès, une véritable frénésie d'émulation socialiste pour effacer de tous les lieux publics le souvenir de Staline : ni Stalingrad, ni les rues de nos municipalités communistes, n'ont trouvé grâce devant l'ardeur tardive des contempteurs du « culte de la personnalité ».

La tâche était cependant lourde, au point qu'un de nos confrères de la presse parisienne a malicieusement proposé, pour simplifier les choses et épargner tout ce travail aux communistes, de retirer à Staline le surnom qu'il s'était choisi, et de ne plus désormais le désigner qu'avec son patronyme d'origine : Staline n'aurait ainsi jamais existé, mais simplement un sinistre criminel du nom de Djougachvili. La comédie de déstalinisation à laquelle s'adonnent la plupart des partis communistes du monde entier ne mérite pas mieux que cette boutade. En concentrant l'attention du public sur des épisodes burlesques ou anecdotiques, les dirigeants communistes se livrent, toutes proportions gardées, au même exercice que ces pinardiers peu scrupuleux qui, par des substitutions d'étiquettes, s'efforcent de présenter de misérables piquettes sous un jour plus favorable : mais le vin ne s'améliore pas pour autant.

## DES ERREURS, DES FAUTES, DES CRIMES

« Les erreurs, les fautes, les crimes de Staline », comme on dit aujourd'hui, ne seront pas corrigés, effacés ou punis par cet intense labeur de voirie communale auquel nous assistons depuis un mois. Ils ne seront pas davantage expliqués par cette inlassable dénonciation du culte de la personnalité, qui n'a été au fond, malgré ses dimensions affligeantes et son caractère pittoresque, qu'un aspect secondaire de la réalité soviétique. Les

mérites des « grands hommes » sont célébrés dans d'autres pays que ceux de l'univers marxiste-léniniste, mais qui, en France, songerait à expliquer les erreurs de la politique gaulliste par l'existence d'innombrables avenues du Général De Gaulle ? Ce qu'il y avait de choquant dans l'idolâtrie stalinienne, c'était sans doute son caractère démesuré et indécent, mais c'était aussi qu'elle s'appliquait à un homme dont les qualités politiques ne pouvaient faire oublier les incalculables forfaits. Et ces forfaits étaient perpétrés, non pas en raison du culte de la personnalité, mais grâce aux possibilités offertes par un système totalitaire qui étouffe toutes les discussions sincères, musèle ou anéantit, selon le cas, les oppositions, et impose comme unique vérité, celle élaborée par un Parti aux structures apparemment démocratiques, mais dont la centralisation intégrale aboutit à concentrer dans les mains d'une poignée de dirigeants, ou parfois d'un seul, tous les pouvoirs, sans aucun élément compensateur.

Dans un monde où n'existe aucune des libertés fondamentales (parole, réunion, presse, association), sinon sur le papier, où l'Administration peut interner ou déporter à sa guise, où tout accusé est incapable de se faire assister convenablement devant une justice domestiquée, où la police est toute puissante, où les gêneurs deviennent des traîtres et les tièdes des saboteurs complices de l'impérialisme, le champ est libre pour les « erreurs, les fautes et les crimes des dirigeants ».

## STALINE, FIDÈLE DISCIPLE DE LÉNINE

C'est pourquoi il est parfaitement hypocrite d'accuser Staline d'avoir trahi le léninisme, d'avoir dénaturé les enseignements de Lénine, etc. S'il est vrai qu'à un moment de sa vie Lénine a exprimé ses inquiétudes sur la brutalité de Staline, « son tempérament capricieux et son manque de patience, de loyauté et de correction », il est aussi vérifiable que c'est grâce à Lénine, et de son vivant, que Staline a été désigné Secrétaire Général du P.C. (b) et qu'il a « accumulé entre ses mains un pouvoir démesuré ». Les procédés

qui, du temps de Lénine, ont abouti à l'annihilation, non seulement de la bourgeoisie tsariste, mais aussi des non-bolcheviks et en premier lieu des sociaux-démocrates mencheviks, ont servi plus tard au régime stalinien pour éliminer les communistes empêchés de tourner en rond ou réticents. Plutôt que de se lamenter sur les violations de la « légalité socialiste » par Staline, il serait plus exact de constater qu'il en a utilisé à fond toutes les ressources. Et s'il semble que, depuis la venue au pouvoir de Khrouchtchev, on ne déporte plus, on ne torture plus, on n'assassine plus en Union Soviétique, rien ne prouve que cela ne soit plus possible, car l'armature du régime reste intacte ; sous le règne de Napoléon III, l'empire libéral succéda à l'empire autoritaire, mais c'était toujours l'Empire.

Une véritable déstalinisation remettrait en cause les bases mêmes du système soviétique, et la politique qu'il a suivie, à l'intérieur comme à l'extérieur, depuis sa création. Ceux qui furent les exécutants de la politique stalinienne nous précéderont-ils un jour si, par exemple, le pacte germano-soviétique demeure un « succès du peuple soviétique tout entier avec à sa tête le glorieux P.C.U.S. » ou s'il n'est plus qu'un forfait de Staline, auquel, pour faire bonne mesure, on associera l'antiparti Molotov ?

## LES STALINIENS CONTRE STALINE

Et surtout une véritable déstalinisation contraindrait au silence ceux qui s'en font maintenant les apôtres. Car à la différence de Gomulka, ou même de Kadar, qui, en 1956, pouvaient se prévaloir, sinon d'une grande lucidité politique, tout au moins des persécutions dont ils avaient souffert du fait du stalinisme, les déstalinisateurs, en Union Soviétique et en France, cherchent à reléguer dans l'oubli leur comportement d'il y a quelques années. Or, sans staliniens, et même avec Staline, il n'y aurait pas eu de stalinisme, et dans le genre stalinien forcené, on ne trouve pas mieux que Khrouchtchev ou Thorez, pour ne retenir que ces deux exemples tristement illustres.

Le plus adroit des deux est évidemment Khrouchtchev qui, dès 1956, comprit le parti qu'il pourrait tirer, pour la conquête du pouvoir suprême, de la transformation de feu son maître Staline en repoussoir des horreurs de quarante ans de dictature. Et, du même coup, ce spectaculaire retournement aiderait à rejeter dans l'ombre l'attitude particulièrement répugnante de Khrouchtchev pendant l'ère stalinienne. Car lorsqu'on remonte aux sources, il apparaît que jusqu'à la mort de Staline toute la carrière politique de Khrouchtchev s'est faite à la faveur des excès du stalinisme, que chaque épuration, chaque purge a été pour lui l'occasion de gravir un échelon supplémentaire dans la hiérarchie soviétique, non sans que cet avancement ait été acquis par des prodiges de bassesse et de lâcheté. Les colonnes de ce journal ne suffiraient pas à reproduire les innombrables propos et à relater les agissements ultra-staliniens de « K. », dont la prolixité et l'activité brouillonne sont bien connues. Mais quelques illustrations méritent cependant d'être fournies à ce qui vient d'être dit.

Khrouchtchev écrivait dans les « Izvestia » : « Quiconque se réjouit des succès réalisés dans notre pays et des victoires remportées par notre parti dirigé par le grand Staline, ne trouvera qu'un seul mot digne des chiens mercenaires fascistes du gang trotskyste-zinovieviste. Ce mot,

c'est la mort par exécution. Que le chef de ce gang, allié de la Gestapo allemande : Trotsky, soit zélé de ce procès, la fureur du peuple, la sentence de notre tribunal l'atteindront toutefois n'importe où. » Et Trotsky fut assassiné au Mexique en 1940, par un agent de la G.P.U. ; quant à Kamenev et Zinoviev, ils avaient été abattus dès la fin du « procès ».

Le même Khrouchtchev, six jours avant l'exécution de Toukhatchevski et de ses « complices », hurlait à la mort dans ces termes : « Que ces traîtres, les Toukhatchevski et autres Gamarnik, sachent que nous les démasquerons et anéantirons, que nous les réduirons jusqu'au dernier en poussière que nous laisserons se disperser par le vent afin que la moindre trace ne reste plus de ces renégats et de ces traîtres à la patrie socialiste. »

## ...AURONT LEUR MONUMENT

Aujourd'hui, Khrouchtchev rend Staline seul coupable de ces massacres, il parle de réhabiliter ces « traîtres et ces renégats » et d'édifier un monument à leur mémoire !

La même moisson de citations accablantes pourrait être rassemblée sur la dévotion, sincère ou feinte, que Khrouchtchev portait à Staline. Deux échantillons d'une gamme extraordinairement riche donneront une idée du talent de « K. » en ce domaine. Ainsi ce télégramme qu'il fit envoyer en 1938 par des femmes de Kiev à Staline : « Les yeux de nos enfants se rallument de joie lorsqu'ils disent : Staline, vous êtes notre fierté, vous êtes notre espoir d'aujourd'hui, vous êtes encore davantage notre avenir radieux. » Ou encore cet invraisemblable discours prononcé en 1950 à l'occasion du 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de Staline, sur le thème de « l'amitié stalinienne des peuples gage de l'invincibilité de notre patrie », où fourmillent

des flatteries écœurantes comme celles-ci : « Tous les peuples de l'Union soviétique, toute l'humanité progressive célèbrent cette date si chère du 70<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de Joseph Vissarionovitch Staline, notre guide génial et notre éducateur. Des millions d'hommes adressent leurs plus profonds sentiments d'amour et de dévouement au camarade Staline... Le camarade Staline, chef génial et éducateur de notre Parti... Le nom du camarade Staline est le drapeau de toutes les victoires du peuple soviétique... Aussi est-ce avec le plus vif sentiment d'affection et d'amour filial que les peuples de notre pays appellent le grand Staline, leur père, leur grand chef et éducateur génial... Gloire au père aimé, à l'éducateur éclairé, au chef génial du Parti, du peuple soviétique et des travailleurs du monde entier, au camarade Staline. » Etc., etc...

Ceci montre assez que le maître de la Russie 1961 n'a aucun titre à s'ériger en redresseur de torts, en vengeur des victimes qu'il a contribué à envoyer à la mort.

## LES « CHIENS MERCENAIRES FASCISTES »...

Le 23 août 1936, au moment de la liquidation de Kamenev, Zinoviev, et de leurs camarades,

## FASCISTES DE STALINE ? THOREZ ?

Quant à celui qui se laissait complaisamment attribuer le titre de « meilleur stalinien de France », et qui mérite encore cette qualification, il

n'a pas voulu amorcer le virage qui s'imposait en 1956, car sans doute la situation n'était pas très claire, c'est-à-dire qu'il n'était pas évident que la tendance qui l'emporterait en U.R.S.S. serait celle de Krouchtchev. Mais, après le XXII<sup>e</sup> Congrès, il s'est plié docilement aux nouvelles instructions, et le voilà aussi « destalinisateur » que Moscou le demande. Le demi-tour manque toutefois de légèreté, et les raisons données aux militants ont quelque chose d'assez piteux. Et quand Maurice Thorez essaie de se tirer de ce pas assurément délicat en insinuant qu'après tout, s'il y a eu des erreurs, des fautes ou des crimes, c'est en Union soviétique qu'elles ont eu lieu, alors qu'en France, la démocratie intérieure, la direction collective ont toujours été en honneur au P.C.F., on a peine à croire que c'était le même homme qui se laissait encenser sans pudeur à longueur d'année. Qui ne se souvient des anniversaires de Maurice Thorez, avec les gros titres en première page de « L'Humanité » et le tableau d'honneur des meilleures cellules, celles qui offraient les plus beaux cadeaux ? Est-ce un dirigeant soviétique qui s'écriait : « Nous saluons, le cœur plein d'amour et de confiance, le guide et l'éducateur des communistes du monde entier, l'architecte du communisme, le champion de la paix, de l'indépendance et de la souveraineté des peuples, le camarade Staline. Gloire à l'éducateur et au guide des communistes de tous les pays, à l'ami et au frère des travailleurs du monde entier, à notre cher et grand camarade Staline ». Le style ferait croire à un quelconque Krouchtchev, mais ces platitudes sont extraites du « salut au XIX<sup>e</sup> Congrès du P.C. (b) », adressé par Maurice Thorez en 1952, devant Staline en chair et en os... On nous croira sans peine si nous affirmons tenir en réserve une abondante littérature de ce genre. Mais à ces Messieurs qui feignent aujourd'hui la douleur ou l'indignation devant l'idole qu'ils viennent de briser, après l'avoir fabriquée, on comprend que beaucoup de militants communistes aient envie de dire : « Pas ça, et pas vous ! ».

## DU SOULAGEMENT...

Les réactions sont cependant bien différentes selon qu'elles ont pour théâtre les pays communistes ou les autres. En Union Soviétique et dans les démocraties populaires, le stalinisme était la doctrine officielle, le pouvoir. Si un nombre non négligeable de communistes étaient sincèrement dévoués à Staline et imputaient « ce qui n'allait pas » aux échelons intermédiaires, Staline étant réputé génial et infailible, d'autres étaient staliniens pour sauver leur peau ou faire une belle carrière. Quant à la masse de la population, elle subissait en silence, écrasée par la terreur policière et une propagande omniprésente, sans moyens de s'informer ou de s'exprimer librement. Il est donc vraisemblable qu'une destalinisation, même caricaturale, sera accueillie avec faveur par les peuples soviétisés, qui espéreront que ce n'est qu'un début, et qu'une fois la machine lancée, elle ne s'arrêtera plus : pour ceux qui ont vécu l'oppression stalinienne dans la vie de tous les jours, qui en ont souffert personnellement, physiquement parfois, le régime actuel représente quand même et indiscutablement, un progrès.

## LA CONSTERNATION

Mais quelle désillusion pour les communistes français ! (Ceux de la base, bien sûr, car il y a longtemps que les dirigeants savent à quoi s'en tenir). Eux qui se sont toujours cramponnés à ce que leur affirmait le Parti, et qui rangeaient systématiquement dans le magasin des calomnies

antisoviétiques tout ce qui pouvait se dire ou se publier en désaccord avec la ligne officielle, ils se croient plongés en plein cauchemar : celui qui était génial devient criminel, les bons deviennent des méchants, les « traîtres » sont réhabilités, bref c'est le monde à l'envers. Ils ne peuvent plaider l'ignorance, si ce n'est celle où ils ont décidé de demeurer, car il fallait être sourd et aveugle en France, ou diablement sectaire, pour refuser de se rendre à quelques évidences. Mais ils souligneront que leur stalinisme à eux, communistes français, était totalement désintéressé, puisqu'à la différence de leurs camarades soviétiques, ils vivaient sous un régime qui ne montrait aucune bienveillance particulière à ceux qui se proclamaient staliniens : naïfs sans doute (et même crédules à l'excès), mais purs...

Il n'est pas question de s'apitoyer sur leur déconvenue présente, car l'esprit de fidélité au Parti ne saurait excuser l'absence de tout sens critique, le fanatisme borné, et parfois la calomnie facile contre des camarades plus avisés, qui ne pouvant plus y tenir, étouffant sous le mensonge et la bêtise, quittaient le P.C.F. Mais il faut constater qu'une masse importante de membres du P.C.F. et de communistes sans appartenance est profondément ébranlée, que certains même se sentent franchement malheureux, un peu perdus, ne sachant plus où ils en sont. De tous côtés pleuvent sur eux les sarcasmes et les moqueries, et si le ridicule ne tue plus, ce n'est pas pour autant une situation bien agréable.

## UNE CHANCE POUR LE SOCIALISME

Convient-il que les socialistes, en cette circonstance, alignent leur comportement sur celui des milieux réactionnaires, dont la campagne antistalinienne, purement négative, vise à dégoûter les travailleurs communistes de toute espèce d'action ou de conviction politique ? Il y a mieux à faire. Depuis longtemps, les socialistes déplorent la stérilisation par le P.C.F. d'une partie importante de la force politique que représentent les travailleurs, et en premier lieu, les ouvriers français. Depuis longtemps, nous enrageons de voir ces communistes, qui souvent ne sont que des socialistes qui s'ignorent, consacrer leur énergie et leur sincérité à la défense d'une cause dont ils s'obstinent à ne pas apercevoir qu'elle est le contraire, en fait, de leurs aspirations.

Eh bien, le moment est venu où les socialistes ont des chances plus grandes de faire admettre la justesse de leurs convictions par ces communistes, naguère si sûrs d'eux, maintenant désespérés : ils se rendent compte que leurs dirigeants ont menti sur pas mal de choses, l'Union soviétique, Staline, les expériences atomiques, etc... mais qui, sinon les socialistes, leur démontrera qu'ils ont été trompés de la même façon sur le Parti socialiste ? Cela, à de rares exceptions près, ils ne le découvriront pas tout seuls, et ce n'est pas la lecture de la grande presse ou l'écoute de la radio et de la télévision qui le leur apprendra. Ce n'est pas non plus la pratique de l'unité d'action, ou pire, des actions communes entre organisations communistes et socialistes, puisque pour le P.C.F. toute action commune, même échaudée, si faible soit-elle, est clouée comme un succès du P.C.F.

Non. Ce travail d'éclaircissement, de reconversion, ne se fera que par des contacts personnels, d'homme à homme, qui ne laisseront dans l'ombre aucune des raisons pour lesquelles les socialistes se tiennent fermement sur leurs positions et rejettent sans équivoque le stalinisme.

Il faudra montrer à ces camarades qu'ils ne sont pas enfermés dans le faux dilemme : rester, même avec une position honteuse, au P.C.F., ou tout lâcher. Il faudra les aider à se débarrasser de leur borborygme idéologique : s'ils sont prêts à lutter encore pour un socialisme libre et démocratique, alors leur place est au Parti socialiste.

François VÉRON.



"KHRUSHCHEV WILL NOT REHABILITATE TROTSKY"

/By Marcel Briand, La Nation Socialiste (The Socialist Nation),  
 Paris, No. 50, December 1961, page 7/ Translation

Little by little, Khrushchev is confirming all of Leon Trotsky's accusations against Stalin. And it is important that Khrushchev is always careful not even to mention the name of the founder of the Red Army. Of all Stalin's crimes he ignores the most ignoble. But can he ignore it? Obviously not.

This merits reflection.

The Limits of De-Stalinization

It would be stupid to underestimate the effort Khrushchev has made in the field of de-Stalinization. What he has accomplished -- the little that he has accomplished -- in rehabilitating several revolutionaries who were victims of the Stalin regime has hardly been pleasing to the men installed by Stalin whom Khrushchev has retained. We know something about this in France inasmuch as Thorez is still in the post given him by Stalin himself.

A certain de-Stalinization of the Party machine has taken place in the USSR. It could not be otherwise because it was a matter of life or death for Khrushchev and his friends. Thus Beria, the principle creature of Stalin (who was not even a Communist Party member if Khrushchev's revelations are to be believed, but who became the chief of the inquisition) was "physically liquidated," as were several others. But other creatures of Stalin remain at the head of all Communist Parties, in the peoples' democracies and elsewhere.

Ever since Khrushchev made his first accusations against Stalin all the Thorezes of the machine have wrapped themselves in hostile silence. And since the last CPSU Congress Stalin's men are de-Stalinizing. That is to say, they take down some statues of the genius Chief and change some street names. But what have they changed in the functioning of the Communist Parties? Nothing.

Therefore it seems that Khrushchev has not chosen to clean house completely by purging the hangman's accomplices in the machine, but rather to persuade the latter to help him in his task. And they apparently have consented. In these conditions one wonders what the limits are to the de-Stalinization undertaken by Khrushchev. These limits are imposed by the need to keep the present apparatus in place at all costs. Not only the apparatus but even Stalinist methods, by slightly reforming and "humanizing" them. According to "K's" revelations, it has been decided in the USSR that the minority in the Political Bureau (the "deviationists") will no longer be assassinated. Only a fool would not recognize this as progress. But, need revolutionaries felicitate Khrushchev for it? Assuredly not.

Had we lived a century earlier, would we have applauded Napoleon III when he led the country from the Authoritarian Empire towards the Liberal Empire? We obviously would have been with the Republicans who redoubled their attacks to bring the Empire down.

Why Khrushchev De-Stalinizes

If Napoleon III "liberalized" the Empire, it was because he was forced to. His throne was tottering and he felt concessions alone could save it. Obviously, he did not appeal to Republicans for this "liberalization" but to Bonapartists. It was a matter of closing the road to the Republic. Khrushchev is not asking help from revolutionaries to "de-Stalinize" but from Stalinites because it is a matter of closing the road to the Revolution. The rehabilitation of Trotsky would quite simply mean the end of all the Thorezes, be they Russian, German, French, or whatever. Khrushchev spoke quite clearly about the limits he expected to see respected in the de-Stalinization operation. In Hungary it was not the Thorezes who toppled the statues of Stalin but the people, among whose leading ranks were militant workers of the communist party. And Khrushchev fired cannon among the people. It is, after all, important to remember this.

(Over)

Operation Khrushchev consists in saving all that can be saved of Stalinism. By remaining immobile on positions of complete Stalinism, Khrushchev would risk being swept away by the revolt of those in the USSR who had a father, a brother, a mother, a sister, a cousin, or a friend assassinated by the Stalin-Beria team. They number in the tens of millions. And, if Khrushchev decided to pay pensions to the widows and orphans of the victims of the "purges," it is because he had to put a little balm on the wounds.

I have been able to acquire the testimony of a comrade who was in a Soviet camp at the time of Stalin's death. Revolt broke out in this camp of 200,000 prisoners. The signal for it was given by an old Bolshevik, one of the first members of Lenin's party, a member of the left opposition (Trotskyite) and one of the few survivors of the "old guard." He started the insurrection only after having obtained information from Moscow -- as a result of liaison established by the railroad workers -- entitling him to believe that the situation was ripe for the unleashing of the Revolution. (The railroad workers had brought back with them a printed tract calling upon the workers to revolt and put an end to the dictatorship.) The interpretation made by this old revolutionary was, obviously, false because the Revolution did not break out. But there were serious troubles in different parts of the USSR.

Khrushchev is much better informed on these events than we are. He knows well enough himself why it was necessary to "give in." There is no doubt that his tactic was intelligent and that in this way he has even acquired a certain popularity. Nevertheless, he has not yet won the game. Italian communists explain that Khrushchev was forced to act this way because of pressure from the young people in the party. They are certainly right, but it must be added that pressure coming from the people is even more disturbing for him.

The thousands of students who applauded the young revolutionary poet at the time of the anniversary of the death of Mayakovsky want total de-Stalinization. They gave an ovation to this young poet who denounced the anti-Semitic crimes in the USSR and called for a struggle against the regime of Khrushchev and for a democratic government of workers and peasants. They carried him off in triumph. In the history of all revolutions, there are found such student demonstrations, announcing the workers' revolt. It can easily be imagined that Khrushchev made all the Thorezes understand, "Either you help me in the way I have chosen by "de-Stalinizing," or you will all be swept away together."

#### As Removed from Marxism as Franco

When Nathalie Trotsky sought the rehabilitation of Lenin's companion, she addressed herself to the Soviet people and not to Khrushchev. She wanted to demonstrate precisely that by refusing this rehabilitation, Khrushchev remained an accomplice of Stalin. Khrushchev cannot pretend to have been unaware of Stalin's crimes for this would be an avowal of unbelievable imbecility. It is the entire Stalinite leadership which is responsible for the assassination of Trotsky and millions of revolutionaries thrown in concentration camps. Nathalie Trotsky further pointed out that she considered the present Soviet regime "as far removed from Marxism and the proletarian revolution as that of Franco in Spain." And she added, "The police terror and Stalin's calumnies were only the political aspect of a struggle to the death against the revolution led by the ensemble of the bureaucracy. One can no more expect the re-establishment of the entire truth than the annihilation of this bureaucracy by the working class it has reduced to slavery. I hope for nothing from the Russian party nor from its basically anti-communist imitators. All de-Stalinization will be confirmed as a delusion if it does not reach the point of the proletariat's seizure of the government and the dissolution of police, political, military and economic institutions, bases of the counter-revolution established by the capitalism of the Stalinite state."

#### When Khrushchev Speaks for Debre

Furthermore, if Khrushchev were to rehabilitate Trotsky, can one imagine Thorez opening the ranks of the communist party to the Trotskyites of yesterday or today, or simply anti-Stalinites who denounced him as the gravedigger of the Socialist Revolution? It is enough to state this hypothesis to point out the absurdity of this idea. The problem is the same in the USSR except for this small difference, that the Trotskyites there have been assassinated. But, there are some dead who are more frightening than the living.

Khrushchev has preoccupations of a different order, let us repeat it: to stem the discontent. This is so true that in a speech he gave the 14 November at Tselinograd he was not afraid to refer to Debre (without naming him, it is true) to answer a dissatisfied worker. It was a matter of a tractor driver who complained of the inadequacies of wages. And K replied, "The salary level should correspond with the level of production and return. The workers' production should always exceed the level of salaries." Debre and Khrushchev employ the same arguments in response to the same claims. But in the USSR the question posed by the tractor driver was of a revolutionary character, and K's reply was a cynical avowal of the reactionary positions taken by the bureaucracy which is allied with the C. N. P. F.

Among the other problems arising in the USSR, one must note the multiplication of scandals. The latest one is worth mention: some factory managers stole 150 billion francs /presumably old francs, equivalent to U.S. \$3 billion/ by selling tulle for window curtains. And 54 persons were arrested, all belonging to the management of this Soviet society. If one correctly understands the case, each of these personages made a profit on the order of 2 billion francs. They bought country estates and "Volga blue" automobiles (Soviet luxury models). You can't do better in a capitalist regime.

But isn't this the sign of rottenness in a regime? Then, there is the famous Soviet Plan, and how does that function? How can swindlers "clandestinely" build a factory belonging to themselves and an enterprise prosperous enough to yield 150 billion in profits without the state planners knowing about it?

If Father UBU presided over the destinies of Soviet planning it would not have been otherwise.

The wonderful part of the story is that the swindle succeeded because the swindlers satisfied a need (for window curtains)) that bureaucracy had neglected.

Unfortunately, swindlers have not found a way to make up for bureaucracy's failings in food supply; if they could manufacture meat, butter and sugar they would be so popular that access to power would be wide open to them.

But it is not this kind of de-Stalinization that we desire. Ours is the kind sought by the students in Moscow and the tractor drive of Tselinograd.

"BROKEN IDOLS AND OPENED EYES"

By Francois Veron, La Nation Socialiste (The Socialist Nation),  
 Paris, No. 50, December 1961, pages 8-9/ Translation

This time things did not drag: Chou En-lai's flowers had scarcely faded before Stalin's body was moved to a discreet spot far from the adoration of the crowds. While in 1956, depending upon the humor of leaders or the pressure of the masses, there was a timid displacement of a statue here or a rebaptism of a street there, since the end of the 22nd Congress a veritable frenzy of socialist emulation has taken place for erasing all souvenirs of Stalin from all public places: neither Stalingrad, nor the streets of our communist municipalities have found grace before the delayed ardor of the haters of the "cult of personality."

The task was nevertheless great, to such a point that one of our colleagues of the Parisian press maliciously proposed to simplify things and save all the communists this work by removing the surname Stalin had chosen and no longer designating him except with his original patronym: Stalin would thus never have existed, only a sinister criminal by the name of Dzhugashvili. The de-Stalinization comedy to which the majority of the communist parties of the entire world devote themselves is worth no more than this sally. By concentrating public attention on burlesque or anecdotal episodes, communist leaders give themselves over to the same exercise as unscrupulous vintners who by substituting labels try to present miserable wines in a more favorable light: but the wine is not improved because of this.

Errors, Faults and Crimes

"Stalin's errors, faults and crimes," as they are called today, will not be corrected, effaced or punished by this intense labor of communal sewers we have witnessed for a month. They will be no more explained by this tireless denunciation of the cult of personality which was, after all, in spite of its distressing size and picturesque character, only a secondary aspect of Soviet reality. The merits of "great men" are celebrated in countries other than those of the Marxist-Leninist universe; but who in France would think of explaining the errors of the Gaullist policy by the existence of innumerable avenues called General de Gaulle? What was shocking in the Stalin idolatry was without doubt its excessive and indecent character, but it was also that it applied to a man whose political qualities could not cause the forgetting of incalculable crimes. And these crimes were perpetrated not because of the personality cult but because of the possibilities presented by a totalitarian system that smothered all sincere discussions and either muzzled or destroyed opposition, according to the case, and imposed as unique truth that formulated by a party of apparently democratic structure but whose complete centralization succeeded in concentrating all powers in the hands of a handful of leaders, or sometimes just one, without any compensating element.

In a world where none of the basic freedoms exist (word, meeting, press and association), if only on paper, where the administration can intern or deport as it wishes, where each accused is incapable of suitably appearing before a tamed justice, where the police is all-powerful and where trouble-makers become traitors and lukewarms become imperialism's accomplice saboteurs, the field is open for "errors, faults and crimes of the leaders."

Stalin, Faithful Disciple of Lenin

This is why it is completely hypocritical to accuse Stalin of having betrayed Leninism, of having perverted the teachings of Lenin, etc. If it is true that at one point in his life Lenin expressed his worries about Stalin's brutality, "his capricious temperament and his lack of patience, loyalty and correctness," it is also true that it was because of Lenin and during his lifetime that Stalin was designated Secretary General of the communist party and that he "accumulated excessive power in his hands." The procedures that at the time of Lenin attained the annihilation not only of the Czarist bourgeoisie but also of the non-Bolsheviks and primarily the social-democratic Mensheviks served later during the Stalin regime to eliminate the standpat or reticent communists. Rather than lamenting Stalin's violations of "socialist legality," it would be more exact to state that he made complete use of all their resources.

(Over)

And, if it should seem that since Khrushchev came to power there is no more deportation, no more torture and no more assassination in the Soviet Union, there is nothing to prove that this is no longer possible; the armature of the regime remains intact. Under the reign of Napoleon III, the liberal empire succeeded the authoritarian empire, but it was still the Empire.

A veritable de-Stalinization would raise questions about the very bases of the Soviet system and the policy it has followed internally as well as externally since its creation. Will those who were the executors of the Stalin policy tell us one day if, for example, the Russo-German pact is still a "success of the entire Soviet people with the glorious CPSU at its head" or if it is no more than a crime of Stalin to which one will associate the anti-party Molotov for good measure?

#### Stalinites Against Stalin

And a veritable de-Stalinization will particularly constrain to silence those who are now the apostles of it, because in contrast to Gomulka, or even Kadar who could in 1956 take pride in themselves, if not for a great political lucidity, at least for the persecutions they had suffered as a result of Stalinism, the de-Stalinizers in the Soviet Union and in France are trying to relegate to oblivion their own behavior of a few years ago. Even with Stalin, there would not have been any Stalinism, without Stalinites, and among the wild kind of Stalinite, one can find none better than Khrushchev or Thorez, to take only these two sadly illustrious examples.

The more adroit of the two is obviously Khrushchev, who as early as 1956 understood the advantage he could win in the conquest for supreme power by the transformation of his late master, Stalin, as a repository of the horrors of 40 years of dictatorship. And, by the same stroke this spectacular turn would help to over-shadow the particularly repugnant attitude of Khrushchev during the Stalin era. Because, if one goes back to the beginning, it would seem that until Stalin's death the entire political career of Khrushchev was built on the basis of excesses of Stalinism, that each purge gave him the opportunity to climb an additional rung in the Soviet hierarchy, not without this advancement's being achieved through prodigies of villainy and cowardice. This newspaper's columns would not suffice to reprint the innumerable examples and to relate "K's" ultra-Stalinite operations whose verbosity and meddling activity are well known. But it is nevertheless worthwhile to cite a few illustrations of what has just been said.

#### Fascist Mercenary Dogs

At the time of the liquidation of Kamenev, Zinoviev and their comrades, Khrushchev wrote in Izvestia of 23 August 1936, "Whoever rejoices in the victories won by our party led by the great Stalin will find but one word worthy of the fascist mercenary dogs of the Trotsky - Zinoviev gang. This word is death by execution. Even if Trotsky, the head of this gang allied to the German Gestapo, is absent from the trial, the fury of the people and the sentence of our court will reach him, no matter where." And Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico in 1940 by an agent of the GPU; Kamenev and Zinoviev were killed at the end of the "trial."

Six days before the execution of Tukhachevskiy and his "accomplices," the same Khrushchev screamed death in these terms, "Let these traitors, the Tukhachevskiys and other Gamarniks, know that we will unmask and destroy them, that we will reduce them to dust so the wind may scatter them and not the smallest trace will remain of these renegades and traitors to the socialist fatherland."

#### ... They Will Have Their Monument

Today, Khrushchev makes Stalin alone guilty of these massacres. He talks of rehabilitating these "traitors and renegades" and of building a monument to their memory!

The same harvest of oppressive citations could be gathered on the subject of the devotion, sincere or feigned, Khrushchev bore Stalin. Two samples from an extraordinarily rich range will give an idea of "K's" talent in this field. Such was the telegram he had the women of Kiev send Stalin in 1938, "Our children's eyes light up with joy when they say, 'Stalin, you are our pride, you are ...'"

our hope today, even more, you are our radiant future." Or, again, this unbelievable speech given in 1950 at the time of Stalin's 70th birthday on the theme of "The People's Friendship for Stalin, Symbol of the Invincibility of Our Country," in which there swarmed such nauseating flattery as, "All the people of the Soviet Union, and all progressive mankind celebrate this precious date of the 70th birthday of Joseph Vissarionovitch Stalin, our guiding genius and teacher... Millions of men send their deepest feelings of love and devotion to comrade Stalin... Comrade Stalin, our party's genius ~~chief and~~ teacher... Comrade Stalin's name is the flag of all the victories of the Soviet people... So it is that with the greatest feeling of affection and filial love the people of our country call the great Stalin their father, their great chief and genial teacher... Glory to the beloved father, to the enlightened teacher, to the genial chief of the party, of the Soviet people and the workers of the entire world, to comrade Stalin." Etc., etc...

This is enough to show that the 1961 master of Russia is not entitled to build himself up as the redresser of wrongs and the avenger of those victims he helped to send to their death.

#### Must Thorez Be De-Stalinized?

As for the man who complacently allowed himself to be attributed the title of "France's Best Stalinite," and who still deserves this title, he did not want to take the curve imposed in 1956, doubtlessly because the situation was not very clear; that is to say, it was not apparent that the tendency that would win in the USSR would be Khrushchev's. But, after the 22nd Congress, he docilely complied with the new instructions, and now here he is as good a "de-Stalinizer" as Moscow could wish. The about-face lacks nimbleness and the reasons given the militants are pitiful. And, when Maurice Thorez tries to extricate himself from this assuredly delicate step by insinuating that after all, if there were errors, faults or crimes, they took place in the Soviet Union, while in France, internal democracy and collective leadership have always been honored in the French communist party, one has a hard time believing that this is the same man who without modesty let himself be flattered year in and year out. Who does not remember Maurice Thorez's birthdays, with the big headlines on the first page of l'Humanite and the honor roll of the best cells, those offering the finest gifts. Was it a Soviet leader who cried, "With the heart full of love and confidence, we greet the guide and educator for communists of the entire world, architect of communism, champion of peace, independence and the sovereignty of the people, comrade Stalin. Glory to the teacher and guide of communists of all countries, to the friend and brother of the workers of the entire world, and to our dear, great comrade Stalin." The style would make one think of some Khrushchev, but these platitudes are extracts from the "Greeting to the 19th Congress of the Communist Party (b)" addressed by Maurice Thorez in 1952 to Stalin in the flesh and blood... There will be no difficulty in believing us when we say we have an abundant literature of this kind in reserve. But, it is readily understood that militant communists want to say to these gentlemen who today feign grief or indignation for the idol they have just shattered after having created it, "Not this from you!"

#### Some Comfort...

Reactions are, however, quite different depending upon whether their theater is communist countries or others. In the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, Stalinism was the official doctrine, the government. If a significant number of communists were sincerely devoted to Stalin and ascribed "whatever was not right" to intermediate ranks, since Stalin had the reputation of being a genius and infallible, others were Stalinites to save their hides or to build a successful career. The mass of the population, crushed by police terror and an omnipresent propaganda, without means of informing itself or freely expressing itself, submitted in silence. It is, thus, probable that a de-Stalinization, even in caricature will be greeted with favor by Soviet people who will hope that it is not just a beginning and that once the machine is in motion, it will not stop again: for those who lived through the Stalin oppression in everyday life and who suffered personally from it, sometimes physically, the present regime even so represents an indiscutable progress.

#### Consternation

But what disillusion for French communists! (Those at the base, to be sure, because for a long time the leaders knew what to reckon with.) Those

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who clung desperately to what the party told them, and who systematically arrayed everything that could be said or published in disagreement with the official line in a storehouse of anti-Soviet calumnies believe themselves in the midst of a nightmare: the man who was a genius becomes a criminal, the good become the bad, and "traitors" are rehabilitated, in short, the world is upside down. They cannot plead ignorance, unless that is what they had decided to remain, because one would have to be deaf and blind in France, or devilishly sectarian, to refuse to accept the evidence. But they will point out that their own Stalinism, that of French communists, was totally disinterested, because in contrast with their Soviet comrades, they lived under a regime that showed no particular benevolence to those claiming to be Stalinites: naive beyond doubt (and even excessively credulous), but pure...

There is no question of taking pity on their present discomfort because the spirit of fidelity to the party could not possibly excuse the absence of all critical sense, stubborn fanaticism, and sometimes easy calumny against better informed comrades who, no longer able to stand it, smothering beneath lies and stupidity, left the French communist party. But, it must be pointed out that an important group of members of the French communist party and communists without membership is deeply disturbed, that some of them even feel frankly unhappy, a little lost, not knowing any more where they are. From all sides sarcasm and mockery rain upon them, and if ridicule no longer kills, it still does not mean that this is a pleasant situation.

#### Chance For Socialism

Is it appropriate in this circumstance for socialists to match their behavior with that of reactionary groups whose purely negative anti-Stalin campaign is aimed at arousing the aversion of communist workers for all kinds of action or political conviction? We have better things to do. For a long time socialists have deplored the French communist party's sterilization of an important part of the political force represented by workers, French workers to begin with. For a long time we have been enraged by the sight of these communists who often are no more than socialists unaware of each other devote their energy and their sincerity to the defense of a cause they refuse to see is, in effect, contrary to their aspirations.

And so, the moment has come when socialists have a greater chance to have the wisdom of their convictions admitted by these communists, formerly so sure of themselves, now disabled: they realize that their leaders have lied about quite a few things, the Soviet Union, Stalin, atomic experiments, etc., but who, if not the socialists, will show them that they have been deceived in the same way about the socialist party? With very few exceptions, they will not find this out all by themselves, and it is not by reading important newspapers, and listening to the radio or the television that they will find out. Nor is it the practice of unity of action, or worse, common action between communist and socialist organizations since for the French communist party all common action, even meager, no matter how weak it may be, is trumpeted as a success of the French communist party.

No. This work of enlightenment and reconversion will only take place through personal contacts, man to man, that will leave in no way obscured the reasons for which socialists firmly maintain their positions and unequivocally reject Sovietism.

It will be necessary to show these comrades they are not bound up in a false dilemma: to remain, even with a shameful resignation /Translator: printing bad; this is only a guess/, in the French communist party, or to give everything up. They must be helped to disentangle themselves from their ideological quagmire: if they are ready once again to struggle for a free and democratic socialism, then their place is in the socialist party.