

fact that a few such bombs, the development of which Marx and Lenin had not foreseen, could also make a considerable rent in any social fabric, including their own. This may have made military risks less attractive to them, at least for the present. If our Western capacity for defence and retaliation should decline, however, the use of military means might regain its appeal for the Kremlin.

No modern ruler, within broad limits of sanity, prefers military means when others appear to have a good chance of gaining him his objectives. The Russians are traditionally cautious and defensive. The more confidence they have in their present political methods and the use to which they can put their expanding economic power abroad, the less temptation they will be under to resort to military aggression or military threats. At the moment, they seem to have such confidence. This is a mixed blessing.

To conclude: I suspect that the internal situation in the Soviet Union is less stable than it appears to be. The less stable it is, the less predictable. I feel quite sure that the present international situation is also unstable. All I can see, therefore, is that things will continue to change. Perhaps the changes will not be catastrophic. It is possible that the free world will achieve ever greater unity. The chief hope, and I do not rule it out, is of a mutual accommodation—based on our own united strength, cultural and physical, and a determination of both sides to control war—that might carry us safely through the immediate future into an unknown beyond.

Louis J. Halle

THE PLEASURES OF NOT BEING STALINIST

TWO things seem to me of very great importance when trying to appreciate the change of mood in Russia. One can be seen from outside the Soviet Union, the other only from the inside. The first is

the way the current leaders, who rose to power as Stalin's chosen slave drivers and executioners, are positively revelling in their new freedom: they are children let out of school; or they are the wartime chiefs-of-staff scampering down the corridors of the War Cabinet offices when Mr. Churchill has at last gone to bed. Many have commented on Mr. Malenkov's extreme geniality and the way in which, with no training for the job at all, this deadly, complicated, and utterly ruthless killer outdid the most gifted vote-catchers of the Western democracies in kissing babies and stealing silly hearts. The conclusion from this, as a rule, was that Mr. Malenkov must be a very clever man, which we knew already, and that his amiable and almost diffident demagoguery was calculated down to the last twinkle in those strange and often weary eyes. Of course the whole performance was calculated: the Russian leadership is trying to sell itself to the West—just as it is trying to sell itself to the Russians. What else? But nobody who stood by Mr. Malenkov, talked to him, then watched him, at one of the official receptions could be in the slightest doubt that he was enjoying every minute of it, every new contact with strange creatures he had never met before, and, on a more imperial level, as pleased as punch with himself for the virtuosity and grace with which he was in fact projecting himself, and the Soviet Union, and beating the Westerners at their own game—a far more amusing and entertaining game than any he had played before.

Perhaps people were misled by thinking of Mr. Malenkov as a unique apparition. He is far from unique in this sense. He is merely more imaginative and polished. I have been able to watch his colleagues a good deal during the past year: first in Belgrade, then in Geneva, then in Moscow itself. And, of course, through the newspapers, in India (where, contrary to popular Western belief, Messrs. Khrushchev and Bulganin were more concerned with taking China down a peg or two in Asia than in actively undermining Britain and America). The first sharp impression of high-spirited enjoyment, of

liberation, immediately produced in Belgrade, has steadily persisted—though in London it was muted for a variety of reasons. There is a strong element of *Schadenfreude* too, especially on the part of Mr. Khrushchev. The state banquet for Dr. Adenauer in St. George's Hall in the Kremlin was a good example of this. Across the top of the hall ran a high table roped off from the main body, and along one side of this table the assembled Presidium sat with the West Germans, eating and toasting away under the eyes of diplomats and journalists and distinguished Soviet citizens (who thought it vulgar to watch), to make a scene not paralleled since the days of Louis XIV. Mr. K's delight in this performance, and in being able to chaff and tease and bully his West German visitors in full public view in the heart of the Kremlin, was irrepressible—for obvious reasons. His colleagues were equally pleased, but managed to restrain their manners.

This *Schadenfreude* is only a small element in the general sense of delight at being rid of Stalin and his ways. A sense of delight which must run very deep. The great leader's "closest colleagues" are not, if they can help it, going to surrender their new freedom to anybody—certainly not to any single one of themselves.

THE other thing which seems to me of special importance is the way in which the Soviet people, and especially the Soviet intelligentsia, is taking the genuineness of the change of mood for granted. These people are not simpletons, and they have had promises before. But when I was in Russia last autumn I found no suggestion anywhere of doubt about the reality of the existing gains—though a great deal of scepticism about the ability of the new leadership to develop the country on new lines as fast as everybody wanted, in face of obstruction from the vested interests of the immense state machine—the old Russian cry. This was at a time when a great many Western commentators were talking about the reversion to Stalinism and the cold war, as well as

(slightly illogically) frightening themselves with stories of a new Leninist revival. There had been a good deal of Party activity against writers who had allowed themselves to be carried away by the Great Thaw. Mr. Surkov was in the ascendant in the Writers' Union. From the outside, indeed, there was every excuse for imagining that a "reaction" might be setting in. I had my own reasons for believing that nothing of the kind was happening, but these were not strong enough to set up against accumulating evidence pointing the other way. In Moscow all this evidence fell to pieces. Writers, intelligentsia, articulate citizens of all kinds paid no attention to it at all. They were, indeed, oblivious of it: things were moving in a certain direction, and so they would continue to move: it was simply a question of ways and means. The Government had to keep control somehow, and keeping control of an earthquake is not easy: hence the occasional stridencies and "Zhdanovist" cries. The general mood of confidence was impressive, and to one who had been used to living in a Russia where nobody dared to talk to anybody (I mean to anybody outside the immediate circle of intimates, not only to foreigners), at first almost alarmingly reckless.

I think the difference was this. In the West we were thinking of post-Stalin Russia in terms of liberalising and reactionary groups warring among themselves: now one seemed to be winning, now the other. We never had a clear idea as to which members of the higher leadership belonged to which group, but we took it for granted that the groups existed. Inside the Soviet Union this view never presented itself: the move away from Stalinism (or from Beria, as it was still publicly called last autumn) was taken for granted not only as natural but also as inevitable: the how and why was simply a question of reorganisation—in the eyes of the ordinary intelligent Russian, of sorting out the "bureaucrats"; in the eyes of the more sophisticated, of sorting out the peasants, and getting agriculture working properly. And so it has gone on.

I have no idea where it is leading or how

it will end. There are so many conflicting forces at work. As for the Russians, it seems to me that they are not yet even thinking about where it will end. Movement is all; and in a country where there has been no movement to speak of for two or three decades, this is understandable. Certainly the Russians are not going to transform themselves into a Parliamentary democracy. No less certainly the famous Leninist revival is for the time being concerned far more with providing the current leadership with a moral authority beyond and above itself—which otherwise it totally lacks—than with any new revolutionary zeal.

Edward Crankshaw

BENEATH THE PARTY LINE

COMMUNIST attacks on Stalin's reputation began immediately after his death and have recently increased notably in intensity. They have been accompanied by some degree of concession to the Soviet peoples. Those who infer "profound and wide-reaching shifts in social and political life in Russia" opening up "long-range perspectives" of a "more peaceful, more liberal Russia" should read, or re-read, the six Conclusions of the Party's basic orientation course in Communism. True, the *Short Course in the History of the CPSU* is due for revision. It has stood unchanged for seventeen years, but the philosophy of each of its chief Conclusions is older than the Revolution.

The revision that has been promised can be expected to diminish Stalin's rôle, well known to have been exaggerated, and, particularly if it comes soon, to emphasise collective leadership as opposed to the cult of the individual. After all, the latter is not in accordance with the doctrines of historical materialism, and so violates one aspect of Communist theory. There is no reason to hope, however, that the six chief Conclusions which are drawn from the historical path traversed by the Bolshevik Party will be

altered, for there is not the slightest indication that Stalin as a theoretician is held to have sinned against any of the six. In fact, our limited knowledge of what has really happened seems to uphold Stalin in his contributions to Party theory and doctrine.

The third Conclusion states the historical necessity of the one-party system, and the fourth says that the Party, which in Russia therefore is Government and the State, cannot function without the internal purge. Although we do not have the full text of Khrushchev's long speech of sensational condemnation, such evidence as we have does not condemn the Party purge as an institution, but rather the manner in which Stalin went about it and the judgment exercised in some cases. There is no reason to believe that the Party will abandon a feature which has contributed so much towards its monolithic character and its discipline. Lenin has thoroughly taught the Bolsheviks not to tolerate dissidents within their ranks. He has also taught them intolerance towards non-Bolshevik political activity. There is no room for political power outside the Party, and in Russia all power and influence have political overtones.

The second Conclusion is that the Party cannot orient itself, cannot understand what is happening, or plan the course of Government and State without the continual guidance of the "science" of Marxism-Leninism, which is defined as not a dogma, but a continually developing and self-perfecting guide to action. This, in so many words, was Lenin's guiding star.

The outbursts against Stalin are in strict accord with the fifth Conclusion, which states that the Party should never become self-satisfied, but should learn by its mistakes through the processes of criticism and self-criticism. The sixth Conclusion is that the Party should always remain in close and sympathetic contact with the masses. Here the extremity of some of Stalin's methods may be held to have been at fault, but not his political aims, and it is not likely that any revision of the basic text will omit his vivid comparison of the Party's strength with that