

The Fifty Years' Agony

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Opposition in the USSR, 1917-1967,

by Roland Gaucher; translated from the French by Charles Lam Markmann, *New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969. 547 pp. \$10.00.*

Only One Year, by Svetlana Alliluyeva;

translated from the Russian by Paul Chavchavadze, *New York: Harper & Row, 1969. 441 pp. \$7.95.*

Nationalism: The Last Stage of Communism, by Emil Lengyel, *New York:*

Funk & Wagnalls, 1969. 369 pp. \$10.00.

THROUGHOUT the first half century of Soviet history resistance by various sorts of Russians to the Communist regime has been unceasing, as M. Gaucher shows us. And though every rebellion, whether overt or clandestine, has been in its turn crushed without mercy, the resistance continues in one form or another. One aspect of it can be seen in the extent to which so many of the younger intelligentsia, at some peril to their own safety, rallied openly to the support of writers like Andrey Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel. Meanwhile, we are told,

. . . believers fight for their religions, little groups of activists distribute leaflets or try to obtain weapons, guerillas

attempt a few attacks from the forests of the Ukraine and White Russia and the mountains of the northern Caucasus. Mass movements erupt unheralded and with particular violence in the industrial centers.

These sporadic activities, it seems, are for the most part unorganized and are wholly uncoordinated, for though the Chekist police system lost something of its power in the downfall and death of Beria, it has lost nothing of its vigilance. From the beginning, however, there has never been much agreement or effective collaboration among the enemies of the regime. One infers from Mr. Gaucher's narrative that it was less the fanaticism and valor of the Red Army or the military genius of Comrade Trotsky, than the mutual hostility of White officers and politicians, and the conflict of purposes among monarchists, Cadets, Essars, and so on, that accounted for the triumph of the Bolsheviks in the fearful Civil War.

Today the opposition is divided between those who would preserve the geographical integrity of the Russian state and those who demand independence for the various constituent nationalities, Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians and the rest. This is a question on which Mr. Lengyel, whose experience of Tsarist and Com-

munist Russia goes back fifty years or more to his time as an Austro-Hungarian prisoner of war in Siberia, has no doubts. Everywhere in the Communist world, he believes, the tendency of historical evolution is toward national revival and separatism. He sees in Tito of Yugoslavia a grand communist heresiarch whose role in the disruption of communist internationalism has been analogous to that of Martin Luther in disrupting the supranational unity of Western Christendom. Recent events in Czechoslovakia and Rumania are further confirmations of the trend. As for Russia itself, he finds both the revival of Orthodox Christianity and the resurgence of anti-Semitism to be deeply symptomatic of the restored "historical exclusivity" of the Russian character. The Jew has again become, what he was in Tsarist times, "an outsider, an 'unconsecrated' person, and therefore an alien, a foe."

To this Mr. Gaucher's history lends a certain support. Though the massive purge, almost amounting to a program of genocide apparently contemplated by Stalin at the time of the "doctors' plot," has not been pursued by his successors, the effort to eradicate all traces of Jewish culture and tradition continues rigorously. Any relaxation of it would not only reveal the new covert enthusiasm of Russian Jews for the state of Israel but there would be instant repercussions among all the other national minorities of the Soviet Union. It is much the same with Christianity. The antireligious campaign, suspended by Stalin in the promotion of a national and patriotic rather than a communist war, has been renewed with increased vigor. Churches and monasteries have been closed and church attendance has fallen off, but clandestine worship has vastly increased. The continued subservience of the Patriarch and metropolitans to the regime, however, has discredited them with a large part of the Orthodox faithful and has given rise to schisms. One schismatic group calling itself the True

Orthodox Christians requires its members to resign from collective farms, trade unions and government institutions and forbids them to keep their children in school beyond the fourth year. Indigenous sects like the Dukhobors, the Khlysty, and the Old Believers, as well as new sects imported from the West, like Adventists, Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses, continue to attract the discontented and rebellious.

[The sects] form small, profoundly fraternal groups that demand specific tasks and commitments of each of their members and that inspire a tremendous devotion. Those who join them find a climate of zeal that is no longer provided in the clumsy, sclerotic groups of the *Komsomol*, a system of routine for some and of careerism for others.

Language, the vehicle of national tradition, the moujik's love of land and his implacable hatred of the *kolkhozi*, and religion, says M. Gaucher, are the three sources of resistance that the regime, with all its elaborate apparatus of terror, has been unable to eradicate. In 1962 a strange bit of news came out of Soviet Russia. The daughter and only surviving child of the late dictator, whose crimes have been compared in magnitude and cruelty to those of Ivan the Terrible and Genghiz Khan, asked for and received baptism into the Orthodox faith. Hers had been a mystical and emotional conversion in which the dogmas and rituals of Christianity played no important part. She conceived of the sacrament as a repudiation of evil and an affirmation of truth.

I believed that the Supreme Mind, not vain man governed the world. I believed the Spirit of Truth was stronger than material values. And when all of this entered my heart, the shreds of Marxism-Leninism taught me since childhood, vanished like smoke. . . . It was then that my father's whole life stood out before me as a rejection of Wisdom, of

Goodness in the name of ambition, as a complete giving of oneself to Evil. For I had seen how slowly, day by day, he had been destroyed by evil and how evil had destroyed all those who stood near him.

Svetlana Alliluyeva, however, was too young to have seen more than part of the evil. M. Gaucher's account of the peasant resistance, both passive and violent, to the enforced collectivizing of agriculture is a story that rivals in horror anything else in this century of horrors, even the extermination camps of the German Third Reich. Besides innumerable incidents of assassination of agents of the government and of persons suspected of being government informers, there were, according to Bucharin, no less than a 150 peasant uprisings. The more prosperous peasants destroyed all their possessions, including grain and livestock, rather than let them fall into communist hands. In many cases they destroyed their families and themselves as well. Those who did so and those who were killed by the GPU, the militia, or the party volunteers were spared the horrors of the deportations. Hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children were crammed into box cars for the forty days and nights of the journey from the Ukraine to Siberia. They had no food except what they had been able to take with them, and they were never allowed to leave the train when it stopped en route. Gaucher quotes the Yugoslav Anton Ciliga, a former Communist:

People died in huge numbers and with terrible suffering. The living and the dead, their food and their excrement, were all piled together; desperate fathers were seen to snatch up their starving children and fracture their skulls against the telegraph poles past which the train was speeding.

Russian agriculture has not even yet recovered from the communists' war against the kulaks and other peasant proprietors. A table reproduced by M.

Gaucher shows that between 1919 and 1923 more than half the livestock in Russia had perished. Even in the 1950s, according to no less an authority than Comrade Khrushchev, farm productivity was well below the prerevolutionary norms.

A concomitant of the collectivization was the catastrophic famine. One Alexandre Weissberg-Cybulski who was in Kiev at the time and whose testimony is cited by our historian, told how thousands of peasants died of hunger, "and the others, unable to stand, lay in their huts. Every day people were fleeing from the regions where the famine was raging; they fell dead in the Karkov market. The workers in the towns looked like corpses. Horses collapsed in the streets." Another frightening and vivid account was given by the late Victor Kravchenko, one of the *komsomols* sent to save the crops that the collectivized peasants were too feeble to harvest. He recalled, as in nightmare, the "skeleton legs and balloon bellies of the children" and how some on the kolkhoz tried to keep themselves alive by eating horse dung and the bark of trees.¹ Little or nothing about the famine appeared in the American newspapers, though the well-fed correspondents in Moscow could not have been unaware of it. By a grim historical irony the height of the famine in Russia coincided with the stampede of American intellectuals into the Communist Party and its protean "front" organizations.

It was hardly surprising that the advance of the German *Wehrmacht* into the Ukraine and White Russia in the summer of 1941 should have been awaited with such joy by so many of the surviving inhabitants. In anticipation of their liberation from the Soviets a nationalist government had been set up. It was here, in refusing the collaboration of this government and in arresting its leaders, that Adolf Hitler made the greatest of his many grandiose blunders, for, as we see it now, it was one that assured the eventual destruction of the Third Reich and the emergence of the US-SR as the overweening power on the con-

continent of Europe. The shrewder German political and military minds understood that the war in Russia could not be won without the cooperation of the people and that this could be obtained only "by creating in opposition to the Stalinist system a government of free Russia with which it would be possible to collaborate after the war." But the policy had already been determined by Nazi ideology; the Slavic peoples were *Untermenschen*, an inferior order of humanity, to be exterminated or enslaved as expediency might suggest, and their homeland converted into a German colony. The businesses and industries expropriated by the Communists were not restored to their former owners, the hated system of *kolkhozi* was continued under German direction. Millions of Ukrainians and White Russians were rounded up by press gangs and shipped to the Reich as labor slaves, but others fled to the forests, where they were organized into guerrilla bands by the nationalists and were presently joined and taken over by communist partisans dropped by parachutes. "A new front was opened behind the German lines, threatening their supply dumps and their systems of communications. This new front was never to be completely broken."

Nevertheless, there were already two hundred thousand Soviet nationals serving in the German army as auxiliary volunteers. "God alone knows what will happen," Lieutenant-Colonel Gehlen confided to a brother officer, "if Hitler or the people around him find out what is going on here, if they learn there are Russians wearing German uniforms. But we have to carry on the struggle. . . . Our aim should not be to colonize Russia but to liberate the Russian state from the Soviet system." His view was shared by many, including the Count von Stauffenberg and Captain W. K. Strik-Strikfeld. It was Strik-Strikfeld who drafted in the name of General Andrey Andreyevich Vlassov the proclamation which, when dropped over the Red Army lines near Volkhov, caused many thousand Russians to cross over to the Germans. It

was the same Stauffenberg who planted the bomb in Hitler's headquarters on July 20, 1944. On the day after the failure of the assassination attempt became known, Strik-Strikfeld went to Vlassov to inform him that Stauffenberg was dead. Another defected Soviet commander, General Malyshkin was present.

Expressionless, Vlassov stared into space. "Stauffenberg?" he said at last in surprise. "Stauffenberg? I don't know any Stauffenberg."

Look, Andrey Andreyevich, you remember: the colonel who did everything on behalf of your cause.

Vlassov rose. "You must be mistaken," he said in a completely composed manner.

Strik-Strikfeld was dumbfounded. How could Vlassov contend that he did not know even the name of Stauffenberg? A moment later Malyshkin left. Vlassov waited until his footsteps on the stairs could no longer be heard; then he said: "One should never again speak of such friends. . . . Do not forget, Wilfred Karlovich, that I come out of the Soviet school. There I learned that I can trust no one.

M. Gaucher offers this conversation as an illustration of the police-state psychology. Vlassov's was the reaction of a man who had "learned to repress his thoughts and to accommodate himself at a moment's notice to every change in the line." To such a man evasion and duplicity become second nature, almost a reflex action. Svetlana Alliluyeva, who found herself astonished by the ingenuous frankness of Americans, also tells us how the Soviet citizen "is trained to lie from his diapers" and learns from his earliest schooldays "that one cannot say aloud what one thinks."

Vlassov, Malyshkin, and several of their associates were turned over to the Soviet forces by the Americans among whom they had sought refuge after the German

collapse. They were subsequently hanged without public trial, for Stalin did not wish the world to know the wide extent of the defections. Nor did he wish it to know that for four years after the end of the war well-organized, well-armed, well-led forces calling themselves the Army of Ukrainian Independence were fighting and often defeating his soldiers.

The French edition of M. Gaucher's history appeared in 1967, the semicentennial anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. That was also a year that began with Svetlana Alliluyeva's appearance at the American Embassy to ask for asylum. She had gone to India with the grudging permission of the Soviet authorities to fulfill the dying wish of her consort,² the Indian Communist Brajesh Singh, that his ashes be strewn over the Ganges in accordance with Hindu custom. There she made her decision never to return to Russia, though it might mean a lifelong separation from her children. To avoid diplomatic complications she was hurriedly flown to Rome with an Embassy escort and thence to Switzerland while it was debated in Washington whether or not to admit her to the United States. After a few months she was allowed to come here on the recommendation of Ambassador George F. Kennan who had been sent to interview her. A book about her family and her early life, called *Twenty Letters to a Friend*, had been smuggled out of Russia and its publication in New York like M. Gaucher's in Paris coincided with the semicentennial celebration. An effort had been made by the Kremlin through the Department of State to have the publication postponed, but the publishers refused. It was then that the redoubtable communist propaganda guns opened fire on Svetlana all round the world. Premier Kosygin fired the first shot by denouncing her to the United Nations as a mentally sick and "morally unstable person," thus establishing the line for what was to follow.

During the next month I learned from

the press many new things about myself. . . . That all my life I had been under the care of psychiatrists; that I was unusually oversexed; that I wore the diamonds of the Romanovs, ate from their gold plates, and lived in the Kremlin in a former Romanov palace. . . . That my father consulted me on every political move; I ran his home and without me not a single decision was taken. That I had gone to Switzerland to collect the money deposited in Swiss banks by my father. . . .

She was also said to have been present (when thirteen years of age) at the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. All this appeared, seemingly with no effort at verification, in European and American newspapers. The *Literary Gazette* of Moscow described her as "an hysterical paranoiac." The Metropolitan at Moscow was quoted as saying he had never heard of her baptism and that she was not a Christian anyway but a kind of religious eclectic. Two massively circulated American women's magazines told their readers she had been converted to Hinduism and while in India had gone every day to the temple of Shiva to participate in exotic rites and had bathed daily in the holy river Ganges.

In the meantime, she had made many valuable American friends and had enjoyed the hospitality of some of them before settling into a home of her own near the Kennans at Princeton. Though she could hardly have seen M. Gaucher's work when she was writing *Only One Year*, she seems to confirm his judgments on many points, including the circumstances of her mother's suicide and of her father's final illness and death. She has appeared on some televised news conferences arranged by her publishers, but she has declined all invitations to lecture and to other forms of public exposure. She professes to have no interest in politics and has discreetly avoided involvement in American controversies. On one point, however, she speaks her mind with some ascerbity. This is when she hears

Americans praising the progress made in the Soviet Union and when they try to tell her that "socialism is a good thing" and that "America in her own way is gradually moving toward socialism."

It is most fortunate for them that they are mistaken. If they could only experience one year of life under socialism, which they seem to fancy so much after getting but a glimpse of it on a two-week tour of the USSR, they would stop forever calling on their country to "move closer to socialism. . . ." You are naïve, but that's all right. Born and bred in this opulent, generous, hospitable land, you could not think in any other way. . . . But do not try to convince us who have left Russia, that Russia has achieved great progress in the last fifty years. When it comes to "progress," kindly allow us to know better!

¹Victor Kravchenko, *I Chose Freedom* (New York, 1946).

²The authorities had refused to recognize their marriage.

The General Good and The General Will

The Mayflower Compact, by Frank R. Donovan, *New York: Grosset & Dunlap, Inc., 1968. 175 pp. \$3.95.*

THIS SMALL and pleasantly illustrated book, in the budding "Documents of Freedom" series, is clearly designed for intelligent teen-agers. As the author observes, in giving a short list of "adult books" for further reading on his subject: "There are almost no books about the Mayflower Compact written for younger readers."

Nevertheless, Mr. Donovan has produced

a study equally worthy of mature attention, not less so because the story of this Pilgrim Covenant is so little known. Hopefully, it may make headway, even though as slowly as did the parent ship, against the presently flooding tide of "Black Studies." Certainly this fundamental piece of Americana retains a relevance far greater than the "Zimbabuc culture" and "Achebe fiction" now absorbing "major blocks of time" for ninth graders in a school where I have grandchildren.

The Mayflower Compact was signed by forty-one of the fifty-one adult male emigrants aboard that vessel as she lay at anchor off Cape Cod, on November 11 (Old Style), 1620. It contains only 167 words and the pith, modernizing the spelling, is less than half that modest length:

We whose names are underwritten . . . do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, Covenant and Combine ourselves together into a Civil Body Politic . . . and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute and frame such just and equal laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

Mr. Donovan notes that: "This was the first simple and direct written expression in recorded history of what the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau would call the 'social contract' theory of government, the theory on which the government of the United States is based." In addition to correcting the nationality of this famous Genevese to Swiss, our author would have done well to omit, or at least severely qualify, his final clause above. Between the Mayflower Compact of 1620 and the theory of Social Contract, as set forth by Rousseau in 1762, there is one vital difference. The former stipulates that civil government shall conform to what is thought to be "the general good." Rousseau, however, con-