

## USSR

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player who never missed a move, who let nothing escape him." While humor was not a strong feature of Molotov's personality, his conversation with Hitler's Foreign Minister, Ribbentrop, in a shelter in Berlin in November 1940, is amusing. During a British air raid over Berlin, Hitler and his party, together with Molotov, had to repair to the air raid shelter under the Hotel Adlon. The negotiations continued. "England," said Ribbentrop, "is finished. She is no more use as a Power." "If that is so," said Molotov, "why are we in this shelter, and whose are those bombs that fall?"

Mr. Kennan has skilfully formulated a description of Soviet feelings toward the West in the early 1920s in this imaginary statement to Western governments:

We despise you. We consider that you should be swept from the earth

as governments and physically destroyed as individuals. We reserve the right, in our private if not in our official capacities, to do what we can to bring this about: to revile you publicly, to do everything within our power to detach your own people from their loyalty to you and their confidence in you, to subvert your armed forces, and to work for your downfall in favor of a Communist dictatorship. . . .

. . . In the blindness that characterizes declining and perishing classes, you will wink at our efforts to destroy you, you will compete with one another for our favor. Driven by this competition, which you cannot escape, you will do what we want you to do until such time as we are ready to make an end of you. It is, in fact, you who will, through your own cupidity, give us the means wherewith to destroy you.

This is a description of the Soviet attitude of forty years ago. Were Mr. Kennan's formulation to be revised in 1961 little change would be needed to make it up to date.

is spent in preventing them from taking over the united front organization lock, stock, and barrel. Third, the united front loses its moral integrity. For example, it will condemn discrimination in America but gloss over or deny virulent anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union; it will denounce American brinkmanship but remain silent about the periodic rocket-rattling threats of the Kremlin. The odd thing is that many lovers of peace understood these considerations when the German-American Bund sought to make a united front with them at the time it too was crying "Peace." But they are overlooked when the Communists artfully claim that they have shelved their ultimate goals for immediate objectives, despite the fact that according to Communist theory this is the earmark of unprincipled opportunism—one of the worst deviations in the Communist book.

All this is the indirect moral of Sandor Voros's firsthand account of his experiences as an American Communist. It is reinforced by his heart-rending story of how money contributed by American sympathizers for Spanish Republican aid swelled Party coffers; of how Socialist and dissident members of the International Brigade, who had staked their lives against Franco, were liquidated for criticizing Soviet policy; of the callousness, cynicism, and arrogant ineptitude of the upper echelons of the Communist apparatus, for whom no moral law was binding but only the law or line laid down by the Kremlin. Voros summarizes one of his early inner-Party experiences with the observation: "A Communist promise binds only those to whom it is given but it is *never* binding on the Communist leaders themselves."

The interest and readability of Voros's autobiography are heightened by his recital of his experiences as a stripling in Hungary during and after the First World War. The fact that he

## In League with the Kremlin

**"American Commissar,"** by **Sandor Voros** (Chilton, 477 pp. \$4.95), recounts the adventure-filled life of a Hungarian-born former American Communist. Sidney Hook, head of the Philosophy Department at New York University, wrote *"The Ambiguous Legacy: Marx and the Marxists,"* among other books.

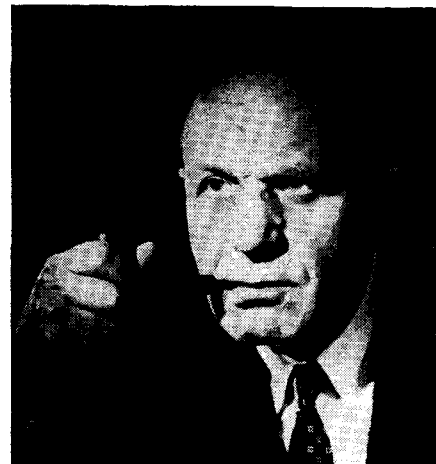
By Sidney Hook

RECENT events have been grim reminders of the importance of familiarizing ourselves with Communist theory, and especially Communist practice, if we wish to understand the world around us. Illusions with respect to Communism seem perennial. The most hardy of these illusions is the notion that if the Communists for strategic reasons support some worthy cause like disarmament or oppose unworthy practices like discrimination, there can be no reasonable objection to making a united front with them. "After all—what's the harm in working with them for a common cause?" the innocent and uninstructed always ask.

A crushing answer to this question can be found in this fascinating life story spiced with an unusual dash of humor, by a former leading American

Communist of Hungarian origin. Sandor Voros was one of the official representatives of the American Communist Party in Spain at the time of the Civil War. Memory of the behavior of the Communist Party in Spain, where it exploited the Popular Front in behalf of directives laid down by the Kremlin, is rapidly fading. This book should do something to revive it, because it contains a host of new and outrageous details of the Communists' indifference to the human values of the struggle, their duplicity towards their allies and supporters, and their ultimate betrayal of the anti-Fascist cause long before the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

On the basis of the record, the answer to the question "Why not unite with Communists or Communist fellow-travelers when they profess themselves willing to work in a common cause?" is at least threefold. First, they invariably subordinate the cause—whatever it is—to the Communist goal or the foreign policy of the Kremlin. Thus when the Picasso dove of peace, under whose sign many good souls were gathered, went "Boom!" in Korea, the united front organizations found themselves defending the invasion of South Korea as an action in defense of peace. Second, Communists always aim at the jugular vein of organizational control, with the consequence that a disproportionate amount of time and energy



Sandor Voros — "a host of new and outrageous details."

had been a military cadet contributed to the subsequent roles he was to play after he fled from Hungary when Admiral Horthy took over. Even farce sometimes has historical effects. His tale of how a rained-out demonstration of less than a dozen people before the empty Hungarian Embassy saved the life of Rakosi, then languishing in a Hungarian jail, seems incredible to those unaware of how the well-oiled Communist propaganda machine functions. As Voros tells the story, the Washington papers on a slow day headlined the demonstration on the basis of the pickets' own reports. The wire services picked it up. The Communist press in Europe splashed it in special editions as hot news. *Pravda* and other Soviet papers front-paged it as a great demonstration in Washington, "the citadel of capitalism." Socialist and even liberal papers relayed the story to Latin and South America, where it sparked other demonstrations. Confronted by apparent signs of a world movement and believing he was under an international spotlight, "Horthy did not dare to have Rakosi executed: he commuted his sentence to twenty years' imprisonment." As Voros observes, once Rakosi himself was installed in power not all the demonstrations in the world prevented him from sending hundreds of innocent Hungarian Socialists and liberals to the gallows. After the Hungarian Revolution broke out, Kadar and Khrushchev wreaked their vengeance against tens of thousands in defiance of world public opinion.

Of greater local interest is Voros's discussion of his life as a Communist organizer in Ohio during the Depression and post-Depression days. Here the limitations and weaknesses of his story appear. His attempt to show that Lenin's classic description of the objective preconditions of revolution were being fulfilled in America in 1932 is pure poppycock. He has a tendency, present in many former members of the Communist Party, to magnify and glorify the activities of the Communists during the period when he was one of them and had no serious doubts about the promise of the New Jerusalem and the wisdom of its architects. He claims credit for the Communist Party for a good deal of the spontaneous outbreaks of local violence in rural and suburban areas that frustrated attempts of banks and landlords to foreclose and evict. This is sheer revolutionary romancing about the tail of the dog. Voros is proud of the work of the Communist-organized Unemployed Councils in getting concessions for those on relief. He is silent, however, about the fact that these Councils spent a good deal of their time—and since he was a

good Communist leader, probably under his direction—in breaking up the meetings of the Unemployed Leagues, organized by Socialists and independent radicals who had discovered and proclaimed the truth about the Communist movement long before Sandor Voros.

When he was not a Party organizer Voros earned his living as a furrier. After he broke with the Communist Party upon his return from Spain and tried to resume his trade, the Furriers' Union, then under the control of the Communists, headed by Ben Gold, made life impossible for him. Although he was a bona fide trade-union member, he could get no work and was subject to physical attack. He finally left New York in quest of a new life. As a

tale of adventure, his book has more exciting qualities than many novels.

There is one puzzling feature about it. Sandor Voros obviously is a very skilful writer and his story deserves the tribute paid to it by Granville Hicks, James Wechsler, Theodore Draper, and others who are well qualified to judge its verisimilitude. But Voros broke with the Communist Party more than twenty years ago. Why did he wait so long to write this account, whose merit insured that it would find ready publication? Its educational effect would have been far greater had it appeared before this. Whoever is responsible for the delay—whether the author himself or others—has done a disservice to Sandor Voros and the cause of freedom.

## The Tie That Binds Two Giants

***"Dragon in the Kremlin: A Report on the Russian-Chinese Alliance," by Marvin L. Kalb*** (Dutton, 251 pp. \$4.50), *assembles information, insights, and opinions gathered in globe-wide interviews. Alexander Dallin is associate professor of international relations at Columbia University's Russian Institute.*

By Alexander Dallin

**M**ARVIN KALB is an astute observer, known to many from his earlier book, "Eastern Exposure," and for his current reporting for CBS News from Moscow. He is one of the handful of Soviet affairs specialists in the "mass media" who spent years—in his case, at Harvard, Columbia, and in the Soviet Union—learning about the USSR.

Kalb's present book is an ambitious attempt to make sense of the complex and inadequately studied problems of the Sino-Soviet relationship. When he realized their magnitude and potential importance and was struck by the general paucity of information, he determined to journey around the world in search of answers. This book, then, is an account of his trip to a dozen or so capitals, from London to Tokyo. At each stop we learn what the "experts" whom Kalb consulted had to say—as well as some other telling but often irrelevant comments.

The result is a highly readable account, dashed off with brilliance, at times oversimplifying but always in-



Marvin L. Kalb—"varied advice."

teresting and informed. It is no fault of the author that the quality of the information and insights he garnered varied greatly. The best is very good indeed; the worst is a hodge podge of rumors, guesses, and contradictions. Since evidence and hypotheses are presented piecemeal, as they came up in Mr. Kalb's interviews around the globe, the reader may lack a coherent framework for them. It is amazing, too, how many presumably competent foreign service officers and journalists are unable to come up with sensible views of the Russian-Chinese alliance. Thus, discussing the communes (a "hot" sub-