

parties may use as a model in similar circumstances.

\* \* \*

The Soviet leaders made no attempt at the Twentieth Congress to map out in detail the several "roads to power" they now profess to sanction for foreign Communists, or even to lay down a complete list of them—except in the purely formal sense that any future conquest of power could be described as either "legal" or "violent." This confinement to broad generalities was deliberate; in fact, leading Soviet spokesmen emphasized that it would be absurd to expect a revolution to take only one or a few prescribed forms in all countries and conditions. In short, the new line is aimed precisely at emancipating world communism from any hampering doctrines about the form of revolution; the Soviet leaders have

at last come forth with the stark recognition that it is the achievement of power alone which matters.

Such power is still described in Leninist terms as "the dictatorship of the proletariat under the leadership of its Communist vanguard." But the sanction both of the Fascist-Stalinist technique of the "legal" *coup d'état* and of the Maoist-Titoist strategy of partisan warfare suggests full consciousness on the part of the Soviet leaders that the alleged proletarian class content of the dictatorship is a fiction, that its totalitarian form as a dictatorship of the Communist Party is the only relevant reality. Ironically enough, they seem to have gained this theoretical insight into the essence of their own system at an historical moment when the growth of new social forces with the achievement of industrialization makes the continued preservation of party dictatorship increasingly difficult even in the Soviet Union itself.

## *Bulganin and Khrushchev in Britain*

By DENIS HEALEY

IT was under the heady influence of the "Geneva spirit" in July 1955 that Prime Minister Anthony Eden first invited the Soviet leaders, Nikolai Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev, to visit Britain. However, in the nine months that elapsed before the actual visit, Soviet actions gave the Prime Minister more than one occasion for wondering if his invitation had not been somewhat over-impulsive.

In September the arms deal between satellite Czechoslovakia and Egypt confronted British policy in the Middle East with a new and exceptionally dangerous challenge. Two months later the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Geneva showed that Soviet policy on specific issues was as unyielding as ever. Then, as winter approached, the Asian tour of Bulganin and Khrushchev gave clear warning of the part

which such foreign visits were calculated to play in the Soviet game of psychological warfare, while the public criticisms of Britain's colonial past voiced by the Soviet leaders during their tour were particularly offensive to Prime Minister Eden's own Conservative Party.

Conservative spokesmen both in Parliament and in the press began suggesting that the invitation should be withdrawn, and the Prime Minister's replies on the subject showed that his own enthusiasm for the visit had dwindled. Official misgivings reached their climax during the unexpected three weeks' sojourn in Britain of Soviet Deputy Premier Georgi Malenkov.

### Malenkov Paves the Way

MALENKOV'S coming grew out of a routine invitation which the nationalized British Electricity Authority had extended to its Soviet counterpart to send a delegation to tour British power plants. When the delegation arrived in March, the British were astounded to find it led by the redoubtable Deputy Premier, who also wears the cap of Minister

---

The Rt. Hon. Denis Healey is a Member of the British Parliament and Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Group of the parliamentary Labor Party. He has served on the Council of the Royal Institute of International Affairs since 1948 and writes frequently for both British and American publications.

for Electricity and Power Stations. His behavior during his stay turned the visit into a considerable Soviet propaganda success.

Malenkov mingled freely with the British people both at work and at play, performing all the rituals expected of a professional politician in an Anglo-Saxon democracy—kissing babies, patting children's heads, and distributing appropriate flatteries to all he met. The contrast between his conduct and the popular Stalin-inspired stereotype of how a Communist boss behaves had a considerable impact on British opinion.

Those who met Malenkov for private talks were no less impressed by his obviously quick intelligence and subtlety. At the long press conference held at the end of his visit, he answered or parried all questions with wit, moderation and adroitness. For example, when asked his opinion of British women, he replied with a twinkle that it was rather difficult to make love through an interpreter!

The Soviet intention to make propaganda capital of the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit became ever clearer as the big moment approached. When the British press directed a barrage of criticism at General Ivan Serov, the ill-reputed head of the MVD, who flew to London during Malenkov's stay in order to make security preparations for the Bulganin-Khrushchev visit, the Kremlin responded by discreetly dropping Serov from the delegation. After Malenkov's return, the Soviet Government ingenuously showed its hand in another manner, by publishing an official protest against alleged British refusal to allow Bulganin and Khrushchev more time for direct contact with the British people—a complaint which was repeated even after their visit. Meanwhile, inside the Soviet Union, the press, radio and television launched an unprecedented propaganda campaign friendly to present-day Britain. Naturally, no hint was permitted of British opposition to the visit, which by this time was quite considerable.

Thus it was abundantly clear, when the Soviet leaders stepped ashore from the cruiser *Ordzhonikidze* at Portsmouth on April 18, that their purpose in coming was vastly different from the purpose which had inspired Prime Minister Eden's invitation. The Kremlin obviously saw the visit as part of its grand softening-up campaign launched at the July 1955 "summit" meeting in Geneva, an operation directed primarily at public opinion not only in Britain but throughout the world, on both sides of the Iron Curtain. The Soviet leaders wanted to create an atmosphere of relaxation which would induce the peoples of the non-Communist countries to exert pressure on

their governments in favor of a wholesale change in attitude toward the USSR. They also wanted to convince their own people, or such segments of the Soviet public as exert any influence on government, that the new line would promote Soviet interests far more effectively than the old.

The British Government, on the other hand, had hoped originally that the visit might further realization of the substantive goals sketched out at the "summit" parley. Now this hope had all but vanished, and the government was painfully aware of the propaganda aims which the Kremlin meant to pursue. Under the circumstances, the only course was to try to salvage something from the visit by drawing the Soviet leaders into protracted informal negotiations on the main issues of the cold war.

### Propaganda Failure

**I**N the end, neither side achieved much of what it intended. Bulganin and Khrushchev, for various reasons, made far less impact on British public opinion than had Malenkov. Their busy schedule allowed them few opportunities for direct contact with the people, and the extensive security precautions which marked their public appearances had a rather repugnant effect. In particular, their escort of uniformed, helmeted and goggled motorcyclists moving with mechanical precision and at high speed called to mind all too vividly Orwell's stark picture of 1984.

Compared with the jovial, engaging Malenkov, Khrushchev came nearer resembling, at a distance, the brutal Bolshevik of popular imagination, although in close-up his face is not devoid of sensitivity and humor. Malenkov, also, had benefited from the traditional British sympathy for the underdog because of his relegation to a back seat in the Soviet collective leadership; and perhaps the spontaneous warmth of his reception produced of itself a reaction toward a more cautious and reserved welcome for the star players who followed him on the scene.

In any case the sparse crowds which lined the routes traversed by Bulganin and Khrushchev rarely evinced more feeling than a wary curiosity, the occasional scattered cheers invariably matched by boos. Only at Oxford did the visitors receive a really noisy reception, and it could scarcely have gratified them once its nature had been explained to them by their interpreters. Thousands of boisterous undergraduates chanted "Poor Old Joe" and the "Volga Boat Song". Some carried banners with such inscriptions as "Stalin for Prof" and "Big Brother is watching you"; and at one point a firecracker exploded within a few feet of the distinguished guests, much to the consternation of their bodyguards.

Indeed, the uproarious proceedings at Oxford illustrated what was a very general popular reaction—neither extreme friendliness nor bitter hostility, but a kind of humorous curiosity with an undertone of malice born of irrepressible British antipathy for everything totalitarian. Thus, the two leaders were quite commonly referred to as “Bulge and Krush,” and in truth the pair, inseparable yet so strongly contrasting with each other, could not but invite such analogies from the music-hall.

Though less successful than Malenkov in appealing to the public, Khrushchev on occasion showed an extraordinary flair for judging his audience. His first statement, made at a Soviet Embassy luncheon on the second day of the visit, had an excellent press. His speech the following evening at the Royal Naval College was calculated to appeal very directly to the senior officers assembled there. Most of all, his final press conference was a big success, and those who watched it on television—not too many since the telecast was at 9:30 in the morning—were impressed. Khrushchev obviously had some difficulty in curbing his volubility on this occasion, but what he said was witty, relaxed and straightforward—even in evasion.

His other performances were definitely less successful. The bullying tone of his speech at Birmingham, in which he boasted of the USSR's atomic striking power, was universally resented by the British public. And his behavior at the celebrated Labor Party dinner—of which more later—completely wiped out whatever good will he may have won in his more restrained appearances.

#### Diplomatic Balance Sheet

**I**F the visit failed to satisfy all the Soviet propaganda aims, the British Government likewise gained little of positive value from the negotiations that took place. On all the chronic sore points of the cold war, the Soviet leaders remained absolutely rigid. Their one minor concession—made at Communist China's expense—was an agreement not to press for the holding of all-Vietnam elections by the originally scheduled date of July 1956.

On the Middle East, they entered into a horse-trade with Britain, the ultimate significance of which has yet to be explored. In return for Britain's tacitly pigeonholing the 1950 Tripartite Declaration which gives a Western guarantee against forcible changes in the Israel-Arab status quo, Khrushchev and Bulganin gave a commitment to cooperate in seeking a settlement of the Palestine dispute through the United Nations. In the short run this may cost the USSR some Arab good will, but the Kremlin undoubtedly

considers a temporary setback in Egypt a cheap price to pay for admission to the Great Power concert on the Middle East, which reinforces the Soviet bargaining position in the area as a whole.

On trade also the value of the Anglo-Soviet conversations is uncertain. Khrushchev handed Prime Minister Eden a shopping list which would increase British exports to the USSR fivefold in five years if present strategic restrictions were removed and if the Soviet Union were able to earn enough sterling to foot the bill. Only long technical discussions will show whether Moscow is prepared at least to start by purchasing the non-strategic items on the list, and whether the necessary financing can be arranged.

The joint communique issued at the end of the talks was even more vague in regard to cultural cooperation. This reflected the Soviet leaders' great reluctance during the talks to accept the basic British condition that exchange visits should be transferred out of the bailiwick of Communist front organizations into non-political channels.

Summing up what had been accomplished in the diplomatic sphere, Prime Minister Eden claimed that the exchanges with Khrushchev and Bulganin constituted at least “the beginning of a beginning” toward improved relations. Certainly they were no more. But the visit did produce one important result which was totally unexpected by all concerned. It arose out of the Soviet leaders' contact not with the Government but with Her Majesty's Opposition, the British Labor Party.

#### Khrushchev Dynamites the Popular Front

**I**N view of the line laid down at the 20th CPSU Congress in Moscow directing Communists all over the world to bury the hatchet and cooperate with the Socialists, it was fully anticipated that Khrushchev and Bulganin would make special efforts to curry favor with the Labor Party during their stay in Britain. They had their first real opportunity to do so on April 23, five days after their arrival, when the entire Soviet delegation dined in the House of Commons with the Labor Party's National Executive Committee and “Shadow Cabinet.”

The dinner got under way in a friendly atmosphere. It was precluded by a certain amount of good-humored but somewhat pointed banter on both sides, in which George Brown, a young trade union MP, figured prominently. After the meal there was an exchange of formal compliments, Premier Bulganin expressing regret that diplomatic protocol had stood in the way of more abundant contacts with the Labor Party. Then Khrushchev was pressed to say a few words.

He rose and made an impromptu speech which, with translation, lasted for more than an hour, growing more and more offensive by the minute.

To the Labor leaders, who a few weeks earlier had heard Malenkov deliver a tellingly restrained speech in the same room, Khrushchev's diatribe was as surprising as it was insulting. Several of them described it afterward as pure Stalinism. The speech notably included a threat to confront Britain with a new equivalent of the Stalin-Hitler Pact and a blunt rejection of any sort of arms inspection affecting any part of Soviet-controlled territory, including the Central European satellites.

In the stunned silence which followed Khrushchev's outburst, Hugh Gaitskell, the new leader of the Labor Party, rose to bring the meeting to a close. After voicing some general courtesies, he said that he could not let the occasion pass without raising the question of the Socialists imprisoned in the Communist-ruled East European countries and in the Soviet Union for no other crime than holding the same views as the British Labor Party. He also asked for information concerning the status of Jews in the USSR.

Khrushchev replied in extremely insulting fashion, declaring that Gaitskell would have to look elsewhere for "agents who would protect the enemies of the working class." He refused to accept Gaitskell's proffered list of 150 imprisoned Socialists on the grounds that there were no Socialists in the Soviet Union, and that he could accept no responsibility for the actions of the satellite governments. At this point Aneurin Bevan got into the argument with a heated defense of social democracy. The Soviet leaders finally beat a retreat long after they had intended, leaving the new Popular Front program in virtual ruins behind them.

It is not easy to account for Khrushchev's behavior unless the explanation was simply that he was excessively tired and irritable. Ever since the incident, the Soviet leadership has manifested an extraordinary degree of sensitivity about what happened. Khrushchev and Bulganin sought immediately to throw the blame on Gaitskell and Bevan, telling the world that they would much rather deal with Conservatives than with Socialists. Both *Pravda* and *Izvestia* returned to the topic repeatedly in the following month.

When the two leaders returned to Moscow on April 28, Bulganin—who had sat silent and embarrassed throughout Khrushchev's tirade at the dinner—declared that "the only organization which tried, by its conduct, to spoil the atmosphere of our visit was the Labor Party, its Executive Committee and its leaders." *Pravda* later likened Gaitskell to Ramsay

Macdonald, who—said the paper—"decided to betray his party," and it further alleged that Gaitskell had become the party's leader against the wishes of the rank and file.

#### Aftermath and Interpretation

**N**ONETHELESS, there is reason to believe that the Labor Party's informal intervention, despite—or perhaps because of—the hullabaloo it raised, did have some effect toward hastening the release of imprisoned Socialists in the East European satellites. Since the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit, the satellite governments have, one by one, been announcing the liberation of Socialists whose names were on the Labor Party's list. Several Rumanian Socialists, formerly members of parliament, have reappeared in their home towns, and a number of Hungarian Socialists on the Labor Party list are now also believed to be free.

Despite these conciliatory efforts to undo the damage done by Khrushchev's intemperate rejection of the Labor Party plea, it is doubtful that the worldwide Communist campaign to win Socialist cooperation can recover completely from the blow. Khrushchev virtually reduced the campaign to so much nonsense and, in so doing, smothered his own baby.

Inside Britain, the affair had a curious consequence in turning the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit into a partisan political issue. The controversy was marked by some complex twists, with some Conservatives charging that a Gaitskell-headed Laborite government would destroy all hope of friendly relations with Soviet Russia, and with malcontents inside the Labor Party attempting to exploit the dinner incident against Gaitskell himself or against George Brown, who is Bevan's main rival for the post of party treasurer.

Foreign observers might be excused for imagining that prominent figures in both the government and opposition parties believe it is not popular in Britain to stand up to the Soviet Union. This may well explain the seeming conviction of the Soviet leaders that public opinion in Britain is predominantly favorable toward the USSR and that mistrust of the Soviet Union is confined to unrepresentative cliques.

It remains to comment on some broader aspects of the visit. Although the Soviet leaders did not succeed in their primary goal of propagandizing the British public, they have definitely been trying to exploit the propaganda value of the visit in other countries. In Italy, for example, Communist posters displayed during the recent local elections carried a photograph of Eden and Bulganin signing the joint



communique issued at the end of the Soviet visit, the inscription on the posters reading, "Bulganin and Eden are concluding peace. If you want to relax tension, vote Communist!" Similar propaganda may carry some weight in France and West Germany, not to speak of Asia. It was certainly a tip-off of Soviet intentions that two hundred cameramen were brought along to cover the Khrushchev-Bulganin tour, and one can be sure that skillful editing will make up for any deficiencies in the raw material.

It also seems probable that the itinerant activities of Khrushchev and Bulganin are calculated to play a part in consolidating their position at home as *primi inter pares* in the new collective leadership. The Soviet press and radio, in their gross exaggeration of the warmth of the British welcome as in their belittling treatment of the Labor Party dinner, appeared extremely anxious to protect the reputation of the new leaders as beloved of all mankind, except a few anti-Soviet fanatics. In this context, it will be interesting to see whether the contrast between Malenkov's success in Britain and Khrushchev's failure does not produce new strains in the leadership rather than bolster the present status quo.

Khrushchev himself, at a recent Kremlin reception, remarked, "When we were in Britain, the Labor Party leaders praised Bulganin a great deal but were unpleasant to me. I am for the Conservatives."

The most difficult thing to assess is the impact of the visit on the thinking of the Soviet leaders themselves. Direct contact with political leaders of the Western democratic world in their natural habitat can scarcely fail to make a deep impression upon men who have been isolated from the outside world for a generation. There were significant shifts in Soviet Asian policy after the earlier Khrushchev-Bulganin tour of India and Burma—shifts which indicated that the Soviet leaders had really learned something from the attitudes of the people they met.

While there have yet to be indications of a similarly profitable lesson learned in Britain, it seems reasonable to expect, in general, that foreign travel by top Soviet leaders will tend to lessen some of the doctrinal rigidities of Soviet diplomatic policy. However, the crucial question—which remains wholly in the field of speculation—is whether such changes will produce a genuine friend or merely a more cunning enemy.

### Lessons for the West

ON the other hand, the West, too, can learn something from direct contacts with the Soviet leaders. Skillful negotiation, even if it fails to produce

agreement, can often cast light into hitherto obscure corners of Soviet policy and reveal unsuspected complexities within the Soviet leadership. What the British leaders learned from their meetings with Bulganin and Khrushchev is unknown since the conversations were confidential. Still, some general observations can be made without inside knowledge.

Above all, the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit confirmed the impression given by the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in February that the present Soviet collective leadership, whatever may be its internal differences of policy and personality, is united by an expanding confidence in the ultimate triumph of the Communist system all over the world. If the men in the Kremlin are frightened of anything, their fear would seem to be more of one another than of the defeat of communism in the world ideological struggle.

The Soviet leaders' statements and posture in Britain also lent weight to the conclusion that their confidence is not just bluff, but grounded in hard facts which no Western government can safely ignore. Khrushchev's repeated and gratuitous emphasis on Soviet atomic striking power was indicative of the Kremlin's belief that this power is already great enough to give vastly increased strength to Soviet diplomacy. As for total economic output, it will be a long time before that of the Communist bloc can match the West's, but it is already evident from the Soviet economic offensive in Asia and elsewhere that the Kremlin intends and is able to allot substantial resources to the furtherance of Soviet diplomatic-strategic objectives. Finally, Khrushchev's boastful arrogance seemed to reflect Soviet confidence in the effective unity of the world Communist bloc.

It seems likely that the Soviet leaders will seek further invitations for foreign travel. If so, their undoubted purpose as in the case of the British visit and the earlier Asian tour, will be to appeal to public opinion over the heads of the host governments. Britain's recent experience would seem to point to the wisdom, on the part of any future prospective host, of settling and publishing in advance the matters on which agreement will be sought, so that domestic public opinion may have a touchstone by which to judge the real value of the new Soviet spirit.

If the West can contrive a means whereby touring Soviet leaders, instead of being allowed to pose as all things to all men, can be obliged to take a clearcut stand on specific issues of critical importance to East-West understanding, then—and only then—will the West have nothing to fear and possibly a great deal to gain by agreeing to future visits.

# Recent Trends in Soviet Labor Policy

By JERZY GLIKSMAN

THE downgrading of Stalin and the new Soviet tactics in foreign affairs have overshadowed by their dramatic impact a number of less spectacular but important changes in the Soviet internal scene. Of these, the reforms in the field of labor law are undoubtedly among the most significant. An analysis of recent developments in Soviet labor policies, which culminated in the decree of April 25, 1956,<sup>1</sup> moderating labor discipline regulations, may serve to reveal the scope and significance of the changes. It is obvious that Soviet labor policy is geared primarily to the basic problem of the Soviet economy—the level of labor productivity. The major speeches delivered at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (February 1956) indicate clearly that the problem of obtaining higher labor productivity is a source of increasing concern to the Soviet rulers.

There is good cause for alarm. Soviet statistics show that the rate of increase in labor productivity has been declining; in fact, the industrial goals of the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1951–1955) were reached only because the labor force was enlarged beyond planned figures. In spite of the recently announced reduction in the size of the armed forces, an increase in manpower at the previous rate cannot be expected during the current Sixth Five-Year Plan (1956–1960); the low birth rate during World War II, the slow-down in

<sup>1</sup> *Vedomosti verkhovnovo soveta SSSR*, No. 10 (852), May 8, 1956 (hereinafter cited as *Vedomosti*). The full title of the decree is: "On Abolishing Court [*sudebniis*] Liability of Wage Earners and Salaried Workers for Leaving Employ of Enterprises and Institutions Without Permission and for Absence From Work Without Valid Reason."

Mr. Glikzman, formerly a lawyer in Poland and later Research Fellow at the Russian Research Center of Harvard University, is now with Rand Corporation, Washington, D. C., where he is preparing a study on Soviet labor.

rural recruitment of labor, and the planned longer schooling of youth are among the reasons. Thus, if the contemplated introduction of a 40-hour work week is to become a reality without causing a decrease in production, it is imperative that output per man-hour be increased. It is only in this context that the recent decree can be understood properly.

For the Soviet effort to increase labor productivity has been a continuous process of trial and error, in which the components of incentives, indoctrination, and coercion have been differently emphasized at various periods. Although no single method has proved sufficient, material incentives have been stressed above all other devices. The use of ideological and social incentives, of prestige symbols; the manipulation of "socialist emulation" drives, and the organization of campaigns to humiliate "slackers" have also played a considerable role. All these methods or devices have been bolstered by the enforcement of so-called work norms; by administrative controls exercised by the government, party, and trade unions; and, finally, by labor discipline laws.

From the beginning of accelerated industrialization in the late 1920's until the late 1940's Soviet labor legislation continuously increased the degree of compulsion and pressure on the working class. Since 1950–51, however, the situation has been changing. The authorities apparently recognized that some of the most repressive features of the labor laws have become superfluous and even harmful to the purpose of increasing productivity. As a result, they took a series of steps relaxing enforcement of the labor discipline laws, imposing court penalties for violations of these laws on a selective basis, and, finally, by the decree of April 25, 1956, abolishing such court penalties altogether. With this decree the Soviet authorities have openly expressed their awareness that