

search director," that consumer organizations are Communist dominated—except Consumers' Research, the one in which he was long interested. Dies authorized publication of this report without consulting minority members of the committee. He also raised Matthews's pay without bothering to mention it. Matthews was probably the real author not only of the original Dies report but of the chairman's other recent literary productions.

The elaboration of Dies's anti-New Deal prejudices into a new testament of Christianity suggests the Matthews hall mark. Other features of the original report were similarly suggestive. For example, there was the announcement that "Communists have from the beginning of this labor organization [the C. I. O.] wielded the dominant influence in its policies and control." And there was the "shameful and alarming" finding that "563 employees of the federal government could belong to so obviously a Communist-controlled organization" as the League for Peace and Democracy. At one of the committee's meetings Matthews was forced to confess that he could not name a single Communist in the government service, although the original report said some of the shameful 563 were "self-admitted members of the Communist Party." The minority members of the committee eliminated this along with other fanciful "statements of fact."

As everyone now knows, the published report of the committee denounced communism and fascism in uncompromising terms. It was, in fact, considerably harder on the Communists than the original. But it affirmatively rejected the falsehood that liberalism and communism differ only in degree. It defended civil liberties and by implication accused the Dies committee of disrespect for them. It estimated that no more than 1,000,000 of 132,000,000 Americans have embraced subversive doctrines despite widespread suffering during ten depression years. "We owe them," it concluded, "a solution of the economic and social problem of unnecessary poverty in the midst of possible plenty."

The published report, like the unpublished original, recommended further investigation of "un-American activities," but it defined these, as the original did not, as operations in the interest of foreign governments. Such a recommendation seemed so reasonable that it was promptly underwritten by the liberal as well as the conservative press. The *New York Times* expressed the happy thought that the Dies investigation at last had educated Dies. But Dies was in Texas whetting his trusty dragon-lance when the report was written. It is plain that his new dragon is much the same as his old dragon and that it still bears a striking resemblance to the Roosevelt New Deal.

Soviet Russia Today

III. DEATH OF A REVOLUTION

BY LOUIS FISCHER

THE drastic modification in Russia's attitude toward the outside world did not suddenly spring full-blown from the brain of Stalin. It is not the casual whim of one individual. Nor is it merely the product of a new world situation. It has its roots deep in Soviet domestic conditions. The Russo-German pact begins a new era. But it is also a stage in a striking development of the Soviet revolution which started several years ago.

The year 1936 represents a divide in the history of the Bolshevik Revolution. The roots of the rapprochement with the Nazis go back to that year. I trace the new pact with Germany to a divorce between the Soviet leadership and the Soviet people; it became noticeable in 1936.

Up to about 1933 the Soviet regime was laying the industrial foundation of a new Russia, for which the population paid in the form of reduced consumption and harder work. Some did so grumblingly, many patiently. In 1934 and 1935 and in the first half of 1936 life became a bit easier. More goods could be bought in shops. But then the rising curve of consumption began to flatten

out. The supply of consumers' commodities in the Soviet Union is today woefully inadequate, and while food is generally plentiful, butter and milk and even articles like cabbage, a staple of Russian diet, are often unobtainable. In this field little progress has been made in the last three years. The deficiency is in part due to military preparations. But it is more adequately explained by the purges and several inherent Soviet economic weaknesses.

Even when he has the money the Soviet citizen faces a knotty problem when he tries to purchase most articles of clothing, especially pants—and there is no socialism without pants—or writing paper, or kitchen utensils, or kerosene for cooking, or a thousand and one items of common daily use. The proof of scarcity is found in the Soviet press: speculators are regularly arrested and sentenced. Speculators flourish only in scarcity. Moreover, factory directors and managers of industries are discharged, purged, or imprisoned for failing to produce efficiently and sufficiently. This usually makes matters worse: less experienced men take the vacated posts. On December 2,

1939, the *New York Times* carried a report from Moscow about "the famine in consumers' goods" and the "complaints by the Moscow public." The inability to buy necessities is a grave disappointment to the Soviet population, which had hoped that some day, after twenty or more fatiguing years of Soviet economy, life would grow comfortable and easy.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE TRIALS

Simultaneously, another great yearning of the Soviet nation was shattered—the yearning for liberty. The Stalin constitution of 1936 was sincerely intended as a charter of freedom. The enemies of the Bolshevik regime—the kulaks, capitalists, old-style conservative intellectuals—had been eradicated. The loyal folk that remained could be granted more civil rights. That was the conception of the constitution, and its promulgation produced joy throughout the land. The subsequent dejection has been no less intense. For almost immediately restrictions on individuals were drawn tighter, restraint increased, arrests multiplied. The terror that had been directed chiefly against anti-Soviet elements who hated the regime was now aimed at Communists who had made the regime. In 1936, for the first time, occurred wholesale arrests and executions of Communists for political reasons. The trials and purges that followed caused the disappearance of hundreds of thousands of men and women, some shot, some incarcerated, some exiled to frozen and desert wastes. Trials were held not only in Moscow under the limelight. Every city and small town had its trials. The purge extended to every nook of the vast continent which is Russia. Foreign Communists, especially Polish and German refugees, were caught in the huge dragnet.

The basic problem raised by the constitution was the future of the G. P. U. Civil rights, habeas corpus, and all democratic liberties are illusory while a secret police operates with special powers to arrest without proper judicial warrant and to exile and execute without public trial. The Kremlin realized this, and as a preliminary to the issuance of the constitution took measures to curtail the prerogatives of the G. P. U. These measures and their success demonstrated that the G. P. U. was not an independent, omnipotent state within a state but subject to the higher authority of Stalin and his associates.

Then there followed a reversal and setback. In August, 1936, Kamenev and Zinoviev, Lenin's friends, with Stalin members of the triumvirate which ruled after Lenin died, were tried and later executed. The trial of Piatakov, Radek, and several others followed in January, 1937; and in June, 1937, Tukhachevsky and a large group of top-rank Red Army commanders were shot. Many of them were anti-Stalin—though he was the one subject they strangely avoided in their confessions and public statements at the Moscow trials—and some probably had conspired against him. When Soviet Russia was

ready for democracy, it got a more draconic dictatorship, because, for one thing, investigations revealed that the country was not as unanimous about the genius and achievements of Stalin as the press seemed to indicate.

The terror of the G. P. U. was now unleashed against all former oppositionists who had or had not recanted, and against numerous others who had never been connected with any opposition. Big figures toppled into prison and oblivion. To have made revolutionary history or to have carried out the Five-Year Plan was no security.

A deadly fear was injected into those who remained. The purges were regrettable not merely from the human point of view and because industry lagged while good industrialists languished in jail; they demoralized the population. The country, for instance, had been taught that Yagoda, the chairman of the G. P. U., was "the flaming sword of the revolution." He was one of the guiding lights of the Soviet government. He had staged the trials of Kamenev and Zinoviev, and of Piatakov, Radek, and the others. But then he himself sat in the dock as an "enemy of the people," and he was executed as an agent of foreign governments. Could he have staged the trials to harm the revolution? Doubts harassed many citizens.

Yagoda was succeeded by Yezhov, and Yezhov in turn became "the flaming sword of the revolution." His picture was displayed in countless offices, factories, and homes. Then he too disappeared in disgrace. Whom could one trust? Whom could one follow?

In 1936 the Soviet government created the rank of marshal and elevated five men to that rank: Voroshilov, Tukhachevsky, Yegorov, Blücher, and Budenny. Children and adults treasured a widely circulated photograph of these heroes of the country. Before long Tukhachevsky was executed for having allegedly wanted a pact with the Nazis, and the children had to cut his face out of the photograph. Then Yegorov had to be excised. And finally Blücher. Today two remain.

Thousands of writers, journalists, Communist officials, party speakers, Bolshevik provincial leaders, and leaders of the youth movement were arrested because, according to the published version, they had been uncovered as anti-Soviet. Then how could the ordinary citizen know whether the man whose article he was reading today, whose speech he was listening to, whose advice he was following, might not be annihilated tomorrow as a foe of the Soviet state? The purges produced a crisis of faith. Since everybody was a potential spy and traitor, everybody distrusted everybody else. This was ruinous to economic activity. Persons in industry knew that promotion brought greater responsibility and greater danger. Some preferred therefore to remain in small jobs. I know of the case of an engineer who chose to be a taxi driver to escape the constant strain of important work in which he might make a mistake that would be interpreted as due to evil

WE HOPE THAT LIBERALS IN WASHINGTON and elsewhere will get the point of the subdued report issued by the Dies committee. As Kenneth Crawford points out on another page, the liberals on the committee were permitted to rewrite the original report because the reactionary majority wants to keep the show going at all costs. They are confident that they can resume control if and when a new appropriation is granted. There has not been the slightest change of heart or objective; Mr. Dies has shrewdly retreated to lay the groundwork for a new offensive. That offensive will, as before, be directed against the New Deal. There is only one way to avert that development: New Dealers must expose the fraud involved in the report and fight to end the life of a committee which has already done an incalculable amount of damage.

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avoided by a cool refusal to help. A loan to Britain, if it were permitted, would combine mercenary and emotional entanglements. Only isolation, far more complete than the neutrality law provides, would prevent acts which bind our interests to those of the Western nations. And even legal isolation cannot freeze human feeling.

Risk of war is not to be dodged. But it can be argued, and I believe it to be true, that American involvement is less likely if continued large-scale material help is sent to the Allied countries. The best chance for preserving American neutrality lies in a quick victory for the Western powers. A long war or a war in which Britain and France face probable defeat will wear down the "hope and expectation" of peace to which Americans still so firmly cling. A long war will increase the danger of a merging of Russian and German forces against the West. A long war will increase the demand for a vindictive peace. Only the early collapse of Hitler's power offers promise of the kind of settlement the world needs.

The President made it plain that he intended to have a hand in securing such a settlement after a totalitarian defeat. He offered as an example of international unity the relationships of the American republics and the success of the Trade Agreements Act in removing restrictive barriers, and he made a strong plea for an extension of the act. He recalled the "blind economic selfishness in most countries, including our own," which after the World War "resulted in a destructive mine field of trade restrictions which blocked the channels of commerce among nations" and contributed to the economic breakdown that led toward the present wars. And he looked ahead to the time when peace would become possible and the United States could "use its influence to open up the trade channels of the world in order that no nation need feel compelled in later days to seek by force of arms what it can well gain by peaceful conference." "For this purpose," he said, "we need the Trade Agreements Act even more than when it was passed. . . . Such an influence will be greatly weakened if this government becomes a dog in the manger of trade selfishness."

I quote this because it shows the direction of the President's thinking. He clearly intends to help bring about peace; if his acts had not already proved this, he indicates such an intention in another part of his message. He believes that an important element in that peace will be a widespread adoption of the principles that govern our trade agreements. This is good enough for a beginning even though it falls far short of the economic collaboration that will be needed after the war. But it is sufficient to prove that the President hopes for a future organization of international relationships in which the United States will play a leading and continuing part. This, too, is an important piece of news.

It is interesting, though perhaps not significant, that the British Ambassador, speaking at Chicago the day

after the President delivered his message, made many of the same points. His address was also designed to emphasize the meaning of the European war for America. He too recognized and accepted the determination of this country to stay out. He too talked about trade barriers and stressed the need of a peace that would prevent the economic collapses and conflicts that led to the present struggle. The two addresses were like the British and American faces of a single coin. But while I agreed with most of what Lord Lothian said, I wish he hadn't said it. When the President talks of America's stake in the war, he is fulfilling his duty to his fellow-citizens. When the British Ambassador says the same thing, it is discounted as propaganda, however true it is. Lord Lothian pointed to our "excellent" Ambassador Kennedy, who "is continually explaining to the British people what Americans think." It was a poor example to choose. Both nations would be better off if their ambassadors maintained a decorous diplomatic silence, especially in war time.

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