

(3) Vygotsky's 'cultural-historical'; (These three were accused of various deviations, and disappeared)

(4) Pavlov's 'conditioned reflex'.

According to McLeish, by the end of 1929 Borovsky summed up in the discussion centring round the struggles of these different schools in the following way:

'The dialectical materialist is constrained to prove to the non-dialecticians and anti-dialecticians that human behaviour in all its specific complexity, conditioned as it is by social factors, cannot be mastered by physiology alone; he has to prove that all the qualitative peculiarity of human behaviour would be lost through an attempt to resolve it into reflexes; that physiology and reflexology both have to deal with the human being as a representative of the species "homo sapiens", with man in "general", whereas psychology deals with men having certain habits and traditions, the ideology of their class, profession, level and so on'.

REJECTED INTELLIGENCE 'TESTS'

This may explain why, although the Pavlovian school of 'conditioned reflexes' as the form of higher nervous activity became the orthodox theory of psychology as early as the thirties, Plov in 1950, at the joint session of the Academies of Sciences and of Medicine, could state that 'the task of building up a system of psychology actually—and not merely nominally—based on the material scientific foundation of Pavlovian science has not yet been carried out'.

In spite of having failed during the thirties to establish a correct theory the USSR did in fact show a correct understanding when it rejected the whole theory of inherited, unchangeable intelligence and character, gave up 'testing' and claimed that children's growth and development depended on their conditions of living.

Two major theoretical contributions to a materialist psychology based on the Pavlovian theory of the conditioned reflex are (1) Leontiev's 'Nature and Formation of Human Psychic Qualities and Processes' and (2) Kostyuk's 'Laws of Psychology'. Kostyuk writes:

'The problem of the nature of psychological laws can be tackled correctly only if we start from the concept of the psyche as a special property of matter at a certain level of organization, as a function of the brain, the reflection by the brain of objective reality.

'This concept is based on the facts of modern physiology, primarily the teachings of Sechenov and Pavlov on the reflex activity of the cortical hemispheres.

'This brings up the question of the relationships between the laws of psychology and the Pavlovian laws of higher nervous activity.

'Pavlov considered psychical activity to be higher nervous activity. In putting this view forward he was giving a description of psychical activity in terms of its relationship to the material substratum of cortical processes, that is, from the standpoint of its physiological mechanisms.

'While pointing out that psychical activity is **higher** nervous activity, Pavlov emphasized that it is brought into being by cortical mechanisms which develop into the course of the organism's individual life.

'This proposition is of the highest importance in understanding the psyche as a function of the brain, and in investigating its laws scientifically. . . .

'The impossibility of separating the psychical from the physiological in the reflex activity of the human brain does not, however, mean that they are identical. Neuro-dynamic laws do not give a complete description of reflex activity in all its objective inter-relations.

'Neuro-dynamic mechanisms do not tell us what is reflected, how and to what extent, or convey to us how the content of the reflection influences human actions.

'Processes of excitation and inhibition, in specific inter-relations with each other, are fundamental to the reflection of all variations of objective reality.

'The discovery of these processes has not yet told us exactly what it is that a person senses, perceives and imagines, what and how he thinks, what he experiences and strives for, what aims he sets himself, what interests, views and convictions guide his behaviour.

'It is in these very problems that the specific and unique nature of psychological phenomena is expressed.'

Kostyuk is at pains to show that psychology is not simply physiology but physiology at a higher level of cortical activity.

What are the laws of the neuro-dynamics of the chain of reflexes which are constantly changing and growing in the cortex through the conditioning which arises as the result of the interchange between the organism and its environment?

Pavlov never stated these laws because he had not had time to study the behaviour of man. He merely stated that these **must** exist since human behaviour was a function of the central nervous system.

Leontiev states that 'the psychologist cannot be content with a mere description of the different human psychic qualities nor does it suffice to make a descriptive study of their development in the child. The chief aim of psychological investigation in this field is to discover those real mechanisms whose functioning gives rise to such and such a psychic quality'.

This manner of stating the problem arises from the view that all psychic qualities and properties of man are themselves the product of dynamic systems of cerebral linkages (conditioned reflexes) developed in the course of life.

He then proceeds to describe the mechanisms underlying simple acts of perception and how changes in stimuli (for instance the reinversion of an image on the retina or the loss of spatial perception following a wound of arm or hand) will cause changes in the neural mechanism to bring about the correct sensation. These are proofs of conditioned reflex linkages.

More important still are the conclusions which Soviet psychologists have drawn from these formed linkages which human beings create in their brains in the act of learning to respond to external stimuli.

The lack of many abilities which are erroneously attributed to inheritance are merely due to the fact that the particular person has not had the opportunity of learning those abilities from the first stage of his development: that all learning takes place through stages strictly according to law, from the simplest to the more complicated, from the concrete to the abstract.

It is interesting in this connexion to note that what the Russians have done on the basis of a theory based on conditioned reflexes we have done purely empirically—it has long been known through much observation and experimenting with young children that this law operates. We have no theoretical grounds for our findings.

How in practice does the Pavlovian approach help the Russian psychologist to understand human behaviour and hence help in shaping society and education so that man can develop more fully and better?

Without reading about every experiment and the application of findings to education it is impossible to give a final answer to this question.

But one or two publications which have appeared in translation via the SCR are rather disturbing. One is Krasnogorsky's 'On the physiology of the development of speech in children'.

MOST DISTURBING PUBLICATION

After one has swallowed the scientific 'fact' that the whole cerebral cortex is composed of analysers (what exactly is an analyser?), and when one has translated the Pavlovian jargon into ordinary speech, one finds that Krasnogorsky does no more than state the stages through which small children pass in their achievement of speech, stages with which anyone in this country who has studied psychology is familiar.

The most recent publication and the most disturbing was published by the SCR this year and is entitled 'Studying the formation of personality in schoolchildren'.

The title alone is surprising. Personality is one of the most complex and involved of the higher processes in man; when the human race has finally discovered how personality is formed man will indeed be in full control of himself and his environment!

The researches were carried out in the Laboratory for Educational Psychology of School Age Children at the Institute of Psychology of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences. Their aim was 'the provision of psychological data on which to build

a scientifically based methodology of upbringing' (a very ambitious aim).

'Transformation experiments' were conducted with school-children (no age is specified). These consisted of 'exercising' the children in the forms of behaviour which typify the correct attitude or trait of character which was required, e.g., a responsible attitude to school work.

After a month's 'training' the children had all 'developed' the required trait. The experimenters also found that besides 'exercise' in the required 'behaviour pattern' the children needed to have 'definite motives' if the personality trait was to remain established.

By 'motive' the experimenters meant the children had to understand the **reason** for the behaviour!

Personality traits, then, are complex psychological formations which include both motive and behaviour pattern'.

The article about these experiments gives no indication that the experimenters knew anything about these children, or their backgrounds.

One is given the impression that they were all identical and all behaved in exactly identical ways during the exercising and that all of them gave identical results. What the 'exercising' consisted in is never mentioned, nor how it was applied.

How could this bit of nonsense come to be published as a serious scientific experiment? From what little I have gathered about child psychology in the USSR, Pavlovian theory has been taken to mean exactly the same as Watsonian Behaviourism—I have seen a film of a day nursery in which the babies were all being scientifically conditioned to the 'correct' behaviour, by sequences of 'correct' stimuli.

Why is this happening? I think the answer lies in the fact that Pavlov dealt not only with dogs (and not humans) but with dogs **only** in an artificial laboratory environment.

He did not observe and therefore stress one of the **two** interacting factors, the subject and the environment. Pavlov,

and hence all the Russian psychologists, have, in practice though not in theory, ignored the **subject** who is reacting to the environment, is changing it and himself.

The subject is an active participant in any situation (outside a laboratory) and this must be taken into consideration.

Last, but not least, there is the theory of 'types' of higher nervous activity—or temperaments. Pavlov postulated four types of nervous systems: the **sanguine**—strong, mobile, equilibrated; the **phlegmatic**—equilibrated but inert; the **choleric**—strong, mobile but badly equilibrated; the **melancholic**—the feeble type of nervous system.

Now quite apart from being completely unscientific these classifications are as dangerous as the theory of inherited intelligence and character.

When a child has tantrums or hysterical outbursts how convenient it is simply to say 'it is his temperament' and do nothing about it!

The nearest we can get, with our present knowledge of nervous activity, and without being unscientific, is to say that at birth children appear to have one of two types of system: one reacts quickly and strongly to any stimulus, the other slowly and weakly.

Temperament—just as character, personality, intelligence and ability—is the product of growth and development of any given nervous system and every person is different from every other.

Soviet psychology is at present failing because in practice it is based on a mechanistic principle—the environment conditioning an organism—and not on a dialectical one, which equally studies and tries to explain the subjective side of the responding organism, men's positive and negative feelings, their interests, their drives, their curiosity, their abilities.

This mechanistic approach is not restricted to psychology; it is reflected in all spheres of work in the Soviet Union. What connexion has this with the system of self-appointed 'leaders' who rule the country?

JOHN DANIELS

Advanced Education Will Destroy Stalinist Mysticism

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION enabled the Russian people to make giant strides in education during these last forty years.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks realized at the very beginning of Soviet rule that, in spite of chaos in industry and of civil war, foreign intervention and famine, the future of Soviet Russia was bound up with combating illiteracy. Lenin remarked that 'it is impossible to educate politically an illiterate people'. Soviet society was the highest form of democracy, based upon involving as many workers and peasants as possible directly in the work of running the State. But if 'every cook' had to 'learn to run the State', as Lenin had said, then every cook, to take part in politics effectively, had to be able to read. Mass education was an essential ingredient of proletarian democracy.

The story of the early enthusiastic campaigns to reduce illiteracy which followed the Russian Revolution has often been told. Teachers, in improvised schoolrooms, taught children to read on a shift system. After each lesson the children ran home—to become immediately the teachers of their parents. Everywhere old eyes were guided by young fingers to unlock the mysteries of print. In every school experiments were carried out on how to build a system of education to match the new opportunities and new duties of the working people.

In this early period of Soviet power Lenin was constantly reminding the party that education was not merely a matter of listening. In 1923, in 'Better Less but Better', he wrote: 'For the renewal of the State apparatus, we must set as our objective: first, to study; second, to study; third, to learn and then to verify this learning in order that science should not remain with us a dead letter or a stylish phrase but should penetrate our skin and our blood.' Lenin campaigned

for a system of pre-school education and revived, in a new way, the ideas of Marx on **polytechnical** education, i.e., an education which, in practice, integrated school learning with the creative labour of the factory and farm.

During the period when Stalin and his associates fastened their grip upon the State organs created by the Revolution, the needs of nationalized industry and planned production for millions of highly educated men and women, for engineers, economists, scientists and technicians became urgent. The tremendous advances in industrial production in Russia since 1929, advances which have staggered the capitalist world, were carried through by the children of illiterate Russian workers and peasants educated to the highest standards in modern science. The first man-launched satellite is the child of the Russian Revolution.

It was Sir Winston Churchill, ever on the look-out for an opportunity to destroy the Russian Revolution, who gave prominence, in 1955, to the vast achievements of universal education in Russia. Every child who goes through the ten-year school, that is from 7 to 17 years of age, spends forty per cent. of his time on science and mathematics. University graduates in engineering entering Russian industry each year number 60,000 as compared with 22,000 in the USA and a mere 3,000 in super-industrialized Britain. By 1960, Russia will produce, each year, three million pupils with qualifications equal to the ordinary level of the General Certificate of Education. This is to be compared with a mere 70,000 in Britain, i.e., proportionately to population, one-seventieth of the Russian product. Reliable authorities in England also warn against jumping to the conclusion that university and secondary school standards in Russia today must therefore be below accepted standards in Britain.

This ripe fruit of the October Revolution convincingly demonstrates, once and for all, that the children of workers

and peasants, who in the countries of capitalism are often regarded as biologically incapable of assimilating advanced education, have brains equal in capacity and efficiency to the ruling class itself. Once the workers take the initiative on the field of history, there are no heights of intellectual achievement which are beyond them. In addition, Russian educational successes are evidence of the great liberating significance of the new property relations—nationalized industry—which the Revolution brought about. Without nationalized industry and planned production the educational system of modern Russia could never have been achieved.

Naturally, there are also many negative features about present-day education in Russia—products of the Stalinist deformation of Soviet society. In the early years of the Revolution, one of the most exciting things about Soviet education was the way in which the old autocratic teaching methods derived from tsarism were replaced by democratic, scientific methods. In this period many educational innovations previously suggested by liberal-progressive educationists of the West were tried out critically, but sympathetically. It soon became obvious, however, that experimentation with new methods could not be allowed to stand in the way of building up a centralized programme of education for the whole country. 'Free', anarchistic, study-what-you-like schemes could not adequately serve as syllabuses for use in schools throughout the whole country. This progressive act, however, coincided with the rise of Stalinism. Stalinism required of every citizen absolute, unquestioning obedience to every political and scientific whim of the 'Personality'. Schools are always the mirror of society, and soon teachers found it healthier to drop their early enthusiasm for school democracy and to lend themselves as servants of Stalin for the indoctrination of the young with the permitted dogma. Excessive concentration upon 'discipline', upon the need for the children to 'respect and obey' the teacher (obviously a necessary step in ensuring 'respect and obedience' to the

'Great Teacher') still today distorts Russian teaching and research. 'Facts' (i.e., facts acceptable to the bureaucracy) are still communicated to students in long, dull, lecture-pronouncements. Teaching methods in Russia today remain incredibly dry, academic and autocratic. These methods discourage original thinking and are a real fetter on education, when the objective possibilities of the system are considered. The Lysenko affair is only the best-known example of methods of scientific training which still hinder the progress of science and the training of good scientists.

The dialectics of history, however, always have their revenge. The Stalinist bureaucracy is today an anachronism in modern Russia—it prevents the full development of the potentialities of planned production. In the same way the autocratic methods of modern Russian education are an anachronism. They represent a strange, uneasy partnership between an advanced system of education and an obsolescent, mid-Victorian approach to teaching which serves narrow interests, and which fetters the full development of Russian youth.

But it is no accident that it was the students, writers and scientists of Russia who first began to show the world the internal crisis of Stalinism. If scientists are trained to understand the material world so effectively that Russian physical science can lead the world, it is also clearly impossible to keep such men and women imprisoned for long in the mystical nonsense of Stalinist ideology. It will be the Russian working class who will finally overthrow the Stalinist bureaucratic bullies that dominate Russia today, but it will not be the Russian working class of 1917. In the modern working class of Russia live the great revolutionary experiences of 1917; but these revolutionary experiences have now been overwhelmingly enriched by the social and industrial gains of forty years of planned economy and by forty years of a truly advanced educational system, which is itself one of the most important products of October 1917.

PAUL HOGARTH

THE FUTURE OF SOVIET FINE ARTS DEPENDS ON THE LOPATKINS' STRUGGLE AGAINST TIMID ACADEMICIANS AND THEIR BUREAUCRATIC ALLIES

MOST SOCIALISTS concerned with cultural problems have always been deeply interested in the art of the USSR. It has always been of great, even intimate, concern that a true revolutionary art was being developed over there. This sincere hope was planted in my own consciousness round about 1935 when I first looked through the pages of *Art in the USSR*, a *Studio* publication and one of the very first to introduce the Soviet fine arts to Britain. In its pages one saw for the first time such memorable paintings as Deineka's *Defence of Petrograd*, Mukhina's vigorous sculpture and vivid prints of the building of great dams and enterprises by Kravchenko and Favorsky. A group of young artists, within a wide range of style, expressed the tempo and mood of rapid thrusting social change that went along with the earlier Soviet cinema and that dynamic periodical *USSR in Construction*.

As we have seen in the recent Soviet Graphic Art exhibition the promise of those years never seemed to reach fruition. During the war years and after, one saw little and heard nothing of what these artists were in fact doing. The exception was Mukhina, creating huge theatrical figures of workers, peasants and Stalins atop of great arches on the Volga-Don Canal. Soviet art became more and more naturalistic in form

as well as falsely sentimental in content; as remote from life or socialism as the Royal Academy of the Victorian era.

It was of course no accident that Soviet art had come to resemble the Royal Academy of the nineteenth century. It was, in fact, the remnants of the nineteenth century tsarist academic tradition—a tradition which had received a new and even greater lease of life under Stalin. Stalin's support of a large and professionally prolific group of academic artists was politically sagacious. Apart from producing a short cut to the problem of creating an illusory and propagandist art that even the most backward muzhik could understand, he involved one of the biggest sections of the old tsarist intelligentsia in active support of his power. This, of course, cut completely across the policies of Lenin and Lunacharsky, which had encouraged those artistic forces that had identified themselves with the Revolution from the beginning.

Men like Alexander Gerassimov—a leading Russian impressionist even in 1906—lived like feudal princes until the recent Congress of Artists deposed them. Gerassimov's clique held dictatorial control over the entire profession for many years and not only purged every original spirit who might be guilty of 'formalism' from teaching in key art academies but also denied them exhibition facilities appropriate to their standing. Such well-known artists as Deineka, Sarayan and Konstantin Yuon had previously worked so energetically to create a socialist art which, like the novels of Sholokhov and Mayakovsky's plays, was honest in its attitude towards Soviet life. But the last thing Stalin wanted was honesty; he preferred to

revive the out-dated feudal role of art in irrational glorification of individual authority coupled with impressive canvases of Stalin as the eternal Father and the fantasies of the Moscow Metro.

This was brought home to me through a visit to the eminent Armenian graphic artist Kodjian with whom I spent an afternoon during my recent visit to the Soviet Union. We had looked at charcoal heads of political leaders and paintings of smiling peasants on collective farms. When it was almost time to leave, fragments of his earlier work were discovered by accident. These were dated 1933 and were wood-engravings for a history of Armenia from ancient times to the first Five Year Plan. They were carried out in an idiom which recalled the ancient Armenian illuminated manuscripts at which I had marvelled in the State archives at Erivan, and were full of invention and vitality. Kodjian showed me the actual book, now unobtainable, as its author had been stigmatized as 'a nationalist' and ended his days in Siberia. Kodjian had designed the book throughout and it was a superb example of the artist-typographer's art. I was moved to say that everything that was bad in book design had become associated with modern Soviet work, in spite of the fact that in the twenties and early thirties engravers like Kravchenko and Favorsky had contributed to a revival of engraved illustration in England, influencing artists like Gertrude Hermes, Blair Hughes-Stanton and Eric Fraser. Kodjian's work proved that Soviet artists could be the equal of any.

The old artist nodded, saying: 'I used to tell them but no one would listen; Gorky congratulated me on my books but even then no one would listen . . . This (gesturing towards the charcoal heads and collective farms) was what they wanted.' All this was so reminiscent of the Philistinism that artists often have to contend with that I almost embraced Kodjian in solidarity.

Many of these artists have suffered no more than artists do in the West, when rival groups—such as the currently fashionable abstract and tachiste painters—capture the interest and patronage of official bodies like the Arts Council. And of course there are many well-established artists who will receive official recognition only after they are dead. But it is indeed ironical that those artists who were communists and were actively involved in the building of socialism after a Revolution should also suffer neglect and victimization.

If this is the darker side of the picture, its brighter side is the permanent creation of a vast new public for the living artist; an audience of this size, no matter that it is conservative in its judgments, is an immense achievement. Prior to the Youth Festival, I was in Moscow for the opening of the first exhibition of contemporary British art to be shown in the Soviet Union. This was an avowedly realist exhibition of the work of eight painters, sculptors and graphic artists who had taken everyday life for their subject. Yet 'Looking at People' aroused the most intense controversy, and when it closed some three weeks later over 100,000 people had seen

our work, filling three thick visitors' books with every kind of comment, insult and praise.

But when one factory worker wrote: 'I wanted to see English art very much and after seeing it I felt sick' and 'looking at people, all right, but WHY distort them?' we began to ask ourselves WHY was it that our exhibition—designed to interest ordinary people in themselves—was understood by a working-class audience in the Peckham Road and not in plebeian Russia? It was only when one walked round the huge public art galleries that one began to find some of the answers to this riddle. Of course it would be true to say, as already has been said, that a long period in which an official art had established itself was the reason for this attitude towards less conventional forms of realism. But I think it lies more in the fact that for many years the fine arts had remained a medium of mass communication with an illiterate peasantry on their way to becoming industrial workers. The John Bull cover had been elevated to the art gallery and this as far as the general Soviet public was concerned was art; and socialist realism a form which portrayed life with the veracity of a press photographer.

This was an attitude found more frequently among older people however; the enthusiasm of the youth more than made up for it. This might be explained by the fact that television for them has become the main medium of visual mass communication, at least as far as Leningrad and Moscow are concerned. The young workers and students who came so eagerly to see our work were well past the stage where every picture had to explain itself in strict and obvious sociological terms. They relaxed in enjoyment of the work for its own sake; as a source of pleasure and an extension of experience.

The rising living standards of a new and essentially industrial class, the emergence of a huge technical intelligentsia, have at long last introduced the very social basis for the development of imaginative and truly contemporary art forms—a basis that those valiant spirits of the twenties like Rodchenko, Tatlin, Malevich, El Lissitzky, Eisenstein and Deineka—would have thrived on. Unfortunately, they are either dead or in semi-retirement. Any if alive or creatively active today would make a great deal of difference to the re-emergence of Soviet art as a vital living force. But the work of all these artists and many others is being studied again and in at least one case (Deineka's) has re-established an influence by means of a retrospective exhibition.

That other, younger, artists will take their place and restore Russian initiative in the fine arts does depend to a great extent on contact with what goes on in the outside world and greater cultural exchange. But most of all it depends on the successful outcome of the intense and complicated struggle which the Lopatkins—the young painters, architects, composers, film-directors and writers—are waging against a still formidable caste of fearful academicians and their political and bureaucratic allies.

PAUL SIMON

Soviet Architecture Is Not Yet Socialist Architecture

BEFORE ATTEMPTING to summarize forty years of Soviet architecture, it is as well to say what we mean by the term 'architecture and town planning'.

It is possible to erect buildings, many of them and of many types, linked by a road network, without creating works of architecture set in a planned urban environment. A typical industrial Midlands town of the nineteenth century, created by the dynamism of early capitalism, with its houses, factories, railway stations, shopping centres, town hall, gin palaces and churches, might represent a large lump of building; but it would take a very perverse art historian to find anything of beauty in any of it, from the point of view either of architecture or of town planning.

In the same way it is possible to get an immense amount of building going on in the Soviet Union, with schemes for new towns and regions, the replanning of cities like Stalingrad, and immense engineering feats, as breathtaking in their way as the building of the canals or railways was for early capitalism, without necessarily creating works of architecture or town planning. It is true that we have our own art historians, jaded with their work on medieval cathedrals or renaissance classicism, fashionably engaged on digging up the more romantic pieces of Victoriana. And—who knows?—they may be doing a good job. If I am unable to do the same for present-day Soviet architecture, it is because the degree of intimacy necessary for such a task cannot be achieved through the glossy pages of the magazine Soviet

Union. Undoubtedly there must be architects working in the Soviet Union who are modestly, quietly and efficiently making their contribution to the visual world as well as and perhaps better than anywhere in the world. In due course we shall get to know of them.

At the moment however the architectural scene in the USSR is dominated by the academicians, the old men of the profession. Many are old in years. Nearly all are old in their outlook. If one is hard on them, it is because they build so much more than our old men, and so there is more to blame them for. In the early days of the Revolution, of course, it was different. Before the Revolution, and for a long time after in western Europe and the Americas, the modern movement in art was often loosely associated with the working-class movement. The avant-garde was linked with the vanguard. There were facile reasons for this: 'international architecture' and the international working-class movement both sought to cut across the national boundaries of the bourgeoisie. Neo-classicism was the architecture of banks and high finance, neo-Tudor the style of the stockbroker's suburban villa. Landed property and the cash nexus saddled every scheme for replanning. The 'reactionaries' loved reactionary architecture; therefore the progressives must, logically, accept progressive architecture. Immediately after the Revolution, nearly any crank could—and nearly every crank did—jump in with manifestos and great schemes for rebuilding everything. 'Away with everything old and up with anything new!'

It is a great tribute to the breadth of vision and depth of feeling of the new workers' State that a great deal of badly needed labour and materials were expended in building some of these schemes. The international competition for the Palace of Soviets (never built) drew the interest of all the best young western architects, many of them now world-renowned names; some of them, like Le Corbusier and Eric Mendelsohn, built important buildings in the Soviet Union.

HARDENING OF 'LINE'

With the development of the concept of 'socialism in one country' there came, slowly at first, but inexorably nevertheless, a hardening of the cultural 'line' which involved a series of gross distortions of the Marxist view of art and aesthetics.

The process was not simple. It is possible to understand if not excuse it. There was an analogous change in the views of the ruling capitalist class in the West to the rebels of modern art, never fully assimilated in Europe, but taken up by the Americans with their characteristic thousand per cent. enthusiasm, and made full use of by those 'modern' artists who exploited their modernity as a fashion house exploits a

new line. Stalinist theoreticians, East and West, could well point to the sterility and fatuity of most modern art and much modern architecture. With the full backing of the propaganda machine the notions of what later was known as Zhdanovism became supreme.

In the realm of architecture, as in that of music, the task of working out a Marxist viewpoint is complex. The relation between social epochs and their architectural expression is not difficult to understand in retrospect. The job of translating the aspirations of socialism into buildings is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for an architect working under capitalism. The divorce of the architect as a professional worker from the proletariat—not necessarily overcome by his participation in working-class struggles or by his working for organizations such as the Co-operative Wholesale Society—is of fundamental importance. Who then was the western architect, almost by definition a middle-class intellectual par excellence, to challenge the new concepts from the Land of Socialism?

ATTACK ON 'COSMOPOLITANISM'

In the post-war years the cardinal points of 'socialist realism' were set out, and the i's and t's of pre-war practice were dotted and crossed. The 'internationalism' of modern architecture was attacked as 'cosmopolitanism'. While the crude over-simplification of the modern pioneers had long since been qualified, and maturer concepts had been advanced by them, the concrete boxes and flats on stilts were objects of ridicule for Soviet architects. Together with an encouragement of folk-art and folk-lore to the point of a cult, came the conception of socialist realism in architecture as 'national in form, socialist in content'. Exactly what this had to do with Marxism was never very clear. (Of course it is true that capitalism disregards the national aspirations of oppressed peoples, and evens out regional and national differences with the Admass of commercial advertising and mass-produced thinking.)

Allied however with the concept of 'national in form, socialist in content' came the concept of the national tradition. In the naïve days of the 'proletcult' anything 'bourgeois' was to be condemned, and the creative and progressive aspects of past class societies tended to be ignored. As opposed to this, the task of socialist realism was to carry forward the best in the national tradition, even to the point of adapting the 'best' in the forms of past periods, so as to show the essential stability and continuity of the new society. To the pre-Khrushchev arguments that many of these 'forms'—i.e., the pediments, swags of fruit, Greek columns and so on—were expensive came the answer that socialism was not concerned



Moscow: the Churches of the Kremlin

(Drawing by PAUL HOGARTH)

with the cheese-paring economies of capitalism. Nothing but the best, after all, was good enough for the working class. To the argument that these things were inappropriate to modern industrial techniques came the answer that Soviet man was the master, not the slave, of his techniques. To the argument that they were inappropriate to modern living came the answer that the 'functional' Pravda building of Le Corbusier, with its wide expanses of glass, had to be warmed by oil heaters in the Russian winter.

The 'national' and the 'traditional' were dressed up in Marxist-sounding phrases to justify the vast mass of dull, stodgy, wasteful building which we know as Soviet architecture. The Heroes of Socialist Labour smiled at us from the pages of Soviet Weekly, sitting at tables covered with machine-made hand embroidery, with lace curtains draped under heavy pelmets. Or they strolled in parks of culture and rest against a background of triumphal Roman arches, Greek temples, the Bradford Town Hall and the better bits of the Sutton Trust dwellings. The Daily Worker contrasted Moscow University with the United Nations headquarters. This, we were told, is what the people like. And that, for a Marxist, was that.

JERRY DAWSON

Heroes, Cult and Spectacle on the Soviet Screen

'THE CINEMA is for us the most important of the arts', said Lenin in 1918. So, in broken-down studios, with hand-made projectors and scraps of stock, the Russian film-makers got down to work.

We had to wait ten years before Lenin's red bombshells burst over England. Even then, their range was limited, touching only the dedicated film students and determined revolutionaries who gathered to see them on hard chairs in draughty Co-op halls. But they packed more dynamite than America's blonde bombshells.

'Potemkin' made revolutionaries, rousing hatred against the tsarist brutality on the Odessa steps, strengthening solidarity with the sailors in revolt. 'Mother', 'October', 'Man with a Movie Camera' and 'Earth' showed how a revolution could give its artists the creative energy to grapple with big themes and the creative freedom to interpret them with the emotional spontaneity of an Eisenstein, the calculated imagery of a Pudovkin, the camera-eye of a Vertov or the lyricism of a Dovzhenko.

Even more, these films were part of the political education in action of many in England who, in their efforts to see them, were brought into conflict (often for the first time in their lives) with authority—with partisan censorship, with Bourbons on city councils, with hall managements.

Exciting days—but soon over. 'The Jazz Singer' sounded the end of an era. The 'talkies' presented Soviet directors with new problems.

But other pressures, even more decisive, were to change the direction of Soviet film-making. At a film conference in 1935, a year after the discovery of socialist realism, the formalism of the early films came under attack—even from their makers. "'The General Line'", said Eisenstein, 'was an intellectual film, a film without emotional feelings.' The austere rejection of story, actors, even characters left audiences cold.

FILMS WITHOUT CHARACTERS

'Characters disappeared from our cinema', said Dinamov in the name of the party, 'because the directors did not know the people. They thought the film must be based upon the mass, but the film without a hero was only an experiment.'

The conference called for films with heroes, films about men and women, films which would help in the transformation of a feudal into a socialist society.

'Artists in uniform' was the taunt of the capitalist world, though even in the thirties the freedom of the Hollywood

What of the future? Soviet town planners have shown the capitalist world the scale that town planning should be carried out on. The setting and conception of Moscow University shows what, for example, the nationalization of the land can mean in urban terms. This we must separate from the dross, and defend from the attacks of the cynics. But while we can admire the twelve-lane roads, we cannot seriously accept them as the answer to urban traffic problems. When Stalin wrote his work on linguistics some theoreticians tried to tear architecture, in the superstructure, from the economic basis, but that did not last for long. Khrushchev, with his business efficiency, lashed out at the waste that goes with some of the most advanced building techniques in the world. But he seems to inspire nothing more than a sort of Ministry of Works, provincial post office style.

The task of Soviet architects, as well as Marxist architects in the capitalist world, is still to work and fight for a climate of cultural democracy where creative genius can flourish without the eccentricities of fashion on the one hand or the deadening stodge of party committees on the other. When socialism triumphs socialist architecture will emerge, socialist in form, humanist in content.

director was largely illusory and in the witch-hunting forties derisory. But Grierson, England's leading documentary director, was more optimistic.

'The Russian directors', he wrote, 'have been slow in coming to earth. They have, indeed, suffered greatly from the freedom given to artists in a first uncritical moment of revolutionary enthusiasm . . . For the future we may leave them safely to the central committee. When some of the art and all of the Bohemian self-indulgence have been knocked out of them, the Russian cinema will come to grips with the swift and deeply-detailed issues around it. The revolutionary will most certainly "liquidate", as they put it, this romantic perspective.'

Grierson's hopes may have been encouraged by the enthusiasm with which the conference established 'Chapayev' as the prototype for Soviet production over the next twenty years. "'Chapayev'", said Dovzhenko, 'is linked up with the future of cinema.'

WARM, HUMAN, HUMOROUS

Vassiliev's straightforward tribute to the revolutionary guerilla leader certainly turned its back on any Bohemian self-indulgence. It was closer to life; more familiar with the way ordinary men and women behaved, even in extraordinary situations; it was warm, human, sympathetic, humorous; it got to the hearts of its audience. These were qualities which were to echo through the finest of later Soviet films—the Gorky trilogy, regional folk-tales like 'Adventures in Bokhara', children's films like 'Lone White Sail'.

On the other hand, 'Chapayev' certainly did not liquidate the romantic perspective. It was an epic of nostalgia, a nostalgia which made many directors turn back to the Revolution for their themes. A nostalgia so powerful even today that the best of recent Soviet films has been 'The 41st'.

But the nostalgia took many Russian directors even further back. It became a nostalgia for all things Russian. At the best it led to the loving re-creation of the writings of Lermontov, Pushkin, Ostrovsky. At its worst—and in later years the worst became dominant—it led to chauvinism.

'Suvorov' showed the Soviet Union ready to glorify a Russian general who had suppressed a Polish national uprising. 'Alexander Nevsky' evoked national rather than class fervour for the coming struggle against nazism. Stilted biographies of Russian composers and writers, tsarist generals and admirals, party leaders and functionaries got further and further away from all that had been genuine in 'Chapayev'.

'Chapayev' obviously never came to grips with the realities of the thirties. There were few films at the time, or since, which did. It may well have been, as we can more readily appreciate today, that it was easier for a documentary director to record the material achievements of collectivization and industrialization than for the feature director to deal safely with the human waste, the ruthlessness, the corruption and inefficiency which lay behind this achievement.

After the war, the central committee's attack upon the Donbas reconstruction film 'Great Life' persuaded directors who ventured into the present to work to the formula—the man with the idea, the obstructive old chairman, the wise party secretary, increased production and the happy ending.

'Chapayev', above all, marked the arrival of the hero on the Soviet screen. 'Chapayev', said Trauberg, 'is a hero, but he is not a hero above the heads of the audience. He is their brother.' But how long could he remain a brother? After the war, Pudovkin could still insist that the positive hero was one of millions, but he had become a 'leader, an organizer and inspirer of the masses'. From a leader he soon became one leader.

HOPE FOR RESURGENCE?

'Only by the impersonation of Stalin on the screen did the positive hero in his cinematic representation achieve the highest form', ran the caption to Chiaureli's sycophantic 'The Vow'. So, finally, to the apotheosis of Stalin at the end of 'Fall of Berlin'. The tribute to the hero had degenerated to the cult of personality.

The frustration and dissipation of talent, after the Zhdanov directive, matched the degeneration of socialist society in the last years of Stalin. And yet the original impulse of the Revolution had the advantages of a socialist system which cherished the cinema as a responsible art and not a branch of big business still allowed the Soviet Union—and, even more, the eastern European countries—to produce films which, at

their best, could challenge anything the capitalist world could provide.

What hope is there for a resurgence of the Soviet cinema? Romm, the director of the Lenin films, made a scathing attack in 1954 upon bureaucracy in the film industry and upon the strangling of individual talent by committee rule. Since then at least two film studios have been taken over by active filmmakers, one of them Vassiliev himself. There has been striking evidence of new directors of ability.

'The Battle of Stalingrad' is to be remade so that it can honour 'a not unimportant hero who played a decisive role in the defence of Stalingrad'—the people.

There have been one or two films which have dealt more honestly with the present-day scene. 'The Big Family' was prepared to leave some problems unsolved. 'True Friend' and 'Carnival' even made a pleasant, easy-going attack upon bureaucracy. But the outstanding achievement has still been in the re-creation of the past, Shakespeare's 'Othello' and Chekhov's 'The Grasshopper'.

'The Grasshopper' may well herald René Clair's expectation of an 'explosion of romanticism, a return to the tradition of Tolstoy' in the Soviet cinema:

'They've been obliged to be so Stakhanovist, so kolkhozist; they've had no choice whatever you may think of their methods. Now after a great effort, things are a little easier and the cold war is less acute. Now they can turn back to romanticism.'

But if the Soviet Union is to regain its first great creative vigour, if it is to come to grips with the world around it, more than administrative changes will be needed, more than the discovery of new talent, or even of the tradition of Tolstoy. It will need big changes in the social and political set-up in the Soviet Union. And we cannot abrogate our responsibility—as often even the most informed did over the last forty years—to criticize stringently anything we dislike in Russian films. For the Soviet film, at its best and its worst, has been, and will still be, the clearest mirror of Soviet life.

BERNARD STEVENS

GREAT PERFORMANCES, BUT FEW CREATIVE MINDS

THE STUDY of the political and economic structure of a society, however profound, will not tell us very much about the character and quality of the people living in that society. It is rather in its artistic life that those qualities will be found upon which depend its contribution to the evolution of the human species.

In attempting to evaluate truthfully Soviet artistic achievements both the quantitative and qualitative aspects must be considered. It is usual for Soviet apologists to concentrate on the former and denigrate on the latter.

In the field of music the Soviet party and government have insisted upon the widest dissemination of activity among the people, and no socialist would dispute either the correctness of that policy or that it has been very largely achieved. There is no other advanced industrialized country in which singing, playing, dancing and listening to music occupies such a large part of the lives of its people. This is clear testimony to a wide general musical vitality and to very successful organization. Most industrial and agricultural enterprises have their amateur performing groups, of which the song and dance ensembles that have visited this country are characteristic examples. Many of the greatest professional soloists began their careers as amateurs in factory or collective farm concerts, and most of the gifted child musicians were first noticed in Pioneer Club concerts. The economic security of professional musicians prevents amateur musical activity developing at the expense of professional, a common phenomenon in this country. The very large number of soloists of extraordinarily high artistic and technical maturity who have appeared in the Soviet Union during the last twenty-five years, and who invariably win the prizes at international competitions, can

be explained only by highly efficient organization for the recognition and development of all outstanding musical talent.

History will make its judgment on Soviet musical achievement, however, entirely on the evidence of its creative work and not on that of its performance, which is, by its very nature, transitory however remarkable in itself.

Even if the economic life of composers in the Soviet Union is not, in fact, as luxurious as we had for long been led to believe, nevertheless the publication during the last forty years of an enormous number of symphonies, operas, concertos, chamber music and songs by Soviet composers indicates at least considerable benevolence on the part of the State. It is of course on the question of quality, however, that controversy rages and where Soviet aesthetic standards must be judged.

Development of folk music

In the twenties, under the general guidance of Lunacharsky, Commissar for Education and the Fine Arts, there were a number of groups of composers such as the Association of Proletarian Composers and the Association for Contemporary Music, with varying attitudes and methods but with the common aim of developing an art that embodies the new ideas. In the thirties, however, these groups were dissolved on the orders of the party and replaced by the Union of Soviet Composers, which took socialist realism as its one and only aesthetic principle. The importance which socialist realism attached to the development of folk-music was in itself of great value in stimulating a closer relationship between folk-musicians and composers working in the forms of opera and symphony, particularly in the Asian republics.

But the most important element in the new theory was the principle that art must 'reflect' reality, and it is necessary to examine the ultimate effect of this principle on Soviet composition. Even today, when socialist realism is no longer mentioned by party leaders, they still assert the 'reflection' principle, so that it must not be thought of as an attitude that belong to the Stalin era. This 'reflection' theory does more than claim that the character of artistic creation is conditioned by its social environment; it denies to the artist the claim that he is exploring new regions of consciousness and so leading humanity towards a higher stage of mental and spiritual evolution. It relegates him to the passive role of expressing only those states of mind and feeling **already experienced** by the members of Soviet society. Hence it follows inevitably that the 'reflection' theory demands immediate comprehensibility of a work of art (since it does not say anything new but merely makes more vivid what is already known) and asserts that the artist has no need to study the contemporary art of other societies because such art cannot 'reflect' anything that is relevant to Soviet society. It is worth noting that the party does not expect science to 'reflect' Soviet life but allows it unhampered development; it has wisely learned from the disastrous results of such interference in the field of biology.

Vistas beyond Kremlin's ken

The effect of this theory is hardly harmful on such really great minds as Prokofiev or Shostakovich, who had already reached artistic maturity before it became official policy: such minds cannot help but communicate new experience, whether they are told to or not. Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony may, to some extent, reflect Soviet life but its claim to be a masterpiece lies in its revelation of new vistas quite beyond those imagined by the political leaders.

On young and undeveloped composers the 'reflection' theory has had the inevitable result of conditioning their minds to the idea that all music is a kind of journalism that comments on the day to day activity of the Soviet people and that there is no place for their own subjective experience. Of course every society needs its 'occasional' music, pieces of a fleeting

topicality, and there is no reason why even the best minds should not engage in such work to some extent; Handel and Mozart certainly did not consider themselves above that sort of thing. But in the Soviet Union such 'occasional' work has for long been considered (and is still so considered officially) of a quite disproportionate importance. There is unwillingness by the party leaders to accept that a serious composer can give musical expression to the great social events of his age only after a long period of assimilation when they can be 'recollected in tranquillity'. Shostakovich's 'Leningrad' Symphony is inadequate to its subject not because the composer became a victim of 'formalism' but because he sought to give **permanent** expression to thoughts and feelings about the war before they had become part of his own subjective experience.

Exploring still unknown regions

It is therefore time that Marxist aestheticians and particularly composers who consider themselves Marxists should abandon once and for all the theory of 'art as a reflection of reality' and replace it by one which recognizes that art is in fact a part of reality itself and that the composer is as much exploring the still unknown regions of this reality as the astronomer. The need for Marxism in art as in science is to help to bring this unknown within the grasp of man's knowledge and sensibility. Until this happens no general development in musical composition in the Soviet Union can be expected, even though we shall undoubtedly continue to receive fine works from such a genius as Shostakovich (who, it must be admitted, is the only really first-rate creative musical mind in the Soviet Union today). One can see no hope for the younger generation of composers until the party releases them from their full-time appointments in the Soviet advertising department and they are allowed to accept full responsibility for themselves and to trust their own thoughts.

Then and then only will they begin to equip themselves for the task of giving reality to the image of communism of which the Soviet Union and the rest of the world is today in such need.

DONALD VEALL

SOVIET LAW AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

THROUGHOUT the forty years since the Russian Revolution law has been regarded in the Soviet Union as a matter of efficient administration rather than of rights of the individual and of the community.

The law courts, being administrative organs of government, could not protect victims against acts of the government. Hence civil liberties, particularly during the Stalin period, have been virtually non-existent.

The proletarian revolution was born virtually direct from the feudalist tsarist régime and inevitably carried over many of its ideas and values. It was the proletariat of Moscow and Leningrad that imposed its will on the millions of backward peasants. The Soviet people could not change their standards and outlook overnight. Their minds had been conditioned by centuries of the old régime where civil rights were entirely unknown.

In western Europe, on the other hand, the bourgeois revolution had thrown up certain values. For example in England opinion was no longer the monopoly of the King. Special courts, such as the Star Chamber, which were instruments of the Government dealing with political offences and using torture as a recognized means of extracting confessions, were abolished. Political offences came to be dealt with by the ordinary courts with a system of procedure more favourable to the accused. A judiciary and legal profession not subject to the direct interference of the government grew up. Men combined in trade unions and other societies to protect their interests or advance causes. The peoples of the Russian Empire had never known these traditions, so that they could

not incorporate them in and adapt them to their new social order.

From 1934 until after the death of Stalin there were two standards of justice in the USSR. One standard was practised in the regular courts and another in the special courts dealing with political offences. These special courts were generally held in secret, with very few facilities for the defence, sometimes no right of appearance for the accused at all; torture was regularly used for extracting confessions and convictions could be secured on confession alone. These bodies were not genuine courts deciding judicially whether or not a man was guilty, but administrative bodies carrying out government policy.

The ordinary courts have been free from the worst of these abuses, but nevertheless have been weighted more heavily in favour of the government against the accused than in most capitalist countries. In criminal cases defending lawyers have had far less status and influence in court than in many other countries. A defending lawyer could not and still cannot represent his client wholeheartedly on the legal or moral merits of some political offence without exposing himself to the accusation of being disloyal. The legal profession is therefore not genuinely independent.

Almost all the special courts have now been abolished. Espionage, however, can still be tried by a military court sitting in secret with jurisdiction over civilians.

The improvements made in procedure in recent years, particularly the abolition of the special courts, show that intimidatory methods are being relinquished. The removal of the

special courts should help the ordinary courts to raise their standards. The Supreme Court in 1955 gave instructions to all courts that there should be no pressure by the government, Communist Party or any other organization or persons to interfere with a judge's decision in a criminal law case.

So far reforms have been mainly procedural. There have been no serious changes in the criminal law itself so far as concerns political offences. The definition of political offences such as 'counter-revolutionary activities' and 'wrecking' remain very wide. Penalties are severe. Nor do there appear to have been any discussions reported on redefining these offences in more specific terms.

The maxim 'no crime without a law expressly creating the offence' does not apply in the USSR. Thus it is possible for a man to be convicted of an act not specified in the criminal code on the basis of crime by analogy. Almost all European criminal codes specifically forbid crime by analogy. (Hitler reintroduced it into Germany after it had been abolished for more than sixty years.)

During the Stalin régime increasing harshness was shown in the 'non-political' law. In the late thirties, although crime was steadily decreasing, due no doubt to the improved living conditions, the proportion of convicted persons sent to prison or put on forced labour at their place of work increased, while the proportion of lighter punishments, such as reprimand, fine or probation declined. Stalin used the criminal law as a means of maintaining labour discipline. In 1940 he made criminal offences such things as arriving late or leaving work early or taking too long for lunch. In later years the courts eased off the penalties imposed for these offences. In 1956 these offences against labour discipline were made no longer criminal.

Divorce was tightened up in 1944 and in practice put out of reach of many of the lower income groups. At the last session of the Soviet Parliament, MPs criticized the divorce laws which prevented the dissolution of broken marriages. Since this criticism was allowed, it seems likely that divorce reforms may take place.

The Stalin Constitution of 1936 contained many admirable provisions. The judges were declared independent and subject only to the law. The procuracy—the legal inspectorate—had full powers of inspection over everybody. Local soviets had the duty to protect the rights of citizens. The inviolability of the person was guaranteed. But these provisions existed on paper only. They afforded no protection against the Stalin terror. Nor did anyone raise the argument that Stalin and his henchmen were acting unconstitutionally. The Soviet people never thought along such lines. They had been too long conditioned to such methods of government. Copies of the Constitution were distributed in millions throughout the world as a propaganda stunt to persuade people that the constitution was a correct account of how things worked in the USSR.

There is much talk today of upholding 'socialist legality'. This is a reflection of a desire to reduce arbitrariness. More and more lawyers are being trained and placed in industry and local government, although not yet in collective farms, to promote legal standards. The procuracy has been given increased powers and the political police down-graded. The procuracy is, however, essentially inspection from above—by one State organ over others—and therefore limited in its effectiveness. Civil liberty can only be protected and extended effectively if people have the right to organize from below into voluntary associations. Such organizations do not exist, for all such activities are canalized into the authoritarian Communist Party. 'Socialist legality' is certainly not yet what we understand in this country as the rule of law.

* * *

More progress has been made in humanizing the law in the last few years than ever before. The increasing standard of living, the raising of educational standards, the existence of a large working class provide the basis for much greater changes. To uphold the Soviet legal system as a model to be followed by other advanced European countries is of no value to those who seek to advance socialism in their own countries. Rather the reforms should be seen as the beginning of the struggles of the Soviet people for genuine civil liberties.

JOHN PETERS

How the Revolution Was Presented to the Readers of the Yorkshire Post

THE *Yorkshire Post* has its modest place among British dailies, not merely because Sir Linton Andrews guards the holy grail of Press morality, but because its readership of Yorkshire business men need somehow to get some facts about the world, and yet keep their illusions intact.

Reportage of the Russian October in the 'Y.P.' had to compete for space with the U-boat campaign, the Austrian victories in North Italy, with Passchendaele and Cambrai and, at home, with the revival of Sinn Féin and the alleged alcoholic excesses of munition workers.

However, Reuter's telegram of Monday, October 27, 1917, puts us into the picture of 'official' Russia and the Pre-Parliament:

At the conference of politicians which is being held here, Generals Brussiloff and Ruskay made speeches describing the disorganisation of the army and the deep and constantly rising animosity between soldiers and their officers. The two generals declared that as long as the Committees of Military Commissioners existed in their present form, the re-establishment of discipline was very improbable.

The Congress resolved: 'In spite of the triumph of the German Fleet in the Baltic and the serious menace to Petrograd, Russian politicians reject all thoughts of treason to the Allied cause or of a separate peace. . . .'

Dated Monday, November 29, Reuter's telegram reports at length the speech in which Tereshchenko and Milyukov described the sacred aims of democracy for which the Russian masses were no longer 'responsible' enough to fight.

The debate on national defence was concluded without approving any of the five formulas of the order of the day. One only, which was of a moderate nature, was at first approved by 141 to 132 but was subsequently rejected by 139 to 135. M. Miliukoff said . . . it was necessary to re-establish discipline in the army, suppress anarchy in the country and create a stronger government capable of acting. . . . He agreed with the policy of arbitration, reduction of armaments and the Parliamentary control of diplomacy, but at the same time such control should not go so far as open treason as the demand to publish at once secret treaties. He accepted the formula of the right of the people to settle their own future, but not in the form proposed by the extreme left. Russia's interests in the South will not be assured unless she has military control of the Straits.

The 'Official News' hand-out from the British Press Bureau on November 5 contained the headlines 'Russian Troops Frazernize. More Disloyal Soldiers'.

A special article the same day, dated November 1 (and secured by copyright to the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Morning Post*) begins 'Anarchy in Russia. A Terrible Picture of Lawlessness'.

The sooner the truth as to actual conditions in Russia is realised, the more likely becomes the possibility of finding help to save what remains. . . . Every man is his own master and most of the nation is in the uniform which clothes alike soldiers and those now commonly known as Tovarisci. Whole regions of European Russia are terrorised by armed bands of Tovarisci who by hundreds and thousands lay waste the countryside. Wholesale murder and wider ruin follow. . . . The peasantry join these bands and share in the pillage and debauches. One of the first uses of 'freedom' in the villages was to institute private stills. . . . Several hundred robberies with violence are reported in Petrograd alone every day. . . . Gangs of Tovarisci openly by daylight rob private houses and shops carrying off the proceeds when bulky in motor lorries. . . . As for the situation on the front it is impossible to say anything

although the Germans know everything. Fraternizing, and money made in German, again threaten disasters. . . Germany's agents, hirelings and dupes in Petrograd have once more established the reign of terror which no amount of well-meaning speechifying does anything to moderate or abate.

On November 9 the paper laments: 'Chaos in Petrograd, Provisional Government Overthrown. Arrest of Ministers. Revolutionaries in Petrograd have seized the Winter Palace. M. Kerensky is in flight. . . In a series of proclamations the Revolutionary Committee at whose head apparently is the notorious German agent Lenin declare for an immediate armistice, in preparation for a "democratic" peace, the handing over of land to the peasants, a settlement of the economic crisis, the abolition of the death penalty at the front and complete freedom of political propaganda.'

A Reuter telegram from Petrograd dated November 8 fills out the picture.

Delegates of three Cossack regiments quartered here yesterday declared that they would not obey the Provisional Government and would not march against the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' delegates, but that they were prepared to maintain public order. The Petrograd Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates held an extraordinary meeting in the afternoon in the course of which the President, M. Trotsky, declared that the Provisional Government no longer existed. . . . The following statement has been transmitted through the wireless stations of the Russian Government: . . . The Revolutionary Committee calls upon the revolutionary soldiers to watch closely the conduct of the men in command. Officers who do not join the accomplished revolution immediately and openly must be arrested as enemies.'

After a sensational account of the capture of the Winter Palace, the Petrograd correspondent of *The Times* (the *Yorkshire Post* used the *Times-Morning Post* telegrams in full) displays his political balance. This from a dispatched dated November 9:

The Soviet itself has been divided and seriously weakened by the withdrawal of the moderate wing. It is doubtful whether the revolutionary organization and committees in the country and at the Front will submit to the dictation of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd and Kronstadt. Furthermore it may be doubted whether the Bolsheviks will command sufficient authority to attempt to negotiate a separate peace.

The extraordinary animation of the Smolny Institute, the headquarters of the Petrograd Soviet and the Revolutionary Military Committee which sprang from it, is described in a Reuter telegram from Petrograd dated November 8:

M. Lenin on making his appearance there received an enthusiastic ovation. He was accompanied by his lieutenant, M. Vinoviev. . . . M. Trotsky explained the reason for the arrest of the former Ministers. It is not, he said, an act of vengeance or political restraint. All the socialist Ministers as well as the whole government will be brought before a court of justice for complicity in the Kornilov affair.

* * *

On November 10 a news-item opens:

The situation at Petrograd remains dark and sinister. The Leninites, having control of the wires, endeavour to give the impression that they have obtained complete power and—what is more important—are sending messages and orders to the armies representing themselves as the established Government. At their headquarters, the Smolny Institute, they have posted a list of members of the new Government but it is declared that the appointments must receive the sanction of the Congress of Soviets. The Congress—purporting to represent 'All Russia'—met at Petrograd on Thursday (8th November) and agreed on a manifesto which is to be sent to the soldiers. This incidentally discloses a feature of the situation of which little is allowed to transpire directly. It states that the parties of M. Kerensky, General Korniloff and General Kaledin (the Cossack chief) are trying to move troops on Petrograd. The soldiers are urged not to join these forces and an appeal is made to railwaymen not to move them. The only other information we have of the marching of troops on Petrograd is a message stating that on Wednesday M. Kerensky was at Gatchina, about 20 miles from the capital and addressed a force of 6,000 men who had been despatched from the front. The message adds that the detachment decided not to proceed 'at present' to Petrograd.

For a short while the clouds lift. The issue of November 12 reports: 'Kerensky's march on Petrograd. News from M. Kerensky's side that his forces are close to Petrograd and that the "Bolshevik adventure" is about to be liquidated. . . . rebels retiring in disorderly mobs on Petrograd. That the Maximalists are fast losing their hold on Petrograd is also indicated by a telegram which states that some of the arrested Ministers have been released.'

But the impossible went on happening; the news got still worse. Reuter's telegram in the issue of November 12 contained the Congress of Soviets' declaration of peace.

On its side, the Government is suppressing all secret diplomacy and it announces its firm determination to carry on peace negotiations openly before the whole world and to proceed to the publication of all secret treaties which were approved of or passed by the Government of great proprietors and capitalists between February and November 7, 1917. The Government declares null and void the provisions of these secret treaties, inasmuch as they seek in the majority of cases to grant all sorts of favours and privileges to the great proprietors and capitalists by maintaining or increasing annexations made by the Great Russians.

On November 13 the *Yorkshire Post* printed the proclamation signed by Trotsky in the name of the Council of People's Commissars:

History will record the night of November 12th. The attempt of Kerensky to move counter-revolutionary forces against the capital of the revolution has received a decisive reply. Kerensky is retiring and we are taking the offensive. . . . The bourgeoisie has endeavoured to separate the Army from the Revolution. Kerensky has attempted to break it by the violence of Cossackdom. Both efforts have failed. . . . The whole country will see that the authority of the Soviets is not a passing phase but is an unchangeable fact. . . .

* * *

But to the same issue the ineffable Exchange Telegraph contributed:

Travellers have arrived in Haparanda from Russia confirming the report that Kerensky has gained a complete victory over the Bolsheviks. Kerensky, Kaledin and Korniloff have formed a triumvirate in Petrograd, where all the troops now side with Kerensky. . . . Lenin is reported to have been captured.

How sad to read on the 16th in Reuter's telegram:

The Haparanda correspondent of Stockholm's *Tidningen* telegraphed last night that he had learned from a Russian who had arrived from Petrograd yesterday that on Monday Kerensky's troops had not entered Petrograd and that he did not think they would enter the capital, as the garrison of Petrograd numbered 50,000 men faithful to the Maximalists. He added that the cause of Kerensky's unpopularity is his opposition to peace which the majority desire. If the Maximalists could have made peace they would have been the masters everywhere. General Korniloff being a counter-revolutionary does not count any more.

An Exchange Telegraph report of November 15 admitted:

When the Revolutionary troops reconquered Gatchina, Kerensky with 3-5,000 men retired to the South. An order was given to cut off his retreat and parts of the Northern Army were despatched to attack him in the rear.

But hope springs eternal. The report went on:

The people seem to have lost confidence in Lenin and Trotsky. It is intended to form a Social-Revolutionary Coalition with representatives of all parties except the well-to-do class. The first task of the new Government will be to make peace with the enemy.

We can follow step by step the political struggle of Lenin and Trotsky against the conciliators. A 'Times telegram per Press Association' dated November 13 (published on November 17) reports:

The Moderate Socialists have attempted to negotiate with the Leninists who still have the full support of the garrison. The extremists demand that if a Coalition democratic government be formed they shall be given places proportionate to their strength in the All-Russian Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates. This has temporarily brought negotiations to a standstill. . . . The Railway Union has decided on a general strike at midnight, unless all parties come to an agreement. Meanwhile the railwaymen will not convey troops or munitions for either side. The extremists support them.

The *Times* telegram of Sunday, November 18, after a blood-curdling 'account' of the shelling of Moscow, went on:

Thus both capitals pass into the hands of the new government of People's Commissaries. Five of the People's Commissaries here—Kameneff, Rykoff, Milutin, Zinoviev and Nogin—have retired as they favour the formation of a Socialist bloc as the only means of ensuring a stable government. . . . but at present the Lenin-Trotsky combination is all-powerful and it is improbable that the others will get enough support at least for a time to enable their more moderate policy to triumph. The Extremists feel themselves firmly seated in the saddle and they intend to ride the horse to a finish.

The *Times* telegram for November 19 admits: 'I learn from a trustworthy source that the reports that are current with regard to widespread pillage and destruction of private property in Moscow are greatly exaggerated.'

On November 22 we read in Reuter's telegram that 'the Maximalist leaders are holding out to their supporters hopes of an international revolution on the Russian model'. However, the Central News telegraphs from Copenhagen: 'The

existing calm at Petrograd will not be of long duration. The Bolshevik régime is built on sand and very strong forces are actively at work with the object of ousting the Lenin-Trotsky usurpers.

The Times telegram of November 21 shows the proletarian dictatorship take form.

The officials of the Foreign Ministry, after having been threatened with dismissal and arrest by Trotsky, the new 'Commissioner' for Foreign Affairs, handed over the keys of the premises, protesting that they yielded to force. . . . The Executive Committee of the Soviets, after hearing speeches by Lenin and Trotsky, adopted by 34 votes to 24 a motion approving suppression of the journals of the bourgeoisie and demanding the confiscation of all printing presses owned by private persons together with all stocks of paper. Trotsky in his speech declared that during civil war the right of resorting to violence belongs only to the oppressed. Victory had not yet been achieved and the suppression of these journals was a lawful measure of self-defence. The Soviets should confiscate all printing presses.

The issue of November 24 rounds off the days of the seizure of power and points forward to its effective use, for it contains Trotsky's letter to the ambassadors in Russia of all the belligerent countries appealing for an immediate truce on all fronts and for peace negotiations, with a proclamation signed by Antonov-Ovseyenko and Krylenko starting the practical work of demobilizing the armed forces, and a manifesto signed by Stalin and Lenin announcing the abolition of feudal survivals and of national discrimination in Russia.

The previous day, Lord Robert Cecil, the future League of Nations pundit, had told an interviewer: 'I do not believe that the action just taken by the extremists in Petrograd really represents the views of the Russian people. . . . There is no intention of recognizing such a Government . . .'

The *Yorkshire Post* can claim at least that its mistakes were no worse than those of greater papers!

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MARTIN GRAINGER is an active participant in the socialist forum movement . . . **WILLIAM HUNTER** was on the editorial board of *Socialist Outlook* and was expelled from the Labour Party for supporting that paper . . . **GEORGE CUNVIN** has been an active member of the Labour Party for 22 years . . . **MICHAEL BANDA** is a printer and a Labour Party member . . . **ROBERT ANDREWS** is an economist and an active member of the Leeds Labour Party . . . **ROBERT HUNTER** is an Edinburgh botanist who joined the Communist Party in 1942 and resigned in 1957 . . . **DON RENTON** fought in the British Battalion of the International Brigade, was a leader of the unemployed workers' movement, then worked full-time for the Communist Party in Edinburgh till his resignation this year . . . **JOSEPH HANSEN** is a prominent American socialist, secretary to the late Leon Trotsky . . . **TONY GUTHRIE** is the name under which a prominent member of the Communist Party writes for *The Newsletter* on eastern European affairs . . . **JOSEPH CLARK** recently resigned from the foreign editor's desk at the *New York Daily Worker* and from the U.S. Communist Party after 28 years' membership . . . **KAMINI MEEDENIYA** is a Ceylonese biologist . . . **TOM KEMP** teaches economics at Hull University . . . **GEORGE I. LORMIN** is a Yorkshire farmer . . . **HYMAN LEVY** is a philosopher and mathe-

matician, author of many popular books on science and dialectical materialism . . . **J. H. BRADLEY** is a physicist, at present working in Canada . . . **A SOCIALIST DOCTOR** recently left the Communist Party and joined the Labour Party; he is a general practitioner . . . **BEATRIX TUDOR-HART** is a teacher, wrote 'Toys, Play and Discipline in Childhood' and has been principal of a progressive school . . . **JOHN DANIELS**, son of a North Staffordshire collier, is lecturer in charge of research at Nottingham University Institute of Education. He edits *Labour Review* . . . **PAUL HOGARTH** is a graphic artist. He visited the USSR in 1954 and in June 1957 . . . **BERNARD STEVENS** is Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music, composer of concert works and films, author of the section on Soviet music in the recent book 'European Music of the 20th Century'; he was a member of the Communist Party from 1941 to October 1956 . . . **JERRY DAWSON** has been secretary of Merseyside Unity Theatre for the last twenty years . . . **DONALD VEALL** is a lawyer, active in the movement for making the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR do its job . . . **PAUL SIMON** is a young architect; a member of the Communist Party since 1947, he was a 'critic'—especially of Soviet architecture—before the Khrushchev speech . . . **JOHN PETERS** is a teacher of science, a member of the Labour Party since 1948.