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A Totalitarianism that is Slow to Wither: The Program of the Communist Party in Two Years' Perspective

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Despite Khrushchev's stress on "peaceful coexistence," on greater attention to consumer needs, and on certain "democratizing" reforms in the party apparatus and legal system of the state—concepts that had found their institutional expression in the program of the Party at the 22nd Congress—significant totalitarian elements in Soviet ideology and in the power monopoly of the party remained basically unchanged. That these elements cannot be ignored in any realistic appraisal of Soviet developments and intentions was again dramatically underscored by the manner of Khrushchev's removal in October of 1964.

Ideology and program perform a central role in Soviet totalitarianism. Together they represent the authoritative Communist promulgation of what is socially right and wrong, of what is desirable and what is not. Through them, Soviet society achieves its sense of unity and strength, and receives from them the *raison d'être* for personal sacrifice and social discipline. Imposed by the ruling elite, which can and does manipulate all the media of communications, ideology thus serves to compel consensus and obedience to what is deemed fundamental for the continuity and eventual victory of the Marxist-Leninist Weltanschauung.

Under Khrushchev, ideology had the "important effect of transforming the party's power into authority, and of replacing terror as a major buttress for the party's power." In this framework, it was the function of the Program, as the embodiment of the "holy writ," to provide the party with the central guidelines for policy and action. Since the Soviet Union is a single-party totalitarian state, the Program thus was depended on to set the ideological course for all aspects of the collectivized life.

For an understanding of political realities in a party state that knows no constitutional restraints, tolerates no self-conscious pluralistic groups possessed of countervailing political power, rejects concepts of private rights when asserted against the collectivity, has vowed to destroy all independent bureaucracies, civilian or military, it is indispensable to analyze the program of such a party for what it contains and avoids as well as for what it favors and opposes.

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I. Preliminaries

When the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union convened in October of 1961 to adopt the new party program—the first since 1919—Khrushchev had, in fact, already solidly established his leadership in party and state. The struggle for the succession to Stalin had come to an end.

Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich and Shepilov, along with Saburov and Pervukhin, were branded "anti-party" and removed from the presidium during the summer of 1957. Although they and their associates were able to out-vote Khrushchev at the critical June plenum of the presidium, Khrushchev, as chairman of the party's presidium, refused to abide by their decision and took his cause to the larger body, the central committee, which sustained him and overrode the presidium. Zhukov, the popular hero of the "patriotic war" who had helped Khrushchev during this crisis, was subsequently charged with "Bonapartist" leanings and, during October 1957, was removed from the inner circle by resolution. Bulganin, who had succeeded Malenkov as chairman of the council of ministers and with whom Khrushchev was forced to share the spotlight during his travels throughout Asia and Eastern Europe, was expelled in 1958 for having given support to the anti-party group. Voroshilov, Stalin's one-time favorite, was purged in 1960.

With the exception of Beria, the brutal and uniformly detested head of the secret police who was summarily executed in 1953, Khrushchev's path to power, compared to that of Stalin's, was relatively bloodless. Molotov became an ambassador to Outer Mongolia, Malenkov was given a minor administrative managerial post with an electric power station in Kazakhstan, Shepilov returned to teaching, Kaganovich was assigned to head up a cement plant in the Urals, and Bulganin became chairman of the Stavropol Economic Council.

Despite powerful domestic forces bent on revenge, Khrushchev was able to bring back under control some of the more immediate consequences and repercussions that had been set into motion by the dramatic revelations of Stalinist crimes documented in his famous report to the 20th Congress (1956). While ruthlessly suppressing uprisings in Hungary and Poland, at home Khrushchev appeared to stress norms of "legality" and needed revisions of the criminal code. He promised increased availability of consumers' goods, a better quality of products, improved housing construction, more food, and higher levels of education; agricultural efficiency would be raised and virgin lands to the east brought under cultivation.

Khrushchev traveled widely, preached "peaceful coex-

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istence," and promised an easier life to all who lived within the communist orbit. Visitors to the Soviet Union reported a general sense of relaxation and a popular mood of cautious optimism. Successes in the technology of outer space and in the missiles race enormously excited the Soviet people and greatly enhanced Soviet scientific prestige throughout the world.

Communist party unity seemed strengthened with the "rehabilitation" of Tito and the Sino-Soviet compromises at the "world" congresses of 1957 and 1960. Although the "Spirit of Camp David" lasted only until the shadow of the U-2 incident fell across it, Khrushchev's visit to the United States and to the U.N., despite his displays of diplomatic crudity, added substantially to his stature as a spokesman for world communism.

Thus, having consolidated his position at home and, at least, temporarily stabilized the "cold war" with the U.S. and other Western powers over the outstanding issues of Berlin, disarmament, Laos, U.N. structure, Congo, and nuclear testing, Khrushchev was now ready to tackle one of the most difficult tasks for any totalitarian leader: he had to become the party's chief ideologist and bring Lenin up to date. The Program of the 22nd Congress was designed to serve as a vehicle to institutionalize his concept of Leninist communism and to delineate the frame of reference for future policy decisions by the loyal cadres that he had placed in key positions in the party and state administrations.

II. The Program

Structurally, the Program centered around two main topics:¹ Part One, Transitions from Capitalism to Communism is the Road of Human Progress and Part Two, The Tasks of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in Building a Communist Society.

The first part of the Program begins with a rather traditional recital of Marxist-Leninist history stressing the shortcomings of capitalism — the inherent contradictions between workers and capitalists, the resulting production anarchy, the periodic crises due to the falling purchasing power of workers, the decreasing rate of economic growth — all are considered signals that the "world capitalist system as a whole is ready for social revolution of the proletariat."

The "desperate" state of capitalism is then contrasted with the "achievements" of the Soviet Union. Here the party of Lenin industrialized the state, ended the exploitation of the working classes, raised the cultural level of the proletariat and established a socialist state in which "each contributed according to his ability and received according to his work." (Marx said, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.") It established a society of "broad democracy" in which all the people participate through the Soviets, trade unions and other mass organizations in the management of the affairs of state and the economic and cultural advances of society.

Soviet democracy is then pictured as going beyond freedom of speech, press and assembly, the right to elect and be elected, to include social rights as well — the right

to work, rest, leisure, free education, free medical services, and material security in old age in case of illness and disability. (This rather idyllic statement of communist "freedom" must, of course, be balanced and read in the well known context of communist thought that there cannot and should not be freedom for the enemies of the "left" and "right," for "dogmatists," "sectarians," "factionalists" and "revisionists" — euphemisms all for those who take effective issue with the pronouncements of the central committee and "its leading cadres.")

In the international realm, the Program sees the capitalist regimes rent by discord and fierce struggles which are accentuated by the growing economic crisis for which capitalism has no solution. The "fraternal socialist" world system, on the other hand, "proceeds on the basis of sovereignty and free will and in conformity with the fundamental interests of the working people."² (The framers of this statement did not anticipate, however, that Chou En-Lai would walk out of the 22nd Congress and depart for Peking after Khrushchev's public insistence that Hoxha and his Albanian labor party had removed themselves from the "fraternal system" by failing to carry out the agreements of the "peace" Congress of 1960).

"Peaceful coexistence" was characterized as the "chief aim of Soviet foreign policy."³ Such a policy would assure "peaceful conditions" for the building of a communist society in the U.S.S.R. and expand and protect the world socialist system. Also, if pursued "together with other peace-loving peoples" it might "deliver mankind from a world war of extermination." Coupled with this olive branch is the reassertion that imperialism is the only source of war, that in the socialist camp there are no groups interested in starting a war, and that the socialist system is the "natural center" of attracting "the peace-loving forces of the world."

The Program does not rule out the "legitimacy" of certain types of wars. Specifically acknowledged are wars of "assistance" and "liberation," especially the Cuban variety. "Together with other Marxist Leninist parties, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union regards it as its internationalist duty . . . (to draw) . . . on the might of the world socialist system" in order to "forestall or firmly repel imperialist interference in the affairs of the people of any country risen in revolt and thereby prevent imperialist export of counter-revolution. . ."⁴

Force can also become necessary according to the Program, "where the exploiting classes resort to violence against the people." Under those conditions "the possibility of non-peaceful transition to socialism should be borne in mind."

Further tactical flexibility is attained by the assertion that "in each particular country the actual applicability of one method of transition to socialism or the other depends on concrete historical conditions."⁵ Thus, while opposing all "wars of conquest" the Soviet leadership sees nothing in the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence" that would necessarily preclude it from countering those who were "strangling people's emancipation movements." As a matter of fact, the Program stresses that it is the "duty" of communists "to support the sacred struggle

of the oppressed peoples and their just anti-imperialist wars of liberation.”

Stripped of its semantic camouflage, “peaceful coexistence” provides ideological underpinnings sufficiently elastic for either peace or war. Whether it will be one or the other would seem to depend in the future, as it did in the past, more on the political-scientific-military realities of the world balance of power than on the imperatives of this vaguely phrased party directive. There is little in this section of the Program to justify the turning off of lights in the State Department, Pentagon, or in the C.I.A.

The Tasks of the Party. This part of the Program is the blueprint for the creating of the new Soviet communist man and society. Its outline is far from new. Envisaged is a classless social system in which all the means of production are socially owned, all persons have “full social equality,” and the people’s “all around development” is “accompanied by the growth of productive forces through progress in science and technology.” Each person contributes according to his ability and receives according to his needs. Public self government takes the place of the state. Labor for the good of society replaces the individual’s acquisitive capitalistic drives.

The practical and nearly instantaneous establishment of the material basis for these goals constitutes the major burden of this section of the Program. Production targets are ringing with eschatological fervor. Within a decade the Soviet Union will “surpass” the United States in per capita production. By 1980 the “abundance of material and cultural values” will be insured. “Everyone will live in easy circumstances; all collective and state farms will become highly productive and profitable enterprises; the demand of the Soviet people for well-appointed housing will, in the main be satisfied; hard physical work will disappear; the U.S.S.R. will have the shortest working day.”⁷ Soviet citizens will be able to enjoy free of costs their housing, basic utilities, transportation, medical care, education, and a “catered midday meal” at public enterprises and institutions. Disparities “between high and comparatively low incomes” will also be further reduced.

An upward revision of projected increases in heavy industry, housing, consumers goods, food, medical services, educational benefits, recreational facilities, and cultural opportunities concludes with the party’s promise “that the present generation of Soviet people shall live in communism.”⁸

Beyond this meld of concrete achievement and impassioned propaganda there emerge at least four important policy emphases in the Program that deserve further attention.

First, “the peasants’ school of communism,” the kolkhoze, will, in its future development, take on more of the character of state-owned farms so that the rural populations can be more easily “amalgamated” into urban populations and help to eliminate “the socio-economic and cultural distinctions between town and country.” In this way “kolkhoze property and the property of the whole people” can be more easily fused into “one communist property.” But, more succinctly, the peasant’s private plot is on the way out. Supplementary individual

farming will gradually become economically unnecessary. Peasants will give it up “on their own accord.”⁹

Second, deficiencies in planning and efficiency must be overcome. The Program decrees that centralized planning is to afford greater initiative and independence to local enterprises; losses must be reduced, thrift practiced, production costs cut and the profitability of enterprises enhanced.¹⁰

Third, to the party, rather than to the state, are assigned the major responsibility for organizing, directing and controlling the road to communism.¹¹ “Organized state power” is to be gradually transformed into “organs of public self government.” A vigilant party, assisted by the Young Communist League and the trade unions, will assure “the education of the people in the ‘broadest democracy’ which must go hand in hand with strict observance of comradely discipline.”¹² In the communist state described by the Program, “rights” and “duties” are fused in order “to form a single standard of communist behavior”¹³ and “comradely censure of anti-social behavior will gradually become the principal means of doing away with manifestations of bourgeois views, customs, and habits.”¹⁴

The primacy of the party is explained in terms of its unique qualification to meet the “growing scope and complexity of the tasks of communist construction,” to accommodate the demands for wider participation of the people in the administrative affairs of state and production, and to assure the greatest possible doctrinal unity and direction.

To make the party more attractive and more “democratic” the Program (as well as the rules for party government adopted separately by the 22nd Congress) calls for more rapid turn over of party committee membership, maximum terms of office for key committees (not more than three successive terms), more active participation of the membership in all phases of party and state work, reduced employment of paid staffs and review of expulsions by higher party echelons. These “democratizing” features of party reform are then balanced by the directive that (1) some members with outstanding organizational talent and competence may be asked to serve for longer terms and (2) the party must strengthen its vigilance against all “manifestations of factionalism and group activity incompatible with Marxist-Leninist party principles.”¹⁵

III. The Program at Work

With this brief sketch of the main “planks” of the Program in mind, it should prove interesting to explore a few of the major ideological stresses and strains to which the program has been officially subjected during the course of the last two years.

Some New Limits to De-Stalinization. In 1963, at the March meeting of party and government officials with prominent leaders in literature and the arts, Khrushchev warned of literary tendencies to “concentrate all attention on the instances of illegality, arbitrariness and abuse of power” during the “era of the cult.” He emphasized that the party had given an adequate account of these

days to the people already and that these years of Stalinist rule "were not a period of stagnation in the development of Soviet society, as our enemies imagine." Socialism was built successfully and state and party withstood the trials of war.

Elaborating on his famous report to the 20th Congress (1956), Khrushchev¹⁶ stressed that the shortcomings that were revealed were not those of the party or the state but those inherent in Stalin's character. He now disclosed that Lenin himself had warned the party to look for a leader more "tolerant, more loyal, more courteous, and more considerate to comrades, less capricious, etc." Despite all this Stalin "was a Marxist and this cannot and must not be denied. At Stalin's funeral many people, myself included, had tears in their eyes. These were sincere tears. Although we did know of some of Stalin's personal shortcomings, we still believed him." During the last years of his life, Khrushchev emphasized, Stalin was "a profoundly sick man who suffered from suspiciousness and persecution mania." Even the doctors' plot and other cases of fabricated subversion—some of which Beria and Kaganovich instigated—would have been more numerous and more severe "if everyone who worked beside Stalin at that time had agreed with him in everything." Why did the party not stop Stalin during the years of the purges? Khrushchev now somewhat lamely admits that while the party did know of the arrests they did not know that "those arrested were innocent." The party "believed Stalin and did not admit the thought that repression could be applied against honest people devoted to our cause."

That the process of de-Stalinization, on the other hand, must not turn the party into a Western-style democratic political structure Khrushchev¹⁷ makes quite clear when he asserts that "every Communist has the right to express his opinion, but when the Party makes a decision, sets forth the general line, then all Party members stand in single rank and start to do what the collective thought and will of the Party has worked out . . . the Party should rid itself of those people who hold their own mistaken opinion higher than the decisions of the Party."

No Coexistence in the Realm of Ideas. At the party plenary session on ideological questions, July 3, 1963, Khrushchev¹⁸ redefined once again one of his favorite themes, there can be no peaceful coexistence between capitalism and communism in matters of ideology. Such coexistence he contended "would give the enemy an opportunity to blacken everything most dear to us, to encourage slander, to facilitate corruption of the people's consciousness, to destroy our self discipline, and in every way retard our advance. We have fought and will continue . . . (to fight) . . . with all implacability . . . not only against corrupt bourgeois ideology but against its agents in our midst, as the agents of our class enemies."

One of this year's most vituperative assaults on the West was delivered by Ilyichin,¹⁹ the party's ideologist. The occasion was the June session of the party's central committee. He rejected out of hand any notion that modern capitalism had lost its "exploitive" or "inhuman"

character, that "welfare" capitalism or "free enterprise" capitalism could improve the lives of the workers or that capitalism and socialism could move into converging streams of development, or that there could ever be a "synthesis" or "hybridization" of the two systems. There will be no "ideological erosion" of socialist society, he insisted. We must go on the "offensive against bourgeois ideology, unmask the misanthropic core of imperialism, its bestial customs, to excise all the ulcers of the old order from the minds of the Soviet people, to raise active and staunch fighters for communism." Singled out as one such ulcer was religion, "chief opponent of the scientific world view in the U.S.S.R., one of the most tenacious survivals of the past from which considerable numbers of the population have not freed themselves despite the fact that the institutional roots of religion have long ago been destroyed."

Attacks on Abstract Art and "Maverick Writers." Few remarks of Khrushchev²⁰ received wider international notoriety than his famous quip at abstract art. Visiting an anniversary exhibition of works created by Moscow artists, he reacted most indignantly to a group of abstract paintings by labeling them "'pictures' that make you wonder whether they were painted by the hand of man or daubed by a donkey's tail."

The next day, *Pravda*²¹ editorialized that the artists had forgotten Party spirit and communist moral content "under the pretext of allegedly daring artistic searches of allegedly daring innovation," that they strayed and betrayed "the glorious traditions of our realistic art," and that these "pseudo innovators, turning away from the life, struggle and labor of their people, thoughtlessly chase after Western 'fashion' and engage in miserable aping of the depraved formalistic art of the bourgeois world, which is in its very nature profoundly alien to our world view, our esthetic ideals, our concepts of excellence, of beauty."

Ilyichev²² delivered the party's policy statement on literature and art three months later, at Sverdlov Hall, at a conference of party leaders, artists, writers, film directors and musicians. His attack centered on "formalism," on attempts of writers and artists to ignore the ideological mission of their work. The thesis he developed was unmistakable. As artists "we have complete freedom to struggle for communism. We do not have and cannot have freedom to struggle against communism." These pronouncements culminated months of meetings throughout the Soviet Union in which were assailed a group of younger writers—Russia's "angry young men" for their failure to contribute to realistic socialist art, for having created weak art, and for having vacillated and deviated from the main line of communist art.

For some months, following the 22nd Congress, Yevtuchenko was able to publicly recite his anti-Stalinist poetry, and the editors of *Novy Mir*, the literary magazine, felt sufficiently safe to publish Solzhenitsyn's "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" as well as Ehrenburg's memoirs "People, Years, Life." It seemed as if Soviet intellectuals at last were being given the opportunity to create and share their works in a climate of en-

couragement, freed from party censure or criticisms. Yevtuchenko, especially, seemed to reflect faithfully the bitterly anti-Stalinist yet deeply communistic mood of a generation that was in search of a new sense of integrity and courage.

"I realize

that something has been cut out root and branch,
something new and great is plain to see.

I notice:

people have become more outspoken,
they're harsher now toward baseness
and dissembling,
people have become more ironic,
and more confident,
both kindlier and more considerate
than they used to be.

I don't agree to calling it
a 'thaw'.

It really is a spring
though a very hard spring.

And those grown used to being hypocrites
and cowards

Are with good reason in dismay nowadays.
This city remembers the 'Black Marias',
remembers the searches,
the questionings
and the arrests.

But just you lend an ear to conversations of today:
There's the sound of April in the talk!

A wind

blustering in the young leaves,
is blowing balky trash over the sidewalks.
The city has a feeling of responsibility
for the future.

Not without reason does the city keep in mind the past.
This city

is sure of itself.

It will not let grim ghosts
come to life again.

The memorable year of '17 will be immortal here.
Never will it know again
the year of '37. ♦

* * *

Shaking their heads, they say to me:
'We wish you had a kinder disposition,
You're such an angry man!'

I did have once.

Not for long.

Life changed me.

It kicked me in the teeth.

I had been living like a foolish pup.
When struck

I'd turn the other cheek.

So that I might angrier be,
I chopped off

My tail of complacency,
myself,

with one blow!

And I'm going to tell you something now about anger.
Every so often they whisper to me before a meeting starts:

'Drop it!

You're young. Better stick to your writing,
and for the time being don't be quick to pick a fight.'

But I don't give an inch:

To be angry at untruth —
that's being kind.

I'm a Communist by my very nature.
Communism bids me

be angrier and angrier

at what stands in its way,
and I am not led astray by advice.

My onetime timidity is gone,
and —

life is interesting when you're angry."²³

Yevtuchenko's difficulties with the party came to a climax when the French magazine "L'Express" published his "Autobiography of a Precocious Man." At the plenary session of the Board of U.S.S.R. Writers' Union,²⁴ speakers claimed that the work "evoked legitimate indignation among Soviet literary people . . . it abounds in untrue assertions and judgments." Its style was found wanting, its philosophy, divorced from the party, seemed "to defend some sort of abstract truth." The most serious charge touched upon his loyalty. "Why does Ye. Yevtuchenko give our ideological opponents an opportunity to conduct speculative discussion about the possibility of an 'opposition' of some kind appearing in our country by hinting in the pages of a foreign magazine that some sort of special trend of those who share his view is forming?"

Before the session concluded Yevtuchenko (along with such other errant writers as Aksenov and Voznesensky) was forced to recant. The official report of the meeting of the writers' board²⁵ indicates something of the climate of the proceedings. "In the first part of his speech Ye. Yevtuchenko attempted to dispute the sharp criticisms directed at him. He also cited tendenciously chosen quotations from his Autobiography, which do not give an objective representation of it. But under the influence of the exacting, principled atmosphere of the plenary session, Ye. Yevtuchenko was nevertheless obliged to admit that he was mistaken." The Autobiography, Yevtuchenko acknowledged, "contained many imprecise formulations and unnecessary details, much immodesty."

Speaker after speaker at subsequent meetings of the Young Communist League and party proceeded to condemn the "liberal" intellectuals for their ideological failures and confusions. In May, 1963 *Izvestia*²⁶ published the following note on the young, "errant writers": "V. Aksenov is going to Siberia, to a construction project, and A. Voznesensky is spending a considerable part of his time at enterprises in Vladimir province. It is to be supposed that Ye. Yevtuchenko will also draw conclusions from his bitter mistakes. . ."

Ehrenburg, the "old" angry man has come under fire for being favorable to "cubism," "modernism," and "surrealism."²⁷ But what angered Soviet leadership even more, was his claim to "have had to live with clenched teeth, that is be silent" during the era of the cult. His critics took this to mean that he accused the party for having long known of Stalin's crimes but refusing to do anything about them while the leader was still living. This, of course, could not be reconciled with the official

line that insists that as soon as the party knew of Stalin's arbitrary actions, they were exposed for all to see. Nobody, not even comrade Ehrenburg, had the right to know about the cult of personality until its official acknowledgment at the time of the 20th Congress. Ehrenburg's memoirs implied a personal wisdom superior to that of the party.

Again it was left to Ilyichev²⁸ to set the record "straight." He charged Ehrenburg with intellectual duplicity and conceit. Had Ehrenburg not eulogized Stalin (in 1951) as the one who "loved people, knew their weaknesses and strength, understood the tears of the mother who had lost her son in the war, understood the labor of the miner and the stonemason . . . knew the thoughts and feelings of hundreds of millions of people, expressed their hopes, their will to happiness, their thirst for peace." Ilyichev who also served Stalin, was quick to add, "If I quote from your words, it is not in order to single you out from among the many and blame you for the words quoted. We all spoke and wrote this at the time. And you, it turns out, did not believe but wrote!"

More Power to the Party. At the party central committee on November 19, 1962, Khrushchev²⁹ delivered a major policy speech in which he advocated a far more active role for the party in the guidance and management of industrial and production enterprises. This was necessary "in order to improve the methods of economic management upon whose solution an acceleration in the rate of our economic development depends." The reason for poor organization in economic planning and in coordinating "research" with "design" in producing such items as turbines, tractors, radios, and television was held to be the failure of the Soviet economy to make sufficient strides towards industrial concentration and specialization. "Why . . . do we not utilize what is rational and economically advantageous that the capitalists have?" While in the U.S. "90 per cent of all . . . (automobile) . . . production are concentrated in three leading concerns" . . . and "in Italy one firm provides the whole country with standard office furniture . . . the economic councils of the Russian federation alone produce 156 types of chairs, 116 types of dinner tables, 222 types of wardrobes and even 217 types of beds!"

By way of administrative reorganization, Khrushchev proposed a plan under which the existing state planning committees would be left with long-range planning responsibilities only, while the annual plan and its actual managerial supervision would be entrusted to a newly established Union Council of National Economy.

The major burden of his proposal, however, dealt with another reform, with methods of raising labor productivity and overall efficiency in production. This could be best accomplished, Khrushchev argued by applying the Leninist principles of party-directed mass participation.

In place of the Leninist peasants' and workers' control commissions fighting against "bureaucrats," "red-tape artists," "parasites" and "wasters of public wealth," Khrushchev now suggests something very similar: party-state control committees to assure the fulfillment of plans and production norms. "Comrades!" he explained, "As the

Party Program emphasizes, the Communist Party's role and significance in our state system rises further in the period of full-scale construction of communism. This is why the Party, as the most authoritative public organization in socialist society, should head the work of control, should become its organizing and guiding force."

On November 23, 1962,³⁰ the plenary session of the C.P.S.U. formally enacted a resolution to carry out the reorganization proposals. The U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers implemented these resolutions a week later by authorizing the presidium to draft the necessary model statutes.

Assuring the Unity of the World Communist Party System. Possibly no other single event or policy during the last two years has assumed the significance for the entire world, communist and non-communist, as the open clash between Peking and Moscow. China's present ideological quarrel with Khrushchev can probably be traced back to the 20th Congress at which Stalin was denounced, the peaceful coexistence theme given conspicuous attention, and the multiple roads to socialism thesis first developed. Tensions were further aggravated when Peking supported little Albania while Moscow excommunicated it, when Peking called Tito a deviationist while Moscow extended overtures of rapprochement to him, and when Peking called for uncompromising hostility to the West while Moscow sought some form of accommodation.

When Khrushchev consented to withdraw the missiles from Cuba, China accused the Moscow leadership of treasonable or "adventurist" moves in the direction of appeasement and surrender to American imperialism.

While *Pravda's*³¹ version of the Cuban decision may not have adequately reflected either the facts of the confrontation or the motives of the United States, its line could have done little to assuage the feelings of Mao Tse-tung or Liu Shao-chin.

"For the first time during the past troubled days, people are breathing easily. They have learned with great joy that conditions have been created for the elimination of the menacing hotbed that threatened to flame into an annihilating war. It was with deep satisfaction and gratitude that humanity greeted the wise and farsighted measures of the Soviet government, which took the initiative in eliminating the crisis caused by the aggressive actions of the U.S. circles in the Caribbean area."

The clearest and most up-to-date exposition of Peking's ideological contentions are found in the lengthy letter of June 14³² in which the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee addresses itself to their Soviet comrades on issues of controversy between them. Some of the issues had already been covered in a series of formal exchanges of views beginning in February, 1963.

Acrimonious in tenor and argumentative in substance, the letter attempts to offer a complete repudiation of Khrushchev's ideological leadership on the basis of a Maoist interpretation of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary principles. Without ever referring to Khrushchev by name, but deluding no one with the semantic disguise of "certain persons," he and his party were accused of having

adopted policies "betraying the interests of the entire international proletariat and all the peoples of the world," showing "cowardice in the face of the imperialists," "helping to restore capitalism" in the Soviet Union.

Referring to the status of the underdeveloped nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, Peking insisted that Moscow was "taking a passive or scornful or negative attitude toward the struggles of the oppressed nations for liberation." These "certain persons . . . are in fact protecting the interests of monopoly capital, betraying those of the proletariat and degenerating into Social Democrats."

As to "peaceful competition," Peking adjudges it "sheer illusion" to "hold that it is possible to bring about a world without weapons, without armed forces and without war." Nor can there ever be "general and complete disarmament" while the system of imperialism and of the exploitation of man by man still exists. Neither can the transition from capitalism to socialism be anything but violent. "The proletarian party must never base its thinking, its policies for revolution and its entire work on the assumption that the imperialists and reactionaries will accept peaceful transformation."

At first the Soviets refused to publish Peking's "missile" on the ground that a formal reply would "lead to a further aggravation of the polemics." Then, on July 14, *Pravda* finally issued both the complete text of the Chinese letter as well as the official answer of 21,000 words by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, addressed to "party organizations and all communists of the Soviet Union."

The tone of the rejoinder was restrained but manifestly resentful. To the charge of Soviet neglect of the less fortunate members of the proletariat in the emerging nations, Moscow responded with a few pointed reminders. Had the Chinese forgotten the aid and assistance given them by the Soviet Union in the realm of science, technology, industry and economic development? or the support given the liberation movements in Vietnam? Egypt? Iraq? Algeria? Yemen? "the Cubans and other peoples?"

Beyond the question of aid—and much more central to the dispute—Khrushchev's Central Committee wished to leave no doubt of its basic disagreement with the Maoist interpretations of the Marxist-Leninist thesis concerning the role of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary struggle at the present stage of historical development.

Moscow accused Peking of "groundless and slanderous attacks" on the decisions of the 20th, 21st and 22nd party congresses which attempted to overcome the differences between the "fraternal parties" and to strengthen the unity of the communist movement; of "taking it upon themselves" to defend the Stalinist cult of personality and with it the "forms and methods of leadership that was flourishing in that period"—an era of "fear, suspicion, and uncertainty that poisoned the life of the people . . ."; of falsely insisting that Leninism called for a dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union whereas workers, peasants and intellectuals were living

in a relationship of friendly rather than exploiting classes; of "failure of faith" in the ability of "socialist achievement" to inspire "the hearts and minds" of the workers throughout the world and in socialism's victory over capitalism by economic competition; of failing to understand that unless capitalists provoke force the period of transition to socialism need not be characterized by violence; of encouraging "anti-party groups" and "renegades" and driving a wedge between communist parties in the U.S., Belgium, Italy, Brazil, Australia and India; and of discrediting Yugoslav-Soviet efforts at rapprochement and friendship.

Moscow reserved its most severe condemnation for what it called Peking's "willingness to play with the destiny of millions of people"—an irresponsible attitude on the nature of modern war.

"It is permissible to ask the Chinese comrades if they realize what sort of 'ruins' a world nuclear-rocket war would leave behind . . . Apparently . . . (those who) . . . refer to the thermonuclear weapon as a 'paper tiger' are not fully aware of the destructive force of this weapon . . . We soberly consider this. We ourselves produce the thermonuclear weapon and have manufactured it in sufficient quantity. We know its destructive force full well. And if imperialism starts a war against us, we shall not hesitate to use this formidable weapon against the aggressor. But if we are not attacked, we shall not be the first to use this weapon.

The working classes of the world struggling against capitalism have given no one the right to achieve socialism through the unleashing of a world holocaust. "If both the exploiter and the exploited are buried under the ruins of the old world, who will build the 'bright future'?"

Based on the "peaceful coexistence" line of the 22nd Congress, the C.P.S.U. rejects the "fatal-inevitability"-of-war thesis between states with differing social systems; the prevention of nuclear war is "quite a real and feasible task."

Also, far from being apologetic about the withdrawal of missiles from Cuba, which the Chinese labeled imperialist appeasement, Moscow asserts that the aggressive forces of imperialism were effectively restrained and the "heroic struggle" of the Cuban people safeguarded. "This was a major victory of the policy of reason." The U.S. has kept its word and not invaded the island; "do . . . (the Chinese) . . . really think that all bourgeois governments lack all reason in everything they do?"

IV. Evaluation and Summary

While far from being precise and reliable in detail, the picture that does emerge from a study of the Program of the 22nd Congress and its official interpretations is certainly not devoid of significant clues about the nature of the changes that are presently at work in Moscow and in the communist world as a whole.

Although the Soviet Union was supposedly run by a collegium, Khrushchev as the chairman of the party's presidium seemed to be very much more equal than his colleagues. He appeared to establish the line—in art, foreign policy, disarmament, administration—and person-

ally inspire it with his moods of exuberance, arrogance, cajolery or sobriety. Whether in Moscow or on the road, in speeches, press conferences, interviews, and social settings, he elucidated the party program, by quote and commentary to give a particular policy its ideological support and authority.

The task of transmitting the party Program's goals and commands to factory, village, district and kolkhose, and to every level of Soviet organization, was undeniably that of the party. In this, Khrushchev's party clearly assured its ascendancy over the bureaucracy, the military and the secret police, none of whom contended any longer for the significant share of public power that was theirs during the last days of Stalin's rule. Territorial party organizations, whose cadres formed the backbone of Khrushchev's power, were entrusted with the supervision and speed-up of needed industrial and agricultural production. These younger and better educated party leaders, eager for managerial power and upward mobility, may well have been a major force behind the newly enacted party-state production law.

Reflected also in the Program and at the party sessions held since its adoption, was the continuing struggle against the cult of personality. To be sure this process of de-Stalinization was much less violent in character than the shrill and vitriolic attacks levelled at the anti-party group by speaker after speaker at the 22nd Congress. At that occasion, among the many charges flung at them, Malenkov was denounced for having once aided Yezhov (a former head of the secret police) to mete out summary justice in Armenia; Kaganavich for blackmailing and framing loyal party comrades; and Molotov for being an "incorrigible dogmatist" and for having opposed the virgin-land program. In proceedings strangely reminiscent of an earlier era, all of them were collectively accused of having conspired to seize power and for wishing to reestablish the cult of personality. Fortunately for them, their punishment was pointedly mild and thoroughly "un-Stalin" like.

But then again, while de-Stalinization served Khrushchev well in solidifying his power and increasing his popularity, it, too, as so many other doctrines and theses of Soviet ideology, became subject to revision and reinterpretation when time and circumstances demanded it. As noted earlier, Khrushchev for very obvious reasons had no hesitancy in applying the brakes to the process of de-Stalinization when, in his judgment, it developed too sweeping a momentum and became too prone to strike out indiscriminately at all of Stalin's acts and associates. Seven years ago he proved this ruthlessly in the streets of Budapest; later less bloodily, he guarded the line in art and literature.

Next to avoiding the repressive climate of the Stalinist era, few measures have earned Khrushchev more acclaim among the masses of the Soviet people, than his repeated emphasis on improved living standards. Yet the Program's most ambitious promise, that it would be possible within this generation to create the material basis for an economy of such abundance as to insure the actual transition to communism, contained within it, also, the party's

most serious challenge. As production targets were not met the scene was set for continued attacks on bureaucratic bungling, the cupidity of officialdom, economic crimes of speculation (with anti-semitic overtones); emphasis was hopefully placed on the need to speed administrative reorganization, centralizing economic planning while simultaneously decentralizing economic initiative, and on the necessity of improving work on the virgin lands. When all this failed to produce results, Khrushchev was ousted. The extent of elasticity within Soviet ideology is apparently considerable. What is involved, for example, is no less than a basic reexamination of the entire pattern of collectivized agriculture where low incentives, poor peasant morale and lack of capital equipment has long held back critically needed increases in the production of food and fiber.

Khrushchev's "softer line" notwithstanding, there was nothing in his Program to indicate an immanent turn to any Western-style liberalism. On the contrary, there was evidence of genuine fear that Soviet youth, especially the country's younger artists and intellectuals, might be overly eager to desert the unifying and collectivizing nurture of party ideology. Special party conferences critically assailed the lack of enthusiasm that young people displayed for "socialist realism" in art and literature, their desire to be a-political, to find autonomous areas of self-expression, to resist party restraint and authority and to prefer the life of urban leisure to that of communist service on the newly opened Eastern lands.

There is nothing particularly "liberal" in the widely heralded de-emphasis upon the Soviet state apparatus as a mechanism of control and supervision. A Rousseauian type of mass participation in the affairs of public life, with its rigid majoritarian intolerance of diversity and uniqueness, comrade courts (these are neighborhood courts below the level of the people's courts; their procedure is much more informal and they do not constitute a court of record in our sense of the word) and "neighborly" concerns for all affording censure for the slightest infraction of social expectation and conformity—such developments can hardly be viewed as cradling individual liberty. What it does mean is that the regime has declared its confidence that Soviet society has been sufficiently molded by the all-pervasive ideology so that the party can take the risk of transferring to other public organizations certain policing and controlling functions. One apparatus of repression—direct, visible and bureaucratic—is replaced with another: more subtle, perhaps even more effective, at best a benevolent totalitarianism—but a totalitarianism nonetheless.

It is around the concept of "peaceful coexistence" that the Program affords the Soviets some considerable ideological elasticity with important consequences for the conduct of its international and interparty relations. As has been noted, the concept does not exactly mean what it says. There is nothing in it, from the Soviet point of view, to constitute a blanket disavowal of war, or a negation of military intervention and wars of assistance on behalf of nations engaged in "anti-colonial" or "anti-imperialist" struggles of liberation. Yet Khrushchev's

speeches, communist-party declarations and the party Program—despite their semantic vagueness and propagandistic quality—do permit at least these generalizations concerning Soviet peace claims: that they are seriously impressed with the enormously destructive character of thermonuclear and missile weaponry; that they will not start a nuclear war but will respond with such weapons if attacked; that they are willing to negotiate all outstanding differences with the West; and that their major struggles against capitalism will take place in the realm of ideological warfare and economic competition.

It was probably unavoidable that the concept of “peaceful competition,” in connection with the events since the 20th Congress, was bound to aggravate the polycentrist tendencies that are now shaking the very foundations of the one-time monolithic solidarity of the communist world movement. To be sure, Mao Tse-tung’s letter of June 14 did not start the fissure in the ideological wall surrounding the Marxist-Leninist tabernacle. He had had his difficulties with Stalin while Khrushchev was still an unknown commissar in the Ukraine but this in no way minimizes the enormity of the conflict. At stake is the nature of the communist leadership for the large masses of submerged people in the underdeveloped nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America to whom both Moscow and Peking wish to export clearly competing doctrines of revolution. These are the people who can more easily understand and share Peking’s anger at Moscow’s alleged reluctance to share its material wealth and scientific knowledge with less prosperous comrades. Accustomed to seeing the problems of political life in simple and sharply defined alternatives, they are inclined to exhibit impatience and disdain for the more cautious and conservative efforts at accommodation and compromise.

In this struggle among the “fraternal” parties, Moscow is neither without power nor without protagonists. Its industrial and military base is incomparably more impressive than that of China. For the present, domestic Stalinists have been successfully contained and Khrushchev and his policies can count on solid support from the communist parties of the West, as well as from a substantial majority of the cadres of Africa and Latin America.

And yet, despite such support, communist parties are bitterly dividing nearly everywhere, especially in Mexico, Brazil and Italy. Cuba’s Castro opportunistically plays off Moscow against Peking to obtain increased quantities of machinery and military hardware. Eastern European

satellites become more restless as they seek greater economic independence and the more favorable trade with the Western bloc.

The price that Moscow must pay in order to hold together the remnants of the once vaunted communist monolith cannot be cheap.

It is by no means certain whether the ideological and political schisms of the communist bloc will work to the benefit of the West. What is offered is a breather, an opportunity for all to see once again that there is no superhuman strength in the communist community or in their ideology; their party discipline is not unyielding. The forces of nationalism or race may yet be stronger than either Leninism or Khrushchevism.

Footnotes

¹ *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1961).

² *ibid.*, p. 23

³ *ibid.*, pp. 53–57

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 38

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 39

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 58

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 62

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 128

⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 70–79

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 79–81

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 91–92

¹² *ibid.*, p. 96

¹³ *ibid.*, pp. 96–97

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 110

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 126

¹⁶ *Pravda*, March 10, 1963. (Citations from Soviet newspapers are based on the official translations as published in the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*.)

¹⁷ *Pravda*, June 29, 1963.

¹⁸ *Pravda*, *ibid.*

¹⁹ *Izvestia*, June 19, 1963.

²⁰ *Pravda*, December 2, 1962.

²¹ *Pravda*, December 3, 1962.

²² *Pravda*, December 18, 1962.

²³ *Literaturnaya gazeta*, July 17, 1962.

²⁴ *Pravda*, March 27, 1963.

²⁵ *Pravda*, March 29, 1963.

²⁶ *Izvestia*, May 7, 1963.

²⁷ *Izvestia*, January 30, 1963.

²⁸ *Pravda*, March 8, 1963.

²⁹ *Pravda*, November 20, 1962.

³⁰ *Pravda*, November 24, 1962.

³¹ *Pravda*, October 31, 1962.

³² *Pravda*, July 14, 1963.

³³ Brzezinski, B., “The Nature of the Soviet System”, *Slavic Review*, p. 360 (October, 1961).