

Malenkov at the Helm

By William Z. Foster

THE DEATH of the great Stalin at 73, after more than half a century of heroic revolutionary struggle and achievement, not only created a profound surge of grief through hearts of countless millions of the world's toilers; but it also caused a great sensation among the bourgeoisie of the world, especially in the United States. Never before upon the death of any world celebrity, has there been even a fraction of the tremendous publicity—by press, radio, television, movies, and every other means of mass communication—as that which has attended the passing of Stalin. This shows that the bourgeoisie, which has no reason to love Stalin, has been compelled, by its intense interest, to testify to the greatness of the man who has just died.

This tremendous sweep of publicity definitely had a ghoulish content. The writers hoped and expected that the passing of the gigantic political figure of Stalin would create a crisis from which American imperialism could profit. Perhaps the world peace alliance, headed by the U.S.S.R., would fall to pieces; perhaps this would even be the opportune moment to strike the aggressive

war blow that American imperialism had been so frantically preparing?

The multitudinous writers and commentators are now shouting that the death of Stalin has created a grave crisis in the Communist world, one that could lead to an outbreak of a world war. Therefore, the United States and the so-called free world is frantically warned to remain belligerently on guard. This fantastic conception is the policy of the United States Government in this situation. The general purpose of such propaganda about the U.S. S.R. is to frighten the peoples of the capitalist world regarding the possibility of an outbreak of war, thinking to block all efforts at settlement of the Korean war, and thus to make possible the continuation and intensification of the present mad armaments race.

The prompt election of Georgi M. Malenkov to Stalin's post has not liquidated this provocative agitation throughout capitalist circles, but merely given it a new twist. The great crisis over Soviet leadership, which obviously does not exist, is now, they say, merely postponed. The Soviet system is supposed to be

in a crisis, which will be especially aggravated by the "inexperience" of Malenkov, etc. Let us, therefore, analyze briefly this political nonsense, which is at the same time dangerous war propaganda.

MALENKOV AND SOVIET LEADERSHIP

Bourgeois commentators on the Soviet system characteristically, in their hate and fear of Socialism, stand reality on its head. In this respect, one of their favorite arguments has long been that Socialism kills individual initiative and development. The reverse, of course, is the case; the very heart of Socialism being to develop and improve the personality of the individual in every respect. This fact is demonstrated, for one thing, by the high quality of the political leaders produced by the Soviet system, by Marxism-Leninism. Lenin and Stalin were no accidents; they were the natural results of the workings of the whole philosophy of Socialism. These two gigantic leaders dwarfed the bourgeois statesmen of this epoch; and, so, too, have the succession of outstanding foreign ministers of the U.S.S.R.—Chicherin, Litvinov, Molotov, Vishinsky. The same is true too in a world sense; Marxist-Leninist leaders such as Mao Tse-tung, Togliatti, Thorez, or in our own hemisphere, a Prestes, Codovilla, Tim Buck, or Blas Roca, being on an altogether higher level of political understanding than the puny bourgeois politi-

cians heading the capitalist countries.

Together with fighting for an advancing, growing world system, the tremendous advantage that Soviet political leaders have over bourgeois politicians lies in their possession of the science of Marxism-Leninism. This enables them to analyze fundamentally the economic and political situations in their own country and throughout the world, and upon this sound analysis to work out practical, realistic policies to meet these conditions. Whereas, the bourgeois political leaders, dealing with a dying system, are constitutionally unable and afraid to analyze either decadent capitalism or ascending Socialism. Modern bourgeois "political science" is only wishful thinking. The capitalist political leaders blunder along empirically, proceeding from one superficiality of analysis to another. The men now standing at the head of the world's capitalist governments, including that of the United States, are political semi-literates. While Marxist-Leninist statesmen go ahead confidently to the building of Socialism, and eventually Communism, the bourgeois economists, ideologists, and politicians blunder along without any inkling of where their society is heading.

Malenkov has been trained in the very best Marxist-Leninist tradition. He long had the tutorship of the greatest teacher of them all—Stalin—and he got his experience in the heart of the world Socialist move-

ment, the Soviet Union. This constitutes the best possible preparation for the heavy tasks of leadership that have now come to him. Malenkov is a Marxist-Leninist of a high order—anything else is unthinkable for a man holding his high position in the great Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., which possesses many hundreds of thousands, actually millions, of students of the science of Socialism. The new leader's speech, the main report to the recent Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was an ample demonstration of his power of Marxist-Leninist analysis. One thing is certain—his superb Marxist-Leninist training and his high natural ability, will make him a giant compared to the petty politicians currently heading the capitalist states of the world.

ON PARTY UNITY

In the vast capitalist discussion and confusion attendant upon the death of Stalin, one thing that the bourgeois commentators have accepted as gospel truth is that there must now ensue a ferocious "struggle for power" among the Soviet leaders; one which will tear the Soviet Government to pieces. But this is sheer nonsense. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union possesses a monolithic unity, based upon the solid acceptance of Stalin's policies. Not even the great shock of the death of Stalin can shake that unity; on the contrary, it can but emphasize the

need for even greater Party solidarity. The prompt election of Malenkov demonstrates how the Party, while mourning the profound loss of its great leader Stalin, brings forth a capable successor and proceeds to the fulfillment of the basic tasks confronting it.

Those who are so sure of the "coming crisis" in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union constantly cite the severe internal struggles that followed the death of Lenin in January, 1924. But this example has no validity whatever for the present situation. When Lenin died the Soviet Union, just emerging from devastating war, was in a state of near collapse economically, great unknown tasks of collectivization and industrialization in the building of Socialism lay ahead, and the Party was still not cleansed of opportunists, wreckers, and traitors, such as Trotsky, Tukhachevsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Rhykov, and the like. Under such critical conditions an internal struggle was inevitable. The Party had to shape its policies for the immense tasks ahead of it and it had to purge its ranks of accumulated alien elements. It was the immortal greatness of Stalin that he was able to lead the Party through these monumental tasks and to establish the Party's unity upon a solid rock of sound policy.

Today, as Malenkov becomes the outstanding leader of the Party and the Government, the situation is totally different than in 1924. The great internal Soviet tasks of build-

ing Socialism have been accomplished and a clear theoretical line has been laid out by Stalin for the road ahead in the building of Communism. The Party, too, in the past generation of struggle under the masterful leadership of Stalin, has cleansed itself of opportunists and has enormously raised the general theoretical level of its membership. It was one of the very greatest achievements of Stalin to have brought about the Marxist-Leninist education of countless numbers of young men and women Party militants and leaders. These are the very foundation and fibre of the Party. Under these circumstances a continuing Party unity is assured.

Malenkov, as head of the Soviet Government, will surely have many difficult problems to face; especially in the field of foreign policy, from a dying capitalism which grows war-mad in its decline. But in meeting these great problems, he will have advantages that Stalin lacked when he took office—a solidly united and greatly expanded Party, a powerful and flourishing national economy, and many potent foreign allies.

THE QUESTION OF PEACE

The American bourgeois commentators, among their many distortions of the Soviet situation after the death of Stalin, have also asserted endlessly that the new Soviet leadership, in order to consolidate itself, would very probably lead the Soviet people into war adventures.

Their argument is that, therefore, the death of Stalin has greatly increased the war danger. In this slander the bourgeois "gangsters-of-the-pen" were outdone by the renegade, Earl Browder. For, while the capitalist writers generally said that the death of Stalin "might" increase the war danger, Browder, who rushed into print immediately upon the death of the Soviet leader, said that it certainly "would" mean the danger of war, because with Stalin now gone, the alleged fiery warmongers would no longer have any one to restrain them.

With such arguments about war tendencies in the U.S.S.R., the bourgeois commentators are talking not in terms of the actualities of Soviet life but of that in corrupt capitalist governments. Nor, to demonstrate this, do we have to go further than the United States. One of the major dangers of war adventures coming from Wall Street arises precisely out of the capitalists' growing fear of the development of a devastating economic crisis in this country and from their sinister conviction that this can be averted only by maximum production of war munitions and eventually by a great world war.

The Soviet Union is in no sense a source of war danger; either before Stalin's death, or after it. The formers of modern wars, the great international holocausts of our times, are capitalist monopolists, and there are none such in the U.S.S.R. The birds of prey have long since been thrown into the garbage can of his-

tory by the revolutionary Russian people. The present center of war danger is not in the U.S.S.R., but right here in the United States, in American Big Business; the world's biggest and most warlike aggregation of monopoly capital. The whole structure of Soviet policy, on the other hand, based upon the people's ownership of the means of production and of working-class leadership in the government, is unalterably a policy of world peace.

The foreign policy of the Soviet Union is based firmly upon the Stalinist principle of the possible peaceful coexistence and competition of the capitalist and socialist worlds. Malenkov again made this fact clear in his funeral oration over the coffin of Stalin in the Red Square. The principle of peaceful co-existence is in no sense contradictory to the basic Marxist-Leninist truth that the capitalist system is in irrevocable decay, and that Socialism, now in the ascendant, is destined by history to become universal. But the peaceful co-existence of capitalism and Socialism can be achieved and maintained only on the basis of the power of the U.S.S.R., the People's Democracies of Europe and Asia, and of the awakened workers and other democratic forces in the capitalist world, to restrain and defeat the incurably warlike propensities of imperialism, especially United States imperialism.

THE CAPITALISTS AND TITOISM

One of the greatest hopes of the bourgeoisie upon the death of Stalin

is that the friendly peaceful cooperation among the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic, and the European People's Democracies will be dissolved by an epidemic of Titoism. But this, too, is an illusion. It is only a rash of wishful thinking; for such can not happen. On the contrary, the basic trend of all these peaceful, progressive, democratic states of the world peace front will be to draw even closer together in a common defense against war-mad capitalist imperialism.

The capitalists' prayer for Titoism among the socialist and people's democratic countries will go unanswered. It emphasizes, however, the extreme importance which they attach to the particular brand of treachery of which Tito is guilty. It is their greatest hope for some means with which to halt the advance of world Socialism. Titoist illusions also go to illustrate the capitalists' failure to understand the basic nature of the Socialist Revolution which is gradually enveloping the world. They cannot free themselves from the notion that the Revolution is a sort of conspiracy, engineered by a few men, and, by the same token, that it can be betrayed to defeat by a traitor or two, here and there. They cannot grasp the great reality that the Revolution is as an elemental movement of the masses developing along lines of advance shaped by the decay of capitalism and by the imperative need of the peoples for a new, higher form of society.

There has been one Tito; there will

not be another. This capitalist agent managed to worm himself into the leadership of the Yugoslav people and then, at the critical moment, to betray them into the hands of the capitalist enemy. For which treachery Tito is now the world bourgeois hope and an object of supreme contempt throughout the democratic world. Added vigilance will take care to prevent his likes in the future. Moreover, there is still another great act to be played in the Yugoslav drama—we may be perfectly sure that, before too long, the Yugoslav revolution will catch up to Mr. Tito with a crash.

THE DANGER OF UNDERESTIMATING THE U.S.S.R.

The present lying clamor in capitalist circles to the effect that the death of Stalin has thrown the U.S.S.R. and the whole world Communist movement into a crisis of disintegration and into a mood for war adventures is not mere wishful thinking, nor simply propaganda for war, nor is it only typical capitalist hatred of Socialism. It is much deeper than all this. It is fundamentally an expression of the constitutional inability of the bourgeoisie to grasp and understand the vitality and power of Socialism. The capitalist class, precisely because it has its own order of society to defend, suffers from a basic and chronic underestimation of the power of the revolutionary socialist movement. Capitalism cannot possibly objectively recognize the

strength and inevitability of Socialism. This deficiency has led it into making innumerable mistakes in analyzing this movement. It is also why capitalism constantly expects the death of the Soviet Union from one cause or another. Communist progress is a sort of unbelievable miracle to the bourgeoisie; a progress which confronts it with one baffling surprise and disappointment after another.

Capitalists (and their Social-Democratic agents) were amazed when the Bolsheviks, under Lenin and Stalin, captured power in Russia in 1917—an obvious impossibility. But, of course, they consoled themselves, the Reds could not long retain the power. But they did. They believed that the Revolution could not emerge from the Civil War, from the current starvation, from the economic blockade, or from the industrial collapse; but miraculously (to capitalist eyes), it did overcome all these staggering obstacles. Then, too, all through the years, the capitalists have declared that Communists could not build and operate modern industry; that their five-year plans were obviously mere propaganda stunts; and finally that they could not stand six weeks before the invincible Hitler armies. Even Hitler, for all his spy service, believed in the latter illusion to his complete undoing. In later years, to the bourgeois mind, with its incurable underestimation of Socialism, the revolutions in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Albania, and Bulgaria were also im-

possibilities. Especially the great Chinese Revolution—was impossible and unbelievable, and where this impossibility became a fact, the capitalists were sure that vast, sprawling, undeveloped China would swamp the Communists and they could never hold power. But now the Chinese people, led by Mao Tse-tung and the great Chinese Communist Party, are busy exploding this bourgeois illusion.

The chronic capitalist underestimation of the power of Socialism—and lots of it is being evidenced in connection with Stalin's death—makes the capitalists foresee disastrous consequences in the present tense world situation. But, on the contrary, the underestimation could act fatally upon themselves. The warmongers during the past few years have built up enormous armaments, and over the world they have hundreds of air bases, all pointing directly at the Soviet Union, leader of the world forces for peace, democracy, and Socialism. They crave to use these murder weapons, and they are fully resolved to do so. And if they can convince themselves and the people that the U.S.S.R. has become dangerously weakened by the loss of Stalin, this might well be the signal for them to send their bombers on their fatal mission. This would be their final price for their habitual underestimation of Socialism.

In our fight to have the Korean war ended by a cease-fire, and to re-

lieve world war tension generally, one of our major tasks is precisely to struggle against the capitalists' propagation of their underestimation of the power of Socialism, especially in connection with the present situation in Russia. We must let the people know—the workers, the Negro people, the democratic forces generally—the reality of the great power of the U.S.S.R. and the dreadful futility of attacking it. We must make them understand that such an assault against that country, which the Wall-Street monopolists are now organizing, could have only one general result—overwhelming military defeat for the United States and measureless tragedy for its people.

Under the leadership of the great Communist Party of the Soviet Union, with Malenkov standing at its head, the perspective of the Soviet people is for a rapid march forward into Communism. This implies a further tremendous development of industry and agriculture, and an unprecedented rise in the standards of living and culture for the great Soviet masses. A swift advance towards and into Socialism is also the perspective of the peoples of China and of the European People's Democracies. All the organized war-mad powers of capitalism cannot halt the historic advance of the peoples, and if capitalism dares to try to do this, arms in hand, it will surely bring about its own destruction.