

his expectations that "collective leadership" would endure and that increasing freedom would be granted to the lower ranks have not been borne out by Khrushchev's successful climb to overweening personal power. Mr. Deutscher may find some consolation in his impression that Khrushchev is "probably still the Russian worker, writ large—the Russian worker who inwardly remained true to himself even in the Stalinist straitjacket," but he cannot ignore the plain fact that this particular "Russian worker" has already begun to curtail the freedom seemingly granted to the Soviet people through destalinization. One by one, the intellectual rebels among the writers, historians, scientists and artists have been made to recant and to re-subscribe to the supremacy of the party line. At a recent gathering of Soviet writers, Khrushchev is reported to have said that the revolt in Hungary would never have occurred if the regime had taken out and shot some of the rebellious writers in the summer of 1956, and that, should a similar situation arise in the Soviet Union, his own hands would not "tremble."¹ The political police (KGB), which is controlled by two Khrushchev adherents, Serov and Lunev, has already begun to arrest the more unruly students and workers. But even admitting that a full-fledged return to Stalinism is unlikely, there is certainly no evidence to support casting Khrushchev in the role of a "liberal" and asserting, as Mr. Deutscher does in one of his recent articles,

¹ "The Silent Writers of Hungary," *The Times Literary Supplement* (London) August 16, 1957, p. xxii.

that he "fights against an opposition that stands in the main for the preservation of totalitarian practices."²

Indeed, according to Mr. Deutscher's own analysis, the continuance of single party rule, coupled now with the victory of one of its factions, should logically lead to the emergence of another autocrat. The changes instituted so far have been designed primarily to revive and perpetuate the dynamism and supremacy of the Communist Party. For the present at least, to borrow the author's words, the "edifice of post-Stalinist society has to be built with the bricks left over from Stalinist Russia," which is precisely why the system has shown itself to be stronger than the forces which feared and opposed the emergence of an *apparatchik* "leader." In a totalitarian society each new leader has to build up his own charisma, and destalinization may serve this purpose in Khrushchev's case. Mr. Deutscher himself concedes that "in a sense the man who smashes his idol stands above the one who prostrates himself before it." Whether or not, in the long run, Khrushchev can control the forces which he has helped to unleash and whether he will be able to find a viable solution to the contradictory demands of party supremacy and economic efficiency cannot be predicted at the present time. Much as one would like to share Mr. Deutscher's optimistic view of what the future holds, it is essential to remain aware that his hopes are not convincingly rooted in reality and that Soviet totalitarianism may still be far from its "twilight" stage.

² Isaac Deutscher, "New Line-up in the Kremlin," *The Reporter*, August 8, 1957 p. 34.

Latin American Communism

Robert J. Alexander:
Communism in Latin America
Rutgers University Press, N. J., 1957.

Reviewed by Victor Alba

UNTIL WORLD WAR II, Latin America was a comparatively little known and neglected part of the world, politically and otherwise. Even Moscow, embroiled in

Mr. Alba, a Spanish journalist now residing in the United States, is author of *Le mouvement ouvrier en Amérique latine* (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières), 1953.

its old world conflicts, paid little attention to the area. The postwar era, however, has brought about a visible intensification of Communist interest in the Latin American countries. Discontent and social antagonisms make all too many of these a vulnerable target for Communist penetration.

The grave implications of this fact emerge in a newly published analytical history of communism in Latin America by Robert J. Alexander, a professor of economics at Rutgers University, New Jersey, who has devoted years of study to the problems and affairs of the area. His volume is a valuable contribution not

only as a study of international communism as it works in one area of the globe, but as a comprehensive survey of Latin America's complex modern history, much of which has been only sketchily recorded heretofore.

The author's incisive analysis helps to dispel some widely-held misconceptions about Latin America. One is that popular discontent is due primarily in Latin America as it is elsewhere to economic backwardness, poverty, and an uneconomic system of land holdings. While economic factors are important, they are only part of the story. In Professor Alexander's view, discontent stems also from such factors as 1) a basic need for changes in the social structure which could make possible a normal and stable democratic life, and 2) a traditional suspicion of all economic cooperation programs for their possible colonialist motivation.

A SECOND and closely-related misconception is that poverty is the prime factor which makes Latin America susceptible to Communist influence. Professor Alexander points out that communism's appeal has been much less effective among the poorer groups of the population than among elements of the urban middle class, the intellectuals and the students. His analysis implies that among these groups it is not economic conditions but the repeated frustration of any attempts at social or political reform which has driven some to support of the Communists. The material progress brought about by the beginnings of industrialization has not substantially affected the economic status of these groups, whereas it has led to some improvement in the lot of the farm workers and city laborers in most of the Latin American countries. As a result, communism has had relatively little success among the latter elements.

Because of their concern over societal ills as well as their natural preoccupation with ideas, intellectuals and students are apt to seek and to favor overall remedies for prevailing national problems. Their major concern is to rid their countries of the remnants of feudalism and to establish greater freedoms and social justice. When progress along these lines has been frustrated, the Communists have found fertile soil for agitation; conversely, with the achievement of any step toward reform, the Communists have been deprived of opportunity to extend their influence.

Mr. Alexander cites the examples of Guatemala and Chile to demonstrate his belief that local social revolution is the best means of preventing the development of communism. Because neither country has had such a revolution, the Communists were able to attain positions of considerable influence in them. In the Latin

American context, it is to be noted, the term "social revolution" implies a gradual improvement of conditions rather than any sudden overthrow of the existing order, and a system of land ownership appropriate to present-day concepts of equitable distribution. Briefly, it means the eradication of feudal practices inherited from an earlier colonial period and strengthened in the nineteenth century, when independence from Spain gave landowners powers formerly reserved to the state. Among these feudal relics are the system of agrarian property in the form of extensive land-holdings by a few individuals, and the system of serfdom which gives landowners complete control over their peon labor. To cite an extreme case of these systems in operation, landowners in the Andes have been known to exercise their right to absolute control over their peons by sending them off to work in the mines and retaining the income of such labor for their own estates.

Throughout South America, the Communists have not hesitated in past years to help perpetuate these feudal elements by cooperating with established dictatorships or with governments having totalitarian or demagogic tendencies, whenever such cooperation suited their own ends. A case in point was their support of the dictator Leguila in Peru some twenty years ago. Other instances are afforded by Communist action in Chile, Guatemala, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. In recent years, however, the Communists have been taking certain precautionary measures to cover themselves in the event of failure by the powers with whom they have been cooperating. Thus, with the establishment of any government, they divide themselves into two seemingly opposed camps. One group cooperates with the existing government, the other with the opposition. This technique was followed during the Peron regime in Argentina and, later during dictatorial regimes in Peru and Venezuela.

LATIN AMERICAN communism has followed all world communism's changes in line, including social fascism, the united front, the popular front. Whenever Moscow has ordered an about-face or issued new rules of conduct, the party organizations have docilely complied. Because the parties are small, they are tightly-knit and much more bureaucratic in character than Communist movements which have established a wide base among the masses. Even such events as the Hungarian revolution of 1956, which caused deep rifts in Communist ranks elsewhere in the world, failed to have much impact on the Latin American parties. To the "professionals" who man the party bureaucracies, obedience to Moscow is implicit in their jobs.

The absence of mass movements should not be construed to mean, however, that communism has failed to exert an influence in Latin America. Above all else public opinion in Latin America is urban; it is shaped by the aforementioned groups, the urban middle class, the intellectuals, and the students—precisely those groups among which communism has won sympathizers. More than in other countries, then, fellow travelers in Latin America are in a position to exert influence disproportionate to their numbers.

TWO FACTS of special interest emerge from Professor Alexander's study. One is the lack of outstanding personalities in the Latin American Communist movement, either political leaders or Communist theorists of any stature, especially since the deaths of Argentinian educator Anibal Ponce and Peruvian journalist J. C. Mariategui. And neither Ponce, who wrote on social problems from a Marxist point of view, nor Mariategui, who formed the Socialist Party in Peru and became probably the outstanding exponent of Marxism in Latin America, were members of the Communist Party.

The other point evident from this study is that communism—despite its general failure to stir the working masses—has gained some strength when, and *only* when, it has managed to get control of labor unions. Thus, at the present time Communists are particularly well-entrenched in Chile, where they managed to seize control of many labor unions. Similarly, their greatest strength in Mexico coincided with their control of Mexican trade unions some ten years ago.

Unlike these instances of success, many of the events and struggles recounted by Professor Alexander reveal the surprising extent to which Moscow has underrated and misunderstood Latin American problems in years past. Errors in tactics and perspective have in many instances resulted in the misdirection of the efforts of its disciplined teams of Latin American leaders and cadres. For example, the Communist Party in Mexico was ordered to switch its opposition from Calles to Cardenas and then back again, as each president in turn was considered too progressive to sustain the Communist cause. In Chile, Peru and Venezuela, the Communists made similar turnabouts in their political alliances, attempting to move with the popular cause but, in the end, supporting the side which no longer was popular. In recent years, indications are that Moscow

is beginning to evaluate Latin America more closely, relying on area experts to determine the fine distinctions between Latin American problems and those in other underdeveloped areas. This is a decided innovation since the days of Lenin and Stalin.

Professor Alexander devotes considerable attention to relations between the Communists and military groups, important because of the crucial and too often pernicious role of military pressures in Latin American politics. As he points out, some of these groups, while not necessarily dangerous as a direct threat to national security, act as a wedge through which the Communists can work. In their persistent efforts to gain power, the military groups are apt to come into conflict with political groups in situations tailor-made for Communist activity. With pressure, as was exerted in Guatemala, the situations can become grave enough to require a military solution.

Professor Alexander concludes his book with four basic reminders:

- 1) Latin American Communists are not "agrarian reformers," "radicals," or "indigenous revolutionists" but disciplined party stalwarts;
- 2) The Communist danger in Latin America is primarily political rather than military in nature;
- 3) Latin American Communists are working under essentially the same conditions which prevail in all underdeveloped countries as they face changes precipitated by the advent of industrialization;
- 4) The primary forces opposed to communism in Latin America are the democratic radical groups who are working to bring about social revolution by democratic and peaceful means.

In addition to the author's explicit conclusions, the reviewer would stress a fifth point, which is implicit in Professor Alexander's book: South America offers decisive evidence that communism is bred not by poverty but by the frustration of those who seek to combat poverty without sacrificing either justice or freedom.

It is Professor Alexander's final judgment that dictatorships are transitory and constitute inadequate dikes for holding back the Communist surge. Only those who can present an imaginative and at the same time constructive program of social reform to the peoples of Latin America are capable of triumphing over the Communists. *Communism in Latin America* helps toward an understanding of this essential truth.

The Military in Soviet Politics

By Raymond L. Garthoff

THE LATEST KREMLIN COUP has unleashed a wave of speculations about the role of "the Army", "the military", "the Marshals", and of Marshal Zhukov personally, in Soviet politics. At this time of writing (November 1), the facts are not yet sufficiently clear to permit an analysis of the factors involved in Zhukov's sudden removal as Defense Minister. It may be useful, however, to examine some aspects of the underlying problem: What is the institutional position of the "Army" in Soviet society; how has that position changed in the past four years; and what have been the evidences of its changing political role? Further, does the military leadership represent a cohesive political force, and if so what conditions its political viewpoint? Finally, what appears to be the course ahead in view of the breakdown of the Khrushchev-Zhukov political alliance?

The Soviet military establishment or Army (this term will be used below to cover the whole defense organization of ground, sea and air forces) differs little in its general institutional features from those of other countries. It is technically an arm of the executive branch of the government, specifically of the Defense Ministry. It commands the weapons of national defense, which at the same time constitute the regime's ultimate "persuader" for enforcing its will internally. It is composed of a permanent caste of officers and an annually changing slice of the population over which the leadership caste exercises powerful rights of discipline and control.

These features admittedly are not peculiar to the Soviet Army, but in a totalitarian society their political impact is quite different from what it is under a democratic system. In a democracy political power is exercised by a government responsible to the electorate or its freely-chosen legislative representatives, and the armed forces, fully controlled by the government, are not, as such, a contender for political supremacy. In a totalitarian society, on the other hand, the locus of political power is determined, not by fixed and orderly procedures, but by a continuing struggle for supremacy in which the upper hand, and hence controlling power, may shift from one man

or group of men or from one competing institution to another. The relative strength, cohesiveness and élan of an institution, be it the party, secret police, government bureaucracy or army, thus are vital factors in the power struggle and tend to have a decisive impact whenever the struggle becomes particularly acute. This is why, with the rivalry for Stalin's succession still in full swing, the Soviet Army's characteristic features have thrust it inevitably into a position of major importance in the struggle for political supremacy.

ONE SUCH FEATURE is adherence to its own traditions, many of which antedate the Soviet regime. Past Russian military achievements, whether under the Tsars or since the Revolution, are held in high regard by the officer corps and inspire in it a particular sense of national patriotism. This patriotic feeling within the Army is reflected in the view of the Army held by the people at large. It is genuinely popular among them in a way that the officially supreme institution, the party, is not.

Even Stalin, who sought to keep the Army subservient to his autocratic control, found it expedient on occasion to acknowledge and cater to the Army's pride in its own military and patriotic traditions. His wartime invocation of the deeds of Tsarist military heroes such as Suvorov—certainly incongruous from the standpoint of party ideology—is a case in point. Stalin made other concessions to military *esprit de corps*. The epaulettes proudly worn by Soviet officers were originally proposed by Marshal Tukhachevsky, and though Stalin liquidated Tukhachevsky, he later adopted this and other practices favored by the professional officers.

A relatively marked degree of cultural and social in-breeding has also contributed toward building up in the officer corps a sense of cohesiveness and group solidarity. Members of the military caste even tend to marry within the group: for example, Marshal Zhukov's two daughters are married to Marshal Vasilevsky's son and the nephew of Marshal Voroshilov.

The marked elevation of the Army's relative standing in national affairs has been brought about primarily by the great changes that have occurred in the political balance of Soviet institutions in the last four years. The death of Stalin was, of course, the first and most far-reaching of these changes, for with the disappearance of the all-

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