

form of contemptuous personal abuse of Khrushchev:

"The United States imperialists have not become beautiful angels in spite of Khrushchev's Bible-reading and psalm-singing. They have not turned into compassionate Buddhas in spite of Khrushchev's prayers and incense burning. However hard Khrushchev tries to serve the United States imperialists, they show not the slightest appreciation. . . . They continue to slap Khrushchev in the face and reveal the bankruptcy of his ridiculous theories pretending imperialism."

Here one comes close to the root of the feud. The Chinese are claiming for themselves the role of champions of Leninist communist orthodoxy and accusing the Russians (the charge is spelled out in detail in many other Chinese publications and communications) of slackness in the revolutionary cause, of "revisionism," the most insulting word in the communist political vocabulary.

A Major Cleavage

What has happened is more serious than a dispute between the two largest communist parties. It is a schism in the whole international communist movement, some parties siding with the Russians, some with the Chinese. The Chinese appeal is especially strong in

Asia, where the communists of Indonesia, Japan, North Korea, Burma, and New Zealand are in the Chinese camp. This is apparently also true for the majority of the Indian communists. And the Chinese seem to be ahead in a bitter struggle for influence in North Vietnam. China has also acquired a European satellite in tiny Albania and has launched splitting movements in the parties of Italy, France, and Belgium. The Chinese have also been very active in Africa, competing with the Soviet Union in attracting students and bribing African government officials in the newly independent states. In Africa the Chinese emphasize the color line, pointing out that the Russians are, after all, a white people.

Most of the European communist parties have remained loyal to Moscow, but have taken advantage of the Moscow-Peiping rift to win more political and economic autonomy. Khrushchev was unable, despite many efforts, to convene an international conference for the purpose of excommunicating the Chinese Reds from the international communist movement. In Stalin's time Moscow's position as the sole center of the international communist movement was unchallenged. Now the conception of "polycentrism" put forward by the recently deceased

Italian communist leader, Palmiro Togliatti, has made considerable headway.

Rumanian Deviation

Because the Soviet communist leaders are under heavy pressure from the schismatic Chinese, they are in no position to impose strict discipline on the East European satellites. The liberalization of living conditions in Hungary, the sweeping departures from rigid state planning in Czechoslovakia, most of all, perhaps, the demonstrations of increased political and economic freedom from Moscow in Rumania are all significant straws in the wind.

Indeed, Rumania has put on a pretty good exhibition of the role of "the mouse that roared." Rich in salable oil and wheat, the Rumanians pressed on with steel development and trade with the West, despite Khrushchev's attempts to persuade them to hold back on industrial development and remain a supplier of raw materials to other communist-ruled countries. And about a year ago, in the spring of 1964, the Rumanian Workers (Communist) Party published a remarkably independent manifesto, which would have been unthinkable in the Stalin era.

This manifesto began by offering a number of criticisms and

recommendations to the Soviet and Chinese parties, with the professed objective of mediating their conflict. Then it repudiated in strong language the idea that some supranational planning body, such as the COMECON (the economic association of the communist-ruled states) should dictate to these states their proper lines of economic development and asserted Rumania's economic independence in the following terms:

"It is up to every Marxist-Leninist party, it is a sovereign right of each socialist state, to elaborate, choose or change the forms and methods of socialist construction. . . . No party has or can have a privileged place, or can impose its line or opinions on other parties."

Dangers to the West

Polycentrism does not change the nature of communist regimes. These continue to deny political and civil liberties that are taken for granted in free countries. They retain strong political and economic ties with Moscow. They may be expected to continue voting with the Soviet Union and against the United States on most issues that come up in the United Nations. The governments in the East European states remain alien, imposed from without, and, in a big crisis, would look to Mos-