the stabilization of world capitalism and the completion of the authoritarian rule in Russia, Factionalism became first an unecessary luxury and soon an annoyance, as it slowed down the execution of the orders from above. When it became clear that neither the mood of the masses, nor the opinions of the party-members carried weight any longer, immobilized as they were by the relatively settled world conditions, more direct methods of control were introduced. The "purge" displaced the empty chatter about "right" and "left" turns, and all decisions made by the Central Committee represented as unquestionable the "correct line". Those who did not grasp the change of situation fell quickly by the wayside.

NOT ANTI-TOTALITARIAN

Ruth Fischer's rise and fall, too, is not explained by any kind of anti-totalitarianism on her part, but by some tactical changes forced upon the Russian leadership and by a struggle for control raging within the Russian party. Comintern policy, shifting back and forth from reformism to putschism, in a steady search for a greater support of Russian state policies, led to the defeat of the abortive October uprising in 1923. In an attempt to shift responsibility from the higher to the lower levels of the Comintern hierarchy, the Russian-sponsored leadership of the German Communist Party was forced to make room for their untried "left" competitors, Maslow and Fischer. Within the Russian party the fight for Lenin's place was already in full swing. Trotsky, too, played a "left" tune. However, Maslow and Fischer thought of a different melody, and by supporting Stalin and Zinoviev in Russia, secured to themselves the German leadership. Once in power, the "left" orientation proved to mean a further decline in party-democracy, more discipline, more authoritarianism. But if the support of Stalin and Zinoviev gained Maslow and Fischer the German leadership, it was soon lost again on account of Stalin's fight against Zinoviev for the control of the Russian party. A general turn to the "right" discredited Zinoviev and supported Stalin. It forced the former to denounce and destroy his own "left" following to strengthen his position *vis-a-vis* the Stalin clique. But Stalin won the fight and with the question of leadership thus definitely settled, all anti-Stalinists, Maslow and Fischer included, were thrown out of the party.

If the intra-party struggles forced Ruth Fischer into an actual oppositional position, her "leftist" orientation became now merely an anti-Stalinist point of view. Like all the other expelled opposition groups, her own also persisted in regarding itself the only "true" bolshevist movement as against the Stalinist "counter-revolution." They set up new organizations that did not differ in form or spirit from those of the Stalinists, and spent the rest of their pseudo-political existence in the illusory hope of regaining their "rightful" place in the international bolshevik movement.

However, their lips were no longer sealed as far as Stalin was concerned. They could now criticize, defame, and ridicule to their heart's content. Ruth Fischer holds nothing back, not even her own weird imagination, to prove the utter debasement of her political enemies and friends of yesterday. Even the failings, mistakes, and shady deals of pre-Stalin bolshevism are now exposed, though partly excused. They were of course known to her while still in power, but as long as silence was golden, she kept silent, as becomes the good bolshevik.

To speak of a Stalinist counter-revolution, Ruth Fischer must defend Lenin's policies, thereby simultaneously justifying her own political past. Almost masochistically she tries to exonerate Lenin of his own interventions in German politics. It was not really Lenin, she says, but others, who "got Lenin to recommend Maslow's elimination from the German Party." This is, no doubt, the extreme in self-denial, as Maslow is the real hero of her book; an all-around genius, as if sprung from the cover of *Time* magazine. At all crucial points, she writes, "Lenin's intervention in German Communist affairs presents an attitude directly opposed to that of Stalin." And this because of "a contrast in character" and a "different political climate." Although "Lenin fought for the centralized power of the party," she says, it was "always with a full consciousness of the dangers to the original concept of soviet democracy in the use of compulsory measures!

Though conscious of the dangers involved, Lenin decided nevertheless to live dangerously. It must be a great comfort to the massacred Kronstadt revolutionists to know, if they could, that Lenin worried about democracy while applying martial law. And also for the dead hostages, democratically butchered at the ratio of two-hundred to one. Who knows, the ration might have even been less favorable to the victims had it not been for Lenin's original concept of soviet-democracy? However, the Dzerzhinsky-pattern was evolved not only as a weapon against the white guardists, but also for the struggle against soviet democracy. The latter was the revolution itself, not yet brought under party control. It was the enemy, which Lenin fought, and over which Stalin finally triumphed.

The whole of Lenin's theory and practice speaks against Ruth Fischer's interpretation. All she has to offer in support of her thesis is the promise behind the power. Of course, all rulers and ruling groups, declare their dictatorship a necessary, if unpleasant medium to a better life for all. If they are still struggling for power, their promises are quite specific; as soon as they are in power, the promises become rather vague and their fulfillment is relegated into the distant future. Lenin's promises are still on Stalin's lips. And what Lenin intended to do in Russia has been fulfilled in her state-economy. The Russian state does not differ from Lenin's party concept, developed long before the revolution. If his principles of organization and control appear to differ from the Russian reality, it is because it involves no longer a few thousand people, but more than 160 millions, no longer a selected group of revolutionists, but all the social layers of Russia and beyond.

What, in any case, is all this talk about the leader's character structure anyway? What sort of "social" movement is represented by organizations depending in their destination on the character of the leader? Certainly not a communist movement trying to break the monopolization of power and to end the social class structure. In Ruth Fischer's story the whole of Stalinism and modern Russian imperialism seems to result from Lenin's untimely death. "After Lenin's second stroke," she writes, "Stalin tightened the screws." And as "Lenin became weaker, Stalin became bolder." Zinoviev's position "became more and more difficult between Lenin's second and third stroke," and so forth, until all is lost with Lenin's last breath.

STATE PARTY — STATE CAPITALISM

Ruth Fischer's attempt to reveal the "origins of the State Party, succeeds only in showing some of its manifestations, as she is unable to escape her own bolshevik ideology. She writes about the revolutionary movement as Eisenhower writes about the war. It is all a question of leadership and strategy, and the rest is just logistics. Apparently, the "origin" of the State Party coincides with Stalin's becoming General Secretary in 1921, for, from page 232 of her book onward, she decides "to capitalize the word *Party* when referring to the Russian institution, in order to indicate that it has become the sole instrument of power in the state." As the capitalizing of a word cannot serve as explanation, the whole of her book must serve to explain the capitalizing. In that case, the history of bolshevism is the story of the coming of the State Party, and against this there stood nothing but Lenin's character qualities and, of course, the revolutionary sincerity of Maslow, Fischer, and their unnamed