democratic revolution." The split between "socialists" and "communists" in 1918 did not cause the collapse of Weimar, but was an attempt to develop a revolutionary force in Germany able to prevent a capitalistic restoration and the return of German imperialism.

However, when Professor Fay speaks of a "really democratic revolution" he does not think in terms of socialism. He merely prefers Weimar to the Third Reich, and even at this late date he holds on to the convenient illusion that a united front between "socialists" and "communists" would have prevented the Hitler regime. But the Weimar Republic ended into the Third Reich because there had been no socialist revolution, because, to speak in Fay's terms, the split in the working class had not been wide enough. Professor Fay seems to have missed the whole point of Ruth Fischer's book, namely, that Stalinism represents a kind of red fascism. And not only since the conclusion of the second world war, but many years before the Hitler-Stalin pact. The division of the labor movement in 1933 represented something other than the split in 1918. With Hitler's rise to power, the capitalistically minded social-democratic organizations and trade unions faced the Russian totalitarians in German clothes. Hitler could destroy the German labor movement so easily not because it was disunited, but because it was partly not a labor movement and partly not German.

WHO'S WHO OF COMMUNISM

Disregarding the preface, Ruth Fischer's first two-hundred pages give an interestingly written and objective account of the political changes in Germany after the first world war. They deal with the development of the German left-wing movement during the war, with the *Spartakusbund* and similar organizations, their consolidation into the Communist Party, the frictions within this party, its early use as an instrument of Russian foreign policy, the position and relations of the workers and soldiers councils to the established political organizations and trade unions, the defeat of all revolutionary aspirations, and the return of German militarism.

The bulk of the book, however, remains interesting mainly as an example of the professional revolutionist's view of history. With Ruth Fischer's entrance into the political picture her book describes, much of the objectivity that characterizes the first part of the work makes way to the subjective wrath of the defeated politician. History is now almost exclusively seen in the distorted form of inter-and-intra-party struggles; the party-faction and the party-leader replace the traditional "hero" or "villain" in explaining historical change. She speaks now of "the sure instinct of the born power-politician," who appeals to "the vanity of the unprocessed raw material of society," that is, the workers, and defeats those less favorably endowed for the struggle for power. This way of writing history requires a large amount of "inside information" and turns her book into a real "Who's Who of Communism" as her publisher happily points out. That much of this information appears in footnotes does not reduce its importance. It is thus easily available to those who like to match Stalin's famous Kremlin files with similar but democratic office appliances in this country.

"BETRAYAL"

Even the quality of the first parts of the book is somewhat impaired by an attempt to make the Stalinist betrayal of "German" Communism the more abhorrent by granting to the German Left a larger credit than is its due. Even if in the wake of the first world war a minority of the German labor movement went farther in its revolutionary aspirations than other minority groups in other countries, their inability to overcome their social-democratic past transcended their subjective readiness to take the revolution seriously. The lack of definite ideas of procedure, the substitution of slogans for concrete plans, the incapacity to adjudge the world situation realistically, accounted for both the demand for leadership, and the indecisiveness of the leaders heading the movement. All the efforts made, all the heroism shown, all the sacrifices suffered, amounted in the end to no more than a feeble gesture in the right direction, unable to affect the bulk of the labor movement, busy as it was with the restoration of the war-torn world by way of capitalistic reforms.

RUSSIAN DOMINATION

There was not very much to be "betrayed." Furthermore, if the radical wing of the German labor movement could be brought under Russian domination within the span of a few years, there must have been tendencies within this movement itself favoring bolshevik rule. In fact, it was again a minority within the minority which seriously tried to break with the tradition of reform to which both the socialists and bolsheviks adhered. The differences between these latter groups were merely of a tactical nature, or rather related to tactical issues at a particular historical moment. On the question as to what constitutes socialism both agreed on the nationalization of capitalist property and its administration by the state. One party was out to capture governmental power by revolution, the other by reform. Most of the German Communists accepted the bolshevik leadership so readily because it corresponded to their own ideas of revolutionary rule.

There were, however, groups of communists who tried to actualize the propaganda slogan "All Power to the Soviets." They advocated actions and proposed goals beyond the understanding and interests of revolutionists out for governmental positions in a state-controlled society. They, too, had their day in the political convulsions between 1918 and 1921. Against them, however, there always operated an informal united front of "socialists" and bolsheviks. Russian intervention set in with Lenin's attack upon the so-called "ultra-left" in Germany. Against their "infantile radicalism", he urged the return to parliamentarism, to trade-union activity, to opportunism in general. His German disciples did not hesitate to split the young Communist Party to suit the great Russian leader's tastes and needs. At this time Ruth Fischer was not as yet in leading position, but supported Zinoviev and Radek, the executors of the Moscow program.

Russian domination of German Communism did not have to await Stalin's coming to power; it was instituted quite early by Lenin himself with the artificial creation of the Third International, the twenty-one points of admission subordinating the international movement to the decisions of the Russian leaders, the splitting of the originally anti-reformist Communist Party and the merging of its Leninist right wing with the reformist Independent Socialists. If Ruth Fischer speaks persistently of herself on representing a "left" opposition, it must be pointed out, that this left factionalism had nothing whatever to do with the actual attempts of the German radicals to oppose the totalitarian rule of bolshevism. Her work went on within the bolshevik party and relates merely to the manipulatory needs of the Russian overseers in the early stages of their developing totalitarianism. With a "left" and a "right" faction, maneuvering was made easy. Now they could blow hot or cold, move in one direction or another, or not move at all. They could advance and retreat, take in reformism or revolution, be national or international, just as the shifting needs of the Russian state required. Neither the "left" nor the "right" had an independent policy, but represented different sets of politicians, emphasizing one or another aspect of bolshevism, in order to make secure at all times the control of the Russian manipulators.

PURGES

The need for this largely indirect form of control ceased to exist with