THE OBITUARIES THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Editorial comment throughout the world on Stalin's death varied all the way from the bitterly anti-Communistic outpourings of papers such as those owned by the Hearst Syndicate to the equally venal Communist Press, one of which, "L'Echo du Centre—La Marseillaise" of Limoges, France is quoted as remarking:

> "Stalin ill, Stalin's life in danger! It is unbearable, unimagined news, all the more so since we had conceived of him as living for all eternity."

Insofar as his memory throughout most of Western "Civilization" is concerned, however, Stalin was truly a man who lived too long. Had he died during World War II, at the time of the siege of Moscow or the Battle of Stalingrad, he would have received quite different obituaries in this country from those he now receives. No more do the school texts in this country, revised since 1946, depict the Russian dictator as a genial, pipe-smoking gentleman, a sort of uncut diamond in the rough, such as was the case with those issued during World War II. Who among us even of school age in those years can not remember how former animosity toward the No. 1 Bolshevik had mellowed into admiration? He was "Uncle Joe" in those times even to the average "God-fearing" and capitalism loving American worker who liked the thought that "his own" great man F. D. Roosevelt, along with Winston Churchill travelled to Tehran and to Yalta to sit in conference with their great ally. Also heart-warming to U. S. patriots in those stirring times was the knowledge that their beloved General Eisenhower could fraternize at champagne and caviar parties with his great and good friend, Gen. Zhukov.

Is ten years too far back for most to remember, or is it just conveniently forgotten about the war-time hegiras to Moscow by such outstanding U. S. capitalists as Wendell Willkie, Averill Harriman and Eddie Rickenbacker; their careful look into Soviet methods in industry and their glowing analysis of the Russian speed-up system? Everything about the Russian dictators and the Russian dictatorship was different in those days, not because there was any less cruelty to their enemies quantitatively or qualitatively, but because the Soviet Union and the West had become useful to each other. Even the massacre of 40,000 Polish military in the Katyn Forest, which was blamed on the Russians by the Polish government in exile was brushed off as too hot to handle by the Allied chiefs and the Polish politicians in London were instructed to mind their P's and Q's.

All this, however, is neither here nor there. This obituary is on Joseph Stalin, not on an embarassing wartime alliance, and anyway it is not impossible that many of our present-day politicians, who now speak out with such righteous indignation at the memory of the dead tyrant, will live long enough to once again grasp in friendship the bloody hands of his successors.

THE BOLSHEVIKS EDIT MARX

The subject of Stalin's personal history from the time he turned his back on his projected religious life, through his early life as a Bolshevik muscle-man; on through his seizure of Party power through a ruthless liquidation of his political enemies; the molding of his personality in the minds of his followers as a demi-god through the effusive outpourings of well-paid Soviet poets and the re-writing of Bolshevik history; his emergence during World War II as a great military "genius"; and his final break with his erstwhile allies and his direction of both cold and hot wars against the West; all of these things have been sufficiently handled both by friend and foe. What interests us at this time is not a rehash of his personal history, but rather the extent and nature of the *damage* he as an individual has done to the cause of world socialism through his revision of Marxism and through the association in the minds of millions of working people all over the world of the terms Marxism and Stalinism, or Leninism-Stalinism, with Marxism.

We found the Bolshevik leaders even prior to 1917 overhauling Marx to suit Russian conditions which did not warrant a socialist revolution but rather the overthrow of her feudalistic, agrarian economy and the necessary introduction of capitalism. Perhaps the first really important alteration came shortly after the seizure of power when Lenin announced that Socialism is a lower stage of Communism under which wages are paid and inequality exists. Stalin later extended upon this and the revolutionary slogan was changed from: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" to: "From each according to his ability, to each according to the quantity and quality of his work." In Soviet documents and inscribed atop the front of the Soviet pavilion at the World Fair in New York in 1939 was the classic prevarication:

> "For the workers in the Soviet Union Socialism is already an accomplished fact."
>
> J. V. Stalin

In the same way that the word "transubstantiation" explains to a Catholic the conversion of bread and wine into flesh and blood, so do these words of Stalin explain to a Communist the contradiction of socialism and a wages system. Stalin said it and that makes it so!

MOSTLY FICTION — SOME FACT

The Marxian pretensions of both Lenin and Stalin have been pretty thoroughly spread throughout the world by the international Communist movement, the social-democratic opposition parties and other professed Marxian groups who, while certainly antagonistic to the Bolsheviks, did not attempt to disassociate Bolshevism from Marxism, but rather looked upon it for many years as a form of socialism which fit into Russian conditions but which should be opposed elsewhere. This attitude, plus an open hostility and denunciation of the methods of the Bolsheviks constituted the sole opposition even in more recent times by the social-democratic movement.

On the other hand, even more responsible than the professed Marxists for the spread of this false idea has been the capitalist press and all other media of capitalist propaganda. It is indeed a rare occurrence when the truth creeps into the editors' columns or into an article which is either published in a journal with scant circulation or contains statements on the anti-Marxist nature of Bolshevism which has escaped the editor's attention. There is, however, the odd exception to this rule and occasionally we find a different slant as for example the following statements, culled from the Uncle Dudley editorial in the Boston Daily Globe for Mon., March 9, 1953:

> " . . . While proclaiming an intention to carry forward a smooth transition of control, made possible by espousal of Stalin's principles, Malenkov is in effect beginning his own revision of Stalin's revision of Lenin's revision of Karl Marx.
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> "The contradiction nevertheless is more apparent than real. For, by the time Lenin died in 1924, the resemblance between what he proclaimed as policy and what Marx had stipulate for the future of Communism was already tenuous. And between 1928 and the final months during which Stalin exercised rule in Russia, any resemblance between the policies identified with him and those of either Lenin or Marx became purely oratorical.
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> " . . . Examining a world that has long since passed by much of his analysis the most of his conclusions,* Karl Marx called for a Communist state in which there should be no private property, no class distinctions, no inheritances, no taxation, no secret police. Stalin built all these ideas into a police state pow-

*For an answer to this argument see "Life's Golden Age," Jan.-Feb., 1953 issue.