

Stalin's Terror Continues With Envoy's Recall

By Victor Serge

Antonov-Ovseyenko, consul-general of the U.S.S.R. in Barcelona, has just been named People's Commissar of Justice of the R.S.F.S.R. He is to leave Catalonia soon, and return to Russia. It is well-known that for some time numerous officials of the government of the U.S.S.R. have been disappearing in entire groups. Here are the latest of the verified news reports in this respect,

dealing only with events of the past few weeks: Goloded, President of the Council of White Russia and a colleague in the administration of the late Cherviakov, President of the Executive Committee, has, like the latter, also committed suicide. The recent suicide of Liubchenko, President of the Council of the Ukraine, has already been announced in the press for some time. The government of the Buriat-Mongolian, the Tadzhikistan, the Uzbekistan and Georgian republics have likewise been purged by numerous arrests which were most probably followed by executions.

(The Associated Press, in a Moscow dispatch dated Oct. 11, reports the ousting of Useyn Rakhmanoff as Pres. of the Council of Azerbaidjan, another of the Soviet Republics. The same dispatch comments as follows on the removal of Rakhmanoff: 'With his elimination, the President or Premier (President of the Council, and sometimes both, now have been ousted from each of the eleven republics making up the U.S.S.R.'—Ed.)

Rudzutak in Prison

Furthermore, confirmed reports have been released to the effect that Jan Rudzutak, a member of the Political Bureau and a Bolshevik of the Leninist generation, has been imprisoned. Sulimov, President of the Council of the Great Russian republic (R.S.F.S.R.) up to the beginning of the current year, is likewise in prison assuming that he has not been executed in the meantime.

Of the three secretaries of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Ukraine—placed in office after last year's purge and following the fall from grace of Postyshev—two, namely, Khatayevitch and Popov, have disappeared.

A comrade who has just arrived from Russia tells me: "There were about a dozen of us celebrating the New Year in Moscow. All Stalinist functionaries, a few of whom can rightfully be called old revolutionists... All devoted to the regime, in spite of everything. Well, all of them have since disappeared, some are in prison, some certainly are not among the living any more..."

Well, Antonov-Ovseyenko is going back. He knows just what to expect. We do, too. His disappearance is only a matter of time.

He has a fine revolutionary past. An officer, he took part in the Novo-Alexandria mutiny of 1905. Escaping from Russia, he emigrated to Paris, where he took up residence. A Bolshevik in 1917, he was a member of the Revolutionary Military Committee under Trotsky's direction, which carried through the insurrection in October. Antonov-Ovseyenko led the assault on the Winter Palace and was the first to enter it. Shortly after that, he organized one of the first Red Armies of the Ukraine. Led the civil war struggle in that country together with Piatakov (shot), Kotziubins-

ky (disappeared, probably shot), Eugenie Bosh (suicide). From 1923 to 1927-28 he was among the leaders of the Left Opposition together with his friends Rakovsky (disappeared) and Piatakov (shot). Represented the Soviet in Prague and in Warsaw; in diplomacy, he was a collaborator of Rakovsky (disappeared), Krestinsky (disappeared), Sokolnikov (imprisoned), Karakhan (disappeared).

In Spain he collaborated with Marcel Rosenberg, ambassador at Madrid, who has since also disappeared. He is an old revolutionist, once famous for his personal courage and for his rebel spirit; he was last to escape, thanks to the revolution in Spain, among several groups of old Bolsheviks who were shot or imprisoned. He surrendered to Stalin in 1928 and has since made every effort to serve him well. But so has the majority of those shot or imprisoned.

Capitulation No Aid

On the day after the execution of the Sixteen, he wrote—on being ordered to, it goes without saying—an unspeakable diatribe against his former comrades of the opposition, in which, outdoing Radek and Piatakov in his delirious prose, he declared that he had always been ready to shoot them. Taking his past into consideration, the Torquemadas of the Central Control Commission could hardly demand less of him. However, this type of prose has not saved a soul up to now. The fact that it is demanded of a person suffices to prove how suspect he is: marked for some future guillotine-cart.

Not a man belonging to this generation can be spared. All, whether they like it or not, are considered in solidarity with the others; all are equally dangerous, in spite of their disgraceful self-vilification, to the new bureaucracy; for all are equally conscious of the crimes of the genial Chief, whom they feign to adore while filled with boundless hatred for him. It is inevitable for him to order their suppression.

Antonov-Ovseyenko will have to give an account of himself. He most certainly does not have any illusion about the dirty work he has been doing in Catalonia. Once the Russian revolution was defeated by the bureaucracy internally, the revolutionists who rallied to Stalinism out of weakness, short-sightedness or political cowardice have always sought refuge in Soviet patriotism in order to justify themselves.

They have said to themselves: Reaction has carried the day for some time to come but the Soviet country remains, with its new acquisitions in history (collective ownership of the means of production); reaction will pass, the regime will change; let us work to furnish it with good equipment, good schools, a powerful army, etc. The bureaucracy can't prevent us from serving conscientiously.

(That's where they were deceived: it is much more concern-

The Crooner



"I see by the papers," I said as I rose to go, my time being up, 'that a certain hotheaded dowager of the Daughters of the American Revolution is sore that we sing the Star-Spangled Banner at our meetings.'

"Why, that's nonsense," Browder answered, his eyes smiling. 'We Communists are showing in our meeting just how the Star-Spangled Banner should really be sung. The reactionaries, the D.A.R.

ladies, always have to depend on brass bands or hired soloists to render our National Anthem. Our mass meetings give the only available model of a mass rendition of the revolutionary song. That's really the proper place to hear it nowadays.'

"He was right. Any good Communist meeting can prove it. And the interview was at an end."

—Interview with Earl Browder in the Daily Worker, Oct. 6, 1937.

ed about its own interests than about those of the country; and its interests, being those of a usurping cast of rulers, have very rapidly become incompatible with the proper conduct of industry, with good administration in general, with the progress of education, even with the existence of a competent high command.)

In Spain, Antonov-Ovseyenko only wanted to serve the U.S.S.R., but in reality he served only the bureaucracy. What does it matter, he probably thought, in comparison with the interests of the socialist U.S.S.R. and its 170 million citizens, if the Spanish revolution is lost; it is far removed from the former geographically and in spirit; it is secondary from every point of view, Spain being only a small power. Stalin has a three-fold aim there: to prevent a Franco victory, that is, the encirclement of his probable ally, France; to prevent a socialist revolution which could become a source of too many European complications and of social complications in Russia itself; to impose upon the Spanish republic a sort of diplomatic and military domination. The patriotism of the ex-revolutionist Antonov-Ovseyenko easily accommodated itself to this policy. But what sort of balance sheet will he be able to present to his bosses?

Assets and Liabilities

Among the assets: the Stalinist domination of policy, censorship and military command; the weakening of the revolutionary proletariat (death of Durutti, assassination of Andres Nin, persecution of the P.O.U.M., imprisonment of several thousand members of the C.N.T.); the defeat of the revolution begun in July 1936.

Among the liabilities: the re-

publican victory compromised; the anti-fascist front broken; the government discredited; the Stalinists, detested by all of advanced public opinion—from the radical bourgeoisie to the F.A.I. and including the left socialists. A patent social crisis. For, certain methods cannot be used with impunity: the interests of a nation of workers fighting for their lives cannot be sacrificed to alien interests without punishment for the perpetrators. The new People's Commissar of Justice of the R.S.F.S.R., replacing the demoted Krylenko (who is also bound to disappear), knows this, sees it, feels that he is lost. He will nevertheless return: for it is necessary for him

to go through with the bargain to the end, just as so many times in the past; because in ten years of capitulating against his conscience, he has burned all the bridges behind him, exhausted all his resources, lost all his chances of salvation; because he still clings to his hope of serving the Soviet fatherland, in spite of all the probability to the contrary.

Finally, those who refuse to return have received an object lesson which is quite precise: it is the course of Ignace Reiss. A high Stalinist functionary only yesterday, he went over to the opposition very courageously last June and was found on the bank of Lake Lemman, murdered under the very windows of the Palace of the League of Nations.

Anti-War Press

The first rumbling of the approaching war finds the entire bourgeois press firmly united. The powerful propaganda machine of American imperialism, the radio, magazines, moving pictures, church, school and newspapers have been swung into jingoist motion. A stew of war hysteria and patriotic blindness is being created! This juice is being sipped daily by millions of workers. It paralyzes the minds and bodies of all whom it reaches!

There is now an intensive campaign by the Stalinist social-patriots League for three daily papers. The Communist Party sounded an early signal of what its role is to be in the next war. 'If America was forced into war against fascism,' declared Browder, "I would certainly take up arms." The slogan remains unchanged! The treacherous communist will be the first to don Khaki. Three daily rags will

better serve their bourgeois masters against the workers!

Our conduct and obligations are only too clear. We are the sole expression of the independent aspirations and the future of the working class!

We alone will raise high the banner of proletarian struggle against all varieties of bourgeois enemies!

Our press must become the most effective combat mechanism against the war-mongers! Every day wasted makes the task of counter-acting the bourgeois chauvinist combination more difficult!

We must act quickly and solidly! Our strength depends upon your response! Lack of funds must not weaken the revolutionary front!

NOW! NOW! NOW!
Rush your contribution to the SOCIALIST APPEAL!