

REDS IN FERMENT ON THE NEW LINE

World Communists Held to
Be in Most Bitter Dispute
Since Trotsky Struggle

By HARRISON E. SALISBURY

Moscow's anti-Stalin campaign has aroused more bitter dispute and sharp argument among Communists of all countries than any ideological issue since the Trotsky-Stalin struggle.

Within the Soviet Union itself there has been dispute, disagreement and open agitation. The citizens of Stalin's home state of Georgia came out into the streets of Tiflis last March in one of the first open demonstrations of the present generation in the Soviet Union, opposing the campaign to downgrade the former dictator.

The Georgian outbreaks were so severe that troops and the police were called out and an undetermined number of persons were killed and wounded. Later strict security controls were imposed on all of the Caucasus as a result of the spreading disorders.

No prominent foreign Communist has actually challenged the campaign to diminish the stature of Stalin. Many leading Communists have sharply questioned Moscow's methods, however. And some important Marxist spokesmen have raised searching questions about the role of the present Soviet leaders during the years of Stalin's tyranny.

Conflict and Argument

Not for thirty years — or since Stalin gained control of the Soviet state — has there been so much conflict and argument within the Communist movement.

For the first time in nearly two generations minor Communist movements, such as that in the United States, have been speaking up to Moscow and raising the kind of issues that would have brought summary reprisals under Stalin.

Secretary of State Dulles has said he believes there is substantial genuine confusion and disarray within the Communist world as a result of Moscow's campaign.

Among the major queries that foreign Communists have directed back to their Soviet colleagues are the following:

QHow does it happen that for twenty-five years everything good in the Soviet Union was attributed to one man and now everything evil is attributed to the same man?

QWhat were the present Soviet leaders doing during the long years of Stalin's evil reign? Why did they make no effort to remove him?

QDo the evils that are now attributed to Stalin not actually arise out of the system that he gained control of?

QAre the present leaders not continuing some of Stalin's methods — specifically in their

action directed against him which comes from the top and does not include consultation with the public or the lower echelons of the party?

QWhy have not the present Soviet leaders informed their colleagues abroad and the Soviet public generally of the precise nature of the charges against Stalin? Why has the foreign Communist movement had to depend to such an extent on the capitalist press and the United States State Department to supply it with the basic documents in the situation?

The different Communist parties have adopted varying attitudes toward the Moscow movement. In some instances it is apparent that the foreign Communist leaders, many of whom were Stalin's own appointees, retain substantially more loyalty toward the late dictator than his erstwhile Moscow companions.

This has been notable in the case of the French Communist movement, where Maurice Thorez, the party leader, has moved very slowly to join the anti-Stalin campaign.

Elsewhere the drive has been picked up more quickly. Palmiro Togliatti, Italian Communist chief, has been a leader in the anti-Stalin movement, but he has directed very basic questions toward the present Soviet party leaders.

The United States Communist party was one of the first of the foreign parties to criticize the Moscow leadership openly. It has repeatedly criticized Moscow for lagging in admitting Stalin's anti-Semitic outrages.

Despite all the open disagreement and lack of unanimity, there has been no indication thus far that any deep or serious split is in prospect within the international Communist movement.