

Palme Dutt

Stalin and the Future



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‘Our task is to transform sorrow into strength.’—MAO TSE TUNG, March 10, 1953.

THE genius and will of Stalin, the architect of the rising world of free humanity, lives on for ever in the imperishable monument of his creation—the soaring triumphs of socialist and communist construction; the invincible array of states and peoples who have thrown off the bonds of the exploiters and are marching forward in the light of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin; the advance of the communist movement throughout the world.

For Death, he taketh all away, but these he cannot take.

After nearly six decades of tireless theoretical and practical activity and political leadership, rising from height to height of achievement and from triumph to triumph, the greatest disciple and successor of Marx and Lenin completed his lifework on March 5, 1953. He was working and giving leadership to the very last hour when the fatal stroke bore down upon him on March 1. He died within nine days of the seventieth anniversary of the death of Karl Marx. And what a lifework in those years from the world of 1895 to the world of 1953—from the darkness of Tsarism to the glory of Soviet emancipation and the transition to communism. Through all the storms of a thunderous dawn, of the dissolution of an old era and the birth of a new, he steered the ship of human hopes and aspirations with unflinching tenacity, courage, judgment and confidence. Now the road lies plain ahead. Departing, he could say with Bunyan:

My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to

There are moments in history when an instant sums up an age. Such a moment was when the news of the death of Stalin struck a chill in the hearts of the overwhelming majority of human beings throughout the entire world. The days of grief that followed revealed that the whole world—with the exception of a tiny handful of evil maniacs—mourned the loss of Stalin. Not merely in the socialist world, but from France to India the flags were lowered. That patient file of mourners, ten miles long, and sixteen deep; hour after hour in the icy cold of Moscow’s streets, to pay their last tribute before the bier of Stalin, spoke the great heart of the Soviet people more profoundly and more eloquently than a million ballot boxes. History knows no parallel to this. When Lenin died, millions and millions mourned him in every country of the world, with a universality that had never before been known for any man in the moment of his death. Hitherto the recognition of greatness across the barriers of countries and continents, of nations and language, of race and colour, has had to await the verdict of generations and of centuries. Communism has changed this. Already through Communism the human race begins to become one kin. Nearly thirty years have passed since the death of Lenin. If millions and scores of millions in every country of the world mourned the death of Lenin, hundreds and hundreds

of millions have mourned the death of Stalin. Not merely the thousand million human beings either already in the countries of the camp of socialism or consciously supporting its aims. Also the further hundreds and hundreds of millions, not yet politically awakened, but recognising in the name of Stalin the symbol of the champion of the oppressed and the exploited over the whole earth, the main target of the hatred of the imperialist oppressors and exploiters, the tireless fighter for peace, the shield and bulwark protecting humanity from the horrors of a third world war. Only the tiny handful of fomenters of war, the parasites and their hirelings, reviled him. Like a penetrating searchlight, the loss of Stalin laid bare the contours of the modern world; the light and the darkness; the masses of the common people, and the ravening enemies of humanity; the friends and the enemies of progress; who is for peace and who is for war.

Hyena Howls

In contrast to the feelings of the common people, the hacks and hirelings of the subsidised sheets of the millionaires—fearful of this universal grief and its meaning, guiltily conscious of the contrast between the mighty constructive achievement of Stalin's leadership and the abject bankruptcy and worsening conditions associated with their own chosen leaders, and panic-stricken at the rising wave of the demand for peace—set to work to try to turn the current and poured out day after day on a scale never before equalled, with a depth of infamy beating their own lowest records, a turbid torrent of filth and lies, compounded in equal parts of barbaric ignorance and malice, which only served to reveal their own degradation and will remain on the record as a measure of their 'civilisation'. The jackals and wild asses sought to dance on the grave of the dead lion. While the body lay scarce cold upon the bier, the servants of the millionaires proclaimed in screaming headlines across the page their witches' feast of rejoicing over the death of the leader of the people. The pigmies of Transport House, conscious of their own abject failure to achieve socialism or bring any result save worsening standards, chronic crisis, colonial wars and the heaviest militarisation of any country in the world, in the service of the expanding profits of the great monopolies and American overlords, assiduously scribbled to 'debunk' the 'myth' of Stalin and expose his 'colossal blunders'. Would that we could enjoy a few such 'blunders' here, which have cleared out forever the capitalists and landlords, raised twelvefold the standards of living of the people, smashed fascism and built a mighty fraternal alliance of states of the working people. which alone do not bow the head to the American Moguls.

High-Principled Gentlemen

Most revealing of all, perhaps, was not so much the screaming and reviling of the sensation-mongering press, as the casual remark of the editorial of the most ‘respectable’ Conservative *Daily Telegraph* on March 7 —within one day of the news of the death:

If anything could convince the Russian people of the sincerity of our will for peace, it ought to be the fact that, at this delicate moment for their rulers, we are not going to swoop down upon them like a vulture from the skies.

A remarkable demonstration of the ‘will for peace’. Perhaps an even more remarkable demonstration of the present frame of mind of our official rulers who can actually boast in public of such a singular piece of self-denial. ‘You see what high-principled gentlemen we are. When our neighbour bows his head in grief, we do not immediately plunge a knife in his back. Are we not wonderful models of virtue?’ The ethics of the American gangster have indeed travelled fast to become the tacit assumption of the reasoning of the Foreign Office. The scribe has given away more than he intended. The illumination which was intended to fall on the virtue of resistance to such a temptation falls much more

powerfully on the peculiar nature of the temptation which has been resisted. And perhaps even the temptation was resisted, not so much because of superior virtue, as because of the very sure knowledge that the strength and vigilance of the Soviet people is not for one moment diminished even in the hour of grief and bereavement.

The Fight for Peace Goes Forward

Let the gentlemen of the *Daily Telegraph* and the Foreign Office, of the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency, who calculate so glibly on the 'crisis' to follow the death of Stalin, and think the moment opportune to redouble the sending of their bombers and their agents into the territories of the people's democracies, take due note. The deep grief which has assailed the Soviet people, the working people of all countries, and all progressive mankind,

over the loss of Joseph Stalin, and now also of Klement Gottwald, will never for one moment weaken, but will on the contrary strengthen and steel the determination of all to go forward for the great aims to which Stalin devoted his entire life and showed the way forward for all —the aims of peace and international co-operation, of political, social and economic freedom, of communism. The calm strength and unity of the Soviet people in their hour of bereavement, as they have closed their ranks around their Communist Party and Soviet Government, under the leadership of Georgi Malenkov, has set the example for all in this time of testing. Above all, the fight for peace unites, and must unite, the widest range of the most diverse political outlooks, states and peoples. There are new dangers. There are new opportunities. The need for a meeting of the Heads of States is greater and not less. Life goes forward. The fight for peace goes forward.

Into Action

In this number we print tributes to the memory of Joseph Stalin from the Chairman of the Communist Party, from the Chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. and from the Prime Minister of the Indian Government. We print also a review of the first volume of the Collected Works of Stalin in English, which will bring new wealth of Marxist understanding to the British labour movement, together with the famous survey by Stalin of the lessons of the British General Strike twenty-seven years ago, which reads today as freshly as when it was first delivered and brings also lasting lessons for the labour movement of this country. The commemoration of Stalin, the profound study of his teachings and example, and the absorption of the rich treasury of the inheritance he has left us—all this is now and will continue the indispensable weapon for further advance. The teachings and example of Stalin live on in the present. They live on by and through the use we make of them in action. The truest commemoration and honour to Stalin can only be finally expressed, not in words, but in deeds. Stalin taught us above all the meaning of ‘living Marxism’, as he called it, which is never content to rest on the study and interpretation of the past, but tirelessly and alertly advances to meet new problems and new conditions and find the path forward. With strengthened understanding, with deepened recognition of our responsibilities, we must go forward to tackle the problems of the present situation in the light of Stalin’s teaching. The enemy does not wait. The hour calls for renewed vigilance, for action.

On Guard

During these hours of loss and of commemoration the international situation has not stood still. On the contrary, crowded events have demonstrated alike the new and intensified dangers of extended war and sudden reckless strokes of aggression, and at the same time the strengthened basis in popular support, and in the universal alarm over the reckless threats of the aggressive war camp, to carry forward to a new stage the fight for peace. In the frenzied language of a Dulles the 'Stalin era' is now succeeded by what he is pleased to call the 'Eisenhower era' in the same grandiloquent tones with which Hitler used to speak of his 'Third Reich' 'to last for a thousand years'—it lasted for twelve. The aggressive plans of the Eisenhower-Dulles strategy are pressed forward in the Far East. The visit of Eden and Butler to Washington has revealed a new depth of surrender on the part of Britain's rulers. On the other hand, the opposition is rising in Britain and in Western Europe, no less than in Asia, to the aggressive war plans. Despite all the 'big stick' thumping of Dulles during his European tour, and his ultimatum for ratification of the Bonn and Paris agreements for West German rearmament by April 1, the Rome compromise of France and the Bonn Government was scarcely announced before its precarious fragility was demonstrated. The economic situation is deteriorating in Western Europe, and above all in Britain. The demand extends for a reversal of the present disastrous course, for a lightening of the burden of rearmament and of trade bans, and for a renewed initiative for negotiation and peace. Such is the nature of the present situation, pregnant with possibilities for war and for peace. The repeated incidents during these recent days of Western military planes violating the frontiers of the socialist world and being brought down are a symptom of the critical character of the present situation. The war-mad lunatics are at large, but the strength of the peace camp continues to grow. The heart of this fight is now here in Britain.

A New Capitulation

What fruits did Eden and Butler bring back from their pilgrimage to their Mecca of Washington? ‘Meagre’ was the best euphemism that the Press could find to describe the outcome. ‘A somewhat meagre result’, was the judgement of the Observer diplomatic correspondent. ‘Meagre’, said the *Daily Herald* editorial. *The Times* spoke of ‘disappointment at the absence of positive results’. But indeed there were very ‘positive results’—from the standpoint of the American aggressors. Britain accepted to impose a self-blockade on trade with China, thus dealing a blow at Hong Kong, at British shipping and at Britain’s export markets. In return, Eden gratefully pocketed two venerable eggs as new ‘concessions’. First, that the United States would support the new proposals to Iran, which had already been presented as *joint* U.S.-British proposals on February 21, before Eden left, so that this ‘concession’ was a dummy; while in the meantime the ‘Miriella’ and other tankers under the control of companies ultimately reflecting American financial interests merrily drew the nationalised oil from Iran and cocked a snook at British protests about ‘stolen oil’. The second ‘concession’ was even more sensational: to recapitulate the promise made to Churchill a year ago about ‘consultation’ in the use of the bomber bases in Britain. With these two dummies in his pocket to display to an

admiring Churchill, Eden happily sailed home to strike the promised blow at Britain's trade with faithful promptitude by the new Board of Trade Order, published on March 16 and coming into force on March 31. Japan's trade with China (with American finance heavily behind the Japanese industrialist) is allowed to soar in the name of 'economic necessity'. Ceylon goes stoutly forward with the mutually beneficial rubber-rice trade agreement; and the American Press regretfully admits that there is really no alternative, since otherwise Ceylon would starve. The blow falls, not so much on China, as on Britain. The 'cold war' on Britain is intensified by the Eisenhower-Dulles Administration of the American Multi-Millionaires with the obliging aid of Mr. Eden and Mr. Butler.

Convertibility?

The economic-financial negotiations have been shrouded in a veil of reticence, in which the verbose and vague communiqué makes one significant reference to the necessity for Britain to pursue 'sound internal policies'. But it appears likely that the outcome will prove no less menacing for Britain. The Dominions Premiers' Conference plan, which Butler brought with him for humble submission to his American masters, is reported to have been a plan for a partial

or limited convertibility of sterling, subject to American concessions in the field of tariffs and investment and the provision of new dollar credits to sustain sterling after the removal of a fixed exchange. Such a plan was clearly designed to counter the American demand for full convertibility, that is, for the destruction of the sterling bloc, by a substitute which would appease the Dominions' demand for more dollar releases, and at the same time correspond to the strategy of powerful interests in the City which were demanding partial convertibility and consequent devaluation as a means to attack standards in Britain and lower costs, and thereby carry forward the fight of sterling against the dollar. It is evident that this plan was 'reported' to the authorities in the United States. There is no evidence that it was approved, or that agreement was reached in this long-drawn battle of sterling and the dollar.

‘Dependable Ally’?

Significance attached to the report on Britain’s crisis released by the semi-official U.S. Committee for Economic Development (described as ‘an important private group of American business men and economists’ with ‘close links with the Republican Administration’) at the moment of the arrival of Butler and Eden. This report, according to the Press (*Observer*, March 1), made ‘a candid analysis of British economic weaknesses’, and pointed out that these weaknesses are not, as was thought until recently on both sides of the Atlantic, merely the effect of the economic dislocation of the post-war years, but are deep-seated and will not disappear automatically with the passage of time.

Hence the fear that Britain might try to escape from the American net. The Report picked out (*Manchester Guardian*, March 2) a growing tendency in Britain to minimise the seriousness of the Soviet threat and the need for rearmament. . . . Under the pressure of economic difficulties British morale could waver and Britain could drift towards neutralism.

From this gloomy analysis the conclusion was drawn that the United States must go on helping Britain indefinitely if Britain is to survive as a dependable American ally.

In other words, hand out an occasional retainer to the faithful vassal to keep him docile—together with a few lectures on how to economise and cut down his disgraceful social services. It is possible, however, that the British people may desire to ‘survive’ for other purposes than to be ‘a dependable American ally’, especially when the ‘dependable American ally’ becomes the ‘expendable American base’, whose chances of ‘survival’ could be highly dubious.

Economic Warning Signals

Indeed, while the American patron sanctimoniously lectures Britain for economic unsoundness, chronic crisis and impending bankruptcy, it is not so certain that the economic health of the patron is quite so blooming as professed. It is impossible to ignore the economic warning signals which are accumulating in the capitalist world, including in the United States, and which may profoundly affect the issues of war and peace. The short-term stimulus of rearmament and the reckless expenditure on the aggressive war in Korea is giving place to the longer term disorganising effects of the rearmament and war policy, not only in the vassal countries of the United States, but also in the United States. The following table is instructive:

U.S. MILITARY EXPENDITURE AND GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT
(Annual increase in billions of dollars)

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952
Military Expenditure	+3.4	+3.5	-1.5	+17.6	+11.5
Gross National Product	+9.2	+1.1	+22.4	+26.1	+8.0

(The Banker, March, 1953.)

Thus the productive increase had begun to sag in 1949, and was given a big upward spurt through the Korean War in 1950 and 1951. But by 1952 the rise in production had fallen behind the rise in arms expenditure.

Contradictions of Rearmament Economy

Rapid expansion of productive power has been accompanied by falling consumption levels of the population. Mounting agricultural surpluses demonstrate the developing farm crisis; farm prices have fallen 15 per cent. during the past 23 months, while food consumption per head is seven per cent. below the level of 1946 (*National Guardian*, February 26, 1953). Previously Marshall Plan expenditure provided a market for agricultural surpluses; now 'economic aid' has given place to 'military aid', which economically weakens the countries receiving it even more than the previous 'economic aid'. Thus the conditions develop, as with the previous Hitler economy, in which the rising contradictions consequent on the rearmament and war policy can only either lead to still more reckless rearmament and new aggression—the demand of the Republican majority—or else compel a basic reversal of existing policies. This is the situation underlying the crisis of foreign policy of the Eisenhower Administration and the whole Atlantic Alliance which is now developing. The alternatives of war or peace—new aggression or the path of negotiation—grow increasingly sharp.

Western Europe and Britain

If the economic danger signals are visible in the United States, they are clamorous in Western Europe, and above all in Britain. The *Economic Survey of Europe Since the War*, published by the secretariat of the United Nations European Economic Commission, has had to admit the staggering contrast between the economic decline or stagnation of the countries of 'Western Europe' (including Yugoslavia and Greece! i.e., more correctly, the capitalist countries of Europe in the American orbit) and the soaring advance of 'Eastern Europe', i.e. the countries of socialism and people's democracy independent of the United States. The economy of 'Western Europe', the Report records, 'has stagnated for the past eighteen months', while 'the Eastern European Governments have on the whole planned successfully', and industrial development in the Soviet Union has 'continued at a rate surpassing that in any Western European country' and 'is increasing at a much faster rate than can be

expected for Western Europe (*The Times* summary, March 6). After all the paeans about 'American aid', the Survey now gloomily admits that American dollar aid 'has done very little to relieve, and may indeed have aggravated' Britain's dollar problem (who was right and who was wrong in 1947?). United Nations statistics have indicated that the industrial output of Western Europe in 1952 has shown no advance on 1951, and that of Britain has declined by three per cent., while that of the Soviet Union increased by 11 per cent., of Bulgaria by 18 per cent., of Poland by 20 per cent., and of Hungary by 24 per cent. Every public statement of Mr. Butler in the United States was a melancholy lament that Britain is spending two-fifths of its budget and using one in eleven of its population for military purposes, at the expense of productive, trading and export needs. Yet the policy which leads to these disastrous results is still blindly pursued.

Towards the Revolt of the Vassals

It is not surprising that in these conditions voices should begin to sound increasingly, both in France and in Britain for a change of course: against the

reckless aggressive plans of the United States' rulers in the Far East; for a reduction of the burden of armaments; and for negotiations with the Soviet Union and with the Chinese Government. All the hectoring and bludgeoning of Dulles on his European tour has not been able to check the rising anger and resistance to Nazi rearmament. In significant recent editorials on February 6 and 8, the French newspaper *Monde* declared:

We shall be unable to follow the United States into a possible general war with China. We shall refuse to let the United States forge an evergrowing number of German divisions in Europe. . .

America would do well to reflect twice. . . . For the peoples of Europe cannot accept such a policy. A third world war . . . would bring the final annihilation of Europe. This is known to all Europeans who will never accept a general war unless there is Russian aggression. No propaganda, no threats can modify this.

Within one week the reply came from the American semi-official organ, the *New York Times*. On February 15, its diplomatic correspondent, James Reston (the same whose questions received the final statement of Stalin for peace), announced grimly that General Eisenhower, while he may 'consult' the Atlantic vassals before any 'important' moves, '*will not wait their approval*'. He went on:

This is no mere war of nerves. Not only are all sorts of military and naval schemes under consideration, but certain specific moves, including at least one new military move, have been planned and approved. Beyond that one cannot go.

The choice of the path of war or of peace is growing very sharp.

Stalin and the Fight for Peace

The wise and tireless leadership of Stalin for peace during these post-war years has been carried forward by Malenkov with his historic declaration of March 15:

At the present time there is no such controversial or unsolved question which could not be settled by peaceful means on the basis of the mutual agreement of the countries concerned. This concerns our relations with all States including in that our relations with the U.S.A. The States interested in the maintenance of peace can be assured at present as well as in the future of a lasting peaceful policy of the Soviet Union.

There speaks the legacy of Stalin to us all today. During all these critical post-war years, in the face of all the provocations and bellicose utterances from powerful circles in the West, in the face of all the frenzied rearmament, encircling offensive bases and local wars of aggression, the calm voice of Stalin never ceased to proclaim that war between the countries of socialism and the countries of capitalism is not inevitable, that the common people of all countries can prevent it, that war could only become inevitable if the peoples let themselves become entangled in the web of lies of the warmakers. To the very last, in that final public utterance of his answers to the *New York Times* in December, 1952, and in his interview with the Indian Ambassador in the beginning of this year, the voice of Stalin never ceased to call for peace, for the cessation of the present wars in progress, for the reduction of armaments, for the negotiation of the leading Powers on whom rests the final responsibility of war or peace, for international co-operation. Let that voice be heeded before it is too late. The co-operation of the British and Soviet peoples for peace could ensure the victory of peace. Such a victory for peace could ensure a new and happier future for Britain and the world. In those last months of ceaseless and redoubled theoretical and practical activity before his death Stalin marked out with sure hand and unshakable confidence and optimism the path to the future. May the teachings, the example and the inspiration of Stalin guide us all in our efforts henceforth to reach to what he proclaimed in that final speech to the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the 'radiant future for the peoples'.

R.P.D.

March 18, 1953.