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REASONS FOR THE ANTI-PARTY GROUP CAMPAIGN

Alexei Kosygin, Nikolai Ignatov, Pavel Satyukov, and Alexander Shelepin have explicitly denied that the revival of the anti-party group campaign at the 22nd Congress indicates any present danger from that group inside the Soviet Union. Explaining why so many party leaders have spoken on this topic, Kosygin said: "...we do it to show the party and the people once again to what the personality cult leads, what irreparable damage the anti-party group might have done to the party and state. We want the lessons of history never to be forgotten." In a similar vein, Ignatov called the anti-party group: "a snake without fangs. One part of it is cringing, the other is hissing. But it cannot bite."

Faced with the apparent necessity of believing that the anti-party attacks are wholly aimed at ensuring that certain lessons of history are not forgotten, one finds it impossible to accept the protestations of Kosygin and his colleagues. It is only too evident that while the anti-party group probably does not represent a clear and present domestic danger, the revival of attacks upon this group is closely related to domestic problems as well as to major questions of foreign policy.

There appear to be at least six clearly-defined reasons for the revival of attacks on the anti-party group. Of these, five are concerned essentially with domestic affairs.

I.

The anti-party group leaders enjoy some continued intellectual influence, and there is widespread support for the ideas they represent. It would, of course, be impossible to argue that the men expelled from high offices in 1957-59, and/or retired (Voroshilov, Bulganin), still exercise important political influence in the highest party organs. However, information presented at the congress about Molotov illustrates how men out of power in the USSR continue to express their views. Thus Ignatov told on October 23 how Molotov persisted in his opposition, even after the June 1957 Plenum of the Central Committee:

They were double-dealing before the plenum, at the plenum, and after the plenum. One became convinced of this by Molotov's behavior in particular, when our delegation attended the Thirteenth Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party March, 1958. At that time Molotov was Ambassador in Mongolia. At the request of the embassy

party organization, he reported about the June Plenum of the Central Committee and about other practical matters of Central Committee activities. At the party meeting Molotov then was asked a question to which a reply was demanded, whether he recognized the decision of the Twentieth Party Congress and whether he agreed to the measures undertaken by the Central Committee. At the meeting Molotov replied that he agreed. But two days later, in a conversation with a member of the delegation, he tried to convince him that the MTS should not be reorganized and machinery should not be sold to the collective farmers (It was precisely then that the plenum was discussing these questions.) -- and not to hurry with the implementation of other measures which had been outlined. Such behavior on Molotov's part brands him as a double-dealer.

According to Leonid Ilyichev (October 24), in April 1960 Molotov dared to submit an article on Lenin to Kommunist, the party's official journal. Ilyichev's description indicates little change in Molotov's intellectual stance since 1957, for the article bore "the stamp of the dogmatic position not only on many political and economic problems but also on questions of theory, the stamp of the position which has been condemned by the Twentieth Congress." It is of considerable interest that almost three years after being ousted from the Central Committee, Molotov could continue to express his views in Khrushchev's Soviet Union. Since he has never been characterized as impetuous or foolhardy, it would appear that (provided the charges are true) he does not feel as isolated in his position as Khrushchev would like him to be. He is known, of course, as a very stubborn man.

According to the chief editor of Pravda, Satyukov, Molotov only last month, in a letter to the Central Committee, characterized Khrushchev's new Draft Program as anti-revolutionary, and found in it elements of pacificism and revisionism. Again, if Satyukov's statement is true, Molotov's conduct indicates that he does not feel completely alone in his views, that he entertains hopes of some sort that members of the Central Committee may be susceptible to this reasoning. In other words, Molotov may hope that "Stalinists" (or men who tacitly agree with him) are still stronger in high party circles than anyone in the West believes to be the case.

It is not, of course, necessary to argue that those who may agree with the ideas symbolized by Molotov and other members of the group are in any way involved with him or with any other member of the anti-party group. Among the nearly ten million members of the CPSU there must be many who believe Stalin's way was better. Open attack on the anti-party group and its ideas may well be Khrushchev's technique for frightening and silencing both people like Molotov and those sympathetic to his kind of ideas.

II.

There are genuine differences of opinion among party members and non-party technicians concerning a variety of domestic and foreign policies, and Khrushchev wants these differences minimized. While those who differ with Khrushchev's policies may have nothing in common with the anti-party group, overt and rough attacks upon that group can suppress criticism and ensure submissiveness.

The most easily identified domestic "problems" are agricultural difficulties, the problems of capital investment, the rate of advance toward communism, relative weights to be settled upon heavy and light industry, organization for defense, strategic planning, the withering away of the dictatorship, etc. In each of these areas there have been serious controversies during recent months which are continuing at the present moment.

Similarly in external policies, there have been many indications in the recent past that Khrushchev's policies, whether "hard" or "soft," are subjected to pressures by opposing forces of opinion. It is logical to assume that the First Secretary of the "monolithic" Party is rattling the anti-party charges as a means of securing less open dissent and more efficient execution of the decisions he has taken.

III.

There are some failures and problems that need to be hidden. The best current example of this is the failure of the Virgin Lands harvest. While many party members must know of this debacle, and while those from Kazakhstan and contiguous areas must be exceedingly angry, critical, or discouraged about it, Khrushchev and the Presidium quite obviously want discussion of the failure suppressed. The anti-party talk at the congress clearly indicates to the people who would like to criticize that what is not enunciated by the central organs of the party is anti-party. How many similar problems-to-be-hidden exist at the moment is not known, but given Khrushchev's ambitious pushing for big results and the known tensions within the economy, it is safe to presume there are many.

IV.

The party needs to boast of the magnitude of its successes as a means of proving how useful it is to the Soviet Union. Every speech at the congress has recounted party victories, since 1917 in some instances. In most cases the starting date for a narration of victory is the 20th Congress of 1956. The past five years have been Khrushchev's great years, and he hopes to have more of them. He apparently feels it imperative to prove his greatness as a champion of communism, and in fact such boasting is deeply rooted in party customs. One of the many "victorious" campaigns he has led was against the vile anti-

party men who schemed to destroy the party's glory and the people's welfare. Given the previously-stated advantages to be gained from reviving this issue it serves Khrushchev's purposes very well to boast at length about how he saved the Soviet Union and the party and World Communism by suppressing the anti-party group.

V.

The party still bears a heavy load of guilt inherited from earlier years which it seeks to divert to the anti-party group. It begins to be evident that Khrushchev's Secret Speech at the 20th Congress, laying much of the guilt for blood purges and Soviet illegality upon Stalin, did not completely clear the party. The heavy bequest of wrongdoing left by Stalin has proved too great to be atoned for by the destruction of Stalin's memory and the execution of a few leading evil-doers (Beria and his lieutenants). That new victims must be sacrificed if this weight is to be lifted from the party is demonstrated in several speeches.

Ignatov, explaining why the anti-party group tried to preserve Stalin's ways said: "In this infamous affair Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, and Voroshilov were prompted not only by a thirst for power, but also by fear of the responsibility for their tolerating transgression of the law and reprisals during which many members of the party and non-party people suffered innocently." Several speakers accused Malenkov of responsibility for the beating of party people. Podgorny raised similar charges against Kaganovich. Minister of Defense Malinovsky declared: "We in the military have a special score with the participants of the anti-party group. I see in this hall high-ranking military commanders who were in prison without any guilt." Shvernik harked back to 1934 to condemn Molotov's willingness to see innocent people saddled with a fabricated murder charge, and Shvernik added that the guilt of Molotov in "violations of socialist legality" is especially great. He "most flagrantly trampled on Soviet laws." Alexander Shelepin, Chairman of the State Security Committee (KGB) charged the group directly with "personal responsibility for the destruction of prominent leaders of the party and the state," and offered names and concrete details of the crimes he attributed to it (October 25).

The best form of atonement is the symbolic one. While the party cannot clear its name by weeding out and punishing every former NKVD man, every low-ranking communist who helped at the great purges, it can select a number of its highest figures as victims to the memory of the past.

Although the novelist Sholokhov declared that "nobody is thirsting for the blood of the factionalists which is poisoned by intrigues," he added: "but they must answer for their crimes against the party and the people."

Answer they will; this is strongly indicated by the steady repetition of demands that they be ousted from the party. In these demands there are over-tones that suggest public humiliation or even formal trial. Whatever the outcome, it is clear that these men are being called upon to answer, not only for their own crimes, but also to draw off some of the guilt still attached to the party.

VI.

The anti-party campaign is designed to win a hidden battle -- that against Mao Tse-tung for predominance in the control of world communist foreign policy. This theory appears to be supported by the Kosygin-Ignatov-Satyukov-Shelepin insistence that there are no crucial internal reasons for the anti-party group revival. To argue that the anti-party group campaign does have significance for domestic affairs would seem to negate the theory that the anti-party group campaign is designed to teach Mao the Khrushchevian brand of foreign policy. This is not the case, however, for the two approaches are not incompatible.

The steady development by Congress speakers since Mikoyan of a highly-organized attack upon Molotov's ideas about foreign policy prove the importance of this theme to Khrushchev. The close relationship between Molotov's ideas and those of Mao Tse-tung are unmistakable, and the intent to have it so is well established (Background Information, "For Molotov Read Mao?" (r.r.g.), October 25. Clearly, it would seem, Khrushchev is explaining to Mao as forcefully as he knows how (without naming names before the world) that Mao must jettison some of his own views if he wants to live peacefully with the CPSU. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that the whole anti-party group campaign was mounted mainly to attack Mao; nonetheless, this use of the anti-party group may have the most significant consequences, particularly if Mao is thus compelled to move toward an open break with the CPSU.

The anti-party group campaign is a splendid instrument for the achievement of many ends. In its ideological leader, Molotov, Khrushchev possesses a victim who suits his needs precisely. If, in the process of advancing certain causes at home by criticizing the theories of Molotov about foreign policy, Mao receives a clearer and more positive picture of the way Khrushchev is determined to run communist world policy, so much the better. Khrushchev probably knows or could easily invent a Russian proverb which proves that a good communist should use one stone to kill many birds. This appears to be what he is attempting to do with the present campaign against the anti-party group.

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