

British Report Tells State of Soviet Jews

A British Communist Party delegation which visited the Soviet Union has issued a report describing the liquidation of Yiddish culture and of the members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee during the years preceding the death of Stalin.

The delegates who were in the USSR in October included Daily Worker editor J. R. Campbell and the noted Marxist philosopher and mathematician, Hyman Levy.

The official report published in the Jan. 12 C.P. publication "World News" says the delegation discovered "from private conversations by Comrade Levy with Jews that the years 1948-52 were known among them as 'The Black Years,' the period during which many Jews were dismissed from their posts, Jewish poets and writers were arrested and charged with treason and executed; Yiddish disappeared from the street and the market place. . . ."

Regarding the murder of Jewish political and cultural figures, the British Communist Party delegation reports:

"Conversations with the relatives of cultural workers who had been liquidated seemed to suggest that the procedure was invariable. Those arrested and charged in secret were prominent political or cultural workers. Shortly after his arrest the immediate relatives of the arrested man would be deported to some distant place and there set to work and often at low wages. Finally the husband would be shot, perhaps after torture, to try to force him to confess or to incriminate others.

"In this way practically the whole of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee was liquidated, and this procedure was carried through by the security police under the direct authority of Beria, with the agreement of Stalin himself, who had apparently become convinced of Beria's genuineness in seeking out the class enemy."

Not until after the Twentieth Congress, according to the report, were families of the murdered men reinstated in their homes and compensated for some measure of their suffering. A marked change took place after the 20th congress but there were no indications of a reinstatement of Yiddish newspapers, theater or other cultural institutions. The delegation found:

"1—That prior to the death of Stalin and certainly from the termination of the war, a deliberate policy was being pursued by a powerful element in Soviet life to exacerbate feeling between nationalities, and certainly against certain smaller nationalities, and that this developed in an extreme form which led to the physical extermination of some of the best brains of Soviet life.

"2—That since the death of Stalin, tremendous efforts are being made to make amends for this terrible state of affairs, and to prevent it ever happening again."

A conversation with Suslov,

chairman of the Central Committee of the CPSU, on the question of re-institution of Yiddish newspapers and other cultural institutions brought the answer "Unless there is a specific demand for them from Soviet Jewry, no, these things will not be reinstated."

In conclusion the delegation declared of the crimes of the Stalin era:

"Crimes and distortions of this type cannot be the work of one man. It must have been the case that sectors of the administrative personnel must have been aware of what was taking place and must have taken the steps necessary to implement it. This argues a certain level of degeneration in this sector; a certain measure of indifference to human values which does violence to those of us, brought up in bourgeois capitalist society, who have given our support to the socialist cause. Rightly or wrongly we have expected something vastly different from this.

"It may be that we have not made adequate allowance in our analysis for the time lag that must exist before the ethical outlook we would like to believe must follow from a change in the economic structure of a society can establish itself.

"It may be that due allowance has not been made for the power and persistence of the traditions and values of an almost medieval tsarist society. It would appear that some time must elapse before the Soviet state will have fully cleansed itself of the moral taint in certain sections of its administrative class. That is a problem the solution of which we shall watch both with interest and confidence."

Call General Strike in Cyprus

NICOSIA, CYPRUS, Jan. 21. — Greek Cypriots declared a general strike throughout Cyprus today.

Firemen battled to check four fires which swept through Greek-owned shops in downtown Nicosia. Police said the fires were set by Turkish youths to avenge the death of a Turkish policeman by a bomb tossed by a Greek Cypriot extremist.

Firemen said most of the fires would just have to burn themselves out. Cyprus was already plagued by a water shortage; Nicosia, the capital, has no fire hydrants.

Authorities said more than 20 blazes were reported last night.