

# POLLITT RESIGNS BRITISH RED POST; KEEPS HIGH ROLE

## Remains as Party Chairman —Cites Ill Health but Tie to Stalin Shift Is Seen

By **KENNETT LOVE**

Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, May 13—Harry Pollitt, long-time leader of the British Communist party, resigned today from the office of General Secretary and was named party chairman.

The 65-year-old Communist chieftain gave ill health as the reason for stepping down after having held the General Secretaryship since 1929. John Gollan, national organizer for the party, was chosen to succeed Mr. Pollitt.

Although many observers regard this shift as part of the world-wide Communist process of de-Stalinization, the Executive Committee of the party asked Mr. Pollitt to continue to play "a major role in [its] leadership."

It appears that Mr. Pollitt has been "kicked upstairs." The chairmanship has been an eminent but powerless position in its thirteen years of existence.

Since the denunciation of Stalin at the recent congress of the Soviet Communist party in Moscow, Mr. Pollitt, who attended the session, has been openly criticized by Communists here for his record of uncritical subservience to Stalinism.

In accepting Mr. Pollitt's resignation, the committee named him as party chairman and member of its political committee. William Gallacher, chairman of the party since the post was created in 1943, was appointed to the new post of president.

### Nature of Jobs Unclear

Until the relative functions of the chairmanship and presidency are made clear, it will be difficult to assess the shifts.

In the past, the chairman has acted as "chief of state" to the general secretary's role of "chief of government" in the party hierarchy. Neither Communist party headquarters nor The London Daily Worker, chief party newspaper, was able to give information tonight on the relationship between these posts and the newly created presidency.

Mr. Pollitt tied with Mr. Gollan for the fourth highest number of votes in the elections April 3 for the Communist party's forty-two-man executive committee. Each got 467 votes. Abe Moffat, leader of the Scottish Mine Workers, led the poll with 473 votes.

In letters to the editor of The Daily Worker, rank-and-file Communists have accused Mr. Pollitt of having failed to understand Stalin's errors or, if he did understand them, of having failed to report them to the British Communists. Mr. Pollitt took up the campaign against Stalin with many reservations only a week before the elections to the executive committee.

Mr. Pollitt's twenty-seven-year tenure as general secretary was broken for a period at the beginning of World War II. He was temporarily removed for having supported the war prematurely during the period of the Nazi-Soviet nonaggression pact of 1939.

In his letter of resignation, Mr. Pollitt said:

"The opinion of the doctors on

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my present state of health leaves me with no alternative but to ask the executive committee to release me from the position of general secretary of the Communist party.

"While I am assured that a period of complete rest will clear up my present ill health, it is also clear to me that it would be unwise of me to continue in the future to carry out all the duties involved in the position of general secretary.

"I will, once restored to health, gladly fulfill any responsibility with which the executive committee entrusts me."

In its statement of acceptance, the executive committee spoke of Mr. Pollitt's "outstanding leadership" and his "unrivaled experience, political ability and capacity to act as one of the principal spokesmen of the party."

The new General Secretary has been characterized by responsible observers as "the lean and hungry fanatic" type of Communist, in contrast with Mr. Pollitt, whose sense of humor made him popular with many non-Communists.

Mr. Gollan is 45 years old. A native of Edinburgh, he has been national organizer since November, 1954, and for five years before that was assistant editor of *The London Daily Worker*.

Mr. Gallacher, 74 years old, has been a member of the Communist party's Executive Committee since 1920. From 1935 until 1950 he served in the House of Commons as Communist member for West Fife, Scotland, an industrial and shipbuilding constituency.

R. Palme Dutt was named vice chairman of the Executive Committee, and George Matthews was named Assistant General Secretary.

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