

ORDERS FROM MOSCOW

On the eve of this week-end's scheduled Communist national convention in New York, Moscow has chosen to intervene with its usual heavy hand. A Soviet newspaper has informed its readers that some Communists here are allied with John Foster Dulles to propagate ideas that would destroy world communism. Immediately this bizarre notion takes us back to the days of Stalin, to the days when all good Communists believed Leon Trotsky was an "imperialist spy" and Nikolai Bukharin a "capitalist wrecker."

Moscow's real target is apparently the majority of the Communist party National Committee, which endorsed the "Draft Resolution" adopted last September. In the wake of the Soviet's own revelations of Stalin's crimes that resolution reflected the Communists' awareness of their political bankruptcy. In particular the resolution made plain that its backers were prepared to revise the formerly sacred dogmas of Marx, Engels and Lenin in their search for an "American Road to Socialism." But even last September a minority headed by William Z. Foster apparently knew or believed Moscow would never accept such heresy and opposed such a change.

Fortunately, the Communist party in this country is unimportant in itself. Isolated from the main currents of our life and small in number, the Communists are important primarily because the dilemma they now face is typical of that facing all other Communist parties, including those which are large and important, as in France and Italy. At their convention this week-end the Communists here will have to choose between bowing to Moscow's clear orders that the Foster faction, a minority up to now, prevail or defying Moscow and facing the danger of denunciation and repudiation by the fountainhead of world communism.

Almost thirty years ago an order from Moscow turned a majority of the Communist party into a minority and resulted in the expulsion of those who had led the majority. It will be interesting to see if history repeats itself.

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