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COMMENTARY**A SOUTH-AMERICAN
REVIEW FOR
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From the Editor's desk:

COMPLEX LEADERSHIP

THERE'S METHOD IN ITS MADNESS

I have never been a devotee of psycho-analysis, and still less a convert to the cranky and complicated over-simplifications of Sigmund Freud, who, it has always seemed to me, needed more psychiatric straightening out than most of us. (To judge from his private correspondence with friends and relatives, he seemed to base his conclusions about the foibles of mankind upon jaundiced observations of his own reactions. I suppose it was just the familiar verdict of the proud recruit — that everybody was out of step but himself). Anyway, the more I read of the findings of psycho-analysis the more I am driven to the conclusion that no one needs analysing more than the analyst. I am told that they do sometimes treat each other. . . What a depressing experience that must be!

If I have digressed somewhat in my opening remarks from what I was setting out to say (and that, at least, must be a prerogative of a commentator), I want to assure my readers that anything I shall say hereafter about Nikita Khrushchev is not intended as a psycho-analytical study, although I am sure he would make as good a subject for aspiring analysts as any of the infamous characters of history or literature — Shakespeare's Macbeth, for instance, whom he seems to resemble in his mingled pusillanimity and megalomaniac ruthlessness.

Khrushchev is an undersized, squat, fat, bald-headed man, with high blood pressure; he is as ugly as a prize fighter, as paunchy as an innkeeper, short-sighted, mercurial in temperament; he is by fits and starts cunningly cordial and studiously insulting; he lacks background and breeding, and he has not even the consolation of the glorious Party past that gives some of his rivals a dubious claim to distinction. This monster of complexes, owing to one of those fatal accidents of circumstances in which history abounds, has become, nominally at any rate, the strongest personality in his own country, and incidentally one of the most precarious arbiters of man's destiny that ever wielded too much power in untrained hands. He himself told assembled delegates at the XXth Congress of the Russian Communist Party that Josef Stalin frequently humiliated him in public, threatened to kill him and forced him to dance before his guests as one might bait a bear or hire a gypsy strumpet to perform for the ribald delight of drunken farmers.

This is the Khrushchev who, on one occasion, loudly declares that all he wants to do is live in peace with the world, and, ten minutes later, and in the same speech, brags that if Russian communism is not allowed to triumph in the spurious diplomacy of the conference table, then Russia and her friends will obliterate half the world as a mad reprisal. This is the man who, blinded and goaded by the bewildering parcel of aberrations which his minions and he call "reasoning", needs as balsam for a

(Turn to page 2)

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bruised and battered soul, to assuage the effects of his nightmares and to protect him from his numerous enemies in Moscow, an urgent meeting with the most powerful representative of the West. For Khrushchev, in the loneliness of his apprehensive immaturity, a meeting with Eisenhower is as necessary a stimulant as a coming-out party to a socialite teenager faced with the prospects of sophisticated womanhood. The difference between the lumbering politician and the giddy schoolgirl is a difference of age and environment: the one has been seasoned in the lime-light of Bolshevism and acquired the astuteness and know-how of self-preservation; the other has been nurtured in chaperoned obscurity and learned how to say "no" more becomingly. But the sense of intimate insecurity and inferiority are the same.

Now, I do not wish my scepticism to give the impression that I am belittling the importance of the imminent Eisenhower-Khrushchev meeting. To understand Khrushchev's complicated nature, and therefore to some extent to account for his behaviour, is not the same thing as to interpret the policy and aspirations of the present-day Soviet Government. The meeting with the U.S. President may be useful to Nikita Khrushchev, but it does not follow that it will be useful to his country, still less for the world at large. Why? The answer is a fact I have stated before: peace does not depend upon talks, at whatever level they take place, nor even upon written treaties. Signed agreements are never more than scraps of paper, like the one Neville Chamberlain eagerly waved at the waiting British people as he stepped off the plane at London Airport when he arrived home from Munich. Chamberlain was convinced that he had staved off imminent war and saved the peace of the world for a generation or two, but he lived just long enough to hasten his end with the chagrin of despair... Or again, three months before the Russians annexed the Baltic countries, the Soviet Government had propounded that it had nothing but peaceable intentions towards its neighbours, just as Hitler's overture to his seizure of Czechoslovakia was the chant that Germany had no further territorial aspirations. Do you need more evidences of totalitarian perfidy? The Churchill-Stalin treaty awarded a 50 - 50 parity of Western and Soviet influence in the Balkans after the war; the U.S.S.R. signed the U.N. Charter denouncing aggression and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and promising to respect self-determination and human rights, including the privilege of freedom of thought, speech and action. But Soviet Russia launched the war in Korea, crushed under its iron heel the aspiration towards self-determination in Germany, in '53, & in Hungary '56... The instances could be multiplied and dramatised. But the pathos is there for all to see: it does not need to be infused. The Soviet attitude towards the sacred obligations to which the Kremlin freely subscribed is in itself so monstrously cynical that the faith of thinking men in Soviet sincerity is irreparably shattered.

Why, then, in the light of all the evidence, and of the comparable disillusionment that Hitler's mendacity engendered, do the statesmen of the West still apparently think it worth while to treat these totalitarian tacticians as equal partners equally sincere? (Surely it must be clear that the Kremlin will only refrain from aggression so long as it suits their purposes, and only respect agreements that redound to their own advantage?)... My guess is that the West is determined to prove to unbiased public opinion that so long as opportunities can still be found to talk rather than to fight, they will be seized and not be allowed to slip away for want of Western good-will. As for Khrushchev, I believe that Eisenhower will be shrewd enough to know how to respond if the Russian's oafishness persists in mistaking vulgarity for humour and insolence for wit.

Alphonse May

SALTO GRANDE HYDROELECTRIC SCHEME

♦ The combined Uruguayan-Argentine hydroelectric enterprise at Salto Grande on the River Uruguay is likely, when it is completed, to have tremendous influence on the future economic development of the country. If we bear in mind that Uruguay has, on the whole, one of the poorest fuel supplies of any country in the world, with little forest land, no coal, no petroleum, and precious little likelihood of any very substantial exploitation of nuclear energy, the significance of this hydroelectric project can be better comprehended.

The River Uruguay scheme at Salto Grande, should be capable, according to competent Uruguayan and Argentine estimates, of producing six thousand million kilowatts annually, of which half (3,000,000,000 kilowatts) would be destined for this country. This figure represents about three times the amount of electrical energy produced by the hydroelectric stations at Rincón del Bonete and Baygorria, when functioning at maximum capacity, and one and a half times as much as all the electrical energy produced in Uruguay at the moment.

(For fuller information concerning Uruguay's hydroelectric potential, see the excellent article by Ing. Augustín Hareau, Chief Controller of the UTE Hydroelectric Works, contributed exclusively to "Weekly Letter Commentary", 46-47/18 Jul., p. 10 et seq.)

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CUBAN "INFORMATION OFFICE"

♦ The Cuban Government has established a so-called Information Office with the designation "Latin Press". The chief functionaries of this enterprise, which aspires to have a pan-Latin-American character, are non-Cubans. The Cuban Press Agency will distribute propaganda material relating to Castro's régime free of charge throughout Latin America, as well as in the Middle East.

The explanation of this strange concatenation of "beneficiaries" of the new service is that the Government of Fidel Castro and that of Gamal Abdel Nasser are to work internationally hand in glove, as mentioned in our editorial "Havana-Cairo Axis" (WLC/45/11 Jul.) Furthermore, the new Cuban Information Service, as this venture is described, for reasons yet to be discovered, for the kind of "information" it will dispense is likely to be anything but informative, will maintain intimate contact with the official communist News Agency of Yugoslavia, which may be regarded as a poorly camouflaged bridge with the remaining communist information services in

Eastern Europe and Asia. As for the connexion with this country the Uruguayan representative who will commence operations soon will be a person closely in touch with the Castro régime.

As is well known, previous Cuban governments have generously subsidised the national press of that country. At present Castro's administration is financing only those organs of the press which wholeheartedly give their support to him. The surplus remaining, after these selective allowances have been apportioned, will go towards financing the newly created enterprise.

PAN - AMERICAN AIRWAYS

♦ With further reference to our note (WLC/51/22 Aug., p. 5) to the effect that Pan American Airways are not interested*for the moment in maintaining their jet service to Montevideo, we have been informed by a spokesman of Pan Am. that the company does not see any point in maintaining such a service until the airport at Rio de Janeiro is completed, since for the time being it is in no fit condition to permit the landing of jet aircraft.



MINISTER'S ALLEGATION

♦ The allegation made by the Minister of Labour to the effect that certain members of the National Council of Government are privately connected with commercial firms in such a way as to hamper his ministerial dealings with the enterprises concerned (WLC/49/8 Aug., p. 5), has not yet been either withdrawn or satisfactorily answered. It seems to us that the present Government, which was not backward in accusing its predecessors of similar irregularities, as well as of other forms of jiggery-pokery, has an urgent moral duty to clear this matter up. Government reticence on the point can only have the effect of appearing to confirm the charge and will cause resentment to spread: the prestige of the present administration will be jeopardised, & the Minister, and possibly others, may feel impelled to unburden himself of similar indiscreet confidences.

Frankly, in a matter of such seriousness, the only feasible explanation of the Government's silence is that they are waiting for the glib-tongued Minister to drop another brick before dealing him a heavy blow in righteous indignation.



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EUROPEAN CHEMICALS

♦ In recent months an increased interest in trade with Latin America has been displayed by European chemical exporting firms. Uruguay has been participating in this changed situation, although, owing to the especially rigid export-import arrangements invoked by this country, it provides by no means the clearest example of the tendency. It is significant that, whereas the United States of America in 1956 sent 63.1 % of all exported chemical products to Latin America, the figure fell to 60.7 % in 1957 and to 58.7 % in 1958.

There are a number of evident reasons for this change. For one thing, the credit facilities offered by European firms to their oversea customers are a good deal more generous than those of the U.S.A.; secondly, the prices of chemical products from Europe are sometimes as much as 50 % lower than those charged by U.S. manufacturers. Thirdly, whereas, according to local importers, the U.S. sup-

pliers are very strict in the matter of the conditions binding upon their export buyers, the European pharmaceutical firms — the West Germans, for example — are much more easy-going and to that extent are more attractive to Latin American purchasers.

On the other hand, U.S. products are delivered more promptly, are better packed, and, generally speaking, of a superior quality to that of their European counterparts. But these latter points, it seems, have failed to impress the Latin Americans, who, incidentally, are also attracted by the fact that the wrappings and accompanying literature of the European products are generally worded in Spanish, a subtle precaution the psychological importance of which U.S. exporters have apparently overlooked.

European exporters are offering up to 180 days' credit for their goods, and it is rumoured that the member countries of the European Common Market may even extend this period and introduce more liberal conditions for export. U.S. exporters, on the other hand, require payment

against letters of credit, on sight, or at short terms.

While the chances of U.S. firms of maintaining their lead in the supply of drugs and plastics are still sound, it can hardly be assumed that they will maintain their dominant position in regard to fertilisers, dyes, and heavy chemicals, in the face of ever-growing European competition and the development of domestic industries. Probably it is for this reason that many U.S. firms have decided to limit their exports to Latin American countries and to set up branch organizations in the republics concerned. Between 1950 and 1960 no less than 100 million dollars will have been invested in South America by only seven North American chemical firms.



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for the future. It has a syndical tendency which is out of all proportion and is misplaced and ill-considered. Its aim is supposed to be social improvement, but in reality this adolescent restiveness is only another aspect of the times. This kind of event is to be deplored because it is more than a regrettable nuisance in itself here and now: it is sowing the seed for endless unrest in years to come. If these young trouble-makers, who form the generation which in a couple of decades will, in the normal course of events, have the destiny of the country in their own hands, are allowed to perform their absurd antics unchecked, heaven help posterity! The educational system of today will have failed to fulfil its natural purpose.

RUSSIAN ENVOY'S VISIT

♦ Rumour has it that the imminent visit of Soviet Big Shot Anastas Mikoyan to Latin America (see WLC/51/22 Aug., p. 6) besides being concerned with concrete political issues, which we hope to deal with in these columns at a future date, is closely connected with a reported Russian offer to instal plant for the production of electrical energy by means of nuclear power.

Some time ago it was announced that three U.S. firms (including the American and Foreign Power Company) had submitted plans for the installation of two atomic reactors. As the inauguration of the scheme had to be formally ratified between the respective Latin American governments and the United States, and as such an

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agreement was never concluded (probably for political reasons), the Soviet Union now believes that it has a splendid opportunity to step into the breach and incidentally insinuate itself into the Latin American economy, not only by supplying goods for immediate use but by providing plant which, in the nature of things, may have a marked effect upon the Latin American economy for many years to come.

Needless to say, Mikoyan's offer will be generous — long-term credits, and nuclear specialists and other technical advisers to instal the plant and supervise the running of it, all paid direct from Moscow.

The suggestion that Mikoyan may be bringing a batch of "inspired" instructions with him for

the guidance of the various national communist parties seems to us not so probable. In the first place, everybody fully anticipates something of the sort from a Soviet emissary, which is in itself a good enough reason why it will not happen. Secondly economic penetration into the Latin American half of the continent is infinitely more important and advantageous to the Soviet Union than sending their No. 1 errand boy with messages which, in any case, can be delivered to the local communist nuclei by other means.

NEW CUBAN AIRLINE

♦ A Cuban air line is shortly to inaugurate a service on the inter-American route, connecting the USA and Argentina.

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RUSSIAN OFFER TO URUGUAY

♦ "Weekly LETTER COMMENTARY" was first to mention, some months ago, that the Soviet Union had offered financial and economic help to this country. (See our note headed "Russian Offer to Uruguay", WLC/38/23 May, p. 1). Newspapers which quoted the news sought confirmation from various sources. At the Soviet Embassy itself they were merely greeted with the answer: "No comment"; at the Foreign Office they were told: "We don't know anything about it"; at the headquarters of the National Council of Government a spokesman curtly replied: "We have no statement to make". Recently some additional details concerning the Russian proposal have been made known: it is reliably reported that the extent of the offer has been increased to some 300 million dollars, in the form of various deliveries of material to assist in technical and agricultural rehabilitation, so as to make the whole thing look as innocuous, and at the same time as attractive, as possible.

It is not likely that the Government can be unaware of the manifest risk involved in making

any such arrangement with a totalitarian and thoroughly imperialistic Power, whose manoeuvres in the international field are wholly dictated by political utilitarianism, so that the National Council of Government finds itself in a delicate situation. The point is that the man in the street will probably be totally unable to see the nature and gravity of the risks involved in accepting Soviet "help": he will be concerned simply and solely with the immediate potential economic advantages, and these the astute propagandists of Russian imperialism will know how to exploit to the full.

YUGOSLAV TIMBER

♦ Ten thousand cubic meters of timber are expected to arrive soon from Yugoslavia.

CHINESE PRESS VENTURE

♦ The Government of Red China, in the furtherance of its endeavours to compete with the Soviet Union in extending its political influence in Latin America, is inaugurating a Chinese communist newspaper in Havana. (The choice of the Cuban capital as the seat of these journalistic aspirations is surely highly suggestive!). The object of the news organ will be to keep Chinese nationals in this sub-continent informed of Red China's point of view. A Chinese communist emissary was recently in Montevideo for the purpose of collecting names and addresses of Chinese residents in Uruguay to be included in the mailing list of the new paper. As far as we have been able to ascertain, his efforts to appoint a local correspondent here were not crowned with success.

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INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

♦ *Acción* is making common cause with the heterogeneous assemblage of habitual malecontents who clamour against the Government's readiness to discuss the possibility of adopting some of the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and has castigated the Government's attitude as "making the mistake of submitting to orders sent from Washington". Must we assume that even an influential paper like *Acción* is unaware of the way the I.M.F. works? We trust that our gesture will not be taken amiss, then, if we append a few relevant details.

The International Monetary Fund was inaugurated in Washington in 1945 as an autonomous corollary of the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Its main purpose, as expressed in its Statutes, is to contribute to the monetary stability, eliminate the restrictions on foreign exchange, and collaborate in the correction of disequilibrium in the balance of payments of its sixty-eight member countries. The board of directors comprise one representative from each member country. The number of executive chiefs who supervise the work of the Fund is seventeen. The capital of I.M.F. amounts to 11,000 million dollars, which has been accumulated from the contributions of the members. The United States of America made the largest contribution (4,125,000,000 dollars), and since the voting strength of the member countries is in proportion to the extent of the contri-

butions they make the influence of the U.S.A. in the deliberations of the Board amounts to 26%.

Member countries may withdraw, as need arises, an amount equivalent to as much as one and a half times what they have contributed—that is to say, one hundred and fifty per cent of their original deposited capital—or even more if the government concerned can show that an emergency situation exists and submits plans designed to remedy the problems for the solution of which the application is made.

Uruguay's contribution to the Fund stands at 15 million dollars. In order to be able to claim assistance from the Fund, Uruguay would have to adjust its currency to bring the gold parity of the peso into line with that of the U.S. dollar, which at present represents 0.75 grams of gold.

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SUGAR TO COST MORE?

♦ It is believed that, as a result of a general increase in the world price of sugar, this commodity is likely to cost more on the Uruguayan domestic market soon. This will be the second increase in the retail price of sugar in this country within six months.

Although world sugar production continues to outpace demand, increases in production costs in Cuba, and the general unstable international situation (aggravated by the recent events in Vietnam) are having the effect of pushing up the cost of essential foodstuffs still higher: in fact, the prices of all commodities of prime necessity show a persistent upward trend. (See WLC/25/7 Feb., p. 10).

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ARTISTS GO EAST

♦ It has been observed recently that the Soviet Government has been intensifying its endeavours to attract South American exponents of the arts to visit Russia and other areas within the Russian communist hegemony. The procedure is as follows. An Iron Curtain diplomatic representative, say a member of the Hungarian or Czech missions, invites a singer, an actor, a conductor, or a solo instrumentalist to pay a visit to his country. On arrival there, the visiting artist is given a royal welcome and greeted with a frenzied public ovation. Conductors are privileged to direct the most eminent and best known orchestras in the Soviet world. The audiences applaud generously, and the pre-arranged *claque* in charge of the guest-performer's reception fêtes him or her with handsome bouquets and lavish supplies of vodka and caviar. From Budapest or Prague the artist from Montevideo or Buenos Aires is carried off in ecstasy to Moscow where the ceremonies are repeated with even greater pomp and ostentation. After Moscow the next call is usually at Peiping, and so the dizzy performer is whisked on a mad spree from one communist metropolis to another. When he or she is again on terra firma in his or her native country, the Reds have almost invariably gained the services of a new and influential propagandist who is only too delighted to have an opportunity of regaling the ears of artistic circles and kindling the inflammable admiration of philistines with tales of how regally artistic folk are treated

in communist lands.

Musicians of the SODRE (the Uruguayan State broadcasting organization) have often been seduced by attentions of this kind on the part of the Soviet Embassy in Montevideo. In spite of the fact that many members of the SODRE are perfectly well aware of the real motives behind these communist manoeuvres, they do not oppose them, and continue to believe that their performance in communist capitals will not have any deleterious effect upon SODRE's ideological structure or its vaunted impartiality. But the bitter truth is that this key cultural institution, a Government-sponsored body, is today saturated with the unbalanced influence of people who have already lived their little hour of triumph in Soviet countries or who are anxious not to step out of line in the hope that their hour will one day come.

RUMANIAN SALT

♦ Uruguay is importing 24,000 tons of salt from Rumania. The salt will be brought to the port of Montevideo in communist vessels in three stages. According to the terms of the contract, the total amount purchased will have been delivered by the end of the current year.

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HUNGARIAN TRADE BID

♦ We have received word that the Hungarian representative of the communist Government in Budapest who is accredited to the United Nations Organization, has made informal offers to Latin American representatives for the delivery of Diesel locomotives, agricultural machinery and electrical equipment. In return the Government in Budapest would be willing to accept the basic produce which some of the Latin American countries export.

The Hungarian representative omitted, however, to mention whether his Government would agree to conform to the international prices of the Latin American produce concerned.

(For further comment on the communist countries' desire to export agricultural machinery, with special reference to Uruguay, see WLC/39/30 May, p. 1 and WLC/46-47/18 Jul. p. 27)

UNHOLY ALLIANCE

Communists, anarchists and Trotskyists (just where the lines of demarcation should be drawn between them it is difficult to imagine) have combined in an unholy alliance to harass the Government by a spate of strikes among workers and students, and in other ways of creating a nuisance. The efforts of the groups concerned are chiefly concentrated at present upon the sponsoring of two lines of "policy":

a) resistance to the Government's security measures (me-

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b) defence of Fidel Castro and all he stands for, under the slogan "Cuba shall not become a second Guatemala!"

The latter war-cry provides a clear indication as any could, that, as in Guatemala five years ago, the present government in Cuba is predominantly pro-communist and therefore has the backing of communists and fellow-travellers everywhere.

ISRAELI ANTIBIOTICS

♦ As a concomitant of the chronic shortage of medicines and pharmaceutical products in general in this country, and in view of the fact that Uruguay has a favourable balance of trade with Israel, the Government has placed an order for a supply of antibiotics from Israel. Although the Israeli pharmaceutical industry has not a bad reputation, it would appear to be the reasonable course to adopt to undertake a few trials of Israeli products on a purely experimental and tentative basis before placing a sizable order. In a matter of such importance to public health some judicious deliberation is plainly called for.