

THREE YEARS OF THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN

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RECENTLY Soviet Russia has assumed a new importance for the western world. Our traditional picture of the Bolshevist as a black-hearted fanatic, armed with bomb and pamphlet, is being superseded by an impressionistic sketch of him as an engineer and trader who threatens to beat the West at its own game. The paradox of Russia expanding industrially while other nations are obliged to restrict their output, of Russia embarrassed by a shortage of labour while twenty million men vainly tramp the streets of our cities in search of work, of Russian agriculture bringing new land under cultivation when western agriculture is reducing its acreage, has forcibly impressed both Labour and Capital and compelled a re-examination of the Russian scene. A flood of books and pamphlets during the past two years is proof positive of the craving of the public for information. Their authors may usually be divided into two schools of opinion. The one still harps upon the original sin of Bolshevism, and interprets the Five-Year Plan as a desperate attempt to preserve Communist control,—“Soviet Russia’s Last Stand”, as Father Walsh has called it. The other group, led by Communist sympathisers, is highly laudatory of the Russian achievement, convinced of its speedy success and exultant at the imminent collapse of the capitalist system. Both groups simplify the issues, distort the facts, and antagonize the historian by their dogmatism. Like Sir Philip Gibbs’s hero, he is forced to choose the “Middle of the Road” and, while conceding that Russia is attempting the “outstanding economic experiment of our time,” he wishes to examine the Five-Year Plan in its proper setting and retain his sense of doubt. Without such an examination it is impossible to appraise adequately its purpose or achievement.

Since the collapse of Tsardom, Russia has passed through three phases of economic development of which the Five-Year is the most recent. In the first, which began with the October Revolution of 1917, War Communism was in the ascendant. Conceived during the terrible days of foreign and domestic war, it was the child of Left Wing Communism, obsessed by theory and enraged at the sabotage of noble and bourgeois. It was introduced

against the advice of Lenin, who warned his companions that "our task is to study with all our facilities the State capitalism of the Germans." Commencing with the nationalization of land, banking and transportation, the State ended by placing virtually every branch of economic life under direct control. Maurice Dobb has said of this period that "its fundamental feature was the displacement of the money system, and the attempt to create a system of State-controlled barter." For a time the principle "From each according to his capacity; To each according to his need" was in operation, but failure was inevitable in this attempt to bridge a gap of centuries between medieval Russia and the perfect Marxian State. At the beginning of 1921 "there was no food, there was no clothing, there was no fuel, no equipment for the factories, no raw material, no stores." Industry had fallen to less than 20 per cent of pre-war production, the peasant was sowing less in a sullen attempt to block the requisitioning activities of the State, and the scene justified Mr. Churchill's subsequent description in which "Russia self-outcast sharpens her bayonet in the Arctic night, and mechanically proclaims through self-starved lips her philosophy of hatred and death." The danger signal was the revolt of the Kronstadt sailors, with the significant slogan "For the Soviets, but against the Communists." Lenin saw the handwriting on the wall, and acted decisively.

At the party congress in the spring of 1921 he told his followers that "The only possible and sensible policy is to refrain from prohibiting and preventing the development of capitalism, and strive to direct it in the path of State capitalism." Or, as expressed more figuratively in his private note-books, "It is possible to loosen the rope without cutting it." Reluctantly the party followed its leader, and the New Economic Policy, or "Nep," was inaugurated. For seven years Nep reigned in the land, and the previous seven lean years receded into the background. The body economic began to recover its lost strength after the bout of blood-letting and semi-starvation. The peasant was permitted to sell his grain on the open market and to pay his taxes, at first in kind and later in cash. The more ambitious were even allowed to lease more land and to employ hired labour, thus becoming the kulaks or wealthy peasants so suspected by the Communist. The smuggler of 1920 became a private trader or Nepman who controlled for a time 85 per cent. of retail trade. Western capital was tempted with the offer of concessions, but did not succumb readily to the temptation. Yet the Communist was careful to reserve for himself "the commanding heights of Socialism," banking, foreign trade, large-

scale industry and transportation. This partnership of Marx and Mammon was successful by 1927 in exceeding slightly the production of 1913, but "the private sector accounted for 98 per cent. of the agricultural and 12 per cent. of the industrial output, and conducted one-fourth of the retail trade."

This persistence of capitalist enterprise produced a bitter quarrel in the Communist party, which blazed into flame after Lenin's death. The left wing under the impetuous Trotsky demanded ruthless treatment of the kulak and Nepman, the intensification of the propaganda for world revolution, and the broadening of the party by the admission of more workers. They accused Stalin and his friends, as Trotsky put it, of "kowtowing to the individualist peasant proprietor...., defence of a tortoise tempo in industry and mockery of the planning principle." Stalin replied that the party must not endanger its position by premature efforts, and declared that any attempt to crush the richer peasants would solidify them as a class. Trotsky was accused of vanity and ambition, and the superior skill of the crafty Georgian as party boss broke up the opposition. Trotsky was exiled, and his friends were forced to recant or be stripped of their positions. Stalin then proceeded to adopt a large part of the Trotsky policies, among which might possibly be included the Five-Year Plan. Three years later, observers were treated to the spectacle of Trotsky criticising Stalin for accelerating the Five-Year Plan to a tempo that was "premature and ill-judged."

The Five-Year Plan, or "Piatiletka", was not formally adopted until the party congress of May, 1929, but it dated from October, 1928, the beginning of the Soviet financial year. Five years was the period chosen in order to allow for an off year in agriculture. In 1930 it was decided to change the dates to coincide with the calendar year, and to complete the Plan in four years. Thus the present year is the fourth and final one for the Plan. Its authors are a group of economists, engineers and technicians, known as the *Gosplan*, who got their first experience of industrial planning in 1921, when Lenin asked them to draft a programme for the electrical industry which he regarded as the basic industry for Communism. Their second task was to work out a five-year plan for the metal industry, and from that the transition was easy to the preparation of an annual programme for the whole of Russian industry, the first of these being used in 1925-26. Trotsky urged a longer period, and a greater tempo in speeding up production, and after the feud previously described this policy was adopted.

The aim of Piatiletka is to bring Russia more on a par with the other Great Powers in agriculture and industry, but under

socialized direction and control. Stalin told his followers that "We have remained fifty or a hundred years behind the most advanced countries. We must cover the distance in ten years." He offered for a slogan the phrase "To overtake and outstrip." One of the ablest correspondents in Moscow, W. H. Chamberlin, described the plan as "a declaration of economic independence against the outside world," and pointed out that this aim would carry great weight with the Communists who are convinced of the imminence of a capitalist attack upon them. The most belligerent interpretation of the Plan is by the Moscow newspaper *Pravda*, which calls it "an important part of the offensive of the proletariat of the world against capitalism." No aspect of economic or social life is omitted from the aegis of the plan. Objectives for the heavy industries are combined with estimates of the number of eggs, cakes of soap or pairs of shoes to be required by the people in the final month of five years. It takes 270 pages of charts and explanatory paragraphs in the official English description "The Soviet Union Looks Ahead", but we need concern ourselves only with the more important control figures. Heavy industry (coal, steel, iron, oil, etc.) is to increase its output 255 per cent. above the figures for 1927-28; Light industry (textiles, shoes, household goods, etc.) is to increase by 144 per cent., its expansion being deliberately restrained in order to divert more capital into the primary industries. This expansion of industry is to be paralleled by a reduction in costs of 35 per cent., of which 24 per cent. is to be used to reduce prices and the balance to increase the profits for re-investment in industry. The worker is to be encouraged by a rise in wages of 35 per cent., but is expected to increase his productivity by 90 per cent. It was estimated that 86 billion rubles (nominally the ruble is worth 50 cents) would be required to finance the plan, the bulk of it being used for the construction of new plants and equipment. This colossal sum was to be secured through taxation, profits from State enterprises and internal loans, a heavy drain upon the annual income of the country. In agriculture it was hoped to increase production by 50 per cent., and to increase the socialized sector occupied by State and collective farms. From the socialized sector would come the bulk of the grain for export that was essential in order to pay for the heavy imports of machinery and raw materials.

Russian fiction has taught western observers to discount the Slav weakness for "big talk" and grandiose projects, so it is not surprising that when these figures were first published they provoked a good deal of ridicule. The doubting Thomases jeered

at the idea of a backward nation, 80 per cent. rural, largely illiterate and poverty-stricken, planning to expand industrially at a rate far in excess of anything previously recorded. The ardent Communists responded by enumerating the assets which justify their expectations. Of these the foremost was the weapon of planned control. No other country in peace time has ever subordinated its industry to such direction and unification as Russia, although our war time experiments in State control under men like Sir Arthur Salter and Herbert Hoover offered some object lessons. Normally, industry is left to "rugged individualism." Wasteful competition, unnecessary duplication of effort develops as has happened with railways in Canada and coal mines in the United States. New industries like radio spring up chaotically, and millions are lost by greedy adventurers eager to skim the profits from public curiosity in a new amusement. The cost of advertising grows in excess of its utility because of the competitive bidding for public favour, and expense becomes so heavy that drastic methods are used to break down "sales resistance." Such defects of industry are shown on a large scale in the United States, the home of mass production, where Stuart Chase has estimated the waste of production to run as high as 50 per cent. The Russian points to these conditions and claims "Nous avons changé tout cela." Russian industry must follow the estimates of power furnished them, and must admit the subordination of the part to the whole, the greatest good of the greatest number being, of course, interpreted on Marxian lines. But it must be remembered that so far the planning of Russian production has been far simpler than it would be with us. The Russian people have never yet had enough of goods services; like *Oliver Twist*, they have always vainly asked for more, and it will take some time to fulfil their needs. To plot an ascending curve of production is easier than flattening the curve because of nearing saturation point. State planning may also suffer from political influence when party leaders, anxious to make a fine showing, goad their experts to draft impossible programmes. Calvin Hoover has already noted in Moscow that "the most serious danger is the tendency to substitute enthusiasm for genuine planning."

A second valuable Russian asset is the population and resources of the country. Here is a country with a population of over 160 million, which is increasing as rapidly as the whole of Europe and adds to its numbers in three years a population equal to that of all Canada. What this means in labour power and consumption is obvious. Here is a country, the most undeveloped of all the Great Powers, with the largest lumber supplies in the world, a

grain-growing area 3,000 miles long and 200 miles wide, an oil reserve which is 35 per cent. of the world's resources, and huge deposits of coal, iron, copper manganese and other products. Over this area is exercised an iron discipline that it is difficult for Canadians to appreciate. The Communist party is the only party, the rest are in jail; there is only one press, one radio, one theatre. Nowhere else are Art and Literature so subordinated to the State. From the standpoint of tyranny, new Sovietism is but old Tsardom writ large. In Russia the State may tax private enterprise mercilessly to further State enterprises. In 1928-29 for instance, the private sector paid 62.4 per cent. of the revenue, but received in benefits only 2.8 per cent., the balance being pumped into the State sector. It is possible to curtail light industry and the consumer to promote heavy industry, to prohibit imports of luxuries and household goods in order to have foreign exchange available for machinery and raw materials. It is possible to purchase the peasant's crop at a price below the world price, and charge him prices for his household needs far in excess of world prices. Occasionally the worm turns, but the Communists have an uncanny knack for estimating human endurance, and the Russians are among the most patient people on earth.

To carry out the Plan, the Communists have used every possible device for stimulating possible enthusiasm. The newspaper, the novel, the play, the film, the radio and the orator have all been pressed into service to make the Russian "Piatiletka-conscious," to praise the industrious and successful, and to censure the indifferent and lazy. As Michael Farmman noticed in 1930, "To work more ardently and to get better results is the supreme effort and highest test of devotion to the cause of socialized industrialization." Factories that have surpassed their quota, workers who have made new records in production or invented new devices are extolled in the newspapers like an athlete or movie star in the West. The worker is urged to enlist in shock brigades, pledged to complete his task under any circumstances, and by the close of 1931, 3,000,000 workers had been enrolled in 200,000 brigades. The love of a contest is cunningly exploited in "Socialist competitions" between factories, in which the winners may receive extra money for housing, scholarships or travel, while the losers receive the inglorious "Order of the Wooden Camel" and are jeered at in the press. Young Communists swoop down on laggard factories, and endeavour to detect the weak spots and to shame the slackers into activity. These devices proved very successful during the first two years of the Plan, but there are grounds for believing that their effect has been waning.

Obviously Russian industry was not sufficiently expert to undertake all the projects outlined in the Plan. Since its inception a steady stream of western experts has poured into Moscow to supervise the construction and productive efforts of the new industrial giants. In some instances foreign firms, chiefly American and German, are retained as consultants or awarded large contracts on condition that they assist in training Russian engineers to carry on after the work is completed. Henry Ford and General Electric Company have had such contracts. Engineers who have carried through huge enterprises in Europe or America are invited to parallel their efforts on an even larger scale in Russia. Colonel Cooper, who built Muscle Shoals Dam, has supervised the construction of Dnieprostroy, the largest hydro-electric project since the War. The designer of the Ford plant designed a large tractor plant at Karkhov. The President of the Great Northern Railway, the owner of the largest wheat farm in the United States, the former head of the United States Reclamation service, the engineer who built the Berlin subway have all been in Russia to advise on similar projects. Besides the leaders of industry, mechanics, lumbermen, bricklayers, railway men, have been employed in key positions. About 4,500 were at work on high salaries in 1930, the American group alone receiving \$10,000,000, and 13,000 more were engaged the next year. With the increase of unemployment, Russia has been able to reduce salary schedules and to reduce the amount paid in foreign currencies.

The results of the first year of the Plan caused great rejoicing in Communist circles. It had been hoped to increase large scale production by 21 per cent., but the gain was actually 23.4 per cent. The oil, electrical and machine-building industries were all ahead of schedule and the coal, iron and steel industries were only slightly behind. 91 new factories had commenced operations, and Labour had increased its productivity by 15 per cent. The grain crop was the largest in five years. Cheered by these successes, the authorities revised all the figures for the second year upwards, even in instances such as the reduction of costs where the control figures had not been closely approximated. Large scale industry was ordered to increase its output by 32 per cent., the construction of new plants was to be greatly accelerated, and orders were given to hasten the collectivisation of agriculture. Enthusiasts began to demand the adoption of the slogan "The Five-Year Plan in Four." The second year did score some striking successes, but not as completely as had been expected. The Turk-Sib railway, linking the wheat of Siberia with the cotton of Turkestan, was completed six months

ahead of schedule, and smoke poured from the chimneys of 291 more factories. The oil industry again exceeded its schedule, and in fact completed its original plan in $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. Yet the general increase in production, 24.2 per cent., was almost the same as in the first year, and the metal industries were still behind schedule. Transportation began to creak under the increased strain, and its periodical breakdowns affected the progress of construction and the movement of raw materials. Labour failed to maintain the increase in output achieved the previous year. To make up for these setbacks, it was decided to create the last three months of 1930 as an extra shock quarter and commence the third year of the Plan on the first of January, 1931.

The most hopeful feature of the second year was the revolutionary change in agriculture, which far surpassed expectations and gave the State its largest supply of wheat for export since the Revolution, approximately 100,000,000 bushels. For ten years the peasant had been the sphinx of Soviet Russia. It was he who had forced the adoption of Nep, he who had aroused the concern of Trotsky, and upset all calculations by his failure to reach pre-war levels of production. His importance was caused by the disappearance of the large land-owner during the Revolution, and the resulting increase in peasant holdings from 16 to 26 million. The peasant's lack of equipment and funds, his ignorance and dissatisfaction with the scarcity and price of goods, combined to decrease the volume of the crops. In an attempt to restore production, State farms were organized on land previously uncultivated and managed by experts. These were of enormous size, the largest Gigant measuring 50 miles by 40 miles, but the number of them increased slowly until after the adoption of the Five-Year Plan. In 1930 there were 142 of them with an average acreage of 200,000 acres, producing grain for export trade and claiming a yield of 865 pounds per acre as against 690 pounds of private farms. From the State farm developed the tractor station, which offered to sow the grain and reap the harvest for private farmers on condition that they farm collectively and sell their surplus to the State. When practical experience convinced the peasant that the use of machinery gave bigger crops, the stations became increasingly popular and increased to 350 in 1930. This success hastened the movement for collectivisation which had been dormant for years. Fewer than 2 per cent. of the peasants were in collective farms when the Plan began, and that number only doubled during the first year. In the second year the Communist party made a vigorous attempt to compel the peasant to enter the collective farm. Those kulaks

who represented successful capitalism in farming were "liquidated", a euphemistic word to describe their persecution that Maurice Hindus has pictured in *Red Bread*. The peasants fought like cornered rats, and in their blind rage slaughtered half of the pigs, one-third of the horses and one quarter of the cows that they might not be collectivised, an act of retaliation which is still affecting food supplies. Although in the spring of 1930 the number collectivised far exceeded the estimate for the final year of the Plan, the unrest was so great that Stalin was obliged to issue his famous decree, "Dizziness from Success." In it he severely castigated local Communists for their excessive zeal, and promised the peasants the right to withdraw from collective farms if they wished. To induce them to remain, special concessions were offered to the inmates of these farms in taxation, loans, supplies, etc. About 22 per cent. remained in the farms and were rewarded by a splendid crop in the harvest of 1930. This turned the tide for collectivisation, and by October 1, 1931, 60 per cent. of the peasants were enrolled in socialized agriculture. Such a victory so pleased the party leaders that Mo'otov told the party congress that "the liquidation of the kulak is the most important step forward since the October Revolution." With collectivization an established fact, the most recent tendency is to deprecate "an unwholesome race after exaggerated figures." It will take time for the Communist leaven to work upon the peasant, who will not soon shake off the customs of centuries. He has still to be humoured about the sale of his crop, as recent decrees have shown, and it has been necessary to introduce piece work and cost-accounting to combat laziness and waste. The immense increase in State farms, tractor stations and collective farms has almost exhausted the supply of trained personnel, and there have been glaring cases of mismanagement which have brought about stern punishments and reductions in the size of State farms. Yet 70 per cent. of the crop is now harvested by State agencies, a fact that must influence world grain prices.

During 1931 the dangers of excessive optimism became apparent, and compelled Stalin to shift his front as skilfully as Lenin had done ten years earlier. As in the previous year, the control figures had been revised upwards and large-scale industry was expected to increase production 45 per cent. 500 new factories were to be opened, and \$2,000,000,000 was to be spent upon construction. Industry was to enlist 2,000,000 more workers, and labour was to increase its productivity by 28 per cent. The strain of these demands proved too great for most industries although the oil, electrical and machine-building branches successfully met the

requirements. Large-scale industry as a whole increased its production by 21.7 per cent., the lowest figure during the three years, and the iron, steel and textile industries actually declined below the figures for 1930. In coal, construction and transportation there were serious deficiencies. Labour increased its productivity by only 6 per cent., and industrial costs actually increased almost 4 per cent. It was discovered that it was easier to complete a giant enterprise than to operate it efficiently; and such a concern as the Stalingrad tractor factory, upon which great hopes had been raised, failed lamentably in its production schedules and had to be closed for re-organization. The zeal for quantity production had almost destroyed the interest in quality production, and began to react upon output. In 1930 the organ of the Supreme Economic Council, "Towards Industrialization", complained that "The low quality of coke and coal is one of the basic causes of the breach on the front of southern metallurgy, the extremely bad quality of metal caused the non-fulfilment of the programme of metal-manufacturing industry, the work of the agricultural machine-building industry for the first quarter threatens the supply of machines for the spring sowing, and here the lumber trusts . . . are guilty in enormous degree. The bad quality of the products of light industry intensifies the foods shortage on the market and cuts down the real wages of the workers." Yet over a year later, the Moscow paper, *Izvestia*, complained: "Along the lines of quality production we obtained not improvement but further deterioration."

Another difficulty was the shortage of labour, which became serious in 1931. The worker became more independent and less dependable with work assured. The turnover of labour was alarmingly high, averaging 40 per cent., and seriously upset operations in the coal mines. Fifty thousand men left the Donetz coal basin in the summer of 1930 for a pleasanter life on the land, and the efforts to recruit new workers to take their place were largely unsuccessful in the first quarter of 1931. The strain of standing in line for foodstuffs and household goods told upon the worker's morale and affected his efficiency. Owing to transportation troubles, the need to export foodstuffs to meet foreign obligations and the struggle with the kulaks, it had been necessary to ration almost all foodstuffs except potatoes. The successive failures in output in light industry produced a goods shortage which exasperated both peasant and worker. Illegal barter increased despite the authorities, and currency was hoarded in disguise because it could not be spent. This embarrassed financial policy, and for a time inflation was necessary. The failures in industry were often blamed upon

engineers and plant managers, many of whom were of bourgeois extraction. They were made the scapegoats in famous sabotage trials, and some were executed *pour encourager les autres*. The effect was, of course, precisely the opposite, and the engineers and executives showed an increasing timidity and lack of initiative which further impeded production.

Last among the factors to check progress was the world depression, which cast a deeper shadow over Russia as it increased in extent and intensity. The decline of commodity prices made the effort to pay for imports more difficult, and made other nations more fearful of Russian competition. In 1930 price declines for exports were about 30 per cent., while imports declined only 15 per cent. This meant a rapid increase in the adverse trade balance which rose from \$60,000,000 in 1930 to \$151,319,360 in 1931. It is true that Russia did increase the volume of her exports in the latter year, but their value declined 21.7 per cent., while imports increased 24.8 per cent. in volume and 5.3 per cent. in value. That explains the forced export of raw materials, the search for longer trade credits, the diversion of orders from the United States to Great Britain and Germany, the attempts to secure more foreign exchange by increased tourist trade, and easier facilities for forwarding remittances to friends and relatives in Russia.

By June, 1931, the cumulative effect of these factors was apparent, and Stalin took advantage of a conference of industrial executives to announce a change of policy. He was brutally frank in his description of the difficulties facing the State, and outlined a series of proposed reforms. To counteract the labour shortage, the collective farms were to divert men to the factories during their quiet seasons, and the mechanization of industry was to be greatly accelerated especially in the difficult and dangerous industries. To revive the worker's enthusiasm, wages were to be increased, piece work was to be employed more extensively, and a greater gulf created between skilled and unskilled labour. It was also planned to improve the comfort of the worker in the factory and the communal restaurant, to divert appropriations to housing projects, and to open more stores and reduce rationing in an attempt to improve the distribution of foodstuffs. Stalin said the problem of management was "to liquidate irresponsibility, improve organization of work and properly distribute forces in our enterprises." He criticised the paper leadership of boards of directors in unwieldy trusts, urged a measure of decentralization and greater personal responsibility as necessary for "real business-like Bolshevik reforms." While the manager's hands were

strengthened, the worker's responsibility for the care of his machinery was decreased by the abolition of the continuous working week with multiple shifts which had proved wasteful and inefficient. New efforts were outlined to create for the working class "its own technical and intellectual intelligentsia"; but the policy of "specialist baiting" which had harassed the bourgeois engineers was harshly denounced. Loyal engineers should be made full partners in the life of the State, and with their families should be free from discriminations. The Soviet Economic Review described this policy as launching "a new era in the policy of the Soviet government towards technicians and engineers and the professional classes generally." The problem of rising costs was to be met by a more rigid system of cost accounting, and a tighter grip upon credit facilities to counteract the prevalent assumption that "all the same, the State bank will grant us the necessary funds."

This policy of "Neo-Nep," as someone has christened it, is now in full operation and has begun to check, at least partially, the most serious abuses. During 1932 the demands upon heavy industry are considerably reduced from those for the previous year, and the control figures for iron and steel are now lower than the original figures in the Plan. Much more stress has been placed upon housing and the light industries, and in the second Five-Year Plan which begins in 1933 the emphasis is definitely upon social welfare. The first Plan will not have been completely attained in the four years; though some industries are already far over their quotas, others cannot reach the control figures. In most of them the qualitative defects will detract considerably from the quantitative achievement. It is also apparent that early fears of Russia being a menacing competitor for western industry in the near future can be largely discounted. On the other hand the combination of a great national objective and centralized planning has, in the opinion of Bruce Hopper, "enabled Russia to weather the depression with fewer apparent economic dislocations than those which have shaken the capitalistic world." As the watchwords of order, discipline and responsibility assume reality, as the new industrial giants at Dneprostroy, Kharkhov, Nizhni Novgorod, Magnetogorsk and Stalingrad swing into full capacity, the wealth of the State will increase and the welfare of the people will steadily improve. Such a success will be the finest Russian propaganda. H. G. Wells has told us in his latest work that "Dogmatic, resentful and struggling sorely, crazy with suspicion and persecution mania, ruled by a permanent Terror, Russia nevertheless upholds the tattered banner of world collectivity and remains something splendid

and hopeful in the spectacle of mankind." Russia is not yet a pure Communist State, but she offers an exciting contrast to our system. The future poses two great questions. How shall we improve our own system in order to hold the loyalty of the common man who will always judge a system by its material results? The second and perhaps more important is how will Soviet Russia fare under the younger Communists in the years to come. Only 20 per cent. of the original revolutionaries are left, and of the group who under Lenin ruled the country eight years ago only Stalin is still in high office. Lenin boasted "Give me four years to teach the children, and the seed that I have sown shall not be uprooted." In the next ten years we shall know if he is right.