

Soviet Russia's Drive on "Undesirables"

ENEMIES AT HOME are the present objective of the Soviet Government.

Frontier districts, munition centers, political capitals, and other places of prime military significance are being "cleansed of elements from whom an invader might draw support or sympathy."

All "former people," by which Soviet term is understood ex-aristocrats, ex-priests, ex-merchants, and the like, will be driven away from regions where they might be dangerous, and with them the kulaks and near-kulaks, who have fled from the farms, as also private traders.

Millions of inhabitants of regions under suspicion, reports Eugene Lyons in a Moscow United Press cable, are being sifted and tested to discover which are "undesirables," and he explains:

"The decrees for passportization provide the Kremlin with the apparatus for this extraordinary revision of its population.

"When passports were first introduced for all residents of Moscow, Leningrad, and Kharkov, the three largest centers in the Soviet Union, it was generally accepted as a method for reducing the swollen populations of those cities."

But a close study of the list of cities, towns, and regions from which "undesirables" must be driven, this Moscow correspondent avers, makes the character of the decree as a war measure indubitable.

COMMENTING on the "cleansing period," which runs from June first to the end of November, *Pravda*, official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist party in Moscow, has this to say:

"In the last two and a half years, the rapid growth of the political consciousness of the proletarian and peasant masses has resulted in an equally rapid growth of our party. Its membership has increased from 1,400,000 to 3,200,000 men (2,000,000 of them being active members and 1,200,000 candidates).

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"Yet this wide admission of new members to the party, which, in a great many places, was carried on in a wholesale and indiscriminate manner, often without any investigation of the fitness of candidates, is responsible for the fact that undesirable elements have penetrated into the party.

"There are men who find it advantageous to belong to the party merely because it means getting coveted jobs and various benefits; also there are individuals who, while paying enthusiastic lip-service to Communism, in reality are malignantly undermining it.

"These opportunists and secret anti-revolutionists, shielding themselves with a party ticket, preach the reactionary doctrine of the 'gradual extinction of the class struggle' and of the leniency of the State toward the bourgeois elements. They babble that the Soviet Union has entered the stage in which 'inner peace between classes' should prevail. Men like Slepko, Eismond, Astrov, and others, who recently tried to organize secret factions within the Communist party, are trying to thwart the policy of our party and to direct it into other channels. Also they are doing their best to prove that the Five-Year Plan is an 'impossible and unpracticable Utopia.'"

Pravda then calls attention to the fact that a lack of brains is the reason why many members of the party fall under suspicion. Such "comrades," altho sincerely devoted to Communism, do not possess enough political knowledge to justify their retention in the party, and this official newspaper goes on:

"An ignorant Communist can not play the rôle of mental leader and political organizer of the proletarian masses not belonging to the party, and this is just the rôle that a Communist must play. Hence, a Communist who does not know the program of his party and the main political decisions that were adopted by its Congresses and who, generally speaking, fails to work on himself and on his own mental development along the Marxist and Leninist lines can not remain a Communist.

"Instead of being ejected, however, such men will be merely demoted to the rank of candidates or to the still lower rank of sympathizers, from which, through real work and effort, they may again rise in time to the position of active membership."