

# Stalin a Felon -- But Right! Says Strong

By William Bundy

NEW YORK, June 13 — "Stalin committed errors, abuses, and even crimes, if you care to use that word," said Anna Louise Strong at a Stalinist sponsored meeting here last night, "but the balance sheet of the Stalin era is definitely on the plus side." She spoke at a meeting under the auspices of the National Council of American Soviet Friendship on "Latest Developments in the Soviet Union."

For three decades now, Anna Louise Strong has made a profession at apologizing for the crimes of Stalin and Stalinism. In spite of the revelations of the Khrushchev speech, she hasn't yet been able to break the habit.

Her speech last night followed almost word for word, the article she wrote in the April issue of her news letter Today, which came out before the Khrushchev speech was published.

## FINDS STALIN MODEST

In that article she said "From what I saw of Stalin in the early 30's, I felt that he was expert in committee action, in getting unanimity without pressure. He proclaimed 'collective decision' long before Khrushchev; his rise to power was precisely the rise of the party collective over the erratic individuals like Trotsky. Ambassador Davies found Stalin 'personally modest'; with this I agree. . . ."

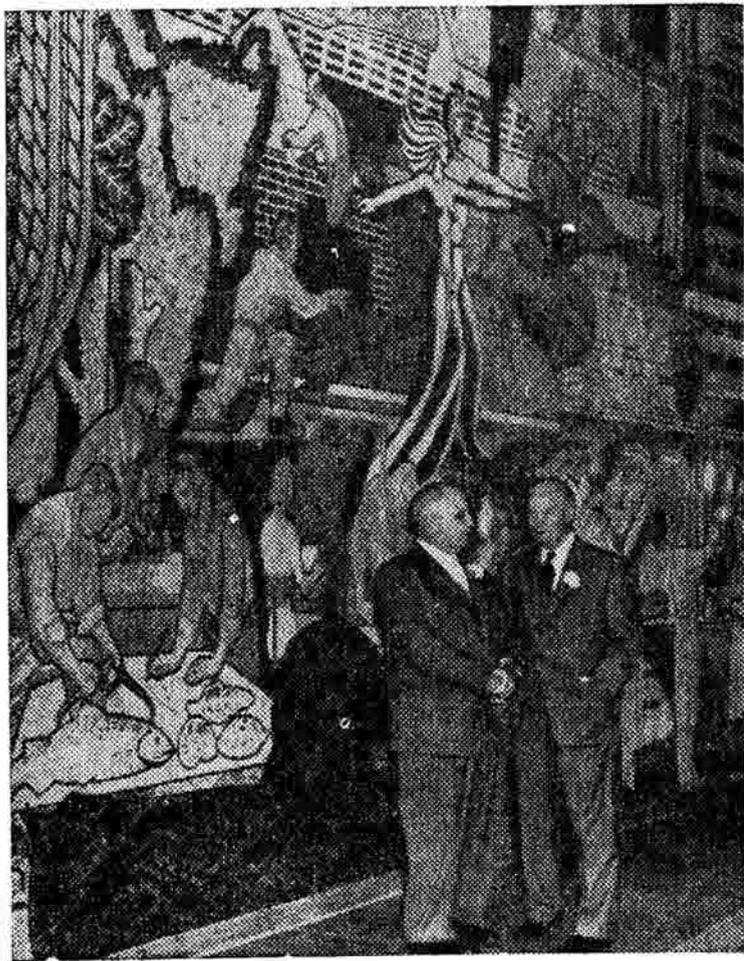
The fact that the Khrushchev revelations make that statement appear idiotic was simply ignored by Strong last night. She dismissed the speech by saying that it was not an official Soviet document, that it was published by the U.S. State Department, and that Khrushchev did not want it to be revealed. "Besides," she said, "it is only the first draft."

In drawing up her "balance sheet," she listed the economic advances made by the Soviet Union, the defeat of Hitler's armies, and the spread of the revolution to one third of the world, in Stalin's favor. She said: "Let us rejoice in all new freedoms, they were bought. . . not only by death of heroes in battle, but by death of men unjustly, and in mistakes. . . let us also give tribute to that harsh, even unjust discipline which in 30 years 'whipped up' a peasant land to a role it was not yet fit for, and thus built the economic base on which freedom can be safe and at peace today."

## STALIN A RIGHT GUY

She also said Stalin was right

## At Labor Building Dedication



President Eisenhower (r) and AFL-CIO President George Meany are shown in the lobby of the new \$4 million AFL-CIO building in Washington, after Eisenhower dedicated the new union headquarters. He said nothing about the role of unions as a means of defense by the American workers against Big Business exploitation. Instead, he warned organized labor not "to dominate" the individual.

on "socialism in one country at that time," and that he was right "in calling Trotsky a mischief maker." This was the only time in her entire speech that Trotsky was mentioned. She did not deal with the Moscow trials. None of the questions submitted on these subjects was answered during the question and answer period.

She completely ignored the fact, admitted by Khrushchev, that the crimes of Stalinism hindered the progress of the Soviet Union and almost brought military disaster. Throughout, she implied that they were necessary and inevitable.

"The most important abuse," she said, "was the unbridled power of the political or secret police." "But this body was not the creation of Stalin. It goes back to the days of the Czar. The Russian people have had a hard time breaking with the habit of political repression," she said.

## DIDN'T WANT FUSS

She had known of the use of torture, anti-Semitism, and "unjust political repressions," she admitted, but said: "I know why I didn't make a fuss about those things to the world. . . I felt I

was seeing something so vast and important that I didn't want to do anything to stop it."

Anna Louise Strong herself had become a victim of "unjust political repression" when she was arrested by the NKVD in 1949, charged with sabotage and espionage, and deported from the USSR. She was "rehabilitated" in March 1955. She said of this incident: "In a certain sense, I had it coming to me. I was boosting Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese revolution all over the world before Stalin recognized them and gave the green light. . . but there are times to criticize and times to shut up and take orders. . . to attack leaders at the wrong time is to lose the war." This is apparently her idea of how to "be careful about justifying terror."

The entire speech was an attempt to justify absolute and slavish acceptance of everything the Soviet bureaucracy had ever done, without admitting that any other course was possible. Since the bureaucracy itself has been forced to admit that much of its activity was criminal and avoidable, the speech was contradictory, confused, and confusing.