

THE STALINISTS OF ANTI-COMMUNISM

Pascal Delwit & Jean-Michel Dewaele

'Paris today is the capital of European intellectual reaction', writes Perry Anderson in his recent *In The Tracks of Historical Materialism*.¹ His formulation is terse, provocative and quite justified. An intelligentsia which was, almost by definition, considered to be on the left has packed up its bags and gone over to the other side. It now addresses its criticisms, not to French society, but to those who dare to think of transforming it. It no longer turns its anger against the injustice of a system which dominates, exploits and alienates the people of France, but against the injustice which prevails 'elsewhere', and in the present context 'elsewhere' means the other side, the Communist camp. Anti-communism has helped to reconcile many Parisian intellectuals—Anderson rightly notes that provincial intellectuals have not been affected to the same extent—to 'western pluralist democracy'. It is probably difficult for an outsider to imagine the degree of anti-communism that now prevails in France. Except for the Communists themselves, almost everyone has been affected by it.

Until recently the newspaper *Libération* was an eloquent mouthpiece for anarchistic protests; not long ago it described the Communist ministers in the Mauroy government as 'the KGB's agents in France'. In his *La Nature de l'URSS*, Edgar Morin, a brilliant sociologist who was for a long time regarded as a man of the left, describes Soviet power as 'a spider which controls everyone and everything' and the Soviet Union itself as 'a historical monster', as 'a monstrous reality which is out of all proportion and which defies all norms', which 'defies all reason'. M.F. Garaud is of course a right-wing politician, but she is on excellent terms with Charles Hernu, the Socialist Minister for-Defence (for and with whom she has organized a number of seminars on foreign policy); in a televised debate she can claim that 'The Soviets are Martians, real Martians. Their system could never have been devised by human beings.'

One could give many other examples. Such extreme statements are not merely examples of individual hyperbole. They are typical of the prevailing climate in France and even of the concrete policies of the government. Compared with Mitterand's Atlanticism, Gaullism looks positively anti-American and De Gaulle himself looks like a trouble maker. Not content with adopting a pro-American diplomatic line, Mitterand also attacks European peace movements and socialist parties which dare to distance

themselves from Washington.

The presence of Communist ministers in the French government from **1981 to 1984** has done nothing to change this state of affairs. Their loyalty to the state, their 'managerial seriousness' and their 'sense of responsibility' have done nothing to placate an anti-communism which still sees them as 'foreign agents'. Anti-communism has done so much to stir up the right's hatred for the left that a former gauchiste pamphleteer like J.E. Hallier can even claim that Mitterand is 'a Russian lackey and deserves to be put up against a wall and shot'.

It is true that the **Parti Communiste Français** (PCF) takes a soft line on the Soviet Union, especially compared with the line taken by the PCI. But it has completely rejected the notion that Moscow can provide a 'model' for the international labour movement. It is also true that the extreme sectarianism displayed by the PCF between **1977** and **1981**—particularly towards the Socialists—did a lot to tarnish its image. It cannot be denied that its tone and its rigidly authoritarian practices help to fuel anti-communism. But anti-communism relies upon false comparisons, invective, groundless accusations and slander. It has no scruples about applying double standards and never qualifies its statements. As in the darkest days of the Cold War, anti-communism is more virulent in France than in any other country in Europe. Its best spokesman is a singer, the most popular singer in France. His success is the most striking demonstration of the strength of anti-communism. Yves Montand was once known for his close connections with the PCF, but the radically anti-communist and anti-Soviet positions he has recently adopted have brought him such fame that it was actually rumoured that he would be standing in the presidential elections. His inspiration comes from none other than Jorge Semprun who was, until about fifteen years ago, a prominent member of the Spanish Communist Party in exile.

In other words, former Communists are playing an important role in the anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign that is sweeping across France. They have been joined by a younger generation of Marxists who, in the heyday of Maoism, looked to the People's Republic of China rather than to the Soviet Union for their inspiration. Their adulation of revolutionary China had an almost religious intensity. These renegades from 'Marxism-Leninism' have not simply abandoned their old convictions and their ardent faith. They have rallied with equal passion to the anti-communist and anti-Soviet camp. Their passion is as great as ever; only its object has changed. Whatever they may say and despite appearances to the contrary, the continuity in their attitude is more real than their change of heart.

It would take a long time to list all the former Stalinists and former Maoists who have become self-proclaimed enemies of Marxism, Maoism and the revolution (and of the left and of even a reformist notion of

change). In France, the list includes the names of the most prestigious members of the intelligentsia. The media flatter them with their best attentions and promote them to stardom. Morin, Leroi-Ladurie, **Elleinstein**, Robrieux, Sollers, Glucksmann and many others have all become energetic, even aggressive defenders of a free world which is, they claim, faced with a 'totalitarian threat'.

In the article that follows, Pascal **Delwit** and Jean-Michel Dewaele examine the case histories of two former Communists who have become virulent anti-Communists: Annie Kriegel, the historian and sociologist, and Pierre Daix, the writer and journalist. Their individual cases are not especially outstanding. But in terms of their general tendencies, their intellectual weaknesses and their ideological impact, they are typical of the murky phenomenon of French anti-communism. It is also an important phenomenon, so much so that it might be seen as one of the major planks in today's bourgeois hegemony.

M.L.

I

Annie Kriegel (née Annie Becker) was very active in the Resistance and joined the PCF during the war. At that time she used the name Annie Besse. Despite her youth (she was not yet twenty), she already had major responsibilities and worked with immigrant workers in Grenoble. It was in these circumstances that she discovered the PCF. Her courage, her youth and her conviction soon brought her to the notice of the Party's leaders. After the war she was promoted rapidly. She was initially a student organizer, but soon became the cadre responsible for intellectuals in the vitally important *Fédération de la Seine*, the largest and most prestigious concentration of intellectuals in the PCF. Our young star was also on the editorial board of the PCF's theoretical journal, *La Nouvelle Critique, revue du marxisme militant*. '*La Nouvelle critique* had been founded alongside *La Pensée*, considered too soft and academic in order to supply a more juvenile, ardent and more militant ~~tone~~.¹² *Les Cahiers du communisme*, the PCF's other journal, described its appearance in the following terms: 'A new journal is about to appear in response to the new needs of the ideological battle. It appears at a time when the forces of reaction are making a major effort to spread their lies, slanders and unhealthy ideas. . . in order to denounce the lies and falsifications of the ideologues of reaction, answer them and promote our arguments and explanations.'¹³ *La Nouvelle critique* was to be—and became—the spearhead of the ideological counter-offensive. It attacked politicians and writers in identical terms: Jules Moch, David Rousset, Bidault, Sartre, Blum, Truman, Mauriac, Malraux. . . The style of its denunciations is *La Nouvelle critique's* immediate hallmark: 'They are not the unwitting instruments of the great fear of capitalism or the wretched playthings of objective contradictions whose

hidden mechanisms and deeper roots remain invisible to them. Far from it! The orders they are **following** are clear and they know whose purposes they are serving. *They are lying and they know that they are lying.* They lie because they know that their lies are useful to their masters. They stink of lies. They use their falsifications to create splits, but they are at peace with their bad consciences. They will stoop to anything and rummage through any **dustbin**.[#] The famous style is the journal's hallmark: groundless accusations, permanent invective, bizarre comparisons and real paranoia. It has to be said that the style was, amongst other things, seen as a response to equally crude anti-communist propaganda which was equally unconcerned about ideological niceties. This was after all the height of the Cold War. The western bourgeoisie was determined to divide the left and isolate the Communist Parties. The Communist Parties therefore adopted the familiar tactic of defending the besieged citadel. The more isolated the PCF became, the more it turned in upon itself. In any study of this period it has to be remembered that it was not only the Communists who were manichaeian, dogmatic and sectarian. Nor were they the only ones to take orders from abroad. That does not, however, excuse the PCF's policies or the speed with which its members retreated back into a citadel they had been able to leave during the Resistance. This, then, was the prevailing climate when Annie Kriegel joined *La Nouvelle critique*. She worked mainly alongside men like Casanova, Daix and Leduc, and all four 'were required to act as intellectual **policemen**'.⁵ There was also talk of the 'thought police'.

Annie Kriegel wrote many articles on a wide variety of subjects for *La Nouvelle critique*. Her style was lively, alert, fiery, aggressive and unsubtle. In short it was perfectly in keeping with the journal's general tone. In 1952, for example, Kriegel was given the task of attacking a new book by Jules Moch, an SFIO minister of evil memory: in 1947 he had given the order to open fire on striking miners. Her article is so virulent that the attack finally becomes blunted. "The care with which Monsieur Moch records all the dirty tricks of the bourgeoisie is significant. He is brilliantly continuing the dirty work of *Gringoire*."⁶ Moch and *Gringoire* are attacked in the same terms. Kriegel is implying that there is no basic difference between social-democracy and the extreme right: *Gringoire* was the best known newspaper of the pro-fascist fringe in the thirties. And, like any good socialist, Moch is a liar. 'His account of the facts is a lie, pure and simple. "In 1935, a young Communist assassinated Kirov." Wrong, Monsieur Moch; it was in 1934, not in 1935. Why should Moch lie? In order to introduce another lie: "After the great trials of 1935, tens of thousands of people were executed and millions were deported."⁷ Jules Moch obviously knew that Kirov was assassinated in 1934. And so he lies in order to serve his masters! And Annie Kriegel catches him out!

But Jules Moch is not the only traitor amongst the Socialists. The hatred expressed in Annie Kriegel's attack on Lion Blum is at once ludicrous and odious. 'Hitler refrained from attacking the Jews of the big bourgeoisie. Who will ever forget that Léon Blum, his wife at his side, contemplated from the windows of his villa the smoke from the ovens of the crematoria.' This is particularly odious: Lion Blum was deported to a concentration camp and those members of the Jewish bourgeoisie who did not choose exile ended up in Auschwitz. Kriegel must have known that. In 1953, she again refers to Blum: 'This was Léon Blum's clever formula. He was always wrong, but he was "so intelligent". He always recommended policies that were opposed to the interests of the working class and the people, but his arguments were so "subtle".'⁹ Blum's political record may be debatable and patchy, but this is a somewhat oversimplified description of the man who led the Popular Front.

The Socialists were not the only targets for these Stalinist-tipped arrows. Marxists who are not members of the Party, like Mascolo, also come under attack. First of all, how can anyone be a Marxist without being a member of the Party? Mascolo must be a splitter. She rains insults down on him. In just a few pages he is accused of being a mere caricature of a dialectician, of being a sophist and of acting irresponsibly. His book is obscure and pretentious. Mascolo is naive, shameless and eclectic. And when he dares to raise the question of the role of intellectuals in the PCF, the reply is stinging, insulting and brooks no reply. 'It is simply comical for the most dubious representatives of the French intelligentsia, café adventurers who are part writer, part philosopher and part artist and who always have an eye for the main chance, to set themselves up as judges who are qualified to pronounce on matters of science and culture.'¹⁰ In the eyes of prosecutor Kriegel, Mascolo's only good point is that he too condemns and attacks Gide and Malraux. Kriegel concludes her article with the words: 'This is a perfect example of petty bourgeois spite. He would rather slander the party of the working class by accusing it of harbouring suspicions about the intellectuals than objectively analyse the relationship between the Communist Party and the intellectuals.'¹¹ Fortunately, the PCF, Annie Kriegel and *La Nouvelle critique* are there to 'Preserve the unity of our Communist doctrine and denounce splits.'¹²

Annie Kriegel is not content with attacking men. When the occasion arises, she can also denounce ideas. Thus, the idea of constructing a European community is pilloried and described as nothing less than a process of fascisization. 'The construction of a European community will encourage the process of fascisization and will paralyse science and culture.'¹³ Naturally enough, no evidence is produced to support her argument. When Kriegel talks about fascism, she should know what she is talking about; after all she did fight it in the resistance. But words seem to have lost all meaning. In some of her flights of oratory, Kriegel contrives

to combine hate-filled diatribes with sycophancy and the most banal eulogies of Stalin. Her attacks on the authors of the history books used in French schools is a typical example. 'The people who write these textbooks will stoop to anything. Stalin is a good and generous man to whom millions of men and women have turned. He is Lenin's disciple and heir, the builder of socialism, the leader of the anti-fascist struggle and the champion of peace. Stalin's name is honoured and his face is loved by the workers of the whole world; in every country the working class and the people take him as their model and their guide. They wish him a long life and have sworn their loyalty to him. The wretched lackeys of the bourgeoisie paint him in the colours of the only men they know and mix with: cunning, cruel exploiters whose hands are stained with the blood of the workers and evil dictators like Hitler and Pkain, whom they helped to power in capitalist states.'¹⁴ It is difficult to imagine a more manichean vision of the world. Annie Kriegel was not, of course, the only person in the PCF to indulge in such excesses. But it is also true that not all French Communists displayed the same shortcomings. Kriegel was in the forefront of the battle and therefore in the forefront of Stalinism and sectarianism.

Throughout this period, Kriegel's defence of the 'purity of Marxism' is not limited to the printed word. She also carried the good word to Party branches in person, explaining the line, convincing those who had doubts, attacking the recalcitrant and even closing down branches which had become too derelict or which had succumbed to the gangrene of criticism or doubt. Despite her youth, her authority, her rigidity and her power meant that she made enemies as well as friends in the PCF. While she was head of the Communist student organization for instance, she played a controversial role in the expulsion of Marcel Prenant, a member of the Central Committee. Although Prenant was an internationally known biologist, he was criticized for his lukewarm support for Lysenko and his 'proletarian science'. It was in fact Kriegel who attacked him and blocked his re-election to the Central Committee. When she now refers to the incident, she claims to have been the victim of a plot and says that she intervened at the request of Thorez himself. 'Do you really think that a young Communist of twenty-two would have dared to take the floor in front of the Party's main leaders without being told to?'¹⁵ When Marcel Prenant later mentioned the incident, he summed it up laconically: 'As soon as she saw where her interests lay. . .'¹⁶

Like all the Party officials of the day, she took part in the campaign against Marty, a famous Party leader who had fallen into disgrace. 'Annie Besse, one of the leading figures in the *Fédération de la Seine* went in person to address a meeting of Communist students in the Latin Quarter and to justify the accusations against Marty. She spoke from the platform in the little room in the rue Lhomond, arms raised, fists clenched,

eyes blazing. She was a convincing little hothead.¹⁷

Annie Kriegel quietly left the PCF in **1956** or **1957**. What was the reason for her sudden departure? Perhaps she was disturbed by the Soviet intervention in Hungary. Perhaps, as she now claims, it was the doctors' plot, though it was in fact Kriegel who organized the petition got up by Jewish Communists to denounce the bourgeois press's 'new slander'. She told her friend Dominique Desanti that 'on the night of **26 May 1955** neither she nor her husband could sleep for worry and kept asking themselves the same question; if Tito was a true socialist, what about those who had been executed?'¹⁸

Whatever the reasons for her departure from the PCF, Kriegel avoided all political activity for a time. She retired from politics to work on her thesis on the origins of the PCF. Its publication in **1964** marked her entry into the scientific world. The militant had become an academic who was respected throughout the French intellectual world. Her thesis, which has been republished in a cheap edition, is still regarded as the authoritative work on the subject. It is even considered a classic. Not only Kriegel's status had changed; arguments replace the old insults and she relies upon abundant documentation rather than unfounded assertions. Summary and peremptory judgments give way to qualified statements, details and precision. Her thesis is also one of the first works to study the PCF from the inside. It is the first example of a genre which was to produce an astonishing number of similar studies, many of which helped to fuel anti-communism in France. At the time, however, Kriegel was very much an innovator. What she was trying to prove or establish was that the birth of the PCF was the result of a historical accident, that the Party is an alien phenomenon which has been grafted on to France.

From this point onwards, Kriegel came to be regarded as the leading specialist on the French labour movement. Her reputation was consolidated by the publication of several other books on the CGT, the First World War and the French labour movement and related topics. Quite apart from the undoubted scientific qualities of her work, many people thought that Kriegel had an extra advantage: 'She knows what she is talking about. Like Racine's Acomat in *Bajazet*, she grew up in the harem and she knows her way around it.'¹⁹ Kriegel's *Les Communistes français* is, then a classic example of the 'Inside the PCF' genre. Such books explain the workings of the 'apparatus', with each author contributing his piece on democracy, political education, the cadres, the bureaucrats, and above all on money, the party's secrets and its relations with Moscow. Written in **1968** and revised in **1970**, *Les Communistes français* is considered a classic. It has to be said from the outset that the book is very accessible, extremely well-documented and simply written. All these factors contributed to its success. But alongside some very interesting passages we find

others that are, to say the least surprising coming from a specialist of this stature: '[in the PCF] anything that smacks of swagger, stands out as exceptional or unusual or catches the attention is suspect. This is of course a source of hypocrisy, but it is a very specific kind of hypocrisy. Everyone tries to hide their vices and their past slips. But within the PCF, everyone tries to model their behaviour on a type whose dominant feature is known to all: *normality*.'²⁰ She later adds: 'The eccentrics who are so common in anarchist organizations—bastards, hunchbacks, homosexuals, butterfly collectors, drug users, fetishists—all feel ill at ease in Communist organizations, as does anyone obsessed by personal problems, as do philosophical, sexual and cultural minorities and as does anyone who is too enthusiastic about music, the cinema or the *countryside*.'²¹ Quite aside from the absurdity of stating that, for some unknown reason, hunchbacks and butterfly collectors feel ill at ease in Communist organizations, it is noteworthy that Kriegel once more fails to provide even a shadow of proof. Such passages simply serve to reinforce the notion that the PCF is made up of robots or zombies who are devoid of any feelings. Nor does Kriegel attempt to provide any explanation for her claims. The fact that the PCF is a predominantly working class organization may to some extent explain why it finds it difficult to accept certain minorities or marginal situations. Kriegel's assertions are unproven; the documentation and detail that characterize the work as a whole are noticeably absent from this chapter. Finally, even if we did have proof that there are no 'eccentrics' in the PCF, we would still need to be able to compare it with other major parties in France. Then, and only then, we might be able to draw some scientific conclusions.

The Party moulds its members and its leaders are simply mediocrities: 'A Communist leader does not merely try to look like the man in the street. Most of them are mediocre through and through. And their mediocrity causes *problems*.'²² Coming from a famous specialist, this is a truly astonishing statement. Communist leaders are said to be mediocre, but the criterion for mediocrity is never defined. Proof, explanations and examples are nowhere to be found.

The major thesis of both this study and Kriegel's other books is that the PCF is a 'counter society'. 'A Communist Party based in a country where it does not hold power functions as a party-society. The counter society it forms within the wider society prefigures the socialist society it intends to substitute for existing society when it has seized *power*.'²³ The notion that the PCF is a counter society is definitively associated with the name of Annie Kriegel. It is an attractive idea and has found many supporters. But first of all we have to decide and agree upon what is meant by 'society'. And to state baldly and without qualification that the PCF is a prefiguration of the socialist society it wants to see is something of an oversimplification. It is, of course, not unreasonable to argue that if the

PCF gained power (and precisely what that means remains to be seen), some of the Party's characteristic features would have a major influence on both power and society. Kriegel, however, concentrates on those features to the exclusion of others. It is perfectly obvious that the very process of the seizure of power and the conditions under which it occurred would inevitably have major effects on the party concerned. The same could be said of the exercise of power itself. **None** of these obvious points are made. It is as though the PCF were a timeless body on which social reality has no effects.

The danger of this kind of 'argument' is that it leads to some very dubious comparisons. Thus, Kriegel concludes her discussion of the party-society as follows: 'We can thus explain how it is that so many characteristic features of Soviet Society reappear in the French Party.'²⁴ How can a sociologist of Kriegel's standing compare a political party with a society? Just what features do they have in common? What is the nature of those features? Neither of these questions is ever answered. Yet Kriegel's reputation in the intellectual world remains untarnished.

Such arguments have the obvious advantage of reinforcing a pre-conceived image of the PCF. The reader finds precisely what he expects to find in the form of what appear to be scientific arguments.

In the seventies, *Le Figaro* offered Kriegel a job and she accepted the offer. She thus became a specialist on the French labour movement working for a conservative newspaper. From now on the political shift becomes very obvious; Annie Kriegel has definitely moved to the right. The columns of *Le Figaro* provide her with a platform and a mass audience for her increasingly militant anti-communism and for her ultra-Zionism. Her passion for Israel and Judaism have also led her to write for *L'Arche*, a very conservative newspaper which is virtually the official organ of the Jewish community of France. In 1979, Kriegel published a collection of the major articles she wrote for *Le Figaro* between 1976 and 1979. They are worth looking at, if only because the author's decision to republish them suggests that she sees them as more than reports on current events. She also feels it necessary to explain why she agreed to write for *Le Figaro*, which she describes in her introduction as 'a thinking and courteous newspaper which is both courageous and liberal'.²⁵

Kriegel's image of the PCF leaves one speechless. 'The 93,879 members who were recruited in 1975 joined, then, a classic Leninist party.'²⁶ How can anyone writing in 1975 claim that the PCF is a classic Leninist party? Besides, what is a classic Leninist party? Since its foundation, the PCF has undergone such major changes and modifications that it is impossible to speak of it simply as a classic Leninist party. To describe it as such means blotting out the entire history of the Party and the labour movement. But Kriegel is perhaps more concerned with satisfying the expectations of *Le Figaro's* readers, who all too often explain the PCF's line in terms of

what is happening in Moscow.

As for the record of the Soviet Union, it is, as one might have expected, completely negative. 'The record of the Soviet regime does not include any positive changes in economics, politics or culture. There is no point in stressing the issue; the stagnation and inertia are self-evident. No one doubts, for instance, that industrial life is severely handicapped by the delays and the incoherence of a centralized and bureaucratic system of planning, by the absence of a qualified and conscientious work force, by overmanning and bad management and by the corruption of middle-rank officials. Agriculture is in an even worse state. Soviet society still displays the same negative features. The small party apparatus dominates an increasingly undifferentiated and stagnating **society** which has never been fully urbanized or properly educated. The population is incapable of imagining any collective project. Alcoholism is alarmingly widespread, particularly amongst the younger generation. Its cultural bankruptcy is irredeemable and the contrast between the shapeless entity known as Soviet culture and the vitality of both Samizdat publications and the intelligentsia makes it even more **obvious**.'²⁷

In just a few lines we have all the classic clichés about the Soviet Union. No one would deny that it has serious problems with agriculture. It is quite obvious that alcoholism is a scourge and that the system of planning is at times incoherent goes without saying. But it is neither serious nor scientific to describe a country solely in terms of alcoholism, incoherence, inadequacy and failure. No regime can maintain itself in power by repression alone. If everything is chaos and stagnation, how are we to explain the fact that the Soviet people give the regime at least passive support? It is of course true that *Le Figaro's* readers are not interested in the detailed figures and impartial accounts provided by specialists like Maric Lavigne or Alec Nove.

Soviet foreign policy is of course determined by all the classic objectives. 'The Soviet Union cannot give up the one thing that justifies it and its power. Not content with ruling Russia and its satellites, it wants to be at the heart of a whole system. The ultimate aim is still the establishment of a world wide socialist republic which would, by definition, be **peaceful**.'²⁸

To conclude this discussion of foreign policy, it should be noted that Kriegel agrees with Raymond Aron that the USA has definitely abdicated its responsibilities. She has also drawn an astonishing comparison between the Russian revolution and Khomeini's revolution in Iran: 'A revolution which is definitely a remake of a glorious model; the revolutions of February and October 1917.'²⁹

In terms of French domestic politics, Kriegel attacks not only the Communists but also the Socialist Party, and especially its Marxist wing (CERES): 'There is no difference—or no coherent difference—between

social-democracy and Communism.³⁰ CERES's leader Jean-Pierre Chevènement is a 'democratic socialist, as his party label indicates, but he thinks solely in terms of Leninism'.³¹ Chevènement's Leninism is 'a poor man's Leninism, even more impoverished than Communist Leninism'.³² She supplies no arguments, but she is happy to indulge in ad hominem attacks: 'Althusser is too innocently speculative for what he has to do. Elleinstein is too obviously a schemer for what he has to say.'³³

Kriegel's 'scientific' period is over. We are back to the mordant tone, the attacks, accusations and clichés of the pamphleteer rather than the language of the author of scientific works.

We have already discussed Annie Kriegel's anti-Soviet views, her anti-communism and her anti-socialism. We now have to look at her ultra-Zionism. In the seventies and eighties Judaism becomes a fundamental assumption for Kriegel. It does not, however, appear to have been very important to her during her Stalinist period. In 1953 she even went so far as to argue for the complete assimilation of the Jewish community: 'Jewish solidarity is a subjective illusion and a product of the diaspora. The Jews have always been an exploited minority. . . Jewish solidarity allows the French bourgeoisie to keep the Jewish masses and Jewish workers under its thumb. It is also an obstacle to total assimilation, which would be a real disaster for the bourgeoisie. . . Like any other nationalist ideology, Zionism is therefore basically racist. It distracts Jews from the class struggle.'³⁴

Nowadays, she cannot condemn anti-Zionists strongly enough and claims that they are nothing but anti-semites. In 1982, Kriegel's Zionism reaches a paroxysm with Israel *est-il coupable?* which appeared in Raymond Aron's 'Libertés 2000' collection. The book claims to be an analysis of the effects of the war in the Lebanon on western public opinion, but its tone can only be described as hysterical. We might be reading something written thirty years earlier. Words have again lost all meaning. Kriegel's targets may have changed, but her methods are the same. 'Anti-Zionism is to communism what racist anti-semitism was to Nazism. It reveals its true essence and is at the heart of its strategy of conquest and expansion.'³⁵ Kriegel launches an attack on a whole host of organizations which are, she claims, controlled or manipulated by the Communists; they range from anti-racist organizations to the World Council of Churches. The Communists and their allies are at work everywhere. Moscow and the socialist bloc used the Israeli invasion of Lebanon to see how Europe would react to a major brainwashing campaign. 'It became a full-scale experiment. The socialist camp is perfectly capable of turning freedom of information, which is the ultimate criterion of democracy, against the democracies themselves.'³⁶ She goes on: 'But that is not the main point. The main point is that a world-wide brainwashing campaign, a systematic

campaign of disinformation on a world scale has developed unimpeded. The western news system has been destroyed and used against the West.³⁷ The media lent themselves to this campaign: 'Because of their leftist sympathies, European journalists all too often reported events quite uncritically and dug up anything that could be used against Israel.'³⁸

For the benefit of the Mitterand government, she then adds: 'French foreign policy has been shown to be broadly in line with the desires of Moscow and those of the French communists.'³⁹ Since the left came to power, Franco-Soviet relations have in fact been cooler than ever before. In terms of foreign policy, Socialists and Communists disagree over many issues: Chad, Lebanon, disarmament, Israel, Afghanistan, Poland. . . Kriegel never mentions their disagreements. She then goes on to explain the 'real aims' of 'anti-Jewish terrorism': 'The fact is. . . that those who are killing Jews are not killing "substitute" Jews, in other words Israelis. They are killing Jews because they want to kill Jews, and if they could do so they would kill all Israeli Jews and all the Jews of the diaspora. . . The terrorist campaign against Jews in European synagogues means only one thing: anti-Zionism is the concrete expression of anti-semitism and the aim of anti-semitism is the extermination of the Jews.'⁴⁰

Judaism has in fact become an essential reference point and a source of identity for Kriegel. In her book, she tells us that she has wept for political reasons three times in her life: when the Soviets invaded Hungary in 1956, when De Gaulle spoke of the Jewish people as an elite people and described them as domineering and self-confident, and when John Paul II granted an audience to Yasser Arafat. The latter reaction would appear to have more to do with hatred for the PLO leader than with disappointment because the trust she placed in the head of the Catholic Church had been betrayed. The fact that she can react to the 1956 events in Hungary and to a diplomatic gesture on the part of the Vatican reveals the extent to which she has entered the realm of the irrational.

How, in the last analysis, can one explain a career which begins with ultra-Stalinism, followed by an academic interlude and then by a definite move to the right? How can we explain how someone can move through all these phases? It seems obvious that Kriegel's individual psychological makeup must have a lot to do with the way she has changed. Psychology might provide at least a partial explanation of certain of her reactions. In an account of a conversation with one of her students, she remarks, 'I wonder to what extent I have forgotten certain things, because one of my pupils spitefully told me last week that in 1947 I had written an article on "Zionism and Anti-Semitism". You could have knocked me over with a feather, I did not remember any more.'⁴¹ It is difficult not to see this as an example of amnesia in the psychological sense. But such explanations are clearly not enough. Kriegel's extreme Stalinism and her

subsequent departure from the PCF can perhaps be explained in terms of the generation to which she belongs. Annie Kriegel joined the Party, it will be remembered, during the war. And as she herself writes: 'No one who looks at statistics on how long people have been in the Party can fail to be struck by one curious percentage: of the present membership, only 3.1% joined the Party during the war.'⁴² According to other figures supplied by Kriegel, only one in ten of those who joined at that time are still members. She belongs to a generation that has been ravaged: 'A generation which has been decimated. It is also a warped generation. The conditions under which they joined have left their mark on them and they are still fascinated by the two techniques they had to learn: clandestinity and partisan warfare.'⁴³

The motivations of those who joined the PCF during the war also have to be taken into account. Did they join because of the PCF's major role in the Resistance or because they wanted to transform society? Not, of course, that there is any necessary contradiction between the two.

A study of the theoretical training these new members received—or did not receive—would be of great interest. During the war they can have received little training and any training they were given after the war must have been very Stalinist. In those conditions, our young militant can have had only a very vague notion of Marxism and would have been unlikely to have been able to resist the simplistic arguments of the day.

Kriegel's decision to join the Party must also have had a lot to do with the climate of the war. When the war and its immediate aftermath (the Cold War and the defence of the besieged citadel) gave way to a less heady period, the basis of her commitment rapidly disappeared, particularly as a considerable degree of naivety was also involved. But other factors must also have been at work. Kriegel's career was compromised once the PCF was forced, however reluctantly, to question the more aggressive aspects of the Stalinism with which she identified. It was not for nothing that the Party completely changed *La Nouvelle critique's* editorial board.

Finally, the denunciation of Stalin's crimes at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, the rehabilitation of the 'traitors', the self criticisms and the questioning must also have increasingly given rise to doubts which eventually led to a complete change of heart.

Personal factors aside, Annie Kriegel belongs to a group of former Stalinists who, as **Maxime Rodinson** puts it, 'Combat their former faith with the zeal of the neophyte, and who, moreover, employ just the same sort of reasoning, the same virulent tone and lack of subtlety, that they had formerly placed in the service of the cause they now combat.'^{*}

Kriegel has moved from one extreme to another, from Communism to anti-Communism. Her fervour remains constant. As with many other Stalinists who have gone over to absolute anti-Sovietism, her career could in many ways be described in religious terms. This conclusion is a

comment rather than a condemnation. It is, however, to be regretted that Annie Kriegel has never seen any need to explain her past actions. It is of course true that no one has ever put her in the position of having to do so. Anti-Communism is now so fashionable in France that it does not have to be justified. It is so much part of the political climate that its ideologues can do and say anything. Even though it is the work of intellectuals, it borders, however, on the irrational. It is in that sense that the case of Annie Kriegel is so exemplary.

II

'The Marxist doctrine is omnipotent because it is true. It is comprehensive and harmonious and provides men with an integral world outlook.' (Lenin, 1913).⁴⁵

'The PCF clings to this ideal more tenaciously than ever. And yet, seventy-five years after the event, what remains of these flamboyant assertions? the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Gulag Archipelago, the crimes of Lin Piao and the Gang of Four, Ethiopia's new head of state consecrated as a revolutionary by Brezhnev when he arrives in Moscow, his hands still dripping with the blood of the students, the cultural genocide directed against the peripheral peoples of the USSR, a crude denial of human rights in Belgrade. The only constant features of Marxism in power are despotism and cultural underdevelopment. What is the point of going on with the list? Every adjective used by Lenin has been turned into its caricatural opposite. Poor old PCF!' (Pierre Daix, 1978).⁴⁶

'The greatest crime of all is man's exploitation of man. The Nazi camps took that exploitation to a paroxysm, to its logical conclusion. But the Soviet Union's reeducation camps are the logical conclusion of something very different; the complete suppression of man's exploitation of man. . . They are one of the Soviet Union's most glorious achievements.' (Pierre Daix, 1949).⁴⁷

'Marxism, the science of politics, is based upon the liberation movement led by the proletariat, the most exploited of all social classes. The Communist Party is based upon the same science. It is both the vanguard of the proletariat, a form of consciousness and a scientific tool. *It brings together the best elements within the proletariat.* It has educated the whole class and is therefore capable of forging the militants it requires if it is to shoulder its responsibilities.' (Pierre Daix, 1949).⁴⁸

'Let me tell you straight away that if the Soviet Union had been a hundred times worse, and if Stalin had committed a hundred times more crimes than he did commit, the struggle I am speaking of would not have been any different. . . The Communist Parties are human tools created in the image of the Party forged by Lenin.' (Pierre Daix, 1949).⁴⁹

'Marcel Liebman listed Lenin's illusions in his *Le Léninisme sous Lénine* and I added a few more to the list in my *Le Socialisme du silence*.

You do not have to look far to find further proof of the naivety, ignorance, simplism and weakness of Leninism.' (Pierre Daix, 1978).⁵⁰

Make no mistake about it. We are not trying to justify the events of the forties and fifties, and we will come back to them later. Nor are we trying to ridicule the author. On the contrary, we are trying to reveal the mechanism behind the evolution of Pierre Daix who, after thirty-four years in the PCF, now takes what Philippe Robrieux describes as 'a position based upon a fundamentalist anti-Communism.'⁵¹

Pierre Daix was born in **Ivry-sur-Seine** in 1922. As a lycee student he was successively influenced by his history teacher **André Meynier**, who was a Socialist, by his mathematics teacher **P. Labérenne**, who was a member of the PCF and, in his final year at school, by **Rent Maublanc**, who was one of the PCF's philosophers.

He joined the PCF on **26 September 1939**, the day that it was proclaimed illegal by the Daladier government. He played an important role in the clandestine work of the Communist student organization. He was arrested in November 1940 and again in January 1942. He then spent two years in French prisons before being deported to Mauthausen in March 1944. In the camp, he played an active role in organizing international Communist resistance. According to his own account, it was then that he became a Stalinist: 'When I finally began to ask myself how I could ever have become a Stalinist, I realized that it must have happened in Mauthausen.'⁵² It was also in Mauthausen that he first learned of the existence of the Soviet reeducation camps. 'In 1937 he [Pavel Loukov, a Russian he had met in the camp] had been in a camp, a Soviet labour camp. He told me that it had made a man of him.'⁵³

This somewhat curious account was to be a vital part of the arguments used by Pierre Daix in the campaign against **David Rousset**.⁵⁴

After the war, Daix was given a post in the cabinet of **Charles Tillon**, the Communist Minister for Aviation. He held that position until May 1947. He then worked for a while on *L'Avant Garde*, the Communist student newspaper and for Editions Sociales, the PCF's publishing house. He did not, however, remain there for long. At the time the PCF was trying to gain ideological control over a number of publications. In January 1948 Daix therefore took over from **Loys Massons** as editor in chief of *Les Lettres françaises*. That this was a planned operation has been confirmed by many witnesses and analysts of the PCF. According to **Jeanine Verdès Leroux**, for instance, 'During this period the PCF, which published a number of titles itself and which had also launched some new titles, gained control over certain papers. In other cases, open-minded editors were replaced by men who were unconditionally loyal. They were rewarded for guaranteeing the strictest orthodoxy without having to be told what to do. This is what happened when Pierre Daix replaced **Loys Massons** as editor in chief of *Les Lettres Françaises*.'⁵⁵ According

to the paper's editor Claude Morgan, 'Casanova wanted to get his own man in. Pierre Daix dragged Marxism into everything and *Les Lettres Françaises*' sales began to fall.⁵⁶ Renaud de Jouvenel: 'Pierre Daix may well have been lulled into a sense of security because he had a sleeping partner he could rely on. He was certainly not interested in the commercial fate of the newspaper. Advertising was the least of this bright team's concerns. The only thing that mattered was putting it to bed early enough to get it out on the streets, but I would be prepared to bet that no one ever worried about sales or wondered why the number of unsold copies was rising so alarmingly.'⁵⁷

When Pierre Daix joined the editorial board of *La Nouvelle critique* it did nothing to alter the widespread view that he was a 'Party policeman'. Jeanine Verdès Leroux describes the journal as follows: 'Official positions on everything were expressed in the crudest of terms. This was the only place that the "two sciences" theory was fully developed and that the pro-Lysenko campaign became most extreme. It was *La Nouvelle critique* that theorized socialist realist painting and praised it to the skies. *The journal perfected the deliberate use of polemic; its virulence and inventiveness are difficult to imagine and almost impossible to describe. Polemic was the norm and it took outrageous forms.* This was not the result of excesses on the part of a few individuals; it was a tactic, as one of our interlocutors saw only too well; "It really was a way of putting the boot in. It was a military tactic designed to stop the majority of intellectuals coming under the influence of our interlocutors".'⁵⁸

Pierre Daix was very active in all this. There is no need to go into everything that he wrote. One event, which is as important as it is dramatic, is enough to tell us a great deal about the climate described above: the Rajk affair.

In 1948, Rajk, the Hungarian Minister for the Interior, was accused of Titoism and of plotting to overthrow socialism. He was tried, found guilty and executed. There was no proof and the only evidence against him came from unconvincing 'confessions'. Pierre Daix wrote an account of the trial and analysed the whole question for *La Nouvelle critique*. Leaving aside his stupidly sectarian comments on the Yugoslav regime,⁵⁹ one passage in particular gives us a very clear picture of the author's state of mind: 'The evidence is there for all to see. The Hungarian government has just published a blue book containing a full transcript of the Rajk trial. A French translation appeared recently. (*Les Lettres Françaises* had already published Rajk's statement.) If we look at the accused's statement, we learn that Rajk was arrested by the Hungarian police in 1941 and became a paid informer. He initially worked for the Hungarian police, then in Czechoslovakia and was finally sent to Spain. According to Hungarian police records, he was recruited by the French *deuxième bureau* [intelligence service] while he was in the Vernet camp. He was also con-

tacted by an American agent, but he had already been recruited by the Gestapo, who repatriated him. When the country was liberated, he went over to the American intelligence services and was infiltrated into their Yugoslav network in 1947. He himself said that "Rankovich [the Yugoslav Minister of the Interior] told me that the Yugoslav network consisted of himself and Tito". Rajk was a self-confessed intermediary for the Americans and acted on orders from the Yugoslav network. He was plotting to assassinate the leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party and to destroy the People's Democratic regime in Hungary.¹⁶⁰ Any comments would be superfluous.

This Cold War dogmatism was to give way to a more qualified attitude and Pierre Daix finally began to ask himself a few little questions. His attitude began to change at the beginning of the fifties, when disturbing reports about certain members of Stalin's entourage began to emerge. Stalin himself of course remained above reproach. In his autobiography *J'ai Cru au matin*, Daix describes the atmosphere when the dictator died: 'Like everyone else, I was completely overcome, perhaps more so than others as I had already begun to ask questions. But that simply meant that I extolled the mythical father who had left us orphaned. I entitled my article in *Les Lettres Françaises* "He Taught Us To Grow Up".¹⁶¹ Relatively soon after Stalin's death news of the turmoil in the Soviet Union began to emerge.¹⁶² Pierre Daix was surprised, even astonished: 'In the autumn of 1954 *L'Humanité* [the PCF daily] published a report which made the ground shake beneath me: the American Noel Field had been rehabilitated in Hungary. Everyone who had been found guilty in the Rajk and Slansky trials had been charged with conspiring with him. This proved that the trials had been put up jobs. I thought I was going mad.¹⁶³ 'So Rousset had been telling the truth.¹⁶⁴

The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU confirmed all the rumours that had been circulating. Once more, Pierre Daix felt the ground shake beneath him. Unlike many Communist intellectuals, he did not, however, leave the Party after the Soviet invasion of Hungary, which he describes as follows: 'I accepted the Soviet army's intervention in Budapest as a tragic but inevitable decision.' He then adds: 'When a demonstration in which both Guy Mollet and Antoine Pinay took part ended with an attack on the PCF's headquarters and on *L'Humanité's* offices, I was with my Party body and soul.¹⁶⁵

In the late fifties, Daix continued to work for *Les Lettres Françaises*, but he now took a more openly critical view of the USSR.

In 1963, he took the important step of writing a preface for Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, the book which provided sceptics with the final proof that camps did indeed exist in the Soviet Union. The preface marked the beginning of a gradual estrangement from the Party, a process which became more marked during the

Prague Spring of 1968. Pierre Daix was actually in Prague that spring and what he saw there filled him with enthusiasm. He wrote a moving account of his experiences there in his *Journal de Prague* and updated it in his later *Prague au coeur* (1974). He was deeply shocked by the PCF's acceptance of the Soviet intervention of August 1968 and of the normalization that put an end to the attempt to build a Czech socialism.

His book *Ce que je sais de Soljenytsine*, which appeared in 1973, marked his final break with the Party. He decided not to renew his membership at the beginning of 1974. He had been a member of the PCF for thirty-four years, but now the divorce was complete.

1974 was a turning point in Daix's life. He has subsequently altered both his beliefs and his field of activity. In recent years he has completely revised his position, his beliefs and his ideals. The main theme of his work is now a systematic anti-Communism.

It is of course quite legitimate to question one's former political loyalties. It is, however, unfortunate that many intellectuals have done so only as a result of changing literary and ideological loyalties.

The case of Pierre Daix is particularly unfortunate. He not only paints a very distorted picture of history and doctrine but also makes what can only be described as an unjustified claim to knowledge of matters doctrinal and historical. The tactics he used during his Stalinist period have not disappeared. On the contrary, they are more pronounced and more obvious than ever. It is therefore useful to look at them here.

1. *Insults, invectives and gratuitous slanders.* 'The Party's central school still teaches Engels in the same old way. No one takes any notice of Michel le Bris's protests. The real question is this: How is it that this raving lunatic, this bloodthirsty moron who plays with the massacre of whole races as though he were playing marbles has lasted this long?'⁴⁶ There is of course no argument or proof in support of this claim. There is a definitely hysterical quality to these insults.

2. *Lying by Omission.* In his book on the crisis in the PCF, Pierre Daix writes: 'Marcel Liebman listed Lenin's illusions in his *Le Léninisme sous Lknine* and I added a few more to the list in my *Le Socialisme du silence*. You do not have to look far to find further support of the naivety, ignorance, simplism and weakness of Leninism.'⁴⁷ This is a very strange view of Liebman's book. Daix suggests that there is very little to it, though it is in fact cogently argued and contains many passages that contradict the 'summary' he gives of it here. *Le Léninisme sous Lknine* does contain many attacks on the deification of the infallible Lenin, but its main target is the way anti-Soviet ideologues have polemically distorted his image: 'The almost desperate will power and paralysed energy he showed in the last weeks and months of his struggle reveal the authenticity of his democratic aspirations.'⁴⁸ Pierre Daix claims to be using Liebman's arguments, but he turns them into a denunciation of Leninism which is simply not

there in the text.

In a rather different register, we find the following comments on the presence of Cuban troops in Angola: 'How is it that not one member of the PCF, intellectuals included, ever asks about the uninterrupted series of defeats Marxism has suffered wherever it has taken power? . . . Not to mention its role in supplying mercenaries, denying the people of Africa the right to self-determination and handing Africa over to the Cubans.'⁶⁹ Once again Pierre Daix is obviously distorting the truth to make it fit in with his a priori assumptions. What about all the interventions that have been made in an attempt to deny the people of Angola their right to self-determination? Does he have to be reminded that the Cubans intervened after the murderous invasion made by South African and Zairean troops and that they intervened at the request of the legitimate representatives of the country? They helped Angola to achieve true political, social and cultural independence. This was in fact the interpretation adopted by the UN Security Council in its resolution 387 of 31 March 1976. Pierre Daix has not a word to say about all this.

3. *Intellectual Dishonesty.* In his *La Crise du PCF*, Daix looks at the problematic of the PCF during the occupation and at the role played by its leaders and others who took part in the events of that period. Here we find a very clear allusion to the death of Fried Clément, Comintern's representative in France. 'Fried's silence was assured when he was murdered by "persons unknown" in Brussels in 1943.' Daix adopts Bruhat's hypothesis that Clément was killed by Communist agents. 'But just to make sure, he was, at the suggestion of Soviet advisers, also posthumously condemned during the 1958 Slansky affair.'⁷⁰ Bruhat's hypothesis has yet to be proven, but Daix's next statement is truly astonishing; 'Julien Lahaut was also murdered in 1958.' First of all, he gets the date wrong; Lahaut was in fact murdered in 1950. He was at that time the Chairman of the Belgian Communist Party, and to claim that both men were killed by Communist assassins suggests an amazing ignorance of the historical facts. Lahaut was in fact shot down by two right-wing killers who claimed that he had shouted 'Long live the Republic!' in parliament as Bauduin was being crowned. The murder is one of the most famous and most tragic events to have occurred during the 'monarchy debate' in Belgium. It is famous enough for Daix to have known both of the murder and who was responsible for it. But facts are irrelevant when an insinuation—even a gratuitous and groundless one—can be used to support an indictment that has more to do with ideology than with history.

Like many other intellectuals who used to belong to the PCF, Pierre Daix has a tendency to set himself up as a historian of the Communist movement and as a Marxist theoretician. As we have already stressed, he has every right to do so. But it is difficult not to look for a connection between the new career he has embarked upon and both the current

fashion for anti-Communism and the profitability of anti-Communist literature.

The method is always the same. Pierre Daix analyses everything that affects the Communist movement and Marxist theory in terms of three or four set formulae.

Thus, when he looks at the history of the PCF, it is always in terms of Moscow and Leninist theory (or his own version of that theory): 'The real history of the PCF begins in June 1920. It begins, not in France, but in the Kremlin in Moscow, if not in Lenin's mind.'⁷¹

'Far from signifying a reconciliation between the PCF and the French nation, the turning point of 1934 simply indicates that the USSR thought it to its advantage to back France against Hitler's might or at least to block the possibility of a Franco-German alliance.'⁷²

'In 1975-76, the PCF leadership put it about that the Party had changed because it had at last come to terms with the facts about Stalin's repression, but the change was really a means of preserving the continuity of Leninism, both in organizational terms and in terms of political strategy.'⁷³ It is quite obvious that the PCF has at times acted in accordance with Moscow's wishes. But anyone who attempts to explain sixty-four years in the history of the PCF solely in terms of orders from the Kremlin and never looks at either socio-political conditions in France or at the problems they pose for the PCF is an obsessional rather than a historian.

When it comes to matters of theory, the flimsiness of our author's assertions is little short of astonishing. In 1949 he was loudly proclaiming theses that bore all the hallmarks of extreme certainty and dogmatism. To take only one of many examples: 'Marxism, the science of politics, is based upon the liberation of movement led by the proletariat, the most exploited of all social classes. The Communist Party is based upon the same science. It is both the vanguard of the proletariat, a form of consciousness and a scientific tool. It brings together the best elements within the proletariat. It has educated the whole class and is therefore capable of forging the militants it requires if it is to shoulder its responsibilities.'⁷⁴

In 1980 the same Daix can make such categorical and unfounded statements as: 'Because so many of his prophecies appear to have come true we tend to forget that, insofar as he was a scientist, Marx was a scientist of his own time. It was because he applied Darwinism to the study of human societies that he came to the conclusion that the forces of production would produce the material basis for socialism. Marx takes the concept of universal evolution from Darwin because he can use it to support the Hegelian dialectic and put it on a materialist basis. By doing so Marx unwittingly reduces social and economic phenomena, which are, he claims, autonomous, to a biological model. He thus sees the same reductionist approach as those who take natural selection, which is the

motor behind Darwinian evolution, and conclude that capitalism is biologically justified because it practises the survival of the fittest. . . I would not take such malicious pleasure in pointing out how crude Marx's anthropology is if it did not have such serious consequences. Because of their continued belief that the development of the forces of production will sooner or later make the social superstructure socialist those Communists who have gained power have no compunction whatsoever about indulging in a horrific number of acts of cultural genocide. Capitalism has nothing to learn from them in these matters. On the contrary, they have gone much further than capitalism has ever done, and their doctrinal generalizations take us back to the days when the missionaries colonized the "infidel" and the "pagans".⁷⁵

The reductionism and the oversimplifications are quite amazing. It cannot be denied that, in terms of anthropology, Marx and Engels now look very dated and that their basically evolutionist views have been proved to be erroneous. But Daix gives us a very summary presentation of Marx's work and makes it look as though his theory never changed. He never supports his arguments with specific references to specific texts and his reasoning is very unsubtle. The similarity between this vision of Marx and that put forward by Daix forty years ago is inescapable; it is simply an inverted mirror image of the apologias and eulogies of the past.

The present climate obviously encourages and authorises such views; indeed it makes them almost compulsory. But Marx's life and work continue to inspire research. In this domain, there are no certainties and no dogmas. On the contrary, few authors have inspired such a wide variety of research.

As everyone knows, Marx once told a French Socialist that he was not a Marxist. If he saw the caricatures that now pass for Marxism, he would probably say that he was an anti-Marxist. And Pierre Daix is certainly one of the more important caricaturists. His eulogies were caricatures and so are his denunciations. He always was a caricaturist.

III

It is impossible not to be struck by the contrast between the incredible intellectual irresponsibility of these authors and the audience they have found, especially (or mainly) in the French intelligentsia. Their writings display all the classic features of the polemics in which right wing journalists and literati used to excel. They deliberately avoided a rationalist approach and their sympathies were with the forces of reaction and the far right. The reactionary pamphleteers won their last and most resounding victories in the thirties, when the representatives of the school led by Maurras launched their final attacks on democracy, the Republic, the reds and the Jews. And then came the divine surprise of Vichy.⁷⁶

The intellectuals of the left are now writing similar pamphlets. And

these people are on the left; neither Pierre Daix nor Annie Kriegel have ever shed their liberal veneer, even though Kriegel does write for a major conservative newspaper. They claim, even more so than ever, to be defending the interests of progress and democracy. It does not take much to make them claim to be the representatives of true socialism, the socialism of Jaurès, for instance. They also claim to be serious scientists and honest intellectuals. Their claims are somewhat extravagant, but the critics accept them and accord them a status that bears no relation to their true merits. Anyone who is sceptical enough to doubt them meets with a two-fold objection. These people know what they are talking about. And of course they do provide certain publishers with best sellers.

'These people know what they are talking about.' 'They have seen communism from the inside.' 'Their knowledge has all the wealth of first hand experience.' All these arguments could easily be turned against them. If we analyse their writings, we find all the classic reactions of people who have been disappointed in love. But no one dreams of criticising them for their past, even though it has marked them for ever. They may well have been converted, but they have not changed. They are praised because they appear to have undergone a metamorphosis; no one notices the constants, even though they are glaringly obvious. Their best sellers prove, thanks to the support of the most indulgent and slothful critics anyone could hope for, that the public can be fooled. No one denounces or even notices the arrogance of both yesterday's eulogies and today's diatribes; no one cares that there is never any proof and that invective is used in the place of analysis. Their inverted hyper-Stalinism—which takes the usual form of total manichaeism—is white-washed simply because it is directed against Communism. The hysteria has not really changed, but it gets a better welcome in its present guise. Raymond Aron, who was, or so we are told, the personification of intelligence and reason, gave these renegades both hospitality and support, even though they had yet to recover from their illness.

Kriegel and Daix should be the object of a clinical study, and no doubt psychology will play some part in their future biographies. The indulgent reception they have had is, however, a political phenomenon and any analysis of anti-Communism has to look at it carefully. It shows the extent to which the bourgeoisie is prepared to use anti-Communism as a weapon. It also shows that the petty bourgeoisie, to which most of the Parisian intelligentsia belongs, is moving to the right and is unreservedly joining in the anti-Communist campaign.

This is not the place to look into the many sources of anti-Communism or at the wave of anti-Communism that has flooded across France in recent years. But the examples of Annie Kriegel and Pierre Daix clearly reveal the power of anti-Communism. Their success cannot be explained in terms of the scientific or literary quality of their work. On the contrary,

the present climate of self-satisfaction and complacency shows that all that is required of anti-Communism is a mixture of extreme convictions and extreme harshness which can easily coexist with 'common sense' and irrationalism. The anti-Communist ideologue is simply called upon to be a merciless prosecutor who can condemn without any hesitation or any understanding. The eternal enemy is the still-born child of a world revolution, something which has been dying for years and which is still the target for an anger that has lost none of its old force.

NOTES

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3. Jeanine Verdès Leroux, *Au Service du parti*, (Paris: Fayard, 1983), p. 179.
4. *Ibid.*
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7. *Ibid.*
8. Annie Besse, cited, Rodinson, 'Self Criticism', p. 43.
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28. *Ibid.*
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30. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
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33. *Ibid.*, p. 225.
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35. Annie Kriegel, *Israel est-il coupable?*, (Paris: Laffont, 1982), p. 16.
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40. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
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42. Annie Kriegel, *Les Communistes français*, p. 67.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 70.
44. Rodinson, 'Self Criticism', p. 31.
45. Lenin, 'The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism', *Selected Works*, (Moscow, 1970), Vol. 1, p. 66.
46. Pierre Daix, *La Crise du PCF*, (Paris: Seuil, 1978), p. 21.
47. Legendre, *Le Stalinisme français*, p. 105.
48. Pierre Daix, 'Le Procès Rajk, les partis communistes et la paix', *La Nouvelle critique*, no. 10, November 1949, p. 29.
49. Legendre, *Le Stalinisme français*, pp. 108-109.
50. Pierre Daix, *La Crise du PCF*, p. 93.
51. Robrieux, *Histoire intérieure*, tome 4, 1984, p. 155.
52. Pierre Daix, *J'ai cru au matin*, (Paris: Laffont, 1976), p. 106. Daix's account of his two years in Mauthausen and of the clandestine organization can be found in his *La Dernière forteresse*, 1950.
53. Pierre Daix, *La Crise du PCF*, p. 116.
54. In 1950, David Rousset began a polemic with *Les Lettres françaises* over the existence of concentration camps in the USSR, which he had denounced in his *L'Univers concentrationnaire*. He was vilified by the entire Communist movement. Pierre Daix, who had already slandered Rousset, defended the interests of the Party but finally lost the argument. This is a contemporary Communist account: 'In Communist circles, intellectual and otherwise, the name of David Rousset was surrounded by a sort of aura of treachery and felony. He was a Tortskeyist and a traitor. I had never read his books, but hatred for him was so great that I never even thought of looking at them. The hatred and slander were so great that I believed he had been paid by the Americans to write books like *Les Jours de notre mort* and *L'Univers concentrationnaire* and to invent slanderous stories about so-called concentration camps in the USSR', cited, Leroux, *Au Service du parti*, p. 51.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 105, emphasis added.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 205.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
58. *Ibid.*, emphasis added.
59. 'Tito's national-communist regime uses the same mystifications as national-socialism. It is the new weapon imperialism needs in its fight against the peoples who have just freed themselves from its yoke.' 'Le Procès Rajk', p. 37.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
61. Pierre Daix, *J'ai cru au matin*, p. 317, emphasis added.
62. Most of these reports dealt with the power struggle between Malenkov and Khrushchev, the physical elimination of Beria, the first rehabilitations and Khrushchev's trip to Belgrade in 1955.
63. Pierre Daix, *J'ai cru au matin*, p. 351.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 337.

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 365-367.
66. Pierre Daix, *La Crise du PCF*, p. 106.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
68. Marcel Liebman, *Le Léninisme sous Lénine*, (Paris: Seuil, 1973), Vol. 2, p. 322, emphasis added.
69. Pierre Daix, *La Crise du PCF*, p. 12.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
71. Pierre Daix, *Les Hérétiques du PCF*, (Paris: Laffont), p. 19.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 164.
73. Pierre Daix, *La Crise du PCF*, p. 50.
74. 'Le Procès Rajk', p. 29.
75. Pierre Daix, *Les Hérétiques*, pp. 304-305.
76. This was how Maurras, the apostle of integral nationalism greeted the defeat of his country in 1940. For Maurras and many others like him the defeat of the Republic was an extraordinary source of comfort in those difficult days.

Translated by David Macey