and effective liberal, has the unusually hard task of
winning reelection from the state at large. Two years
ago, running against the notorious Stephen A. Day,
she picked up a plurality exceeding that given by Illinois
to Roosevelt. Long active in the League of Women Voters
and other civic organizations, she has much independent
support. She will probably get a Cook County plurality
of something like 150,000. That will be enough only
in the event that widespread apathy downstate prevents
her opponent from coming to the Cook County line
with the normal G. O. P. plurality of 200,000 to 300,000.
The odds, what with a Republican trend downstate,
are against her. Possibly her own independent strength
can pull her through.

The Twenty-second, the only downstate district
represented in Washington by a Democrat, is an even
bet. It has two heavily populated industrial counties, St.
Clair and Madison, and three rural counties, Bond,
Washington, and Madison. The rural counties are expected
to give Calvin Johnson, the Republican nominee, a plurality approximating 7,000. An outpouring
of labor votes in Madison and St. Clair for the
incumbent, Melvin Price, will be needed to retain the
seat for the Democrats. Johnson won the seat in 1942
and lost it to Price in 1944. Chicago's Second District,
now represented by William A. Rowan, Democrat, was
long considered debatable, but in recent days the Demo-
crats have become more confident.

To return to the contest for Representative-at-Large,
Mrs. Douglas's Republican opponent, William G. Strat-
ton, served one term in Congress (1940-42) and then
was elected state treasurer. He has an ultra-conservative,
ultra-isolationist record, and with "Ham" Fish and
Stephen A. Day, was involved in the Vier Eck-Frank
episode. But on the basis of past performance he must
be reckoned no mean vote getter.

Stratton has spent most of the campaign in red-bait-
ing, and he finally overstepped himself when he sought
to link Mrs. Douglas—native-born Illinoisan, product
of the state's school system, daughter of the late sculptor
Lorado Taft, and wife of an eminent University of
Chicago economist—with Moscow. His own record of
association with Vier Eck then became an issue. Before
that, on account of his brief war-time navy service, it had
been largely ignored.

Such Republican worthies as Chauncey Reed in the
Eleventh District, Leo Allen in the Thirteenth, Noah
Mason in the Twelfth, Anton J. Johnson in the Four-
teenth, and Leslie Arends in the Seventeenth have
nothing to fear. They come from districts which went
Republican during most of the New Deal peak years.
Probably all incumbent G. O. P. Representatives from
the state will be reelected. Broadly considered, the
group stands for Tribune isolationism, Tribune reaction,
and Tribune — red-baiting. Without exception, they
acknowledge the leadership of Robert R. McCormick.

Uninspiring as the fact may be, present hopes to keep
the state's Democratic liberals in Congress rest largely
on the vote-getting ability of Chicago's notorious Kelly
machine. The P. A. C. has not bestirred itself, and other
liberal groups, with the exception of the small but active
Independent Voters of Illinois, appear to have lost their
effectiveness since Roosevelt's death. Boss Ed, incredible
as it may seem, is being called on to save whatever
vestiges of liberalism may remain in Illinois. Sic transit
gloria!

The Soviets Clean House

BY WALTER DURANTY

I N THE present flurry about Soviet Russia much is
being made of an "internal upheaval" in that country.

We are told that the dread word "purge" was allowed
by the Moscow censor on, I think, June 28, and that
since then the newly named Ministry of State Control
(ex-OGPU, ex-NKVD) has been doing a wholesale job
of "purging" in many fields. Although we are also in-
formed that "unlike other Soviet upheavals, notably
those of the mid-thirties, the sentences so far reported
have been confined to prison terms and fines," the tone
of dispatches is ominous and in tune with other alarums
and excursions of the anti-Soviet orchestra.

However, all this talk about "purges," now and in
the past, ignores the fact that the "purge"—orчистка,
as the Russians call it, literally meaning "cleansing"—
is an essential feature of the principles and conduct of
the Russian Communist Party and was in operation as far
back as 1920. The чистка was then used to cope with
the somewhat indiscriminate admission of new mem-
ers to the party during the civil war (1918-20); by
1920 more than twenty thousand "undesirables" had
been placed on probation or expelled. The test which
Communists must pass was threefold, dealing with faith,
works, and conduct—that is, knowledge of and belief in Marxist doctrine, obedience to party rules and instructions and performance of party duties, and personal behavior so scrupulously correct as to bring no slur upon the party name.

At various later periods exceptional stress was laid upon one or another of these three points, but serious dereliction in any of them was enough to warrant expulsion or a period of probation. Thus there was a very sharp purge in 1921, when Lenin's New Economic Policy (N. E. P.) was opposed by many of his followers. This purge was so severe that the membership of the party was reduced from 732,000 in March, 1921, to 532,000 in March, 1922. And the decline did not stop there, for the Twelfth Party Congress in April, 1922, represented a membership of only 386,000—scarcely more than half the 1921 figure.

The mechanism of the purge was as follows: Every party member, high or low, was called before a meeting of his cell, or unit, to answer the questions of a board of examiners appointed by the Central Committee. Other fellow-workers, friends or relatives, including non-Communists, might be present, and the Communist being examined could appeal to them for support and corroboration of his statements. The examiners might also appeal to the "audience" to confirm or deny complaints and generally to illumine each case. This was the system before Lenin's death, and it has been continued since within the party.

In the fall of 1924 a nation-wide drive was undertaken against the profiteers, Communist and non-Communist, who had exploited the New Economic Policy. Scores of thousands of "Nepmen"—private businessmen—and party and non-party officials were arrested and punished for crookedness and for taking or giving bribes. State organizations of investigation and punishment, like the Peasants' and Workers' Inspection Committee, the Criminal Police, and the OGPU, formerly known as Cheka, conducted this drive. It was not a party purge—this distinction is important—but simply an effort to correct abuses which had developed because the party leaders, notably Stalin and Trotsky, were already engaged in a struggle of persons and power and methods caused by Lenin's serious illness and imminent death.

I venture to suggest that the present "internal upheaval" in Russia is like what happened in 1924—that is, a general cleansing out of the cobwebs and mess which accumulate in any house when its occupants are so deeply preoccupied with something else that they have no time to keep it in order. In the last five years the U. S. S. R. has been fighting for its existence. That was what counted most. Now that the war is won, the Russian leaders have time to look around, and they see rust and moths and corruption and even places where thieves have broken in to steal. Doubtless they also see that the enormous number of new party members, welcome and useful during the war, requires some sifting—now that the war is won. That would be a party purge; and so we have today the dual process of a party purge, or chistka, and the punishment of non-party members for the many sorts of misconduct and abuses which are the common response of human imperfection to the double temptation of greed and opportunity.

It is not surprising that American public opinion and its informants in the press and radio should misunderstand the present state of affairs in the U. S. S. R. Apart from the censorship and the confusing effect of such factors as the shortage of consumers' goods, transportation difficulties, and the presence of millions of refugees from the western provinces in the Urals, Siberia, and Central Asia, there is the bewildering memory of the treason trials and so-called Great Purge in the years 1936 to 1938. The whole tragic story of that vast and panic witch-hunt has yet to be revealed. It was not a party purge in the usual sense of the phrase, although it was primarily concerned with party members and, as in 1921, reduced the party membership by more than one-half. Nor was it mainly, as in 1924, a national house-cleaning. In a sense it was both, but it was something else. It was an explosion of national suspicion and fear which shook the country to its roots but also destroyed the network of foreign intrigue and fifth-column activity, native and foreign.

There is a further point which merits consideration. I refer to the Cheka, or OGPU, or NKVD, or, as they call it now, Ministry of State Control, that subtle organization which often changes its name but never its character—or its purpose and methods. From the very beginning, when Lenin early in 1918 appointed Felix Djerjinsky to head the Cheka (Extraordinary Commission) against counter-revolution, that body—with all its names—has been far more than a secret police or an intelligence service. It has been that of course, but it has also been, first, last, and always, the executive arm and the vigilant watchdog of the Soviet state, the right hand and obedient servant of the ruling force in Russia, which is the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and of the Politburo which runs the Central Committee—and therefore of Stalin, who runs the Politburo.

On certain occasions foreign public opinion has been led to believe that this particular organism of the Bolshevik system was the power behind the throne, an imperium in imperio. Once perhaps, for a moment, this fancy may have been true, when Yagoda dared to dream that a dog could bite its master. So Yagoda was shot. Before him and after him—perhaps even during that moment of his extravagant dream—the Cheka, OGPU, NKVD, or present Ministry of State Control has always been the swift sharp sword of the Kremlin.