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**EUROPE****SPECIAL ARTICLE****THE EASTERN ZONE OF GERMANY—I****Introduction**

It has only recently become possible to piece together a reliable and coherent picture of the Soviet Zone of Germany. The result is in some ways alarming. Progress towards a Communist society has been more rapid than appeared on the surface. A façade of democratic forms has been maintained, and there is even the appearance of a democratic party system. In practice, however, the Communist-dominated Socialist Unity Party has either already secured complete control of every organ of the legislature, executive and judiciary, or has occupied a position which will give it complete control in the foreseeable future unless there is a drastic reversal of developments through amalgamation with the West. This first of two articles discusses the power of the Socialist Unity Party itself and of the various organisations dependent on it. The second will discuss the progress of sovietisation in the organisation of industry and agriculture, in the

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administration and police, education, youth, religion and denazification.

**The Party System**

The system of Government in the Soviet zone has not yet received its finishing touches. The skeleton and outline is, however, firm enough. It is based on the principle of control by one group, the Socialist Unity Party (SED), which in turn receives directives from Russia. The SED is virtually the Communist party under another name. It was formed on the 1st April, 1946, through compulsory fusion of the Communist Party and some of the Social Democrat Party; actually the Social Democrat component has had no real influence on policy. At the beginning of the occupation the Communists were not eager for fusion, but they reversed their policy when they saw that the Social Democrats were steadily growing stronger while they themselves were weakening. There were three main causes for their unpopularity :

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