

# Leaders, Cleared of 'Treason' Released from Hungary Jails

SOME TRAGIC results of the false accusations against Tito and the Yugoslav Communists came to light when Hungary's Laszlo Rajk and Bulgaria's Traicho Kostov were cleared of false treason charges. Both were executed in 1949, together with a number of other Communists.

Matyas Rakosi, first secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party, said that the whole Rajk trial had been under review since Beria was exposed in the Soviet Union in 1953. He said that a special commission of the Hungarian Ministry of Justice had made an investigation of the Rajk trial and concluded that it was a frame-up.

Rakosi said that both Beria, the former Soviet security chief, and Peter Gabor, Hungarian police chief, were implicated in concocting the false charges, the false evidence and the false confessions made by Rajk and his companions in open court.

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APPARENTLY a similar review had been taking place in Bulgaria which cleared Kostov of allegedly attempting to overthrow the Bulgarian government. However, it was significant, on the basis of available reports, that in Bulgaria party secretary Vulko Chervenkov, was criticized by the Bulgarian party for his own errors in failing to develop collective leadership.

Throughout the socialist world Communists were saying that violations of socialist justice had been fostered by the abnormal situation of one-man leadership which had developed in the latter years of Stalin's life and activity.

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REPORTS from Czechoslovakia indicated that a number of persons who had been imprisoned following the trial of Rudolf Slansky and his fellow defendants, have been released from jail. Slansky had been the general secretary of the Czech Communist Party and was executed as a Titoite following a "treason" trial, in 1952, together with a number of other Communist leaders.

The release of Slansky's co-defendants seemed to indicate that a review of that case was also being made by the Czech government.

In all these trials Titoism was the alleged basis of the treason charges. And in all cases confessions had been made by the ac-

cused in open court. Correspondents from all over the world, East and West, covered the trials.

After Soviet leaders Khrushchev and Bulganin went to Belgrade last spring and admitted that the 1948 Soviet charges against Tito were baseless it was clear that similar charges against Rajk, Kostov and others couldn't stand up.

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AN EDITORIAL on April 2 in the Daily Worker reflected the indignation of supporters of socialism everywhere against violations of socialist justice. The Daily Worker pointed out that frame-ups were typical products of capitalism. Mis-

carriages of justice in socialist lands, the editorial said, mean that capitalist methods had been adopted, instead of socialist legality, in the cases concerned.

The Daily Worker editorial said: "It is noteworthy that the Soviet leaders have undertaken a huge review of the operations of their system of justice with an aim to restoring completely the rights guaranteed to the individual by socialist law. We trust that such a review will be carried out everywhere in the socialist countries without fear or favor.

"Such a review has never been carried out by capitalist governments. Who has ever heard of capi-

talist regimes admitting they have wronged and persecuted countless victims of the fight for social justice? All the world knows that Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent. But under capitalist rule not a thing is done to admit the wrong.

"To those hypocritical supporters of reaction who taunt us, advocates of socialism, for admitting that injustices took place in socialist lands, we say: Look to the victims at home. Look at the dungeon at Alcatraz that still holds Morton Sobell, whose innocence of any crime now causes even anti-Communists like Bertrand Russell to cry out for rectification of this injustice."

The editorial said an explanation should be forthcoming from those responsible, as to how confessions were made in open court by apparently innocent persons.

The editorial further declared: "Any departure from the rule and practice of justice and equality, any violations of human rights, are alien to socialism. We therefore express our most profound indignation and protest against the frame-up and murder of Laszlo Rajk and his associates."

The editorial concludes with an appeal for abolition, here and everywhere, of capital punishment. —J.C.

## Does Socialism Limit Freedom?

A discussion entitled "Socialism—U.S.A. and USSR" has been conducted in recent issues of the magazine MONTHLY REVIEW, a Socialist publication. The editors of POLITICAL AFFAIRS were invited to participate in this discussion, and their answers, reprinted from April issue of MONTHLY REVIEW follow:

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In answer to the questions which you asked Political Affairs to join in discussion, we would make the following comments. We agree with you, as any thoughtful person must, that "short answers must necessarily take a good deal for granted that ought to be explored and explained."

And, as you say, just as your "ideas about these questions are not fixed and frozen," so our own views and subject to change with the changing needs of the people and the country.

We think that the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Eugene Dennis, expressed this idea well when he said recently:

"When and how socialism will be brought about is up to the majority of the American people. We Communists believe that ultimately some kind of workers' and farmers' government, based on a united and class-conscious working class and

a militant alliance of labor, the Negro people and the toiling farmers, will effect the transition from capitalism to socialism.

"Likewise we are sure that this will be a truly American government. It will be headed by an American president and act through an American Congress which would be—for the first time in our nation's history—genuinely of, for, and by the people. And as for us Communists, we desire, and advocate that this people's democracy shall be established by constitutional and democratic processes. (Political Affairs, February, 1956, p. 10.)"

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THE AMERICAN people's decision for socialism will take place after socialism has been triumphant in many countries. Our own country, in such a new world situation, will face nothing like the problems of the wars of intervention and the Hitler invasion. There will be no other power capable of organizing a Project X, or a "Crusade for (capitalist) Freedom" against a socialist America. These changed circumstances will vastly alter the forms of social development here as compared with other countries. With this conception of the situation as a background, our answers to the questions are as follows:

Question 1: Under what circum-

stances (if any) should civil rights in a socialist America be denied to anti-socialist individuals or groups who are not practicing, actively planning, or inciting violence?

There should not be any curtailment of the civil liberties of such groups. But the key achievement of socialism in the field will be that it will bring about the fullest flowering of civil liberties and political freedom, first and foremost for the overwhelming mass of the people who are denied these liberties in the fullest sense today.

Question 2: Can the outlawing of propaganda which incites racial or national hatred be accomplished in a manner consistent with the First Amendment? If not, should the Constitution be amended, and how?

Racist propaganda should be outlawed now; there is no need to wait for a socialist America for that. This would no more challenge the First Amendment than do libel laws.

Question 3: Is the leadership of all or virtually all public bodies by one party inevitable in any socialist state? If not, would it nonetheless be desirable in a socialist America?

In general, the assumptions in the question indicate a certain confusion on the relation between parties and democracy. The number

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