

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Some Questions About Hungary

Editor, Daily Worker:

Would like to ask some questions and disagree with our handling of the events in Hungary—but mostly about the actual situation itself. I refer particularly to characterizing the struggle as counter-revolutionary, and the emphasis placed on the role of supporters of Horthy and "foreign intervention."

I seriously wonder whether the Hungarian workers, students and peasants are incapable of distinguishing Fascist — or foreign agent-inspired efforts to take over a mass movement for democratization. Not that I doubt that these dirty elements are playing a role, but it is certainly to be questioned as to how decisive their influence is.

It seems to me that there at least two other possibilities, both of which raise the most serious questions about how the Soviet Union and Hungarian Party leadership have responded to this situation.

First, let's take the possibility that I personally think is the least likely. Suppose this is a counter-revolutionary movement, anti-Socialist and anti-Soviet? Does it necessarily stand that it is led by foreign agents or Horthyite fascists? Just supposing that it's a bourgeois-democratic revolution? Is this really so improbable? And if it is that kind of revolution, is the intervention of the Red Army justified?

Putting it more sharply—are we prepared to grant the possibility and right of a people to unseat an established socialist regime and set up a bourgeois democratic regime?

Consider that the Hungarian people will judge socialism by what they have seen and experienced. It's pretty obvious they have seen a lot of bad with the good — undemocratic procedures, arrests, murder, stifling of opposition, bureaucracy, inefficiency, etc.

Add to this remnants of old attitudes, the role of the church, peasantry and the previous existence of a Fascist regime, we cannot be so shocked that the result would be a repudiation of socialism itself, a swing to bourgeois democracy, and not necessarily a return to fascism.

Surely this would be a backward step, heartily to be condemned. But what I'm concerned with is our attitude towards the right of a people to make such a change.

We have sharply and correctly (particularly in some of Alan Max's columns) challenged the position of the capitalists on the question of whether they are prepared to permit a peaceful, democratic transition to socialism. There's plenty of evidence that these hypocrites will use any filthy means—including war and violence—to prevent any fundamental advance, even short of socialism, wherever they can. Just look at the South, Algeria, Guatemala, etc.

But how do we stand about a movement to unseat Socialism? Do we recognize such right?

This movement is clearly violent. And I wish to make it clear that I oppose the violence, that I have little doubt that provocateurs are playing some role in that regard. But the facts about the origins of the violence are unclear. I'm becoming more and more convinced that a combination of blunders and provocations was responsible for the original outbreak. But its perpetuation and spread can be understood by the intervention of the Red Army and the reaction this provoked, without requiring fishing for any other explanation.

What of the other possibility—or rather, a group of possibilities?

1. That this was a mixed movement of socialist and petty

bourgeois elements around a theme of more democracy and a common bond of hostility to the Soviet Union, which contained both positive and negative features, patriotic and ultra-bourgeois nationalist features.

2. Couldn't this movement have started out similarly in the movement in Poland, with similar objectives, but become provoked when the leadership of Hungary failed to respond adequately? Surely the action of keeping Geroe in as First Secretary—which has always had more significance than the Premiership—could have further inflamed the people.

The leadership of the Hungarian party, in turn, could very well have misjudged the whole temper of the masses, misunderstood the character and objectives of the movement, gotten panicky, called in the Red Army, which meant it had little or no confidence in the substantial Hungarian Army, working class, or security forces.

I question the continued role of the Red Army in this situation. I question whether we shouldn't consider—and I think I realize the full gravity of this idea—a request that the Red Army in Hungary take no further part in the struggle there, return to its own bases. If the Hungarian regime cannot handle this struggle itself. I question whether it deserves to rule, or whether it could without the Red Army for a long time to come.

If the Red Army were to return to its bases in Hungary, and if the rebellious forces were then to attack them, they might have no alternative to fight. They could certainly have a more legitimate right. I seriously question their moral right to have stepped in before now, unless and only unless—it is proven that this is an actual Fascist-led outbreak—and I have the most serious doubts that this is so.

Enclosed find \$1 for the fund drive. My family has been hard hit by illness, but will try to come through with 10 more in next few days.—J.

Hungarian Events Were Predicted

Editor, Daily Worker:

Worker readers will be interested to know that the Hungarian events were practically predicted by a contributor, E.S., to the October issue, No. 6, of the N. Y. State Communist Party Bulletin, "Party Voice". He, or she, wrote:

"The Hungarian C.C. wants creative discussion, but not anti-Marxist—how do they propose to deal with a situation in which a major course they undertake is wrong and the workers suffer? How many more Poznans must take place?"

The whole article is the best criticism I have yet seen of the weaknesses and contradictions in the Soviet Central Committee's June 30 Resolution trying to analyze what went wrong in the USSR and answer foreign criticisms. The writer says that mass deportation of the Kalmyks could not have taken place if they could have told the whole Soviet people of their plight through a free press that the "outlandish" agricultural tax could not have been proposed if the farmers had a place freely to speak their piece, that "that long list of heroes from Eikhe to Feffer" could not have been murdered if "there was an opposition and the actual facilities guaranteeing one the right to protest publicly."

E.S. brings this up to date by quoting the rabbis' delegation as saying that a Yiddish newspaper is not allowed in Moscow because this would be theoretically incorrect, and asks: "Well, how does a Jew in Russia come out and attack such a theory?"

What conclusions are the Soviet workers, with their admit-

tedly bureaucrat-run unions, and others in the USSR, drawing from the Polish and Hungarian events, I wonder?

—A.B.

Democracy in East Europe

Editor, Daily Worker:

Yes, there are those in Hungary and Poland who want to restore capitalism and even fascism through a bloody revolt by an armed minority, and against the wishes of the majority of the people.

But these have seemed to be few, compared to the overwhelming majority, who want to go forward to national independence, democracy and socialism.

In Poland, the working people and their Communist Party have won, for the time being at least, over both those who wanted to restore capitalism and those who wanted to stay tied to Soviet forms of Marxism, and in so doing were straining the people and the economy to the breaking point.

In Hungary the picture is far from clear—the fighting is still going on in Budapest and other places as this letter is written. But some things can be said:

First, that no matter how well organized a small minority of fascists may be tens of thousands of socialist workers and youth do not fight in the streets without tremendous grievances, grievances which they feel they have little hope of settling peacefully. The new Hungarian government gives much promise of setting the country on a new, healthy path—but let us be clear that the great majority of those who took up arms against the government, according to that government, were honest people, with socialist ideals.

Second, that whatever the justification for using Soviet troops, and I certainly don't know if it was right or wrong, the world has now been treated to the sight of Soviet troops shooting down Hungarian workers and youth in the streets of Budapest! This is a wound to world socialism which will be a long time healing. We'll have to find out much more about what actually happened before we know whether or not all this could have been avoided by keeping Soviet troops out of it, as was done in Poland. There are many unanswered questions, and this is not the time to either attack or defend the Soviet Union's role in the Hungarian revolt. Perhaps in a few days . . . or much longer . . . National independence and democratic socialism aren't coming so easily to the Hungarian people.

I think in light of the recent events in Eastern Europe, and in expectation of further developments (for we have yet to really hear from East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Albania), we American Communists have to make much more clear, through our present discussion, that we are for democratic socialism taking national forms and particularly for an independent and equal relation to the Soviet Union. That means first of all changing our Draft Resolution's very general statements to very specific statements.

We should praise such things as the Soviet Union's call for an end to hydrogen bomb testing. We should praise advances toward socialist democracy that occur in such countries as Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union itself. And we should be critical of Soviet interference in Poland's internal affairs, or of continued Soviet backwardness in admitting such serious past deeds as the Nazi-Soviet pact and postwar anti-Semitism. We should openly call for full information about the circumstances surrounding the use of

Autoto

THE DETROIT FREE precincts for sentiment for Eisenhower talk to "don't cotton to Coburn" Detroit they knocked on 20 doors only two doors knocked at of Three of the 30 who voted for

REPUBLICAN state chair News, Oct. 12th admits the with a "superb organization organization". The coalition of community groups which is responsible for Michigan now The coalition leaders figured it came through, and that's what

WHY hasn't Governor V to the stand of Stevenson again

Get ready for a "big surprise" and Free Press let us have the Do you have any doubts as to

WOULD have helped Stevenson there if he had hit on the C unemployment in the auto industry on desegregation. A good leaflet on these issues would have paid done along that line.

Would be a better idea for Chas. Diggs, Michigan's only Negro state of Michigan than sending used to speak in Muskegon a only, he really packed them in.

Labor issuing an instruction Also through their pressure in for the first time, they demanded voters. Check your precinct.

To start beating the Eisenhower have to start coming out of W total vote, instead of 39 percent majority state wide. Ike won Michigan The Dems say if Stevenson could can win by a slight majority.

Top Labor leaders in Michigan organizers about being over confident official revealed he had never seen the majority of Michigan's 83 counties chief Neil Staebler making predictions

NOT ONE of the big GOP will touch with a loud-speaker are unemployed, that the GOP regular and four special sessions extend unemployment aid.

After election day, Nov. 6 International Executive Board will place in April, delegates are elected election campaign starts, after Detroit City, biggest convention union expected. Membership 1,660,000

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that the working class is best represented by the Nagy government, the appeal said.

The appeal concluded: "Stop the shedding of blood."

MOSCOW, Oct. 29.—Marshal Georgi Zhukov, Soviet defense minister, denied today there had been any fresh movement of Russian troops in Hungary in the past 64 hours. He added Russia would pull its troops out of eastern Europe as soon as the U. S. leaves western Europe.

"We are ready to go home if you are," he said to western newsmen.

Foreign Minister Shepilov, attending a National Day celebration at the Turkish Embassy, was asked by western news correspondents whether he had received an appeal for a cease-fire in Hungary from the Austrian government.

"I have heard it on the radio," he said. "The fact is that Soviet troops, which acted on the demands of the Hungarian government for assistance, have actually ceased fire. To the extent that insurgents lay down their arms and danger is removed, Soviet troops

Soviet troops in Hungary, without judging until we have some facts. Out people will not be satisfied with generalities, nor will we Communists.—D.B.