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**On the Events in Hungary\***

By National Committee, CPUSA

OUR PARTY'S National Committee meeting in enlarged session last week, considered the recent tragic events in Hungary, their impact on our country, on world peace and on the further development of Socialism.

The National Committee states frankly that, like the Party membership as a whole, it finds itself confronted with complex problems of an unprecedented nature. It is therefore not surprising that while we have a common view on many questions we also have differences of opinion. These areas of difference will be resolved on the basis of further discussion by the whole Party as we acquire more facts and a deeper understanding of these events.

Let us begin with those aspects that constitute our common point of departure.

Together with our fellow countrymen who want world peace, democracy and the independence of nations everywhere, we are deeply disturbed by the events in Hungary. We are deeply grieved at the bloodshed and

destruction in Hungary and are profoundly concerned with the causes and meaning of these events for Socialism—as are all Party members and other socialist-minded Americans.

Together with our fellow countrymen who want to preserve the spirit of Geneva, we recognize the dangers created by the unscrupulous exploitation of the Hungarian events by the enemies of peace. The demands of Senator Knowland for sanctions against the Soviet Union and the prompt use of the Hungarian situation by Senator Eastland's witch-hunting Internal Security Committee are examples of this exploitation as are the efforts of the State Department to promote a UN cover for interference by the Western powers.

In analyzing these events we are motivated by the desire to strengthen peaceful coexistence as opposed to those who seek to heat up the cold war.

We are motivated by a desire to strengthen the cause of Socialism as opposed to those who seek to weaken or destroy Socialism.

We are motivated by our fraternal interest in the process of democra-

\* On November 19, 1956, the National Committee, CPUSA, issued an "Open Letter to the Membership," dealing with the Hungarian situation. The full text is published herewith.

tization in the socialist countries and the further development of friendship and cooperation between them on the basis of full equality and national independence, as opposed to those who seek to sow enmity between these lands for the purpose of destroying Socialism and gaining world supremacy for imperialism.

Now let us proceed to our estimate of the Hungarian events and their causes. There is general agreement in the National Committee on the analysis of the situation prior to November 4, but divergent views on subsequent developments and on conclusions to be drawn from them. The great upheavals in Poland and Hungary were initially and primarily popular upsurges for democratization, for a solution to their economic problems, and for full national sovereignty and equality in their relations with the Soviet Union.

As a result of the distortions of socialist policy during the latter years of Stalin's regime and the pressure exerted on the People's Democracies, the Communist Parties of these countries had mechanically followed the experiences of the Soviet Union instead of independently developing policies based fully on the national political and economic requirements of their own peoples.

These wrong policies, aggravated by the stringencies of the Cold War, led to the deterioration of economic conditions instead of the improvements that the people had expected from a socialist society. They led to the imposition of bureaucratic

rule, the violation of socialist democracy, the jailing and even execution of leaders of the people, including leading Communists. They resulted in infringements upon the sovereignty and independence of these nations.

The 20th Congress of the CPSU recognized the need for correction by calling for an end to the Stalin "cult of the individual"; for the development of democratic procedures; for equality amongst socialist nations and Communist parties; for the need and right of each nation to chart its own road to Socialism.

The healing of the breach between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia was a major step in this direction. However, in our opinion, the implementation of the decisions of the 20th Congress was not resolutely carried forward with respect to other socialist nations. It is apparent in the light of recent developments in Poland and Hungary that the implementation met with considerable resistance within the CPSU and other Parties.

Meanwhile, the demands for change in accordance with the promises of the 20th Congress were growing, especially in Poland and Hungary.

The Communist Party of Poland, responsive to the demands of its people, pressed with great determination and courage to correct the wrongs in their country. Such a policy is winning the confidence of the Polish working class and people and the most heartfelt support of

Communists and other socialist-minded people the world over.

The Hungarian Communist Party, on the other hand, did not grasp in time the need for deep-going changes. Instead it resisted taking the necessary corrective measures. At the last moment, when the Hungarian masses rose in demonstration, it again resorted to repression. The October 24th decision of the Gero government to call upon Soviet troops stationed in Hungary to put down the initial popular demonstrations inflamed the situation to a grave crisis. This was a tragic error for which the Soviet Union must also take responsibility. It disclosed the failure of a policy which was not based securely upon the national needs and sentiments of the working class and popular masses in Hungary.

The great prestige that the Soviet Union had won amongst the Hungarian working class by its role in liberating the country from the Nazis and the hated Horthy regime was thereby seriously damaged.

These grave errors facilitated the open intervention of the forces of reaction within Hungary from abroad. From the beginning, strenuous efforts were made by the Western powers through U.S.-financed Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, Project X and other agencies to utilize this crisis for their own imperialist aims and to encourage reactionary and fascist elements to take over the situation.

The role and influence of the reactionary elements within Hungary

were bolstered by an influx of exiled fascists, interventionists and agents of Project X across the Austrian border. The Nagy government, retreating before reactionary pressures, lost its capacity to govern and was unable to halt the lynchings, anti-Semitic outbreaks and reign of terror against Communists and progressives.

From these facts it appears that the Soviet Union decided on the large-scale use of troops on November 4 to head off the White Terror and what it considered to be the danger of the formation of an anti-Soviet, Horthy-like regime on its borders, which would threaten not only the security of the USSR and other Socialist countries, but world peace as well. It should be borne in mind that the Soviet troops, who had liberated Hungary during the anti-Hitler war were stationed in that country not only under the Warsaw Pact, but also in accordance with the Potsdam Agreement.

We do not seek to justify the use of Soviet troops in Hungary's internal crisis on November 4. Neither do we join in the condemnation of these actions. Was there no alternative? Was it a grim necessity? There are no ready answers and we are in no position to give final judgment on the Soviet action. On this there are different viewpoints in the National Committee and in the Party. With the unfolding of events further clarity on this point will be achieved.

Uppermost are the basic long-term factors making for the tragic Hun-

garian situation and the need to support and encourage the great process of correction in the socialist world to prevent the recurrence ever again of any such tragedy.

In any case, the use of troops by the Soviet Union in Hungary cannot, of course, solve the basic problems involved. Within Hungary the solution lies in correcting the mistakes of the past, in carrying through in practice the program announced by the Kadar government and in developing a broader government based on the needs and desires of the Hungarian people. We welcome all efforts in that direction.

The solution of the basic problems of democratization and the establishment of relationships of equality and friendship between Socialist states depends on the resolute implementation of the decisions of the 20th Congress and the October 30th declaration of the Soviet government.

The process of democratization now going on in Poland shows that Socialism has the capacity for self-correction, a process greeted last week by the Prime Ministers of the Colombo powers. As it develops in the socialist countries, this process of democratization will have many favorable results. Among other things it will help bring about the unification of socialist currents in many countries and lay the basis for new advances to Socialism. To this end we urge the speediest implementation of the decisions of the 20th Congress and the declaration of October 30.

It is of the utmost importance that

we American Communists do not confine ourselves to evaluating events abroad but give serious thought to the harmful role that our State Department has played in these developments. Thereby we will help provide the American workers with a greater understanding of what they can do to influence U.S. foreign policy in accord with the peace aspirations of our people.

On this score the November 1 resident National Committee statement—unfortunately distributed to the press on November 2 for publication November 5—was inadequate. In this connection it should also be pointed out that the *Daily Worker* editorial of Monday, November 5, did not, in our opinion, take into account sufficiently the new developments in Hungary over the previous weekend.

It is the hope of the National Committee that our present letter will meet some of the critical questions raised by our comrades in respect to both the first National Committee statement and the November 5 editorial of the *Daily Worker* with which some members of the National Committee are in disagreement.

The recent events—and even the very serious mistakes which led up to them—are very much connected with the fact that since the end of World War II, capitalism and our own government, in particular, has carried on an unremitting cold war against the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. Much of the economic and

other difficulties in these countries can be traced in no small measure to the effects of this cold war.

Moreover, the efforts of the Soviet Union to correct the relations between Socialist States is being hampered by the continuation of the cold war, by the attempts of various imperialist groupings to capitalize on past mistakes as well as to make use of the present efforts at correction for their own reactionary purposes.

But these elements are not concerned with democracy nor with national independence. Those who embraced a Horthy and a Franco, as well as those who were responsible for the overthrow of the elected government of Guatemala and those who are at this moment invading the territory of Egypt, cannot convince the world that their interest in Hungary is based on concern for democracy and national independence.

New hope for agreements to advance peace have been opened up as a result of the new disarmament and neutralization proposals advanced by the USSR on November 12. Speedy negotiation at the summit level can relieve world tensions and, out of the present difficult situation, there can emerge a stronger basis for a durable peace.

We share with all peace-loving Americans the determination to prevent a third world war. Whatever their feelings about the rights and wrongs of the Hungarian situation, our fellow-countrymen do not want a pro-war hysteria whipped up by the Knowlands, Eastlands, McCarthys, and other pro-war forces in our land.

We call for the ending of such instruments of subversion and incitement as Radio Free Europe, Project X of the Central Intelligence Agency, and other similar agencies.

In America's national interest and for the sake of world peace, we urge a new summit conference to tackle afresh the root question of the cold war. We call for the dissolution of all military blocs, the simultaneous withdrawal of all military forces from all foreign lands and the closing of all military bases on foreign soil.

We urge widespread support of the efforts by relief agencies cooperating with the UN and the Hungarian government to assist the people of Hungary. We also propose that economic aid be voted by Congress, without strings, to Hungary, as well as other nations.

Such a program of action will contribute to easing world tensions and to the realization of a durable peace.

Comrades, great changes are taking place in the world and not least of all in the socialist countries. In this communication we have sought to analyze certain vital aspects of recent events in Eastern Europe. The entire Party should continue to make the most searching study of these events and their consequences and discuss in a comradely fashion differing viewpoints. We are confident that in the process our Party will collectively draw the lessons of these far-reaching developments. In this way we will make a greater contribution to the cause of world peace and the democratic advance to Socialism in our country.