

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Where Was Soviet Intelligence?

WORCESTER, Mass.

Editor, Daily Worker:

I was happy to read in the Nov. 29 issue of the Daily Worker Mr. Dennis' views and the fact that he was allowed to bring to the readers' attention Cardinal Mindszenty's fascist intentions, which were supported by Nagy's regime or close advisers to the outlandish extent of including him (Cardinal Mindszenty) in an active position in the government.

This outlaw fugitive cried for the return of capitalism and the hundreds of acres of church property and political power, with the support of Horthy's old guard.

No doubt the Hungarian situation is regrettable, and would move any man's heart with compassion, but even more regrettable is the fact that the Socialists allowed that regrettable condition to advance to the extent it did, before moving to squelch it.

What was the Socialist intelligence doing while all this activity was ferment? . . . Why were they not able to affect it while it was still in its emyo stage? . . .

In closing please find \$5. Wishing you all success in your current drive.—F.M.

Lillian Gates Answers

Benjamin J. Davis

Editor Daily Worker:

Ordinarily after writing a letter to Speak Your Piece, I would let the matter rest. Everyone has the full right to disagree and I welcome further discussion which I believe can only be helpful to deeper understanding and greater clarity.

However, the letter by Benjamin J. Davis in commenting on mine in reference to the Hungarian developments not only seriously distorts one of the points made by me, but uses this as the occasion to bring in estimates of the past period in the Party's work as well as views on the 20th Congress. Hence, I feel impelled to reply.

Comrade Davis charges me with departing from a Marxist-Leninist, scientific Socialist approach and adopting one of a "monk or the incantations of a cult."

I cannot agree with the judgment of Comrade Davis that it is a departure from Marxism-Leninism to make the point (as I did in my letter) that the main responsibility for the Hungarian developments rest on the errors made there. I had understood that to be the position of Comrade Davis, since he voted for the Open Letter of the National Committee. I further said that in this specific instance (the Hungarian developments) we must make clear what we considered the root sources of the problem and that this would aid us in exposing the efforts of U.S. imperialism to explain the Hungarian events. I did not advocate in any manner, shape or form that we must purge ourselves of all errors before criticizing U.S. imperialism in general.

I particularly object to the implication that the views expressed on the Hungarian developments might be applied to the Negro people's movement and that I have the view it must be free of errors before it struggles for full equality in all spheres of life. Joining the Communist Party in the South some twenty-two years ago, I attempted, not without weaknesses and shortcomings, of course, to support that struggle at all times.

Criticism and self-criticism is considered to be the heart of the process of growth of Communist movements. We Commu-

nists do not abjure moral and ethical values; rather we believe that a Communist society will bring to fruition all the highest ideals that mankind has held throughout the centuries.

We have found, in practice, that it has been difficult to apply the necessary criticism. In general, we could say that the very existence of capitalism is responsible for all the weaknesses of Socialism, since it is the evils of capitalism that breeds all those undesirable traits in human beings and society. But this would be a truly undialectical approach. It is necessary in each given instance to point out the specific features. And in the Hungarian situation, the specific features were that the tragic outcome there were rooted in the errors. U.S. imperialism and other forces hostile to socialism were able to make progress in such an atmosphere. Hence, it is not enough to condemn the forces of reaction; it is imperative that the evils be cured.

As for estimates of the work of the Party, I do not know of any "Max-Gates" position. There is an estimate contained in the Draft Resolution of the Communist Party to which I subscribe, and which Comrade Davis also voted for. It might be helpful at some future time to place on the table the specific questions involved, since it is impossible within the scope of a letter to deal with questions raised in such a general way.

I hope that the result of this discussion will be a clarification of the issues and am prepared to state my views publicly, which I feel is the responsibility of all of us.—Lillian Gates.

The Price of Revolution

NEW YORK

Editor, Daily Worker:

Among the best of the American traditions—and there are many good and bad—is the career of Lincoln Steffens, reporter, reformer and muckraker. In his autobiography he quotes from an interview he had with Lenin. The great Russian leader said:

"Don't minimize any of the evils of a revolution. They occur. They must be counted upon. If we have to have a revolution, we have to pay the price of revolution."

Commenting on roads to socialism, Steffens reflects on the Bela Kun stage in Hungary's history: "The reds let the whites stay in Hungary, and they wiggled and wangled, got help from abroad (Hoover, who was feeding the people, used his charity for the whites against the reds), and finally rose and conquered the red revolutionary government, driving Bela Kun to Moscow. . . . The terror, red or white, is inevitable in a revolution or a civil war, just as outrage and death are unavoidable in a foreign war and as bribery and corruption are natural elements in a political conflict of economic forces."

Lessons for today? We know about \$100,000,000 spent yearly by our government to "liberate" the Eastern European countries. We know from the bourgeois press that Hungary permitted the entry of 60,000 people including an assortment of Horthyites, criminals and renegades. Czechoslovakia wisely refused to put out a welcome mat to trouble.

Ah, but some say, perhaps in days gone by drastic measures were the only way to silence our enemies, but world forces have changed. This is a new era.

Perhaps. But does the ruling class know about it? How come they didn't act accordingly in Guatemala, Cyprus, Algeria. Moral suasion didn't prevent the

British and French from desperate and violent actions to try to hang on to the Suez Canal. Isn't it obvious that our government is rubbing its hands together in glee over the possibility of a Hungary "freed" from Socialism?

Although we have Pravda's discussion of the events in Hungary, we are too anxious to reject it. We seem to feel safer in favoring the display of hypocritical human concern for the Hungarians we find in the bourgeois press.

Which side are we on? Are we for a working class government which — by definition — threatens not only Hungary, but the USSR itself? The Red Army is well acquainted with the threat of fascist neighbors. Twenty million Russians were sacrificed last time.

Speculation about peaceful transitions in a war-ridden world plus an overzealous attempt to prove our "independence" from the Soviet Union is destroying the Communist party.

This is a period in which we must make decisions. It is my view that we must take sides. Mistakes made in Hungary which led to a civil war situation must be looked at from a class point of view. Why did Stalin, Gero and Rakosi err? They erred because they led advanced systems in a hostile world. The real class struggle, internally and internationally, forced these governments to be harsh toward the enemy.

Let's return to our Marxist-Leninist party. We must reaffirm our belief in the class struggle, in the eventual overthrow of the ruling class, in the obvious necessity to crush the resistance of all exploiters who would see capitalism and fascism win.

—M. W.

Questions About Foster's Article

DETROIT.

Editor, Daily Worker:

After reading and thinking about Comrade Foster's article on "The Hungarian Situation," I have several questions to ask.

If as Foster says, the Soviet Union has misused Hungary in the past, why does he so easily assume its army will behave properly in the present and future?

In a lengthy description of the Hungarian events, why does Foster omit the firing upon Hungarian demonstrators by the Soviet army, considering the key role this event had in aggravating the revolt? The omission of this fact might explain the easy assumption referred to in the first question.

Foster says there can only be socialism or fascism in Hungary, not capitalism. What is the proof? Since this is not proven in the article, in my opinion, it therefore should not have been stated.

Why does Foster omit the possibility that, given the chance, the Hungarian working class, intellectuals, youth and farmers could have taken care of themselves against fascist forces? Why does he not state that among the revolters were many long-time Communists like the martyred Rajk's widow?

Why does Foster have as one of his conditions for the Soviet troops leaving Hungary ". . . foreign troops are withdrawn from other countries."? Does he really think the presence of Soviet troops in Hungary among a hostile population and a protesting world, adds to its strength, even if U.S. troops are in France or West Germany?

Foster speaks of the ". . . brutalities of Stalin in his later years." What does he mean by his later years? The first great murder-purges occurred in 1934 — 19 years before Stalin died. Foster says he agrees with

Dennis' letter to the Daily, criticizing the paper for its editorial policy. But in that letter, Dennis implied that anyone who criticized the motives of the Soviet Union, is not a Marxist-Leninist. Yet Foster strongly criticizes the Soviet Union's past motives towards Hungary. How does this gibe?

As can be seen from my questions, I believe Foster's analysis of the past history of what went on in Hungary is pretty good, but his understanding of the meaning and present results of that history is quite shallow. —DETROITER.

Writes on Dennis' Letter of Nov. 29

BROOKLYN

Editor, Daily Worker:

It seems to me that Eugene Dennis is less than modest when he states, "There is a growing concern among many readers of the Daily Worker" who share his disagreement with the paper's editorial position on the Hungarian tragedy. (DW-11/29).

While Dennis implies that American Marxists share his views on the situation there, I think it would be more accurate to say that many American Communists are concerned with our general secretary's dispassionate endorsement of the Hungarian bloodshed.

I cannot share the view that the only issue to be resolved is whether or not the Nov. 4 intervention by the Soviet Union was "necessary" to prevent the emergence of fascism. I frankly tend to doubt this, but do not claim enough evidence upon which to base a firm conclusion. In any event, I believe the issue goes much deeper than this.

The fact is that Dennis, in his conclusions that Red Army intervention was "necessary," places himself in the position of justifying 11 years of misrule in Hungary and the mass slaughter of workers and youth.

Our general secretary, for whom I have a world of respect and admiration, defends his position on the basis of "science." But ours is not a cold-blooded science for the microscope, but a science of society and people.

For the past several years I have been in leading positions within the Marxist youth movement. . . . Am I now to tell these forward looking youths, or am I to tell myself for that matter, that Hungarian youth do not have the same rights in a socialist country that we demand for ourselves under capitalism. Or that these young Hungarians who have lived their whole mature life under socialism were hypnotized by fascist agents (who unquestionably played their devious role) into laying down their lives before barking tanks.

No, I can only list those Hungarian youths with the long annals of young fighters against tyranny throughout history—as much as it hurts to identify socialism with that tyranny.

I remain unshaken in my allegiance to socialism and my belief that it will ultimately triumph on a world scale. I also still firmly admire the Soviet Union as a socialist state which has taken the lead in preventing nuclear war and advancing many of mankind's most important struggles.

But I also now realize they can be awfully wrong on occasion. I have also discovered that partisanship to any particular leader or group solely because they call themselves Communists does not advance the cause of socialism. I cannot say: Communist—my Party right or wrong. I further believe that if our Party were to adopt the posi-

tion advocated by Dennis and those who agree with him, the possibility of our ever gaining the confidence and support of any significant section of the American people would be destroyed. In fact, I doubt we would any longer be worthy of that confidence.

I think Lester Rodney's article on the Hungarian situation was far more worthy.—FRANK A.

Capitalist Press Hasn't Changed

Editor, Daily Worker:

Alan Max's expose of capitalist press lies about alleged "deportations" of 16,000 Hungarians was warmly welcomed by some workers I know. It's a sign, they hope, that the Daily Worker is returning to its old crusading traditions.

This expose was badly needed.

For many progressives have been carried off their feet by the twisted yarns in the Big Business press. These yarns from the White Guard listening post in Vienna are reminiscent of the "coverage" of Russia from Riga after the Soviet revolution of 1917, as Cedric Belfrage well said.

Alan Max bases his expose on the Times (fine print) admission that evidence for these deportations does not exist. The Times seldom makes such admissions. But newspapers sometimes contradict each other. And I note a British refutation of the American press stories about the Dean of Canterbury's (Dr. Hewlett Johnson's) position on Hungary.

New York papers had the Dean criticizing the Soviet Union's intervention in the Hungarian civil war. And our sports writer, Lester Rodney, took the truth of this story for granted in his polemic against Soviet intervention in the DW of Nov. 20. Said Rodney:

"In England even that noble friend of the Soviet Union, the Dean of Canterbury, had to speak out against the Soviet action."

But I found a distinctly opposite report of the Dean's remarks in the London Daily Telegraph of Nov. 19, which I purchased in the basement of the Times Building. The Telegraph said the Dean SUPPORTED the Soviet action.

"Dr. Johnson, who is 82," said the Telegraph, "issued a statement last Monday defending Soviet intervention in Hungary, and attacking Britain for her action in Egypt. No Eastern workers' state, he said, could tolerate the danger of a relapse to Fascism."

It's time for all progressives to remember that the Big Business enemies of Socialism and Labor control the big newspapers and the wire services and the TV and radio too.

It's time to remember that the papers, which lie about a picket line struggle at home, will lie 25 times as much about a civil war 5,000 miles away.

ART SHIELDS

[Ed. Note: Concerning Hungary the Dean of Canterbury said on Nov. 12 as quoted in the London Daily Worker, Nov. 13: "Morally I am no more able to condone those events than our attack upon Egypt." He added that politically the situations were different since the Soviet Union's purpose was to bar fascism while Britain's purpose was to restore colonialism.]