

# Letters from Readers

*Following are more letters in the current discussion of American Marxists and the Soviet Union. Letters over 300 words cannot be printed in full.*

## **Was in Hungary**

### **During Rajk Trial**

Editor, Daily Worker:

The announcement that Rajk was innocent, and now that Kostov too was innocent, has a deep personal meaning for me, because at the time they were accused I was in Eastern Europe and joined in assuming their guilt. That is why I congratulate the DW for its forthright and principled editorial demanding a full explanation for the Rajk execution, and that those responsible be punished.

I was in Budapest as a newspaper correspondent shortly before Rajk's trial. I was filled with the excitement of seeing the magnificent strides Hungary was making, and how there was such enthusiasm among the people for the government and for the progress toward socialism.

But one day I was walking in the park with a Hungarian friend, a young woman who worked for the government. She remarked that there were many things in Hungary that still were not right. When I pressed her on what she meant, she cited the arrest of Rajk. "But he's a spy," I protested. She looked at me knowingly, as if to tell me not to be naive and said, "Whatever he's done, he's not a spy."

This upset me, and I asked her to explain this further. She quickly wanted to change the subject and implored me to forget that she had ever said this, and not to tell anybody about her remark. Instead of wondering whether what she said had any truth in it, I proceeded to doubt the "loyalty" of my friend. I thought perhaps she too was somehow mixed up in this thing.

A short time later I was in Yugoslavia, which Western correspondents were using as a base for covering the Kostov trial in Bulgaria. I became embroiled in many arguments trying to convince the correspondents that he must be guilty, and that he was lying when he went to his death proclaiming his innocence.

We must probe how it happens that innocent people are executed under socialism. What happens that persons with doubts remain silent? What happens that people are stampeded into demanding the death penalty for the accused, despite an abhorrence of capital punishment? What about the prosecutor in the case? What of the judge? What of the people like myself, who were led to accept the mere accusation as justice, and ready to shun anyone who dared protest?

Only if this kind of investigation is carried on can we understand how such a painful event can take place and prevent a recurrence. That is why the editorial in the DW is so vital to the search for truth and the victory of socialism.

We in this country deplore our own victims of frame-ups. We must deplore all the more when it happens in a country where the wheels of government are in the hands of the people. Mere criticism of a mistake made is but a gesture. Such injustices call for the deepest shame and indignation, wherever they take place. Some people fear that to be critical of injustice under socialism plays into the hands of those who hate socialism. To the contrary, to remain silent plays into their hands. Speaking out for justice wherever injustice may occur is incumbent for every Communist.

A Reader.