

Charney Hits Use Of Soviet Troops

By Myra Tanner Weiss

The position taken by George Blake Charney in the Daily Worker discussion of the Hungarian situation, Dec. 3, represents a step forward in so far as he urges the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary. Charney is the first American CP leader to take this eminently correct stand. "Recent statements by the Soviet government and repeated in Pravda," Charney says, "express a readiness to withdraw as soon as the situation is stabilized. Well and good. Could not the Soviet Union retrieve its position by a bold approach to the people of Hungary—now?"

Charney bases his stand on the fact that the struggle in Hungary is clearly dominated by the working class. "Factory councils have been established in Budapest and throughout Hungary . . ." he points out. "The general strike has been conducted for several weeks by the workers through these councils. They are the decisive force in the national movement. Surely it will not be said that they favor a fascist regime."

A SERIOUS WEAKNESS

Charney's case however is weakened when he grants the possibility that earlier Soviet intervention may have been justified to prevent a fascist victory.

But there can be no glossing over the Nov. 3 events, as Charney does. For, if there had been an imminent danger of fascist victory early in November, Soviet intervention would indeed have been justified. And class-conscious workers would hardly risk demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops today, although they would most assuredly demand an end to the suppression of the workers and the workers' councils by the occupation force.

However, what are the facts about the struggle in Hungary from its very beginning? It is not necessary to accept the picture painted by the West—with the pro-socialist demands obscured to make better anti-Soviet propaganda. And it certainly isn't necessary to accept the traditional frame-up charges of the Kremlin to the effect that the insurgents represent "fascist counterrevolutionaries," as Charney is inclined to do. Isn't the cumulative evidence of their frame-up technique enough to warn anyone against giving the slightest credence to claims of the Soviet bureaucrats?

A RECORD OF LIES

Only a few weeks before the Hungarian revolution, Khrushchev and Co. accused Gomulka of restorationist intentions—then had to retract these charges. A few months before that, the workers of Poznan were accused of acting under the instigation of imperialist spies from the West—charges that were dropped in subsequent trials. Still earlier, thousands of "Titoites" were killed and imprisoned on essentially the same charges for which later apologies had to be made. And before that there were the Moscow trials. Indeed, three decades of purges in the Soviet Union perfected the frame-up techniques utilized by the bureaucrats in their efforts to hold their power and privileges against the workers. Isn't this history sufficient warning that it is above all necessary to conduct a rigidly independent examination of the facts?

Despite all distortions bred of the propaganda needs of the imperialist West—and despite the frame-up technique employed by the Kremlin—the facts in the history of the Hungarian revolt are all too clear to be concealed or misunderstood (See, for instance, the reports of Peter Fryer, London Daily Worker correspondent from Budapest or of Russell Jones, cited elsewhere in this issue.)

The first demands raised by the workers and youth in their earliest demonstrations, the now-famous 18-point program, were pro-socialist in character. They never altered thereafter. The U.S. imperialists, ever-hopeful of restoring capitalism, may have had their stooges, spies and provocateurs on the scene. Horthyite elements may have dreamed eventually recovering wealthy estates and dictatorial power. But their hopes have rested on a mighty slim reed as long as the workers remained in revolutionary motion. Their hopes will acquire better foundation only to the extent that the revolution is crushed and the workers are demoralized and further alienated from the Soviet Union.

Charney recalls that Khrushchev only last February at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union asserted that "The socialist system is marching forward triumphantly without crisis or upheavals." Charney also remem-

bers how "we greeted this analysis, and . . . drew strength from it. We never doubted its accuracy. And yet eight months later, we witness 'crisis and upheaval' in two of the peoples Democracies!"

Khrushchev can now fool Charney only a little bit. But that much is enough to prevent Charney from stepping out of the confidence game completely and getting a good clear look at the Kremlin bureaucrats and why their regime engendered so much working class hatred in Hungary. In attempting to explain the background of the struggle in Hungary, Charney lays the wrong crimes on the door of the Kremlin. "What price was paid," Charney asks, "for the dissolution of the broad democratic coalition in these countries . . . or for the forced program of socialization?"

This would imply that the East European countries were not ripe

Not for Horthy But For Socialism!

Russell Jones, United Press writer, who was forced to leave Hungary last week, reported the following: "Believe none of the stories that this was a misguided uprising fomented to restore the great estate owners of the Horthy regency or the industrial magnates. . . . The fiercest fighters were the workers, the proletarians in whose name communism had ruled. . . . 'A 17-year-old girl, twice wounded at Corvin Theater, told me she fought because 'it isn't right that my father with four children to feed should get only 900 forints (\$80) a month.' The chairman of the workers council at the Csepel iron and steel plant with 38,000 workers, biggest in the country, said: 'These are our factories. We will fight to the death to hold them. But we will continue plant maintenance because we want to work here again.'"

for socialism and that Stalin was merely impatient. But this is not true. These countries were over-ripe for the workers' revolution. The capitalist class heavily controlled by foreign imperialists, could rule only through fascist dictatorship. Stalin's crime in East Europe was precisely the crime of stifling the developing revolution of workers in alliance with the peasantry on the heels of Hitler's defeat. The bureaucrats tried, but failed to establish viable coalition regimes on the basis of capitalist parliamentarism.

The subsequent bureaucratic-military social transformation carried through by the Kremlin destroyed, for the time being, any capitalist aspirations in Eastern Europe. But Kremlin rule also frustrated the aspirations of the working class. For the workers, Kremlin domination brought the severest repression and lowered living standards. The political revolution that is now taking place in East Europe represents the attempt of the workers to liberate Hungary and other countries for a genuine socialist development, for workers' control of production and an improvement in the living conditions of the people.

As for parliamentary democracy, which Charney thinks would have provided the road to socialism in Hungary if the Kremlin had left it alone back in 1948, this is an empty abstraction in this epoch of transition to a socialist world. What the Hungarian workers needed then and need now is soviet democracy—the kind that was won in Russia in October, 1917 under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky.

The Hungarian workers, in their uprising of Oct. 23-28 did create such soviets, or workers' councils. Today, Charney—and here he distinguishes himself favorably from other American CP leaders—recognizes that these councils have won the support of the Hungarian population. However, his confusion about what really happened on Nov. 3 and his mistaken notions about the "parliamentary road to Socialism" in 1945-48 keep him from coupling his demand for the withdrawal of Soviet troops with the only revolutionary solution of the Hungarian crisis—namely, that all power shall pass into the hands of the Hungarian workers' councils.