

# Daily Worker Stand A Win for Foster

By Harry Ring

Last November Communist Party leader William Z. Foster vehemently assailed the editors of the Daily Worker for daring to criticize the Kremlin's reactionary assault on the Hungarian people. The Daily Worker then published a defense of its editorial stand by Max Gordon which accurately pegged Foster's line as a "platform of the old, blind apologetics" for the Kremlin. But since that time Daily Worker editor John Gates has led a steady, shameful retreat before Foster's fire. This retreat has now culminated in an ignominious capitulation, as demonstrated by the June 25 Daily Worker editorial on the UN report on Hungary.

At the Communist Party national convention last February, the Gates group supported a rotten compromise with Foster, according to which the party would "neither condemn or condone" the Russian role in Hungary. The present editorial, however, condones the Russian invasion in straight Fosterite language.

## "HORTHYITES"

The editorial declares that the committee which prepared the UN report, "refused to authenticate the mass of evidence, beginning with State Department and Central Intelligence Agency policy, which showed the belligerent exploitation of popular dissatisfaction by organized Horthyite clerical-fascist forces within Hungary and imperialist and emigre circles abroad for the purpose of overthrowing socialism."

This is followed by the equally false claim that "The reasons for popular discontent in Hungary, which proved so fertile for counter-revolutionary activity, are being discussed, examined and rectified throughout the socialist world and the Communist movement."

The Daily Worker then goes on to parrot the Moscow line that the Kremlin and its Hungarian puppet regime are "rectifying mistakes" and "restoring socialist order." This contention was answered in advance by one of the paper's own staff writers. Reviewing Herbert Aptheker's book *The Truth About Hungary*, Robert Friedman wrote in the June 19 Daily Worker:

"Aptheker sees in Hungary after the storm a government which has learned its lesson from the past. I am not so sanguine. Russian has been restored as a compulsory second language. The right to strike is proscribed by death penalty. The Hungarian people have no more opportunity to recall Premier Janos Kadar by popular referendum at stated intervals than they had to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with Rakosi."

The Daily Worker now finds itself in the difficult and incongruous position of peddling a line that a large number, if not a majority, of its own writers and editors can't stomach.

## EXPRESSED OPPOSITION

In addition to Friedman and Gordon, opposition to the Kremlin role in Hungary has been expressed by Joseph Clark and Alan Max. Lester Rodney took a particularly clear-cut stand on the issue last winter. Radio and

TV critic David Platt has also refused to buy the Fosterite line. Reviewing W.E.B. Du Bois' recent television appearance, Platt made a point of taking exception to Du Bois' "dogmatic" stand that the Hungarian revolution was imperialist-engineered.

In a July 1 article on the art of Picasso, Platt points out that the world-famous artist demonstrated his opposition to all forms of reactionary rule when he recently "cabled the Kadar government urging a re-examination of the death sentence meted out to two Hungarian writers for publishing an 'illegal' newspaper during the uprising last October."

Perhaps as a concession to Platt, Rodney and the others who have refused to yield on the issue, the Daily Worker editors decided to publish a more "balanced" editorial on the UN report in the June 30 Worker. This time the editorial concedes that "The UN report undoubtedly contains much that is factual." It then returns to the theme that there was a dual aspect to the uprising: the legitimate grievances of the masses and "the crafty efforts of Hungarian fascists," U.S. imperialist agents, etc., to overthrow the regime.

The editorial does not dare approach the basic question of which of these two forces, the working class or the counter-revolutionaries, were predominant in the situation. Honest on-the-spot Communist observers (Peter Fryer, Wiktor Woroszylski, editor of Poland's *Nowa Kultura*, and others) reported that the Hungarian working class, through its councils and by means of a powerful general strike, completely outweighed all other forces in the struggle. Based on a program of workers' democracy, national independence and defense of the nationalized property, the heroic Hungarian working class came close to defeating the Kremlin military assault. It would have had little difficulty in handling the tiny minority which the forces of capitalist restoration represented.

## AGREE WITH FOSTER

For the Gatesite leaders, to publicize these facts would mean a final break with Foster. And this they cannot do despite their desire for a modicum of independence from the Kremlin. Bound to Foster by fundamental agreement on a class-collaborationist program (the so-called "peaceful co-existence" slogan and the "people's anti-monopoly coalition") the Gates group leaders can only capitulate to Foster's drive for the complete re-Stalinization of the Communist Party.

Thus we have the spectacle of the Daily Worker editors offering up Foster's "platform of the old, blind apologetics"—a platform that seven short months ago they pledged themselves to fight against.