APPEAL FROM BUDAPEST

"The Central Workers Council in Budapest decided to call a general strike after it had protested unavailingly to Premier Kadar against the arrest of many of its members. It called on workers in the whole world to strike in sympathy." — N. Y. Times, Dec. 10.

The Hungarian workers’ councils, leading the struggle for freedom the world has ever seen, here sends an appeal to the American labor movement, as to "workers in the whole world."

What will American labor do?

There has been dozens of locked doors and hours of breast-beating spent on depicting the "inability" of the West to give support to the Hungarian freedom fighters. The desperate and wrong cry for military aid, or "arms to Hungary," is rightly rejected. There has been a ton of print devoted to asking what one could be done.

Here's one thing: Will American labor ignore it, while continuing to beat the drums about supporting the Hungarian fight?

There were other things that could have been done. The biggest was to demand that the U.S. call the Russians on their proposal for a simultaneous withdrawal of all foreign troops by both sides, as has been pointed out many times (discussed in L.A. Dec. 3).

The labor movement did not raise a peep about that, but its leaders and everybody else went on lamenting the West's inability to "do something." George Meany or Walter Reuther or David Dubinsky are not being asked to stand up to a Russian threat.

They are not even being asked to stand up to John Foster Dulles. They are simply being asked to demonstrate their "sympathy" in action, as the Hungarian workers enter a death-struggle phase of their battle.

They are simply being asked for some easy moral support, given demonstratively before the world.

It would not cost them a drop of blood.

They would not even have to ship a man.

They need not suffer a moment of discomfort in their rich, full, contented lives. It's practically borgen-rule晓得ly.

But a sympathy strike demonstration by American labor would help to magnetize to the Hungarian people the world knows what they are fighting for, that the eyes of all people are on them, that they are fighting against something greater than a forgotten corner but are actors in one of the most inspiring world dramas ever seen.

"This is American labor's cue to "do something" right now. It is not anywhere near what should be done, but it is what the Hungarian workers themselves are asking for right now. It is almost literally the least we can do.

Free Dijas!

In a quiet trial from which the press was excluded, there was a record sentenced Milovan Dijas to 3 years hard labor for committing the crime of expressing disagreements with government policy in the Balkans.

This is the reply of the Tito totalitarians: They are purgative and haste must that they are "Free Dijas!"

That is why "Free Dijas!" must become a world-wide giant from the labor and socialist movements of all countries.
The Warsaw Regime Fights the 'Second Stage'

By PHILIP COHEN

We have recently seen reports that have sparked a hopeful reaction in the West. These reports suggest a change in the Warsaw regime's policy, possibly prompting a move towards détente. The Warsaw regime, known for its hardline stance, has been under pressure from various international and domestic forces to reconsider its policies. While the specific details of these reports are not clear, they seem to involve a shift in the regime's approach, possibly hinting at a loosening of its grip on its policies.

The Warsaw regime is known for its authoritarian rule and its firm grip on political power. However, recent developments suggest a change in its strategy. This change is likely to have significant implications for the region and beyond. The reports indicate that the regime may be considering a new approach, possibly involving a more flexible and cooperative stance.

The news has been met with mixed reactions. Some have welcomed the possibility of a new beginning, while others remain skeptical. The regime's past actions have led to many challenges and setbacks, and it remains to be seen whether this new approach will be successful.

If true, this change in the regime's policy could have far-reaching consequences. It could lead to a more stable and prosperous region, with improved relations between countries and a reduction in tension. However, it is important to note that the details of these reports are not yet clear, and only time will tell how this change will unfold.

The implications of this development are significant, and it is crucial for all parties involved to work together to ensure a peaceful and constructive outcome. It is essential to maintain vigilance and to continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure that the regime follows through with its new approach.
Poland and The Hungarian Revolution

The Gomulka regime in Poland has been treading a cautious line in its treatment of the Hungarian Revolution before its own people. It has severely avoided supporting the freedom fighters of Hungary and acting in a manner that could allow the Russian line of condemning and scapegoating them as "fascists." Gomulka himself bends this line toward Hungary, yet he angles his comments on Hungary to give color to the Russian version of events. In an Octobe 23 broadcast on the Warsaw radio arguing for a more sympathetic attitude toward the Hungarian people:

The following is based on texts and summaries of Polish radio broadcasts now available here.

First, for Gomulka:

On November 23, the Warsaw Radio carried a broadcast made by Gomulka as a "pre-election conference" in the capital (the comment, as all that we considered in an accompanying article in this issue). Gomulka's treatment of the tragic events in Hungary, showing both the bias and the ambiguity, went like this:

"As is known, these events have been taken advantage of by a small group of people hostile to socialism for a mad campaign against the US government and the Communist Parties in a number of countries... We are convinced that the situation in Hungary developed in such a way that, at the wish of the Hungarian government, the Polish Communist government forces were used for fighting inside that country."

Note that Gomulka carefully uses a figure of speech that is "a smug, pained" about that the situation "developed in such a way" that not his Polish military forces, but would be used for a revolution in blood—though of course

ANOTHER FLAREUP IN POLAND

As we go to press, events in Poland confirm that the revolutionary element is growing in spite of Gomulka.

A group of "students and young factory workers" in the Polish city of Sarcesk on November 30 were reported to have been involved in Polish feeling.

According to the AP, reliable sources in Szczecin said "it was a case of an agitation of students and young factory workers against events in Hungary." The situation was directed itself against the Russian consul in the city. This was admitted in the Polish official press, which in (according to the pattern discussed on page 2 of this issue) called the demonstration a "sightseer" and tried to pretend that "drunkards" were the cause.

The reaction, however, was obviously even bigger than the one at Bydgoszcz. Large-scale arrests were made and shooting was reported.

It is clear that the authorities believed that the demonstration had as its object solidarity with the Hungarian Revolution.

Even more important, a resolution unanimously adopted by the same workers who had spearheaded the Polish demonstrations. After three days of demonstrations in Poznan, condemned the Russian intervention in Hungary, and called for the withdrawal of Russian troops, supported the Buda- pest authorities, and called on the Gomulka regime to support the revolution. The resolution was supported by 100,000 workers on their resolution by declaring that they would strike if it were suppressed.

The same dispatches from Warsaw also reported that Szczecin, a hot spot during the October days, and clashes in several provincial towns in the last two days,

Tito opened explicitly admitted approval of the second intervention as "necessary." Thus, he cannot afford to do that, at least yet.

To continue with Gomulka, his speech went on:

"Since this intervention has taken place it is clear to us and to everybody that the USSR does not seek in Hungary a ground for economic exploitation, that it has no intention of exporting its methods of the social and political changes."

Here is no doubt that this Russian version does not reflect the feeling of the Polish people. It should be remembered that the Hungarian Revolution is not an isolated case, but one of the events of the Polish people. The Polish people are suffering from the military intervention of the Western powers in Egypt..."

"It is significant that the Soviet intervention in Hungary is opposed most loudly by those political circles which always base their policy and their hopes on Western intervention—but not on the Russian one, either.""y.

It took a small radio propaganda which "instilled hostile elec- trical sympathy for the Hungarian and bears little re- sponsibility for the blood shed on Hungarian soil," and wound up with the comment that it is "in the interest of Poland" where the Party took the lead in provoking a series of events.

The Hungarian case has already been heard on the Warsaw radio from a particu- larly interesting source, none other than the man who was acting as Polish correspondent in Budapest during the post-communist events. He appeared on December 1, 1956. On December 1, "Letter to a Friend," broadcast in the Hungarian language, was heard.

We reproduce a good part of it below, as taken from the offi- cial radio broadcast. Most of it is direct quotations, as indi- cated by the quotation marks.

A Polish Eye-Witness Tells the Truth About Hungary's Battle

LETTER TO A FRIEND

By Marian Bielicz

(Warszawa Radio, Dec. 1)

Between the first and second Soviet intervention an important change in the political and social character of the Hungarian revolution occurred. The workers and industrial groups were established in Hunga- ry on a new basis for the first time, the social and political character of the Hungarian revolution would have been much more closely tied to the Hungarian revolution, the social and political character of the Hungarian revolution would have been much more closely tied to the Hungarian revolution.

"This is an absolutely clear statement. That is why party politics in the time of the post-communist Magyars was unorganized and uncoordinated. It was the demand for helping Hungary's future to be an socialist ownership to be developed."

"It is a true statement that the workers, the farmers, and the intellectuals, who are the backbone of the Hungarian revolution, have no return to the time of capitalism, said the leader of the Socialists, Berta Koves, who is one of the leading figures in the Hungarian movement."

"I firmly believe that the national movement will be victorious, and just for the victory, I try to reveal the policy of the old regime.

That the Communist Party, the Hungarian Workers Party ceased to exist, it proved incapable of understanding its own strategy and errors. The conflict between Stalinism and socialism; the conflict between the Party, the Communist Party, the Hungarian Workers Party."

"But even then, as it was shown a few days before the Stalinist movement had already penetrated the leadership group and have become since once again dealt a terrible blow to the Stalinist movement."

THE "TRUE COMMUNISTS"

"But, believe me, all this time the true Communist, for whom the cause of their own people is dearer than anything else, were on this side of the barricades, within the labor movement. They were only facing the oppression and falsehood. They were and they knew that the world of their idealism that had justice behind it and it was working to respect their."

"But even then, as it was shown a few days before the Stalinist movement had already penetrated the leadership group and have become since once again dealt a terrible blow to the Stalinist movement."

The Warsaw radio carried a broadcast on November 3, the declaration of the new party formed by Com- munists.

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British People Paying

(Continued from page 1)

bers on all of London’s buses and subways will be increased by 20 per cent. Fascists in the capital believe that the new system is going up in a similar fashion.

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The price paid by the public so far only covers the cost of the diminished oil supplies. The cost of freights charges of new cargoes around the longer Cape route is not included in the price paid by the British. The total cost of the price increases brought about by the British economy is further burdened by price increases due to the activities of the Tory government in other directions.

In the past few weeks the prices of bread and milk have gone up as the Tories have pushed with their policy of high living. In the present economic climate of basic foodstuffs. Additional charges have also been levied on drug prescriptions dispensed under the National Health Service.

The blow of the Tory government’s economic policies, however, is yet to come. The total total of the increased charges has not yet been agreed.

Under a bill now going through Parliament, perfectly reasonable landlords—the people who have to pay the increased rents—will be the people to suffer. Workers and others will have to pay the landlord more. Tenants of municipal houses will also find their rents going up in the near future as a consequence of the government’s arbitrary action in abolishing the rent control.

The government claims that the increase in rents is necessary to meet the cost of short-term working and unemployment. This will be most apparent in the case of the automobile industry. If wages are reduced, profits will be cut. With reduced wages and shorter supplies of gasoline the house market another blow.

The following Thursday, December 27, hear

HAL DRAPER, editor of Labor Action, on

Behind Israel’s ‘Preventive War’: The Role of Zionism in the Middle East Crisis

8:30 p.m.—Labor Action Hall, 114 West 14 Street, N. Y. C.
Hungarian Student Leader, on U.S. Tour, Appeals for Solidarity by American Youth

By RAY WALSH
Chicago, Nov. 19

In an extremely unusual meeting before an American student audience, an authentic spokesman for the revolutionary Hungarian student movement appeared through an interpreter for American student solidarity with his people’s struggle.

Under the assumed name of Istvan Laszlo, the Hungarian student who arrived in the U. S. on Sept. 23, was scheduled to address 500 or more students who jammed into the Student Lounge here at the U. of Chicago tonight. The meeting was arranged by the student government as part of the National Student Association’s tour for the speaker.

Laszlo is too young to active part in the, leading the Hungarian uprising, was a member of the revolutionary students’ council of the University of Sopron, and escaped to the West to appeal before the U. N.

There can be little doubt that this tour by Laszlo for the N.S.A. (with all sorts of official governmental assists) is intended by the spokesmen to be primarily aimed at being in support of America’s side in the cold war. This is a reasonable thing to do, despite what must have been intensive official prompting before the tour. Laszlo’s words, far from being tireless appeals to down “godless communism” in a NATO, were electrifying and revolutionary throughout.

Referring to the Stalinists murderers of the revolutionary anti-imperialist youth fighting, he found it possible, though a bit cautiously, to appeal to the American students’ unionism, to speak out against the invasion of Egypt, and to take passing potshots at official American statements on the uprising.

Thanking the audience for the standing ovation with which he was greeted, Laszlo began by discussing the justification for the revolt. For him only one criterion needed to be applied in this case: foreign subjugation.

“Which of you,” he asked, “would not oppose foreign subjugation in any country, anywhere? Also, how unfortunately inaccurate is this about many American students!”

REACHING THE RUSSIANS

“We do not hate the Russians; we are not national chauvinists or fascists,” he said. “Especially,” he went on, “we do not hate those many ordinary Russian soldiers, who when they found they were fighting the whole Hungarian people, turned over their arms to the revolutionaries.”

Here he recounted an incident when a Russian soldier in a tank was handed a rebel leaflet explaining that this was a fight for freedom. “Accepting the leaflet with a smile of agreement, the soldier, when asked if he would stay in Hungary if the revolution succeeded, shook his head yes!”

These troops were potential allies of the revolution. Laszlo claimed, but not so the satellite countries who used the truce period to rush in fresh troops who had no contact with the revolutionary troops. If these troops were Mongolian troops, he said, who were told that they were going to Suez to fight the imperialists!

Laszlo was particularly bitter at the inability of the U.N. to do anything effective to save the revolution. He raised a profoundly significant question when he exclaimed, “Why can’t one of the well-paid Western diplomats in the United Nations write a single resolution that the Russians can’t wiggle out of?”

Though the speaker gave the impression of one still groping for a formulation of exactly how the potential of the world could have helped save the revolution, he did say that he did not want U. S. armed intervention or a world war.

“Nevertheless,” he added, “we would appreciate it if the U. S. state Department would not say that any citizen volunteered to fight with the Hungarian revolutionaries was liable to lose his U. S. citizenship.”

The discussion period opened with a question justifying the Russian attack on Hungary. A campus Stalinist rose to refer to “the widespread allegations” of the presence of anti-Semitism in the uprisings, and of the “blooding photographs” of “mob violence” and “lynchings” to Life magazine. This Stalinist claimed that the N. Y. Post correspondent in Budapest reported anti-Semitic speeches at revolutionary meetings.

Laszlo replied that any such accusations were absolutely without foundation. He reminded the audience that security policemen were spared execution because they were Jews and the revolutionaries did not want give anyone a chance to slander the struggle.

FOR DEMOCRACY

A resolution declaring the floor to express socialist solidarity with the speaker’s revolt and the Hungarian revolution, was adopted by the students before the arrival of the speaker.

Laszlo answered by saying: “Great Britain and France could not have done anything worse to Hungary than to take the part they did in Hungary.”

Replying to a question about the ultimate aim of the revolution in social as well as political terms, the speaker declared firmly that Hungarian youth were opposed to any return to the pre-war regime or any fascist system. As for the economic system, Laszlo said that they were quite willing to condemn capitalism, and said that the labor movement through out the world was the principal opponent of imperialism. He called for solidarity with the workers’ counsels of Hungary and the Labor Party of England.

A second resolution from the audience was passed calling for the youth groups in the Socialist Forum—the Young Socialists Club and the Young Socialist League to form a Student Government to institute a fund drive for relief of victims of imperialism in Egypt and Hungary. The forum’s other sponsors are the Independent Socialist League of Chicago and the Socialist Party of Hyde Park. Its 1st meeting this fall will be: Sid Lees, local union leader and N.A.A.C. branch president on the Suez crisis, and Max Schachtman, national chairman of the I.R.S. on the 1946 elections.

Eric Fromm, now in Mexico, has made arrangements with the forum to speak some time in April.

Chicago Rally Condemns Attack on Suez, Hungary

By NANCY WILDE
Chicago, Nov. 15

A resolution condemning the imperialism attack on Egypt and the Russian attack on Hungary was passed unanimously by a gathering of thirty-five people at the Anti-Imperialist Rally tonight at the University of Chicago.

A sympathetic audience applauded vigorously as R. H. Shemilt, an Egyptian citizen studying at the university, recalled the bitter experiences of life under colonial rule. The colonialist pretense to a disinterested civilization mission amounted in effect to a systematic attempt to rob the colonized peoples of their dignity as human beings, to destroy any sense of the value of their past, and even to replace their language, while at the same time turning Egypt into the producer of cotton for Manchester’s mills.

A student who was born in Romania and escaped from behind the Iron Curtain drew many parallels between the West’s attitude and that of Russia in Eastern Europe. He reported that the Russian language has been forced on students in Rumania and Poland, and Russian culture and ideas had been taught as superior to those of the satellite countries. Who used the truce period to rush in fresh troops who had no contact with the revolutionary troops. If these troops were Mongolian troops, he said, who were told that they were going to Suez to fight the imperialists!

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The Pacific island group of American Samoa is by no means the most blatant example of colonial economic domination. That is the characteristic form that American imperialism takes. The Philippines and Cuba even became white elephants and were turned loose. The main form of American imperialism in the Samoans is through economic and indirect-political domination and control—a quite different subject of inquiry. The few exceptions are Taiwan and Okinawa, for reasons of economic exploitation but mainly for military reasons—that is, the maintenance of the U.S. navy in the Pacific area.

It adds to the obscure picture of American imperialism when it appears, for example, that American Samoa was turned over to the United States under the Guamanian and Samoan constitutional arrangements. In the case of the United States, the Constitution of American Samoa was drawn up by a committee of American samoa scholars and approved by the American Congress. In the case of Samoa, the Constitution of American Samoa was drawn up by a committee of American samoa scholars and approved by the American Congress.

The fact that the decisive reason for holding on to these territories is not economic underlines the meaning of what has been taking place there; for there is little to be said in this country except that if the last minute Guamanian and Samoan alliance was included in this suspension, but as we shall see in another study, that makes no difference at all.

When Congress had passed a law suspending the application of American Samoa’s Constitution and the last minute Guamanian and Samoan alliance was not included in this suspension, but as we shall see in another study, that makes no difference at all.

To learn what was behind this, one has to go to the two weeks before the last minute Guamanian and Samoan alliance was included in this suspension, but by now American Samoa has been turning over to the United States.

The true situation is much more complicated. For example, the American Samoa’s Constitution and the last minute Guamanian and Samoan alliance were not included in this suspension, but as we shall see in another study, that makes no difference at all.

In brief, we learn that for several years, with little knowledge of what was going on, the government has been permitting the complete ignoring of U.S. labor standards in the exploitation of native labor under the American flag. There is a real anti-wage system not only nourishing the American flag but encouraged by the government itself.

The Majesty of the Law

The issue became sharp when it was discovered several years ago that the minimum-wage law actually applied not only to the 48 states but also to the territories of the United States. This discovery was very disconcerting, because the law was not being enforced. Not only that: the government had not, and had not, the slightest intention of ever enforcing it.

Perhaps we have a mechanical notion of capitalist legality that may think this incredible. It happens to be a public fact. And it has been going on for years, and is still going on.

The United States government is openly, publicly and administratively violating the law, in order not to interfere with the cheap-wage system which would be blown up if the law were ever enforced.

It was a difficult situation, very weird, however, if the issue ever came up concretely before the courts, which are inclined to be less accommodative. For example, suppose someone brought suit because what was due was not paid on time. A suit could be brought, and for the wages the worker was paid whatever was due under the law. But the courts decided that the wages had not been paid at all, and therefore the worker was not entitled to anything; or perhaps the $1.60 wage was paid in law, but the worker was entitled to the $1.60 wage; or the worker was entitled to $1.60 wage; or the worker was entitled to the $1.60 wage.

So this past year bills were drawn and presented in Congress to do two things: (1) kill the application of the minimum-wage law to the territories, particularly Guam and Samoa; (2) exempt the affected employers retroactively from their liability for the back wages that they should have been paying.

The first objective was formulated in the bill as a means to amend the minimum-wage law so as to give the Secretary of Labor power to set the minimum-wage levels in these places. This is the change that has already been passed for Samoa.

The second objective of this bill was that it was set up as the cost of living in these Pacific islands leading up to the following year the first time some information came out, when a subcommittee of the House committee on Education and Labor held a hearing on the same bill, beginning February 15 and ending April 18, 1916.

At these hearings, the A.F. of L.’s legislative representative Walter J. Moore, a strikingly attractive and eloquent gentleman, claimed that if this bill were passed, there would be “an almost total vacuum of down-to-earth rational fact information about the Samoan economy, the level of wages in Samoa” and many other things, because once the bill was passed, there would be no political campaign on the part of the workers or the workers’ organizations, and that the ordinary pocketbook consumer would always be able to see the other side.

But now it is discovered that the two volumes of congressional hearings themselves constitute an exception. Let’s see what they reveal.

‘Irishmen’ of the Pacific

American Samoa is the name given to the eastern group of the Samoan Islands; Western Samoa is the name given to the western group. The history of the latter is largely a history of imperialist scramble in the Pacific for possession of these lands is a very edifying one, but we shall look at this time at the history of American Samoa.

Suffice it to say that in 1875 the U.S. got itself a colonial possession. During the 1880’s the islands were partitioned between the U.S. and Germany; the A. F. L. is interested to know why the former took it upon itself to administer the islands was turned over to the U.S. and German colonial possession. The government, however, never enacted any law that set up a permanent government for Samoa.

After the Second World War, it ceased to be of naval interest, and the U.S. government was not interested in this island. The last thing that happened was that, in 1957, the administration was taken over by the Interior Department.

The Samoans are not citizens; their status is that of American “nationals” only. The government, appointed by the Interior Department, is a dictator pure and simple. There is a native legislature with advisory status called the Fono, but the government is the law. He is also the president of the island’s bank and the editor of the island’s newspaper—Lord Poohoo himself.

For some time now, Walter J. Moore was asked whether the A. F. L. has any unions in Samoa; the answer is no, for the reason that he had no interest in representing the matter and was only waiting for the government to decide what it should do.

If you have read Margaret Mead’s popular Coming of Age in Samoa, you probably have come to the conclusion that the United States is the only place left of the native culture, you have some idea of the cultural background of the people. But this study was made in the 1920’s and 1930’s, and does not offer a guide to conditions in present-day Tuvalu.

One background historical fact is indispensable. The Samoans have not been very docile colonial subjects. Even before the Americans came, there was a native dissident movement—the Mu’ (Opinion) movement—which caused the then German masters a good deal of worry. Under the German influence, and with aid from Germany, the Americans increased and the Mu’ movement was weakened, with the shops “Samoa for the Samoans,” national symbols and a separate native government. There was stubborn fighting; a native boy

The actual number of things European; a disdaining campaign and an anti-tax-payment campaign—campaign was the demand for more money and the end of the occupation. Later, under a Labor governmen, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom moved through concessions.

The Mu’ movement also appeared in American Samoa, under a communist rule. The workmen, however, were made, including the setting up of the advisory Fono. It is no secret that the Samoans, the “Irishmen of the Pacific”—i.e., scrappy troublemakers from the point of view of the imperialists.

In fact, there was a native agriculture which was not based on slavery. The Fono was part of the industrial economy of the island consists of one solitary bank inPago Pago, a tannery cannery of the Van Camp company, whose nigger plants are in California.

There are here in some respects a laboratory specimen, isolated for easy inquiry, of some typical problems, including the rationalizations used for the exploitation of native labor.

The American Samoa company has been making a previous attempt to establish a fishing and cannery industry in American Samoa, but it has not as yet been successful. The land and buildings owned by the company have been taken over by the government, and some information was contributed by the Van Camp man, Willis F. Moore, who testified before the congressional hearings.

The company pays no taxes on the plant. These workers are not covered by social security, nor by any unemployment or old-age insurance. Even the U.S. labor laws, like the anti-cripple act or the child labor laws, do not apply.

The wage rates start from 27 cents an hour, the earnings are not paid in overtime (by the way, the average personal income of a worker, a man’s hourly income, for which a national worker, a man’s income for the year is about $485). This coolie wage scale is in a high-price economy, compared to the U. S. S. price scale.

Wages were not at all satisfactory, Moore complained, that the company had lost money in its first year of operations. He was living in a little house.

But under questioning, he admitted that some “part of the bills” (how much he didn’t know, or wouldn’t say) was simply due to the capital investment that had been put in, especially an expensive refrigerator plant. At the same time, the company was not entirely happy and even Moore was hopeful of getting into profitable financial shape; and, according to Moore, the capital would depend, however, on the continuation of the coolie system.

But, like the congressional committee, Moore frankly and fully realized that there was a slight difficulty: it was not thoroughly happy with these coolies, and yet, it was certain that the wages would have to be paid. On the other hand, by paying them, Moore made sure that the coolies would continue to work.

James Roosevelt (D-Cal.), a member of the subcommittee, pointed out that the tax man was worried about this situation: “It is something that the government can give, very serious to them because there has been back pay for 400 people piling up there;” he remarked at one point.

And later, he said, “I know well, if ‘An American samoa national did not, of course, mention the minimum hourly wage of $1.00 (women) and $1.485 (men); the Samoan plant is unfair competition because of the low-wage conditions; other cannoso
A South Pacific Tale: What U.S. Colonialism Does to a Possession...

would be moved to take advantage of coolie labor in the South Sea island territories; and "the U. S. Con- gress is considering the adoption of a ordinance that would make it illegal to sell rum to natives on the Pacific islands." It is not only a matter of competition for state-side workers, but the U. S. government is ... for the sale of Samoan women and brasses into the same picture.

For example, the government has had another pro- gram that has been in operation for some time, the Exquisite Brasserie Company, which is now oper- ating in the South Sea islands. The Van Camp experiment is financially successful, but the whites are in no hurry to abandon this piece of turning Samoan women and brassieres into the same picture.

So it is fairly clear that the terrible "danger" to be avoided is not simply the economic one; rather, it seems to be a danger from the Samoan people.

The White Man's Burden

All of this is based on an assumption: that the speedy industrialization of Samos is not only a good thing in and of itself but indeed practically vital for the inter- ests of the United States; that the economic progress right here and now... Is that so? We may tend to take it for granted because we know it is so in many other underdeveloped countries. But the question has to be raised today on an economic level but also on a cultural one; the impact of one culture on another and its responsibilities.

Perhaps it is necessary to understand better the things that would happen if the "minimum wage" law were enforced only in the United States but also in the region; not for the people who are supposed to be Washington's wards.

That same question is also impressed by the arguments about the "disruption" of their economy. The U. S. government's own problem is no different: in many other places—for example, Morocco, where the French raised wages, the local labor market was disrupted. High U.S. wages to "spoil" the natives. As long as Morocco was under French rule it was not only in line with the local imperialist exploiters, elsewhere.

What Are They Afraid Of?

Congressman Aspinall lifted a veil on another point: "For decades the Navy controlled the islands... They paid higher wages. And during that time, of course, the working of the island was kind of up and down, but they went out, and civilian control in came, and we have had trouble ever since then as far as those people are concerned in their lives and in their economy is concerned."

The congressman also made a strange point: "If a small segment of the population—the canneries workers—were the only part that were able to get these desired luxuries, the rest of them would be, of course, discontented all the time." Mr. Aspinall was almost an avowed economist, but he was not alone in his neglect of poverty. When a recent statement came from Professor Kelso Kang, a top economist who has also worked on the Pacific islands, it was never in the public nin- e. Patience was put into the record. It is clear what he is afraid of:

"Minimum wage" would have unfortunate re- perceptions on those other territories. But it was not over, and civilian control in came, and we have had trouble ever since then as far as those people are concerned in their lives and in their economy is concerned."

The wage-scale issue is part of a larger political process. The United States is in a sense a part of the U.S. executive and Congress... Persons familiar with the South Pacific know that the U.S. government and its allies would tend to breed discontent among those same people, and to encourage separate policies and plans.
Kadar government, whose existence depended wholly on Soviet armed might. Kadar was isolated even from his normal base of support, the Hungarian Workers’ (Communist) Party... The harsh measures adopted by the Soviet debt stagnated the Hungarian economy. - During the week of November 25, the Budapest Workers’ Council agreed to call off the general strike as a test of Kadar’s sincerity. The moment the call to resume work was announced, Kadar made a radio speech in which he denounced Nagy for having countermanded a “murderous counter-revolution,” and accused the workers of making “impossible demands.”

On Thursday, November 29, leaders of the Budapest Workers’ Council renewed their demands for (1) the full story of Nagy’s fate; (2) the right to publish their own newspaper; (3) greater powers to the Workers’ Council; (4) withdrawal of Russian troops from Hungary. Their demands were refused after several days of negotiations.

On Monday, December 3, workers’ demonstrations at the steel plant in Budapest, refused the right to publish their own newspaper and in the throes of the beginning of conferences of the mimeograph machines by which they had tried to inform the people of what was going on, the marchers demonstratively burned government newspapers in the street.

On Tuesday, December 4, one month from the day the Russians landed their first unit, the second intervention, thousands of women marched to the factory to demand release of Nagy’s Unknown Soldier and to demand new demonstrations to lay wreaths and drape them with flags in honor of the heroes and martyrs of the Hungarian revolution.

In a clash with Russian troops, one woman was killed.

TOWARD A CLASH

This was an open declaration of war. It was the last resort to mass terror by which the government was trying to support in the face of a regime which the Budapest Workers’ Council had proclaimed a “general strike call as being incapable of leading the country out of its tragic situation. The government had no plans, no action, no plan to protect the Russian workers, nor to use the most brutal terror against the people, but it would also employ anti-Russian action to seek the backing of those who had joined the strike. As we go to press, the Kadar government, the workers, the whole people, led by the workers and organized in their Workers’ Council, are still locked in a struggle to the death. The utter inability of this government to gain any support whatsoever in the population it is already in power since it has been kept in power by Russian tanks was nowhere more evident in these sad days.

In the face of such working-class unity, of such overwhelming popular rejection, its attempt to paddle its fox among the “workers” “reformer-revolutionaries,” and “act as if nothing happens — and robbery and lootings among the crowd is to be seen and uranium reaped by military tribunals. The leaders of the Hungarian revolution 1956 plans to kill as “robbers and looters.”

This was also the meaning of its charge that the workers’ Councils were being dissolved because they had been “innitiated by reactionaries to the west.”

On Monday, December 10, the workers called a meeting of factory workers to work as to debate and discuss their demands until all the people of Hungary could be heard against the identity cards of passers-by. It was clear that a major round-up was in progress.

The government demanded not only that the citizens turn out on some occasion to show pain of death before the Tuesday night but that members of the “national guard,” armed by the government, do the same. It appeared that the Kadar government had lost all confidence and that its gendarmerie and its Russian troops were ordered.

In an effort to disrupt communications among the workers, the government stopped telephone communications within Budapest, between Budapest and the rest of the country, and to the outside world.

UNITED IN BATTLE

The Associated Press reports that on its first day the general strike was highly successful. Only a few streetcars and a few utilities were working.

Western reporters saw streetchains on the main thoroughfares, members of the government officers’ “protection” the people and not their tormentors. Trimming the car was a truck packed with other officers. Shortly after 10 o’clock when the car reached a market station, the Soviet workers, in fact, the crews of the trains, in fact, the workers did not want to have a general strike.

This was a general strike completely closed down.

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