

Marosán at Lorand Eötvös University

Anti-Intellectual Bias Denied

Agency and radio reported a speech by György Marosán, Minister of State and member of the Socialist Workers' Party Politburo, to the professors and students of the Lorand Eötvös University of Budapest on 16th October. "During the past 12 years Party workers have seldom visited the universities," he said. "That is why the Politburo has now decided that we should visit the professors and students and talk to them. I have received more than 70 questions from the students and I must say at once: we are not afraid to face the toughest questions if they are put with honest intentions."

Marosán pointed out that in the 1957/1958 school year 2.7 per cent of the students were of working-class and 0.8 per cent of peasant origin. At that time there were 4,367 students at this University. In 1956/1957 - excluding the faculties of theology, medicine and pharmacology, which had been separated from the University - there were 2,047 students, of whom 35.3 per cent were of working-class, 16 per cent of peasant, and 22 per cent of intellectual origin, the latter figure including the 16 per cent who were children of officials. Answering "the enemy's allegation that we are anti-intellectual", he emphasised that actually there were now more children of intellectuals at the University than there had been during the Horthy regime.

"Counter-Attack" against Hostile Elements

Marosán refuted the allegation that all the students were on the side of the counter-revolution. It was true that they had all taken part in the 23rd October demonstrations, but it was also true that 24 hours later the majority had remained aloof from the subsequent developments, in the same way as the workers had done.

Marosán also rejected the Catholic Church's allegation that present-day students were immoral. Most of them were at the University to learn, but there were certain people who did not wish them to do so, but wanted to use them for their own ends. "We shall not allow this. We are starting a counter-attack and will rid the universities of these elements." The 23rd October demonstrations had served only the purposes of the West, which had rejoiced to see careers of young people of 20 and 21 being broken.

Marosán asked the professors to educate youth in a spirit of honesty. But if the professors expounded hostile points of view, if they tried to use the students for hostile activities, the young people must protest, not only as students but also as citizens, and must demand that the necessary action be taken. In future students would not be spoilt, because the country's situation did not allow this. The anniversary of 23rd October would be the political test for students.

Replying to questions, he announced that estimates of expenditure on school and university sports were to be revised and, if possible, more money would be made available. He also spoke in detail of his experiences in China, particularly as far as youth was concerned.

He ended: "Don't accept at once what I have said; go home and think about it. But if you then feel that what I have said is the truth, that it is an expression of the interests of the Hungarian people, then come along with us and take part in the counter-attack aimed at clearing the minds, and if necessary clearing the universities, of the enemy, and thus ensuring the possibility of work and construction." (Budapest 23.00 and MTI 16.10.57)