

Regime-Response to US Measures Concerning Cuba

The Hungarian public opinion was informed about the radio-TV speech of President Kennedy by Radio Budapest on October 23 in the home news service at 0700 hrs and by the daily papers of Budapest on October 24 in the customary way. Both radio and press carried only an extremely short, completely distorted version, interwoven with derogatory remarks.

The first comment on the speech was broadcast by the Homeland service of Radio Budapest, intended for Hungarians living abroad, in the evening of October 23. Comments for Hungarians at home appeared in the Budapest press and were broadcast by Radio Budapest only on October 24. But the statement of the Soviet government on the Cuba issue was broadcast already on October 23. A declaration of the Hungarian government on the issue as well as an interview granted by Kadar to Cuba's Ambassador in Hungary as well as to Cuban journalists were broadcast by Radio Budapest on October 24 and published in Budapest papers a day later. On October 24, Radio Budapest broadcast also an interview with Gyula Hajdu, Communist professor of International Law of the Budapest University, on the legal aspects of the question.

At the same time also the masses were "worked up" into the expectable state of outrage and protest. Thus on October 24 and 25 meetings were held over the country in factories, mines, collectives, schools, etc. and the participants expressed their condemnation and contempt in "thousands of telegrams" addressed to the Cuban Embassy in Budapest, the Peace Council and the various mass organizations. The action culminated in a mass-rally at the Budapest Sports Hall, Kallai being the speaker of the occasion. The rally ended with a message of sympathy and encouragement to the "revolutionary" people of Cuba.

Leaving aside the commonplace content of the comments which were couched in rough and violent terms, a few trains of thought deserve attention. The question is being asked why did the United States Government feel like embarking on the "adventure". Some commentators feel that President Kennedy acted out of motives of internal politics with a view to the forthcoming elections. "Nepszava" of October 24, however, advances the opinion that President Kennedy may try to look much farther ahead and therefore

26 OCTOBER 1962

the whole dangerous election play is only a smoke screen to conceal an attempt to solve radically the Cuban issue. "Nepszabadsag" of October 24 puts forward the view that the government of the United States eventually yielded to the pressure of extremist circles alarmed by the world-wide decline of American prestige in foreign affairs. All the comments stress the sober and balanced approach of the Soviet Union to the grave situation. As a commentary of Radio Budapest, broadcast on October 25 put it, on the one hand the world witnesses a playing with the fire, while there is level-headed calm on the other. An other commentary of Radio Budapest, also broadcast on October 25, pointed to the fundamental difference in the stand of the United States and the Soviet Union on an eventual armed conflict. While the former thinks that a limited, i.e. non-thermonuclear war is possible between the two biggest powers in the world, the latter is of the opinion that a war would be thermonuclear from the very first hour. To prop up this thesis the commentary refers to the arguments expounded by Khrushchev to Bertrand Russell.

In his above-mentioned interview to Cuban journalists Kadar drew a parallel between the present situation in Cuba and the October 1956 uprising in Hungary. He declared that the government of the United States supported both overtly and in secret the "putsch" of 1956 because it did not like to see the Hungarian people also moving along the road of socialist revolution. Also the message addressed to the people of Cuba by the mass rally of Budapest held on October 25 stressed that "the Hungarian people which had to suffer the intervention of American imperialists in 1956, is with you in your right and just struggle."

Sino-Indian Armed Border Clash Admitted for the First Time

On October 25 Radio Budapest gave details on an article in the Moscow "Pravda" on the "border incidents" between China and India and tersely remarked that the "uncertainty of the border line has led to armed clashes in recent times". Radio Budapest emphasized on this occasion the readiness of China for negotiations to settle the dispute. This has been the first admission by Hungarian regime media on the existence of a border-war between China and India.