

The 23rd October Anniversary: Replies to Western Views

Gaitskell's Message

Budapest radio's English service on 24th October included a commentary by Jozsef Sziki, who said that it was "unfortunately" part of his job to know what people like Mr. Gaitskell had to say. He went on: "If I have any remarks at all to make about the content of his so-called greetings to us it is that he could have spared his breath for more useful purposes, and for purposes far closer to the British people than the attempt to foster the already completely (twaned) spirit of the remaining counter-revolutionaries in Hungary and abroad. And judging from what he said he must be even more dejected today, when he learnt that all the attempts by our enemies outside, to which he tried so hard to contribute, were to no avail. Life was quite normal in Hungary yesterday and most people who thought at all deeply about last October the 23rd did not at all think along the lines Mr. Gaitskell would have liked. So Mr. Gaitskell is championing a very much lost cause.

The Khrushchev Letter: Gaitskell's "Duplicity"

"Frankly, however, that is not so much what interests me at the moment, although he, a so-called socialist, could serve peace and friendship if he would stop advocating such discreditable causes", Sziki went on. "What interests me far more is what I am compelled to call the duplicity of the man. That, and the unashamed manner in which men like him display such duplicity. I cannot help but marvel at the indignation the leader of the British Labour Party displayed at Mr. Khrushchev's letter urging the unity of all socialist forces against the very real danger of war in the Middle East. Addressing such a letter to them, say the Labour Party leaders, is an intrusion on the way things are done in Britain. They are an opposition Party, and how can they be appealed to over the head of the Government? If I have ever heard of a strange piece of reasoning it is that. And just as strange is the fact that the Labour Party should consider the letter of the leader of a workers' party to the leaders of another workers' party as something outside bounds. It is a very usual procedure between parties and not at all out of the ordinary... Where does the duplicity come in? In many things that has already happened; but at this particular moment in the attitude of the Labour Party leaders to the Khrushchev letter and Mr. Gaitskell's appeal to what he regards as Social Democrats in Hungary to continue counter-revolutionary activities with the purpose of forcefully overthrowing the Government of the Hungarian people. That Mr. Gaitskell obviously does not regard as interference in the internal affairs of other peoples.

"The question which inevitably arises in my mind, and in the minds no doubt of other people as well, is: what makes one interference and the other not? The answer, it seems, is not far to seek. If the object is to overthrow a people's Government and destroy socialism, then that is not interference. When the object is to safeguard peace and establish friendly relations between peoples, that is outside interference and a thing to be outraged at." (Budapest in English 20.00, 24.10.57)

Austrian Minister's "Brutal Attack"

Commenting on an article by Oscar Helmer, one of the leaders of the Austrian Social Democrat Party and Minister of the Interior, in 'Arbeiterzeitung' about the anniversary, 'Nepszabadsag' said that he had "brutally attacked the Hungarian People's Republic". Expressing appreciation to the Austrian Government for banning the fascist paper 'Ut es Cel' and expelling its editor (Summary Part IIB, No. 872, p.1.) 'Nepszabadsag' said: "The difference between the measures taken by the Austrian Government to improve relations with Hungary and Helmer's attitude is considerable. While Helmer openly defends the counter-revolutionaries, the Austrian Government bans the fascist 'Ut es Cel' and the Austrian police took action against counter-revolutionary defectors who wanted to demonstrate on 23rd October. We note this with satisfaction. We also not with



satisfaction that the Austrian authorities agree with our just demands for the settlement of the cases of minors among the defectors, and the banning of the reactionary emigre organisations functioning in Austria. But we note with regret that the views of leading official circles in Austria concerning neutrality are not the same. The socialist Helmer's attitude is a good indication of his interpretation of 'socialism'." (MTI 26.10.57)

#### Reply to Cabot Lodge

A home-service news bulletin on 24th said: "Cabot Lodge, the US delegate in the UN, referred in a speech to the anniversary of the Hungarian counter-revolution. This inciting outburst, which was full of distortions, is a piece of gross interference on his part in the internal life of the Hungarian people and an attempt to cause confusion and disquiet. The Hungarian People's Republic's UN delegate has issued a statement in this connection, in which he vigorously refutes Cabot Lodge's slanderous allegations. The communique points out that all the efforts of the imperialists are in vain. They are not in the position either to prevent Hungary's consolidation, or the continued building by the Hungarian people of their free and independent fatherland." (Budapest 17.00, 24.10.57)

#### Western Press Campaign Condemned

'Nepszabadsag' on 27th October pointed to the absence of events as being the most remarkable internal political event of the past week in Hungary. Western papers and radio stations found it remarkable that nothing should have happened in Hungary on 23rd October. But the 23rd October had not been altogether uneventful: there had been a very successful mass meeting on 23rd October (Summary Part IIB, No. 875, p.19). So uneventful a 23rd October had not, of course, been to the liking of the Western Press. They had found it hard to explain to their readers that in a country where, according to their loud propaganda campaign, the embers of the uprising were still smouldering under the ashes and where everyone except the Communists were dissatisfied, there should have been complete calm and order that memorable day. (Budapest 11.00, 27.10.57)

#### Peaceful Slogans were Deception

In another 'Nepszabadsag' article on 27th, Oszkar Betlen denied that the demonstration on 23rd October 1956 had been peaceful. It had not been due to mistakes and provocations that this demonstration had ended in an armed insurrection. "The peaceful slogans proclaimed by the leaders of this demonstration were only counter-revolutionary tactics to deceive the students. The true programme of this demonstration was expressed in the celebrated 14 points..." These had demanded "not socialist democracy or pure Leninism, but the annihilation of the power of the proletariat". While these slogans were being stencilled, the organisers had changed the points accepted by the students, substituting expressions such as "destruction of the country", and "reparations which could not be paid" for expressions like "Hungarian-Soviet friendship". The only honest and well-intentioned people whose intentions had been peaceful were those who had been misled. (MTI 27.10.57)