

Trade Union Council Launches Nation-Wide Work Competition

"Nepszava" of January 14 published the appeal of the Trade Union Council launching a nation-wide work competition in order to help accomplish the targets of the economic plan for 1962. Both the appeal and the report of Trade Union Council Secretary Gyorgy Varga to the Trade Union Council plenum held on January 12 in order to discuss the tasks of work competition for 1962, call for an increase in the "democratism" of work competition. Economic leaders should discuss problems with the workers before decisions are made so that they can share with them the burdens of leadership. Commenting on the Trade Union Council appeal, the editorial of "Nepszabadsag" of January 17 mentions that there are still many leaders in the economy who are prepared to discuss the problems and difficulties of their enterprise only with a narrow circle of other leaders. "Nepszabadsag" stresses that the strengthening of democracy on the factory floor is an indispensable condition of the development of the labor competition.

"Nepszava" of January 16 carried a statement by Gyorgy Varga on the forthcoming production meetings in which more than 1.5 million workers will discuss the tasks arising from the economic plan for 1962. The organization of the work competition should be the central problem of such meetings which should be held before the end of February.

In the course of the work competition not only the progress of the socialist brigades should be furthered but the article envisages a new departure: the setting up of entire Socialist workshops, factories, etc. as it was recommended by the Resolution of the Central Committee passed on 17 November 1961. The new initiative was already discussed at a conference called by the editorial office of "Nepszabadsag" and the Trade Union Council of Budapest and termed a "higher degree" of work competition. ("Nepszabadsag" of January 12). It is expected that the creation of Socialist workshops, factories, will be also discussed

in detail at the first national congress of the socialist brigades to be held in the first quarter of 1962.

Tactics of the Atheistic Campaign

Istvan Ballo, a teacher at the Evening University of "Marxism-Leninism" of the Budapest Party Committee and member of the Central Committee's Agit.Prop.Section, has produced an interesting guidance to help the triumph of atheism over the religious world outlook. In an article published in "Nepszabadsag" of January 17 under the title "Sound Foundations and Efficiency" he gives theoretical as well as practical advice to the propagandists charged with combating religion and takes to task those who deviate to the right or to the left from the correct line. Claiming that religious ideas act as a brake Ballo wants the fight concentrated on the points where religion hinders development in the most direct manner and hampers the unity of the whole people in the building of Socialism. Such are for example petty bourgeois views appearing in a religious cloak concerning work and the condition of women, religious views hindering the consolidation of the agricultural collectives, the ideas of "Christian" nationalism, the new forms of natural scientific fideism etc. Much care ought to be taken not to confuse the ideological fight against religion with the political fight against clerical reaction. "Administrative" measures are "necessary" instruments of the political fight if reactionary forces which threaten the building of socialism are to be repressed. At the same time, however, account should be taken of the priests who are loyal to socialism and ready to fight for the peace and who are therefore clearly to be distinguished from clerical reactionaries who approve of the plans of imperialist warmongers. In the first post-war years the anti-clerical political aspect of combating religion was in the foreground. Now, due to the changed conditions, the task is an ideological struggle with the "religious illusions" of the working masses.

The practical form of that struggle through debate is tenacious and patient work of illumination. Ballo criticizes the

propagandists who deviate to the left by taking a too simple view of the anti-religious struggle and by striving for quick results get impatient too easily. Such efforts are self-defeating as they antagonize the religious layers of the population. On the other hand, views according to which the struggle against religious ideas is superfluous as religion is doomed anyhow or too accommodating^{and} surrendering an attitude toward religion for fear of trespassing on religion grounds are also to be rejected as they stand in the way of anti-religious propaganda.

Manual on Religion

Under this title the Kossuth publishing house of Budapest has recently issued (in some 30,000 copies) the Hungarian translation of the Soviet book "Sputnik Atheist" which appeared in 1961. The Hungarian edition is complete with specific Hungarian material, e.g. also with pertinent proverbs and sayings. It is a richly illustrated volume dealing with the problems of religion and atheism in a vulgar form. the "Handbook of Religion" has already reached many factory libraries.

What to Do With the Abandoned Synagogues?

Most synagogues in County Csongrad have been abandoned and stand empty the Mako-issue of "Csongradi Hirlap" wrote on 29 December 1961. How could they be given a useful employment? The article quotes a precedent: some years ago the synagogue of Csongrad was purchased by the local administration and last year it was passed onto the "Petofi" agricultural collective which uses it for storing grain. This article raises a sad issue for Hungarian Jews. In 1955 there were still some 120,000 Jews in Hungary. Their number dropped to about 100,000 after the October 1956 Uprising as many Jews availed themselves of the opportunity and left Hungary to emigrate to Israel. About 80,000 Jews are concentrated in the capital, while the remaining 20,000 are spread over the rest of the country. There are localities with no Jewish inhabitants,

hence the abandoned synagogues. On top of that the finances of the Hungarian Jewish community are in a bad shape which makes the maintenance of synagogues very arduous a task even in Budapest.

Where do the Real Interests of West Germany lie?

In "Nepszabadsag" of January 16, Istvan Arkus, one of the foreign policy experts of the official Party journal, asks in a commentary on the Soviet memorandum of 27 December 1961 to the West German Government whether, taking a realistic view, Bonn's interests actually lie with its Western great power allies?

"The unsettled conditions of the German and West Berlin questions serve only the interests ^{of} West Germany's American, British and French partners who, in their own selfish imperialist interests, would like to push back West Germany on the capitalist markets by increasing the rearmament burdens of the West German state," Arkus writes. Would it not be more convenient for West Germany to get rid of the burdens of the arms race and trade with the East European countries? Arkus claims that the arguments put forward in the Soviet memorandum are in agreement with the train of thought of certain West German business circles who are more sober; here the Rapallo Treaty of 1922 is frequently mentioned these days. It is recalled in this context how far that treaty was instrumental in mitigating the effects of the world economic crisis of 1929-1933 upon the German economy.

"Neither New nor Constructive"

The part dedicated to foreign policy in President Kennedy's "State of the Union" message contained nothing new or constructive in the opinion of Anna Bebrits, as echoed in "Nepszabadsag" of January 16. The main instrument of the United States foreign policy remains the stepping up of rearmament. Kennedy's views on world affairs hardly differ from the "cold war" views of his predecessors. The only important measure recommended by Kennedy in the foreign policy domain, the reduction of customs tariffs between the USA and the countries of the Common market, do not aim at reducing the contrasts between East and West but on the contra-

ry, at increasing such contrasts. The President's avowed objective is to reinforce economically the Western alliance lest it should be the loser in economic competition with the Socialist part of the world.

Istvan Friss Still on Editorial Board of "Tarsadalmi Szemle"

Istvan Friss, recently demoted from his important Party and state offices (see Situation Report of 16 January 1962) has not been dropped from the editorial board of the regime's ideological monthly "Tarsadalmi Szemle". His name is listed among the members of the editorial board, as before, in the January 1962 issue of the periodical.