

## The Position of the Universities: Speech by Szigeti

### Past Mistakes: Recent Repressive Measures

Addressing a conference of university rectors, the First Deputy Minister of Culture, Jozsef Szigeti, said that certain stages in the development of the universities must be weighed up "so that we can deal with the mistakes of which it is both necessary and justified to speak, and correct them. The method used by the counter-revolution was the nihilistic denial of achievements and the distortion and exaggeration of mistakes." The "exaggerated quantitative development of the student body" had been an error the root cause of which had been the "oversized dimensions of the first Five-Year Plan and the endeavour to train many experts quickly in accordance with that Plan". Although the prerequisites of raising the standard of the universities and colleges had been created, the standard of tuition had not risen sufficiently. Now, the emphasis would be on quality. Referring to "a number of measures with which the forces of the counter-revolution had been driven to retreat", he said that these "administrative measures" had been indispensable and necessary. But the Ministry had also taken other measures.

### Political Development Slow

In the second half of the academic year, progress had been made towards consolidation in the universities. The Socialist Workers' Party organisations in the universities had largely contributed to this consolidation. Development had been particularly remarkable in the scholastic field. It remained "less pronounced in the political field". All the pre-conditions for a political consolidation existed, Szigeti said, but "we cannot be indifferent to the rate of progress". In view of the progress of consolidation, the Ministry was of the opinion that the leading bodies of the universities must have wider powers and that life at the universities must be further developed in accordance with the principle of socialist democracy. The draft of the University Bill, which had just been submitted for general discussion, and which defined rights and duties, served this end.

New chairs had been set up at the universities, and those abolished without justification had been restored. "We have restored the language and philology departments at the provincial Universities, and the Chair of Philosophy at the Lorand Eotvoes University. The former Lenin Institute has been merged with this Chair. We have restored the teaching of Marxism-Leninism. The standard of teaching of Marxism-Leninism will be raised by asserting the historical principle in accordance with the characteristics of the various faculties. This will eliminate many justified complaints in this field."

### Co-operation with Non-Marxist Teaching Staff

Dealing with the importance of co-operation between Marxist and non-Marxist professors, Szigeti said that "the non-Marxists' loyalty to our State has created a basis for co-operation". But even non-Marxist teachers must "acquaint themselves with the tenets of Marxism", because they had to "educate their students to solve the problems of the existing society". Co-operation on the basis of socialist principles between Marxist and non-Marxist pedagogues was a guarantee that "the education of our youth is developing in the right direction". Some members of university teaching staffs were convinced Marxists. "Others, without being Marxist-Leninists, share our opinions on essential questions, so that co-operation is relatively easy with them."

As for those who do not, or do not yet, accept Marxism-Leninism, we must urge them to remain loyal. The adoption of the Marxist-Leninist ideology by the university teaching corps is our aim." But this must be done not with administrative measures but through political debates. (Budapest 18.00, 6.9.57 and MTI 7.9.57)