

SECOND LOOK AT A DW EDITORIAL

THE TRAGEDY in Hungary this week impelled me to look back in the files at what the Daily Worker said last April 2 on the Rajk Case. Readers will recall that this editorial was prompted by the revelation that the Rajk trial had been a frameup. Here is what the DW said in part:



"The execution of innocent persons is a crime anywhere and by any standards. In Hungary it was also a betrayal of the socialist revolution which swept away the hated Horthy dictatorship and proclaimed a people's government.

"No explanation and no mitigating circumstances can excuse the terrible miscarriage of justice uncovered with the an-

nouncement that Laszlo Rajk and his associates were executed by the Hungarian government on false and framed-up charges. . .

"Frankly this newspaper and people everywhere do not have the facts of how this miscarriage of justice came about. To blame it on just one or two individuals is unworthy. No explanation has been given, but the public is entitled to know how so-called 'confessions' in open court were rigged. Not one, not some, but all those responsible should be brought before the bar of justice."

Some of our readers were deeply shocked by the DW editorial—more so, it seemed, than by the frameup. One of our contributors wrote at the time:

"It is improper and unworthy for the Daily Worker to demand a trial of Communist and State leaders in other countries. Is it not a departure from basic Socialist principles to intervene

in the affairs of other parties, the mistake for which Stalin was so justly criticized with respect to Yugoslavia? Does it not seem entirely beside the point for the Daily Worker to raise such demands of parties which rule in Socialist countries and which are themselves currently engaged in rectifying their mistakes?"

IN MY OPINION, if the DW made any mistake at that time it was in not persistently coming back to the subject time and time again. Perhaps if we had, and if enough Marxists elsewhere throughout the world had also raised their voices, it would have made something of an impact upon the leaders of Hungary and of the Soviet Union and played some part in averting the tragedy of this past week.

As it was, the Rakosi government, forced by the Khrushchev-Tito rapprochement to admit

that the execution of Rajk as a "Titoist traitor" was a frameup, hoped to let matters rest there. It was only in recent weeks, evidently under the pressure from both Yugoslavia and from within Hungary itself, that the government arrested Farkas, who had perpetrated the frameup, while Rakosi himself disappeared in the direction of the Soviet Union.

It is notable that one of the main demands of the popular uprising against the legacy of Stalinism in Hungary and in Soviet-Hungarian relations, was for an open, as against a secret, trial of Farkas who obtained confessions by pulling out the finger-nails of his victims.

CAN ANYONE be so blind as not to see that if the Hungarian Communist leaders had cleaned out Stalinism in time—as the Polish leaders did—the setback in Hungary to the social-

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ist revolution this week would not have occurred?

Can anyone still doubt that yes, the "demand" by the DW for justice in Hungary was in the best interests of the socialist revolution and of healthy Soviet-Hungarian relations, so important for the peace of Europe and of the world?

Isn't it clear that the stubborn refusal of the two Stalinists, first Rakosi and then Gero to make the necessary reforms played directly into the hands of those who would destroy socialism in Hungary?

In my judgment, the DW last April (and on similar occasions since then) was trying to make its small contribution to the cause of Marxism and of genuine international workingclass solidarity. My sorrow over the events of the past week cannot hide my confidence that what the DW has been trying to do is right.