

Daily Worker Scribe Backs Kadar Decree

By H. W. BENSON

There is no doubt that a wing of the Communist Party is eager to break away from the domination of Stalinism and found a movement which genuinely looks toward the American working class. It was this tendency, led by John Gates, *Daily Worker* editor, that was encouraged, and properly so, by the defeat of Foster at the CP convention and which enthusiastically greeted the convention's declarations for independence and equality.

But as we described last week, the convention's declarations were basically weak and ultimately futile as a means of actually transforming the Communist Party; and those who limit themselves to the convention position will find themselves just as isolated and just as distrusted by labor militants as before.

For, while declaring for independence and the right to criticize other Communist Parties, the convention in fact did not take a stand on a single critical question at issue. Not one word to rebuke those who crushed the Hungarian Revolution; not a phrase of rebuke to the puppet Kadar regime. Not a sentence of moral and political support to the Poles who are fighting to defend the measure of independence they have already wrested from the Kremlin.

While the convention, and therefore the party, evades the issues, not all of its publicists are equally discreet. There is *Daily Worker* writer George Morris who uses his column on February 15 to spring to the defense of the murderous Kadar government and to defend it from the eminently correct attacks directed against it by a prominent trade-union magazine.

Morris provides a typical sample of old-time Stalinist apologetics mitigated only by a clumsy effort to hold out the hand of good-fellowship to two AFL-CIO labor leaders at the very moment when he is revealing himself as the defender of a tyrannical dictatorship in Hungary.

The latest issue of the *Butcher Workman*, published by the AFL-CIO Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union, prints a stinging denunciation of the Kadar puppet government and excoriates its recent decree "legalizing" the execution of strikers. (Its editorial is reprinted in full on this page.) Morris is pained.

What saddens Morris most of all is that the attack emanates from a union whose leadership cannot be described by him as reactionary. In fact, he hails the *Butcher Workman* for its stand on Tito's projected visit to the U. S. When the

AFL-CIO Executive Council issued a statement opposing Tito's visit, Patrick Gorman and Earl Jimerson, the top Amalgamated officers, disagreed and concluded "Let Tito Come." Needless to say, they based their views not on any agreement with Tito's political policies but on pure diplomatic and tactical considerations.

"Jimerson and Gorman," Morris is careful to point out, "...took 'unorthodox' positions on questions including civil liberties for Communists because they weren't guided by hysterical headlines...."

And so Morris is disturbed, if not mystified, to discover that they "are simply swallowing hook, line and sinker what the labor-hating news services had prepared for them on the recent Hungarian decree. The decree has been falsely described in the commercial press as providing a death penalty for 'strikers.'"

A job must be done and Morris does his best. It is necessary to apologize for an anti-working-class dictatorship. One might imagine that after the recent convention, Morris would let well-enough alone, preserve a well-advised if not dignified silence, and talk of other things. But he plunges right in, equipped by the training of a political lifetime.

In sum, he argues that the Kadar regime was acting not against strikers but against saboteurs, wreckers and dynamiters; that the government has the right to defend itself against "so-called freedom-fighters."

Here is one oozing sample of his work: "Would Jimerson and Gorman favor a union cover-up to wreckers and dynamiters who infiltrate an American union and use it? It is well known how gangsters, racketeers and an assortment of crooks use the American trade-union movement. We're trying to get rid of some of them at least. Surely one can find no fault with a workers' and peasants' government that seeks to flush out saboteurs and wreckers in the midst of a revolutionary situation."

But who are the "gangsters, racketeers

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teers and crooks" in Hungary? American labor militants are convinced that it is the puppet regime of Kadar that can best be described by such blunt words, even though it masquerades as a "workers' and peasants' government." They are right, absolutely right.

It is clear where Morris stands—the open defender and apologist for a regime of terror. He will attract to the *Daily Worker* and to the Communist Party as much support and sympathy from American unionists and progressives as has the Kadar government!

But since he insists that the Kadar decree is not directed against strikers but only against "wreckers," let us examine his documents for a moment.

We must admit, at the outset, that every fighter for democracy has doubtless been executed by the infamous Kadar regime as a "counter-revolutionary," "wrecker," etc. But that is not to their discredit; it only exposes the regime as a faithful copier of the methods of the Stalin regime in Russia, which in its

time executed individuals and wiped out whole nations on similar charges. History now records, without the possibility of refutation, that it was Stalin and not his victims who was the "wrecker."

Still, it is instructive to see how Morris is convicted by the very document which he quotes. Excerpts from the Kadar decree were printed in the *Daily Worker* on January 28, not by the editorial board but by Herbert Aptheker in a letter to the editor. It is from these excerpts that we quote:

"Sentence in cases tried under this decree may be death. The court under conditions may mete out, instead of the death sentence, life sentence or a sentence ranging from five to 15 years imprisonment."

Who is subject to these penalties? The decree, as translated by Aptheker, covers no less than 10 types of "offenses," including "organizing against the People's Republic or the democratic order." Who can doubt that this section alone is directed against every independent action of the working class?

But the authors of the decree wanted no misunderstanding; the decree covers "any water, gas and electric utility or of any plant which furnishes vital supplies and which has been declared essential for public welfare." That is, it covers virtually every and any factory.

And one of the "crimes" for which it authorizes death is "the purposeful disturbance of the operation of such plants by illegal entry or any other way, or inciting to the commission of such act." [Our emphasis.] Is that clear enough? Death... death for "the disturbance of the operations of such plants" in "any other way."

The *Butcher Workman* is 100 per cent right: "... to destroy liberty, dictators must first destroy labor unions. This is best accomplished by murdering or sending to jail the leaders of the workers."

And Morris uses the pages of the *Daily Worker* to serve as an apologist. In the preconvention discussion, there were Communist Party members who raised their voices in protest against such blind apologetics. Will they have the right to do so again?