

THE RAJK CASE

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

The overthrow of the Horthy regime in Hungary was a great and liberating development. It removed an ally of Hitler who had fought Americans fighting fascism.

It placed Hungarian people's divisions at our side as allies in America's war for survival. It ended the abomination of Horthy rule, whose anti-Semitism, whose savage and constant murder of labor leaders, socialists, Communists, liberals, for decades had become a byword.

At this moment reactionaries are trying to use the admissions on the Rajk case as a means for furthering the cold war and the crusade to overthrow all socialist governments by force and violence. It is the height of hypocrisy for them to pretend anguish about Rajk, since they supported the murders of the Hungarian Horthy regime. How hollow their outcries since they sponsored and supported frame-up in our country, from the Haymarket martyrs to Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, from the Molly Maguires to Sacco and Vanzetti, from Joe Hill to Willie McGee.

But none of this explains, none of this excuses the adoption, by a socialist government, of the age-old capitalist method of frameup, sending innocent persons to their death or to prison.

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.

This we do know. The frame-up of Rajk and other Hungarian Communist leaders was a result of the false charges brought against Tito in 1948 by Soviet leaders.

It is noteworthy that the Soviet leaders have undertaken a huge review of the operations of their system of justice with an aim to restoring completely the rights guaranteed to the individual by socialist law. We trust that such a review will be carried out everywhere in the socialist countries without fear or favor.

Such a review has never been carried out by capitalist governments. Who has ever heard of capitalist regimes admitting they have wronged and persecuted countless victims of the fight for social justice? All the world knows that Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent. But under capitalist rule not a thing is done to admit the wrong.

To those hypocritical supporters of reaction who taunt us, advocates of socialism, for admitting that injustices took place in socialist lands, we say: Look to the victims at home. Look at the dungeon at Alcatraz that still holds Morton Sobell, whose innocence of any crime now causes even anti-Communists like Bertrand Russell to cry out for rectification of this injustice.

But in demanding justice at home we who have supported socialism as a system which brings real justice and freedom to all are doubly justified in condemning departures from these principles in socialist countries.

We who protest each day against the continued murder of Negroes seeking the simple right to vote have every right to demand that the investigations in Hungary and the Soviet Union shall be full and complete and shall bring to book those responsible for injustice, no matter how high their position was or is.

At the same time we derive great satisfaction from the effort of the socialist countries to drastically overhaul their procedures and bring their legal system into line with socialist principles.

Murders like those of Willie McGee, the Martinsville Seven, Joe Hill and the Rosenbergs are typical products of capitalist class rule and of racism produced by such rule. But socialism is a system based on the fullest expansion of democracy. It means government of the people, by the people and for the people to an extent impossible for capitalism because socialism creates an economic democracy enabling individual rights to flourish.

Any departure from the rule and practice of justice and equality, any violations of human rights, are alien to socialism. We therefore express our most profound indignation and protest against the frame-up and murder of Laszlo Rajk and his associates.

We also take this opportunity to reaffirm a demand we made in the past—that our country and all other countries shall abolish capital punishment. We urge that our government take the initiative in the United Nations to secure a world covenant ending capital punishment.