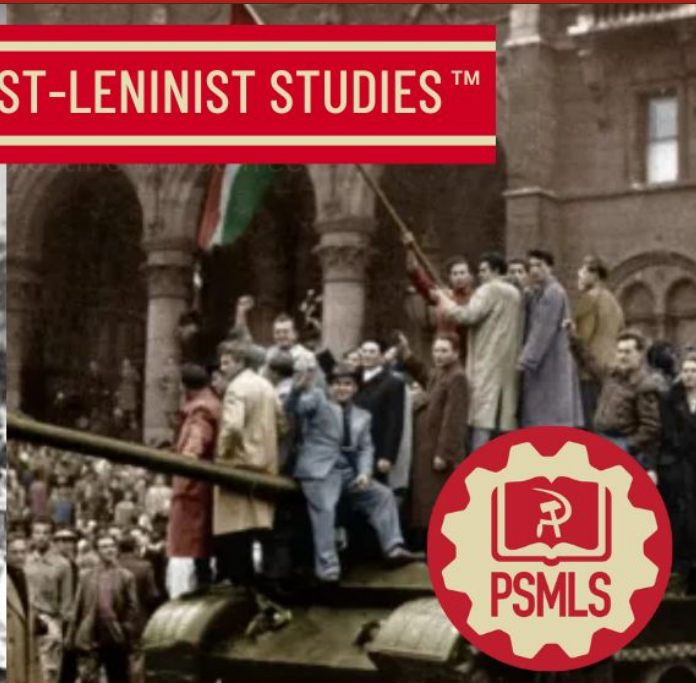




“A felszabadulás dala”(A Song of Liberation) - Written by Erno Rossa

PEOPLES SCHOOL FOR MARXIST-LENINIST STUDIES™



The Hungarian Counter-Revolution

PSMLS 10/28/25



What we'll be learning today:

- Note on effects of Secret Speech
- Background of Hungarian history and conditions that led to the counter-revolution
- The events of the 1956 Counter-Revolution
- How western imperialists conduct counter-revolution, examples in the modern day



A Note on the so-called Secret Speech and its role in creating chaos in the Communist Movement



During the 20th Congress of the CPSU, in February 1956, General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev made the speech that would later be known as the “Secret Speech.” This speech had disastrous effects for the International Communist movement and provided ammunition to the enemies of Communism which have made and still made copious use of.

To be sure, Khrushchev, despite the damage he caused, did put down the counter-revolutionary attempts by fascist and monarchist forces of the same year in Poland and Hungary as we will see in this class. Not only did Khrushchev put a stop to counter-revolution, but during his tenure, he contributed to the expansion of socialism in countries such as Cuba, Mozambique, and Angola. These contributions cannot be forgotten and Khrushchev cannot be characterized the executioner of the Soviet Union.

That being said, his “Secret Speech,” whose effects deserve a class of their own, caused irreparable damage that led to divisions in the International Communist Movement.



Khrushchev addressing 20th Congress of CPSU



The speech over-emphasized alleged mistakes under Stalin's leadership and de-emphasized all the massive accomplishments made by Stalin, the rapid industrialization of the Soviet Union; the defeat of fascism in Europe; the protection of Jewish, Romani, and other minority groups against the Nazi extermination efforts; the expansion of socialism to Eastern and Central Europe as well as in China and North Korea; and many other accomplishments.

The speech provided credence to and downplayed the counter-revolutionary activities by the enemies of socialism such as Laszlo Rajk who conspired with ex-Horthy forces to undermine the Hungarian Peoples Democracy in 1949 as well as the Trotsky-Bukharin-Zinoviev bloc whose subversion included sabotage of munitions factories in the face of Nazi aggression.



Comrade Stalin and
Comrade Field
Marshal Zhukov at
Red Square



In 1956, thousands of Communist Party members around the world, including the CPUSA, left the Communist movement out of distrust sowed by the speech.

As we present the class tonight, it must be understood that after the 20th Congress, all Communist sources adopted the same line created by Khrushchev. Stalin, having passed 3 years prior, and leaders such as Matyas Rakosi, Erno Gero, and others who supported Stalin's leadership being forced to resign from the Hungarian Working Peoples Party (the Marxist-Leninist party of Hungary), there was no-one to defend their line. Thus, all the works we draw from tonight, are tainted in various degrees.

The analyses of the Hungarian Counter-Revolution of 1956 and the reactionary forces that perpetrated it are generally correct.

However, attendees should note that some of the authors over-exaggerate the disparity between the development of heavy industries and the light consumer product industries. The same authors also over-exaggerate the "lack of party democracy" and the "need to democratize." These analyses opened up the door to divisions.



Background & Conditions that led to 1956 Counter-Revolution

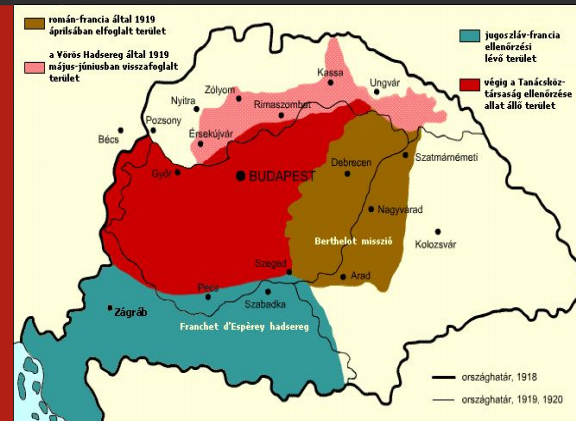


Hungarian Socialist Revolution of 1919

Post WWI a wave of socialist revolutions occurred across Europe (Russia, Germany, Finland, Hungary).

Hungary became a Socialist Republic for 133 days under Bela Kun and the Hungarian Red Army. Held immense support amongst industrial proletariat, little in the countryside.

French, Romanian, Yugoslav, Czechoslovak intervention to defeat the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Led to defeat of Red Hungary and the rise of Miklos Horthy & the White Terror.





White Terror & Horthy Regime

Horthy: The Franco of Hungary

Miklos Horthy was a Hungarian admiral who led counter revolutionary forces during the Hungarian Revolution. Came to power through the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Propped up by the Entente.

Horthy's White terror imprisoned tens of thousands and murdered thousands. Banned all communist & workers parties, trade unions, mass organizations. Established a fake "parliament" with only rightist parties allowed. Similar to Finland in the interwar period.

State backed anti-semitism, no Jews were allowed in universities or government positions. Hungarian nationalism & anti-semitism paved the way for the Holocaust of Hungarian Jews during WWII.





The Interwar Period

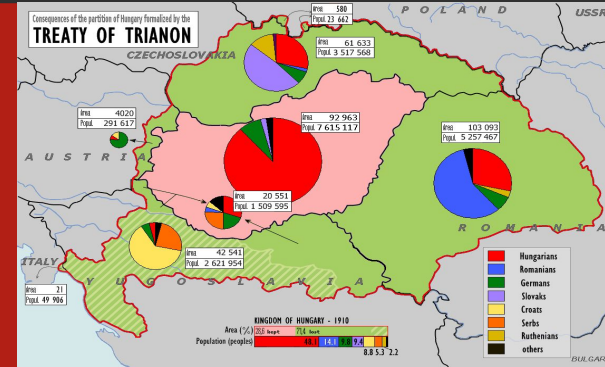
Hungary During the Interwar:

The Treaty of Trianon led to Hungary losing $\frac{1}{3}$ of its entire population and intense revanchism in Hungary, similar to Germany during the interwar period.

Semi-feudal conditions in the countryside. Vast majority of the population were peasants who owned less than 8.25% of all land in Hungary. A collection of 400 magnate families & the Catholic Church owned most of the land in Hungary.

Government of the estate owners of the Esterhazy-Károlyi class. Less than 30% of Hungarians were allowed to vote. Hungarian ruling class even opposed industrial capitalism. Weak capitalist class, most industry and finances were foreign owned.

Close connections with Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany.





Hungary during WWII

Hungary joined the Anti-Comintern Pact (The Axis) in 1940. Helped Germany invade the USSR in 1941 with Operation Barbarossa.

Hungarian Armies committed horrific war crimes in the USSR alongside the Germans. The Hungarian Second Army was wiped out in the Battle of Stalingrad.

Horthy sabotaged resistance efforts to switch sides with constant anti-Sovietism. Nazi coup occurred in 1944 Hungary leading the Arrow Cross Party to rise to power.

564,000 Hungarian Jews were deported and killed as a result of the Holocaust in Hungary.

The Soviets liberated Hungary in 1945 and established a provisional government (not a communist one).





Effects of Khrushchev's Secret Speech

Anti-Stalinism in Herbert Aptheker's work

Khrushchev's infamous Secret Speech which was delivered at the 20th Congress of the CPSU denounces Stalin as a “cult of personality” and paints him as an oppressive tyrant who murdered thousands of innocent people through purges. Khrushchev likely did this to discredit other party members loyal to Stalin, like Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich.

The speech was a huge blow to the Communist movement worldwide, leading many to abandon the cause or engage in anti-Stalin revisionism. It should be noted that even many western historians were skeptical about Khrushchev's efforts to lay all the blame on Stalin. The speech also fails to explain how the Soviet Union remained progressive and democratic all throughout Stalin's time as Premier if he was supposedly a tyrant.

Unfortunately, Aptheker adopted this anti-Stalinist view, writing that “it is clear and admitted now by all that the USSR itself, under the leadership of Joseph Stalin, practiced bullying tactics which were often contemptuous of the national feelings of the fraternal, but weaker, states seeking to build socialism.” This bias should be kept in mind when interpreting his work.



Hungarian Nationalism

Hungarian nationalism was deeply ingrained in the monarchy and church. From the 1830s, language laws required voters, lawyers and priests to be fluent in Hungarian. These laws discriminated against Slavic and Romanian minorities. Jewish people were barred from holding any sort of political position. By the 1900s, anti-Semitism was a deep, pervasive idea held among all classes and segments of Hungarian society.

During the rise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Hungarians sought Magyar national power over the ethnic minorities instead of full political independence. The Croats, Serbs, Slovaks and Romanians were minorities, but in combination they nearly equalled the number of ethnic Magyars.

The Roman Catholic church was an integral part of the ruling class. In property, politics and ideology it was identical with and a bulwark of the clerical feudal fascist regimes which ruled over Hungary for a thousand years.

Hungary's nationalism was tied, quite consciously, to political reaction; her Catholicism served to sanctify both the nationalism and the reaction.

After World War I, Hungary in common with, though preceding, her neighbors (with the exception of Czechoslovakia), adopted a fascist-dictatorial political form and maintained this, unchanged—except for increasing Nazi influence—for twenty-five years.

The specific features of Hungarian development are of particular relevance, of course, to any effort to understand the recent upheaval.

One finds, first, in Hungary, a non-Slavic people surrounded by Slavic neighbors. This served to expedite an alignment of Hungary with Western dominant powers, particularly Austria and Germany; it served, also, to help keep Hungary out of the French-created Little Entente, and thus, again to direct Hungary into the Germanic sphere. At the same time, Hungary's clerico-

feudalist-fascist character kept her a prime member of imperialism's *cordon sanitaire* surrounding the Soviet Union. In Hungary's case, however, this membership had a special quality in that Magyar hostility to the Slav, and especially to Russia, the major Slavic power, added a nationalistic and deep-seated fervor.

Also, in the case of Hungary, her nationalism contained intense chauvinistic and aggressive features, for Magyar expansionism fell easily into line with German imperialism. Both sought to sate themselves upon their Slavic neighbors, and Hungary, as a "natural" helpmate of German ("our best ally," was Hitler's characterization of Hungary), served as a particular source of exasperation and war danger in the always nervous Balkans.

Competent observers and historians are unanimous in noting the extreme chauvinism that characterized Hungarian politics and thought, especially from 1918 to 1945. Typical is this paragraph from John Gunther's well-known *Inside Europe* (N. Y., 1936, p. 324):

In Hungary is the strongest, the most pervasive nationalism in Europe. In the chauvinism sweepstakes the Hungarians beat even the Poles.



Note on Apthekar's View of Heavy Industry

The transition to socialism in Hungary was faced with much opposition from the ruling class. Hungary was deeply entrenched in feudalism and not as industrialized as other European countries. Socialist reforms such as land redistribution, construction of public facilities and industrialization greatly improved the lives of many Hungarians.

In the following slide, Apthekar claims that citizens who were previously living with next to nothing apparently grew impatient when they didn't receive enough provisions due to the focus on industrial development and agricultural production remaining at pre-war levels.

This is telling of his bias, aligning with Khrushchev's view that Stalin overemphasized heavy industry and that socialist countries should focus on small commodity production.

Once again, the exceptional position of Hungary is clear immediately. A dramatic way to indicate Hungary's extraordinary concentration on developing heavy industry, as projected in her 1950 plan, and in part carried out, is to note that the investment planned for her single greatest steel-producing plant was greater than the total investment planned for all light industry in the period 1950-1955.

Another area in which, again, Hungary showed herself to be exceptional was in that of military expenditure—a particularly devastating kind of waste to a Socialist economy.

Thus, in 1947-48 the percentage of total state expenditures for arms in Hungary was 4, the lowest in Central and Eastern Europe. But with the policy of re-arming, Hungary was devoting 36% of all state expenditures in 1952 to defense preparations. This nine-fold increase was greater than any other Socialist country (very possibly greater than any country in the world), and it brought the percentage of Hungary's expenditure on arms to the top of all Socialist countries in 1952.

There was a smaller, but a considerable rise, also, in the light and food industries. This was notably true in cotton-goods, woolen cloth, shoes, paper and sugar output, the rise equalling about 60 to 80% from 1950 to 1955, with the major gains here coming after 1953. Here, however, consumer demand began to grow increasingly selective and critical, and the problem of rejects and poor quality grew in severity as the Five-Year Plan drew to an end.



Problems with Socialist Reforms cont.

The problem of agriculture was met less successfully. The "three-million beggars" of the Horthy regime were gone and most certainly the peasantry never forgot that it was the New Hungary which had wiped out the unspeakable physical, cultural and psychological impoverishment of those awful days.

Yet here, with nature in control and man still quite puny and with the weight of the past hanging like veritable Alps upon the backs of the peasantry, actual advances in total production were much slower than in industry. Thus while by 1955 industrial output was three times greater than pre-war, agricultural output was only negligibly higher—ranging from five to ten percent. Indeed, certain crops—corn, for example, was below pre-war levels, and others—potatoes, for example, barely held its own. The picture as concerns stock-breeding was no better; the cattle, hog, sheep stock remained essentially at pre-war level.

Under Socialism—even with the especially disadvantageous circumstances faced by post-war Hungary—people expect and should expect that living will be better and easier and more joyous. This very expectation, on the part of millions who, in the Horthy era, expected nothing but misery and hunger and insult, produced impatience and worse than impatience in the face of scanty or delayed or partial realization. The expectation is part of the dynamics of a Socialist society and discontent can oil the dynamo, if the realization is not too far from the hope and if the improvement is steady.

As a matter of fact, the conduct of the U.S.S.R. in connection with reparations from Hungary was rather generous. First of all, she extended the time of payments from six to eight years. Then, on January 20, 1948 she announced a reduction of \$17 millions on Hungary's reparations, and on June 8, 1948 she waived 50% of the remaining reparations payments. Nevertheless, for eight years Hungarians witnessed trainloads of commodities (sorely needed at home) chugging their way eastward to complete reparations payments. This was made to order for hostile rumors and exaggerated gossip (the existence of CIA, etc., is to be recalled at this point) as to how fierce was Soviet Russia's alleged exploitation of Hungarian resources. The severe Soviet secrecy in connection with anything involving her own internal development—especially as this touched on military matters—did not help squash such rumors and tales.



Importation of Fascists to the US

Committee for a Free Europe (1949) & the Lodge Act (1950)

The Committee for a Free Europe was an anti-communist CIA front organization. It was funded by corporations such as Standard Oil, US Steel and Ford Motor Company. Related to it was Radio Free Europe and the Free Europe Press. This front utilized political exiles to establish psychological warfare techniques to be used against the Soviet Union and its satellites.

Defection was encouraged and defectors rewarded to engage in propaganda and infiltration as well as to return to their native lands as “sleeper” leaders for future crises. Many of the members were reactionaries and conducted acts of terrorism and violence. The influence of these groups was directly linked to the 1956 uprising. Ferenc Nagy, former prime minister of Hungary, was one such asylum seeker who was intended to be a “sleeper” leader for Hungary had the attempted revolution succeeded.

The Lodge Act provided for the recruitment of an anti-communist “Foreign Legion” selected from defectors of Soviet countries. These men received “specialized” training and after 5 years in the US army, rewarded with citizenship.



Discussion



The Hungarian Counter-Revolution



Hungarian Students Inspired by Polish Counter-revolution Attempt

University students of Budapest decided on a demonstration in solidarity with the Poles; the assembly point was to be the Writers' Union headquarters, the time 2:30 P. M. The indecision in the Party leadership reflected itself to the last moment, for shortly after noon the radio announced that the Ministry of Interior had forbidden the demonstration; but two hours later it rescinded the ban.

Students and other youth assembled at the appointed place and time, carrying placards. The sentiments dominating the banners were: "Solidarity with the Polish Youth" and, "For Friendly Relations with the Soviet Union, on an Equal Basis."

At about 3 P. M. the demonstrators marched to the statue of the great Hungarian patriot and poet, Sandor Petofi. From thence they moved on to the statue of General Bem, a Polish hero who assisted Hungarian revolutionary efforts a century before. By this time the marchers numbered perhaps 50,000. Towards the end of the afternoon, the Budapest broadcasting station announced the text of the result of talks held in Belgrade between leaders of the Hungarian and Yugoslav Parties, already referred to, and it was announced that in the near future leaders of Yugoslavia were to visit Budapest.



October 23, 1956

He concluded his address with the slogan: "With Party Unity for Socialist Democracy!" That was splendid and correct, but where did it leave the 200,000 people packed in the streets of Budapest who had heard their effort denounced as "a demonstration of a nationalistic character"? It left them sharply dissatisfied and disquieted, particularly since the characterization was more in keeping with the previous role of the speaker, than was his promise.

By now—nearing 9 p. m.—uglier sentiments began to appear from knots among the demonstrators: sentiments justifying Gero's characterization for a small minority certainly present from the beginning. Evidences of disciplined, preconceived schemes of provocation and disorder began to appear—anti-Semitic remarks, false rumors of shooting, the bursting of fire-crackers. Soon contingents broke away from the main body and, very sure and very clear as to what they were doing and where they were going and who was to do what, one group headed for the broadcasting station; another for the building housing the newspaper *Szabad Nep*; a third for the telephone center; a fourth for a motor park



Toppled statue of Joseph Stalin
Budapest, Hungary
October 23, 1956



At the radio station were some police and guards but they had firm orders not to shoot except in self-defense. They were attacked; the group killed several and wounded more. The firing then was returned and after a skirmish and some damage, the attack on the station broke off. At the newspaper office, after killing a woman, the group gained control, smashed a bookstore in the building and burned the books, tore down and burned a red flag that topped the building and held the presses for about 16 hours. Meanwhile, the trucks had been driven off—drivers clearly prepared and selected beforehand—and arms and munitions were loaded into them from the factory and the dump.

Involved in all these more or less simultaneous and swift actions were perhaps something under a thousand people. Meanwhile, many demonstrators had returned home, suspecting nothing, and even the Government seems to have been informed tardily and not very urgently of the apparently disconnected, sporadic assaults by mere handfuls of people.

An emergency session of the Politbureau was convened about 10:30 in the evening of October 23 and it confirmed Gero as First Secretary, but made a momentous decision in offering the Premiership once again to Imre Nagy.



Protesters destroy Budapest Bookstore and Marxist-Leninist Literature



October 24 and 25

What fighting there was on October 24, was conducted in very large part by units of the Hungarian Army itself, and by the end of that day it appeared that the back of the organized armed assault had been broken. There still persisted some coherence and unity in the Party and in the organs of State power.

In the morning of October 25, the Central Committee of the Party announced that Gero had been dismissed as First Secretary and that the post had been accepted by Janos Kadar. But later that morning there were renewed assaults upon army and police units and organized assassination attempts upon Communist leaders. This was still largely sporadic and did not yet involve large-scale participation. The disciplined nature of the attacking groups was manifest; it was also observed that their members were well-armed with infantry weapons, and that many wore



Demonstrators join in fraternity with the Soviet Union after attacks by fascist attacks

That same afternoon thousands of Hungarians set out for the square before the Parliament building. The essential purpose seems to have been to support the pleas for peace which, as we have shown, were coming now from all sides where responsibility and good-will still existed—from a Roman Catholic Archbishop through the First Secretary of the Party. Many of the demonstrators rode to the square atop Soviet tanks and there was the warmest fraternity between the Hungarian masses and the Red Army troops.





October 26

But meanwhile, outside Budapest and especially in the West—where the border with Austria had been thrown open since last July*—and where, as we shall show later, all sorts of strange people were entering by the thousands—fighting continued against Hungarian police and army units. The Red Army took no part in these battles and skirmishes, having been ordered apparently to participate only in governmental defensive measures inside Budapest. By the end of October 26, insurgents had gained control of the Austro-Hungarian border and of dozens of county seats in the western part of the country.



October 30

On October 30, Imre Nagy issued a proclamation terminating the one-party system, and announcing the return of the Government to the coalition plan that had existed in 1945. For this purpose "an inner Cabinet within the national Government" was established. It consisted of six people, three of whom were Communists (Imre Nagy, Janos Kadar, Geza Losonczy) and three non-Communists (Bela Kovacs and Zoltan Tildy, Smallholders, and Ferenc Erdei, Peasant). At the same time it was announced that a seventh person would be added as soon as possible from the Social-Democratic Party. This was Anna Kethly, added to the ruling inner cabinet the next day. Thus by October 31 the decisive governmental powers were not in the hands of Communists, but rather in a coalition whose majority consisted of a leading Right-wing Socialist and three non-Socialists.



October 30 - Release of Cardinal Mindszenty

On the afternoon of October 30, Zoltan Tildy, now a member of the inner cabinet, offered his opinion that Cardinal Mindszenty should be allowed to "return to his seat in Esztergom and, by taking up his activities as Primate of Hungary, take part . . . in the noble fight which counts on every true patriot in these historic times." Mindszenty, who had been released from prison in the summer of 1955 and was living under a kind of house arrest in the former estate of a Prince, was actually freed from this detention on the evening of October 30. The act was accomplished by a Hungarian Major—the son of a Count who had been a leader in the 1919 White Terror and a prominent figure under Horthy—with several tanks. That same night the Cardinal entered Budapest.

Meanwhile, still on October 30, the Eisenhower government offered the new Hungarian government a grant-in-aid of \$20,000,000, but this did not become public knowledge until it appeared, in a one-inch item on the back pages of the *N. Y. Times* of January 9, 1957. Presumably, however, this negotiation was known to the Soviet government very much earlier than the next January.



October 31

Before dawn on October 31, the National Air Defense Command demanded the immediate withdrawal of all Soviet forces from Hungary: "Failing this, the air forces of the People's Army will take action in support of this demand"—other Hungarian sources simultaneously put this more bluntly: "Bomb the Soviet troops."

Further, on October 31, Premier Nagy announced, quite on his own authority, that the 1948 prosecution against Cardinal Mindszenty "lacked all legal basis." Hence:

The Hungarian national Government announces that the measures depriving Cardinal Primate Jozsef Mindszenty of his rights are invalid and, therefore, the Cardinal can exercise, without any restrictions, all civil and ecclesiastical rights.



November 3

Then, on November 3, once again the formation of a new Government was announced and again it represented a further move to the Right. In this Government the names of twelve persons were announced. Of these, three were Communists—Nagy, Kadar and Losonczy—but the name of Kadar was included without his authorization and against his will. Now, in fact, of eleven members, only two were Communists. Of the remaining nine, three were of the Smallholders Party; three were of the Social-Democratic; two were of the Peasant; and one was Independent. This, even in name—let alone in the realities of power at that moment—was a government considerably to the Right of that formed eleven years before.



The US and Europe planned for Cardinal Mindszenty to take over Hungary

George N. Shuster, the official apologist for the Cardinal, wrote a series of articles for the *N. Y. Herald Tribune*, October 29, 30, 31, 1956, based, according to the paper, upon "direct information from that country (Hungary) within the last few days." Mr. Shuster declared, "There can be no doubt that the key to the solution of the nation's problems is in Cardinal Mindszenty's hands." Further, wrote Mr. Shuster:

When the revolt started, another effort was made to convince the Cardinal that he should go before the microphone, calm the people, and tell them to put down their arms. Obviously the appeal was made without success.

Yes, that is obvious; and it has, I think, but one explanation: the Cardinal wanted the violence to continue because he wanted the drift to the Right to gather momentum. Shuster remarks that in the highest circles within the insurgent movement was Bela Kovacs, formerly Secretary General of the Peasant Union, and once jailed for counter-revolutionary activities even before Mindszenty and released sometime before the October uprising. Kovacs, wrote Shuster, on October 31, was "a faithful and ardent supporter of Cardinal Mindszenty"; Kovacs was third in the chain of command (behind Nagy and Tildy) in the eleven-person government announced by Nagy on November 3.

Shuster also wrote:

The revolt has shown that Mindszenty was and is the sole moral force in the country, whether he is in office or not. The drive of this national upheaval draws strength from him.

According to Shuster, the Mindszenty-Kovacs leadership "has one aim":

install in Hungary a genuine Christian Democratic regime in which Mindszenty will not participate actively, since he is not a politician, but which he would support as the greatest force for justice and moderation. This is what he did in the past.

On November 2, *Populaire*, organ of the French Socialist Party, noted:

Cardinal Mindszenty frequently speaks over the radio. It seems the Cardinal intends to play a leading role in political life. The impression is that nothing is done without him. The danger in Hungary is the revival of Horthyism, after liberation from the Soviet yoke.

In a leading Paris newspaper, *Aurore*, on November 3, it was reported: "Cardinal Mindszenty is ready to participate in a government that will re-establish order in Budapest." The editor declares that he has interviewed the Cardinal, who was anxious to see a Christian-Democratic party emerge as a potent force. The Cardinal, asked if he would accept a "leading post in the future government" responded, "It is possible." Yet, the editor added, it was not likely the Cardinal would take the leading office in such a government: "This position would revert to a political man to whom the prelate would expect to give, as Minister of State, his moral support."

Reuters at the same time announced from Budapest that the Cardinal, interviewed by Prince Hubertus Lowenstein, had declared that a united and rearmed Germany, "ready to repulse the Soviet danger by all means" was the hope of Hungary and of all Europe.



The CIA and U.S. Security State Involvement in the Counter-Revolution

The CIA and the U.S. Government claim that they had no involvement in the Hungarian Counter-revolution and despite the track record of U.S. imperialism, they were largely successful in spreading this falsehood far and wide. Without evidence to prove otherwise, many who would normally be expected to see through this propaganda were inclined to parrot the talking points of the U.S. Empire ie. that the Soviet government was solely to blame for the violent rebellion that occurred in Hungary in 1956. The CIA claimed vehemently that they had no fore-knowledge or participation in the so called “uprising.”

A public report released by the CIA in 1958 on the subject claims "This breath-taking and undreamed-of state of affairs not only caught many Hungarians off-guard, it also caught us off-guard, for which we can hardly be blamed since we had no inside information, little outside information, and could not read the Russians' minds."

They further claim that the U.S. security state could not have played a part in the counter-revolution because "Small psychological warfare and paramilitary units came into being in the early 1950s, (including the Hungarian National Council headed by Bela Varga), and occasional reconnaissance missions took place at that time, (but) the prospects for penetrating into Hungary deteriorated by 1953 when stepped up controls by Hungarian security forces and 'the meager talent available' among potential agents made cross-border operations essentially untenable."



The CIA and U.S. Security State Involvement in the Counter-Revolution

The first publicly available evidence that the CIA's preferred narrative was in fact a pack of lies, came in the form of the book "Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA" by Tim Weiner. Published in 2007, the book purports to be a "hidden history of the CIA." The book is based on more than 50'000 documents taken mostly from the CIA archives, and contains many revelations about formerly secret CIA programs. We learn from this book that in fact the CIA was extremely interested in fomenting unrest in Hungary in general, and directly involved with escalating the conflict to open violence. From the book (p. 129 -130):

"On October 28 (1956), Wisner (a founding member of the CIA and Deputy Director) flew to Paris and convened a few trusted members of an American delegation attending a NATO conference on the question of Eastern Europe. Its members included Bill Griffith, the senior policy adviser at Radio Free Europe's Munich headquarters. Wisner, exultant at a real revolt against communism in the making, pushed Griffith to pump up the propaganda. His exhortations produced a memo from Radio Free Europe's director in New York to the Hungarian staff in Munich: "All restraints have gone off," it read. "No holds barred. Repeat: no holds barred." Beginning that evening, Radio Free Europe urged the citizens of Hungary to sabotage railroads, tear down telephone lines, arm the partisans, blow up tanks, and fight the Soviets to the death. "This is RFE, the Voice of Free Hungary," the radio announced. "In the case of a tank attack, all the light weapons should open fire at the gun sights." Listeners were advised to throw "a Molotov cocktail... a wine bottle of one liter filled with gasoline ... on the grated ventilation slit over the engine." The sign-off was "Freedom or Death!"



The CIA and U.S. Security State Involvement in the Counter-Revolution

“That night, Imre Nagy, a former prime minister who had been expelled from the Communist Party by hardliners, went on the state radio station to denounce the "terrible mistakes and crimes of these past ten years." He said that Russian troops would leave Budapest, that the old state security forces would be dissolved, and that a "new government, relying on the people's power," would fight for democratic self-rule. In seventy-two hours, Nagy would form a working coalition government, abolish one-party rule, break with Moscow, declare Hungary a neutral country, and turn to the United Nations and the United States for help. But as Nagy took power and sought to dismantle Soviet control over Hungary, Allen Dulles deemed him a failure. He told the president that the Vatican's man in Hungary, Cardinal Mindszenty, newly released from house arrest, could and should lead the nation. That became the party line on Radio Free Europe: "A reborn Hungary, and the appointed leader sent by God, have met each other in these hours." The CIA's radios falsely accused Nagy of inviting Soviet troops into Budapest. They attacked him as a traitor, a liar, a murderer. He once had been a communist and so he was forever damned. Three new CIA frequencies were on the air at this hour. From Frankfurt, exiled Russian Solidarists said an army of freedom fighters was heading for the Hungarian border. From Vienna, the CIA amplified the low-wattage broadcasts of Hungarian partisans and beamed them back to Budapest. From Athens, the CIA's psychological warriors suggested that the Russians be sent to the gallows.”



The CIA and U.S. Security State Involvement in the Counter-Revolution

Further documentation released in 2025 under the JFK Assassination Records Act of 1992 paints an even more damning picture of U.S. clandestine involvement in the lead-up to the supposed “uprising.” The document to the right contains evidence that the CIA was actively supporting and perhaps even giving orders to the “Hungarian Freedom Fighters” who would later go on to form an important part of the counter-revolution.

104-10110-10525 2025 RELEASE UNDER THE PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY ASSASSINATION RECORDS ACT OF 1992

13 December 1967

SUBJECT: BATISTA, Laureano
(See also DAVIS, Rudolph Richard)

ALLEGATION:

Rudolph Richard DAVIS, Cuban exile questioned by GARRISON's staff in connection with a training camp for Cubans at Iacombe, Louisiana, told the FBI in May 1964 that Laureano BATISTA, sent him 19 men from Miami in response to a request from DAVIS in 1963. The men stayed at a home near Iacombe, Louisiana.

CIA CONNECTION:

Laureano BATISTA, Secretary of Military Affairs, Executive Committee, Movimiento Democratica Cristiano (MDC), Miami, was granted a Provisional Operational Approval on 30 December 1959 and an Operational Approval on 20 February 1960 for use as a PP Agent, Havana, Cuba.

SOURCE:

Memorandum No. 5, Enclosures 3 and 7.

OS INDICES RESULTS:

Subject, a 32 year old Cuban exile, was from a wealthy Cuban family and in Cuba he was a banker. He was granted a POA in December 1959 and an OA in February 1960 for use as a PP agent in Havana, Cuba.

A copy of a letter in Subject's file dated 22 November 1963 signed by Subject as Secretary for Military Affairs, Executive Committee, Movimiento Democratica Cristiano is addressed to Major General Bela K. KIRALY, President, Hungarian Freedom Fighters Federation, Inc., and offered the services of the MDC in arranging meetings and discussions with other anti-CASTRO organizations and the Hungarian Freedom Fighters. The Hungarian Freedom Fighters were Agency sponsored and Covert Action Staff was interested in information on the MDC before granting approval for contact between the two organizations.

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Last broadcast of Free Hungarian Radio before Soviet Intervention





Discussion & New Members Introductions



New Member Introductions

- What is your name, pronouns and state (or country/territory)?
- Where do you work? Is it unionized?
- How did you find out about the People's School?
- What do you think about tonight's class?



Counter-revolution in the Modern Day



Portrayal of Hungary in the US vs Europe

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One may begin with typical expressions of widely-held American opinion concerning the Hungarian events. We cull these not from the big-chain press, or from such newspapers as the *New York Times* or *Herald Tribune*, themselves multi-million dollar corporations, well-known as dedicated partisans of capitalism, but rather from three very much smaller liberal, or Left or socialist-oriented journals.

The *New Republic*, in an editorial entitled "Myth With Nine Lives" (Nov. 26, 1956), finds that the "myth" that Communism was somehow to be preferred over Capitalism, has finally and at last been destroyed by the events in Hungary: "It is this myth that the Russian tanks crushed as they lurched into Budapest." The *American Socialist* editors (Jan. 1957) see "Russian butchery in Hungary"; they find that the idea of a serious threat of the restoration of fascism in Hungary early in November, 1956 "is a slanderous fable." They "reject the fabrications about a fascist counter-revolution" and insist that "the real trend of the Hungarian revolution was not toward fascism, or capitalism, or feudal-landlordism, but to get the Russian troops out, to get Hungary out of the Warsaw bloc and to neutralize the country."

Paul M. Sweezy, in the *Monthly Review* (December, 1956) writes:

An uprising of classic form and proportions took place in Hungary. It was drowned in blood by the Soviet army. These are simple facts which no amount of arguing and no conceivable new evidence can change.

This opinion is dated November 12, and while it asserts that "no amount of arguing and no conceivable new evidence" could alter it, nevertheless the writer added a postscript—presumably a few days later—stating: "In the interval between writing and going to press, a great deal of new material on Hungary has appeared. It tends to prove that by November 4th the forces of extreme reaction were definitely getting the upper hand."

One must assume that since "extreme reaction" was getting the upper hand, this might throw askew the estimate of the event as "an uprising of classic form." On the other hand, that so astute and socialist-minded an observer as Dr. Sweezy should view an event, at any time, as a classical revolution, would lead one to believe that even if this first estimate should be wrong, still the event was hardly likely to be a classical counter-revolution. One cannot be sure just what is Dr. Sweezy's opinion; but certainly his view as expressed on November 12 is the overwhelmingly dominant one in the United States.

One must add that it is not a unanimous opinion in the United States for many (probably most) Communists disagree, and some non-Communists also have serious doubts that the dominant view is valid. Dissidents may draw encouragement from the fact that the dean of American scholars, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, is with them. He finds that the fundamental feature of the Hungarian outbreak, as it developed, "was not against the failure of socialism, but against socialism itself, with the help of former Hungarian capitalists and landholders now gathering in Austria, together with the great capitalist and colonial interests in America and the West." (*The American Socialist*, Jan. 1957, pp. 8-9.)

It is significant, also, that in Western Europe, where political maturity is greater, where fascism is better understood and carries more bitter memories, and where a deeper comprehension of the realities of Hungarian history and life is more widespread, the estimates offered by the prototypes of the *New Republic* and the *Monthly Review* and the *American Socialist* are quite different.

Thus in West Germany, the organ of the Social-Democratic Party, *Vorwaerts*, editorialized (Nov. 11, 1956) that the downfall of Nagy had come about because he pursued a policy of continually granting concessions in order "to appease the insurgent movement." This, says the Social-Democratic paper, "was bound to fail because the insurgents were being excited to extremism under the influence of reactionary and fascist elements which had come to the surface."

Two weeks later, Herbert Wehner, a member of the Central Board of the West German Social-Democratic Party, reported in Hamburg to Party leaders on the world situation: Wehner was at pains to point out that a veritable White Terror had appeared in Hungary in the last days of October, 1956, so that "a sort of

fever of destruction against everybody believed to be members or officials of the Communist Party" developed and that "not only they, but also their wives and children were being persecuted and killed in indescribably brutal ways."*

Wehner felt the restoration of clerical-fascism was a real danger, and referred to Cardinal Mindszenty as having "found nothing better to do than to call for a return of land to the landowners, and the restoration of the property of the Catholic Church"; but his greatest worry was that the Hungarian events had invigorated the Cold War. The main problem, as he saw things, was:

How can a way be found out of this crisis except by political means? Must there be shooting? It is now clear that the loud-mouthed radio promises to help Hungary, parachute troops and so on, sent out from West Germany, but not only from here, were absolutely worthless.

Again, the French socialist paper, *Populaire*, on November 2, stated: "The danger in Hungary is the revival of Horthyism"; and even the British *New Statesman and Nation*, in an editorial appearing as early as October 27, declared that while the movement in Poland "is neither counter-revolutionary nor anti-Soviet," the situation in Hungary seemed "to present a very different picture"; that there "the regime has for the present lost control" and that "it was, in fact, to repress a threatened counter-revolution that the Red Army went into action in Hungary."

So do the commentators of the United States and of Western Europe differ. Sir Walter Raleigh, faced with conflicting reports concerning a contemporaneous event decided, therefore, to abandon his project of writing a truthful history of ancient Rome as completely impossible. This writer, much less wise than Sir Walter, will not follow his example. Rather, we turn now to an effort to comprehend the Hungarian events of October-November, 1956.



Color Revolutions

It's fair to say the 56 Hungarian counter-revolution was an example of what is known today as a “color Revolution”.

The term “color revolution” was coined in the early 21st century to designate at first popular movements, but later directed at establishing in Eastern Europe regimes favorable to Western so-called liberal democracies.

These so called “revolutions” did not actually overthrow socialist governments, but mostly capitalist countries not friendly enough to Western imperialism.

The method is always the same: support popular and grievances through the intense use of internet and foreign NGO's, and bring to power Western puppets. Often protestors are youth, who are naïve and impressionable whose frustrations are easily manipulated

Often, there are signs that the protests are artificial. Symbols representing monarchy and feudalism inexplicably show up at protests (ex: country's flag under monarchy).



Kronstadt anti-Soviet Uprising 1921

One could say the first color revolutions were the many anti-communist uprisings of the 20th century.

It began in March 1921 at Kronstadt, outside of Petrograd when sailors rebelled against the Soviet Republic. They reflected the discontent of peasant masses after 4 years of “war communism” at the end of the Civil War. Their slogan was: “Soviet yes, but without the Bolsheviks”. They were fully supported by French British and Russian capitalists, including White Tsarists.



Kronstadt Sailors



German Democratic Republic Uprisings 1953

In June 1953, shortly after Stalin's death, a similar revolt happened in East Berlin. While still in the process of rebuilding what was destroyed in WWII, the reactionaries with their backers in Bonn, Washington, and London, took advantage of the death of Comrade Stalin to destroy the German Democratic Republic.

Thanks to rapid Soviet intervention, socialist order was quickly restored. The radio in the American sector of West Berlin had been blasting the news of the first workers going on strike in order to fan the flames of anti-communism in East Germany.

The events of October 1956 in Hungary followed that familiar playbook.

Spontaneous demonstrators

BERLIN

I watched a demonstration of alleged "East Berlin workers" and was interested, but not surprised, to see that one of the "workers" was Mr. Tom Reedy, Chief Correspondent of the American Associated Press in W. Berlin. Rowdies . . . were often led by young men wearing black-dyed U.S. or British battle-dress . . . issued to the semi-military German formations attached to the Western armies in W. Berlin.

—Eye-witness report by John Peet, British editor of Democratic German Report (6/19), on Berlin demonstrations.

Excerpt from the newspaper
National Guardian July 6th, 1953



Solidarity Movement - Poland

Once again there was a 12 year gap until the next color revolution. This time it was Poland in 1980 with the Solidarity movement.

In 1978 a new Catholic pope had been elected in Rome, John Paul II born in Poland, a rabid anti-communist. This wasn't lost on the CIA who saw a great opportunity. In August 1980 a trade union was founded at the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk. Its name was Solidarity, its leader Lech Walesa, also a rabid anti-communist. Solidarity had the CIA's and the Vatican's fingerprints all over. Lech Walesa quickly became the poster child of the so-called Free World.

By 1981 Solidarity reached a membership of an incredible 10 millions. In 1983 Walesa received the Nobel Peace Prize, in passing that same prize awarded in 2009 to Obama, the U.S. president who ordered the most drone strikes, and once said "turns out I'm really good at killing People". Solidarity was instrumental in overthrowing socialism and Walesa became capitalist Poland's first president from 1990 to 1995.





Chinese Color Revolutions

The People's Republic of China wasn't spared either by color revolutions.

In June 1989 the Tiananmen Square protests were an attempt to overthrow the Communist Party of China. It must be noted that the so-called "democracy protestors" were marching at the sound of the Internationale. Once again they never openly rejected socialism but pretended to improve it.

The CIA and Western ideologues are expert dialecticians and master wolves who know how to invite the sheep to the dinner table.

In 2019-2020 the West pulled the "Water Revolution" in Hong Kong. Protests were broadcasted 24/7 in Western media, and protestors didn't even hesitate to march with U.S. and U.K. flags.



Protesters burn and flip buses outside
Tiananmen Square 1989



EuroMaidan - Ukraine 2013 and 2015

Of course the most infamous “color revolution” of late was the 2014 Euromaidan that overthrew a bourgeois government in Kiev, whose mortal sin was to be too friendly with Russia and not friendly enough with EU & NATO. During her envoy to Ukraine in 2014, Victoria Nuland hand-picked herself the new Kiev government at the time, publicly admitted years later that the U.S. had spent \$5B to bring “freedom and democracy” to Ukraine.

Just like all color revolutions from Kronstadt to Budapest, Euromaidan began with somewhat of a legitimate popular discontent, and was quickly funneled by the West into installing a lapdog puppet régime, this time openly fascist.



Annual Ukrainian march to celebrate Nazi leader Stepan Bandera's birthday. January 2015.



Jihadist takeover of Syria 2024

In December of 2024, the democratically elected Bashar Al-Assad of the secular Baathist party was toppled by American, Israeli, and EU supported Al Qaeda terrorists called the Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS).

This Fundamentalist-Jihadist terrorist group, with the support of groups like ISIS, have turned Syria into failed state similar to Afghanistan in the 1990s where warlords are constantly at war and where public executions of so-called infidels are the norm



Jihadist HTS fighters, how were they able to afford their equipment?



Cuba

In 2021, rumors spread online of protests in Cuba. While some posts showed thousands of protestors, in reality these counter-revolutionary protests were small and images of counter-protests in support of the Cuban government, which were massive, were used in these online posts to mislead people.





Venezuela Today

Today, American Imperialism has its sights on Venezuela.

Despite the Nicolas Maduro's electoral win in July 2024, the Trump administration continues to claim the elections were a "sham."

Trump has ordered the bombings of boats off the coast of Venezuela and is responsible for at least 34 deaths under the false pretense that these boats are drug smugglers.

This renewed effort of regime change is attempt to enforce a modern day "Monroe Doctrine"



Nicolas Maduro in a crowd of supporters month before 2024 election



Discussion & Wrap Up



Announcements

- PCUSA Cell Chairs need to call members of their cells to remind them about attendance.
- The next issue of New Masses (2026) has begun production. If you have art you want us to feature, email it to info@partyofcommunistsusa.net.



Volunteers Needed!

We are in need of volunteers for the staff of the People's School! Here's a few roles we need filled:

- People to help manage posting on our social media and podcast platforms
- Video Editors, Audio Editors, Graphic Designers, Artists, Narrators
- Web Controls, Moderators

Email info@peopleschool.us if you're interested and try to attend our next staff meeting if possible.



View From Left Field

<https://viewfromleftfield.libsyn.com>



The Old PSMLS Youtube is now the Youtube of View From Left Field, a podcast of analysis and discussion of current events from a progressive perspective.

Like the Youtube videos and subscribe with 5 star ratings on your podcast platforms.

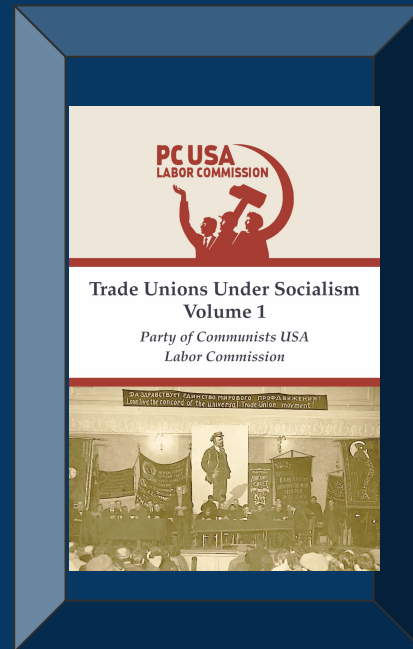
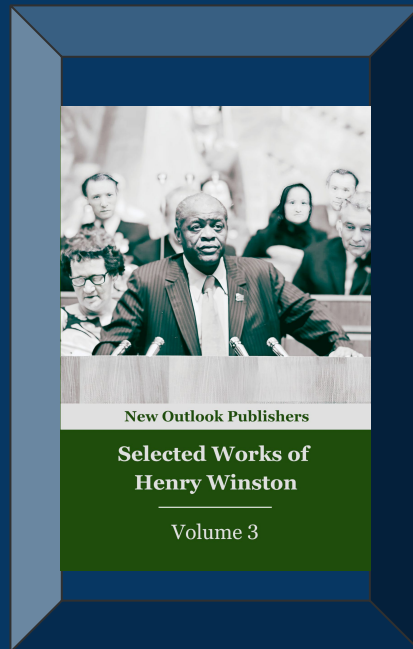
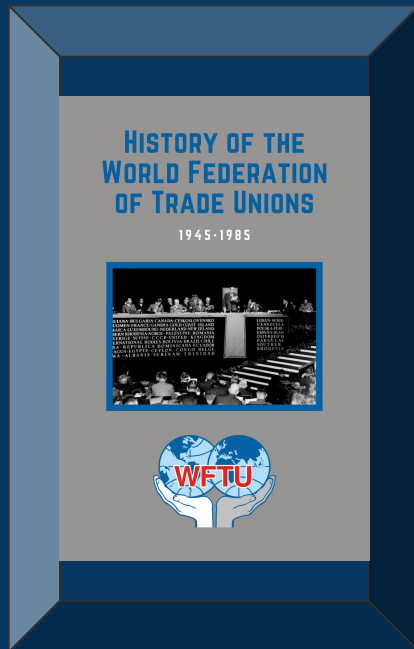




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Harry Bridges School of Labor

luel.us/laborschool/



The Harry Bridges School of Labor is a monthly class covering a variety of topics aimed at building class consciousness among union members.

November's class is on the 1946 Sugar Strike. Class will be November 8th, 2025 at 7pm EST/4pm PST.





Internacionálé- Hungarian Soviet Republic Anthem [1919]