

# Message to Hungarian people and Soviet soldiers

**MICHAEL RANDLE**, 22-year-old member of the Peace Pledge Union and the Non-Violent Resistance Group left his job on his father's farm today on the first stage of a trip to the Hungarian frontier bearing a message to the Hungarian people and the Soviet troops in their country on Christmas Day.

He will leave Victoria Station Sat., Dec. 22, for Vienna by the 9 a.m. train, unless he uses a plane which has been offered to him as we go to Press.

The text of the leaflet which he hopes to distribute during a Christmas vigil on the Austro-Hungarian frontier reads :

**T**HIS is a message expressing the feelings of people in many parts of the world who have been deeply stirred by recent events in Hungary. It is brought to the Hungarian border in an effort to reach you, the Hungarian people, and you, the Soviet soldiers.

We are not important people, as the world goes, but plain people with deep beliefs. In our own countries we have refused to be conscripted or become a part of the military machines used everywhere to enslave and murder.

We have opposed and condemned the suppression of liberty everywhere—by the West and by the Soviet Union—in Cyprus and Algeria not less than in Poland and Hungary. We strongly opposed the recent crimes of aggression by Britain and France against Egypt and by the Soviet Union against Hungary.

We oppose all war and violence because we believe that, whatever the goal, in the long run they cannot bring lasting good, but only more misery and bloodshed.

You, people of Hungary, have demonstrated that courage and self-sacrifice are stronger than armed might and have thus inspired millions with new hope. When you have fought with arms, the Soviet military machine has been able to defeat you, but it has been unable to conquer you as you continue to resist largely without arms.

India, led by Mahatma Gandhi, won independence from British imperialism by non-

violent resistance. He saw clearly that true and lasting freedom could only be won by militant but peaceful methods.

He asked his followers not only to remove violence from their actions, but hatred of their enemies from their hearts. The way of love was taught by Jesus. It is the way of Buddha of India, Tolstoy of Russia and the Quakers of many parts of the world.

We hope that you will somehow find the strength to continue your resistance without arms, and will come to realise that violence against the Soviet troops and others hinders, rather than helps, your cause. They, too, are victims of the evil that engulfs the world.

By resolute non-violent action you may be able to break down the barriers of fear and hatred and bring them to join you in your struggle for freedom.

What can we say to you, the Soviet soldiers stationed in Hungary? We are painfully aware of the crimes of the West and our own failure to prevent them. But precisely because we have opposed them, we feel we must speak frankly to you now.

Just as we deeply regret the occasions when violence has been used against you, so we also must make it clear that we believe the Soviet Government's invasion of Hungary was wrong and are appalled by the bloody repression.

We hope you will not open fire on unarmed people—as many Soviet soldiers to their everlasting credit have already refused to do.

We believe that all men have the right to choose their own way of life and form of government, and that this would result in a society more free and just than that existing in either the West or the Soviet Union today.

Human brotherhood will only be fulfilled when all tyranny is ended. But we believe that the means used are equally important. It is our deep conviction that the road to liberation lies in complete reliance on moral power arising from non-violent resistance and love.

*Reprinted from Peace News, Dec. 21, 1956. Further reports of this action will appear in Peace News next week. Order from your newsagent. Every Friday, price 4d. or from 3 Blackstock Road, London, N.4.*