

Dear Editor

Letters from Readers

Walter Lowenfels on Foresight And Hindsight in His Own Poetry

PHILADELPHIA.

Editor, The Worker:

My late father had a saying which used to annoy me: "Your hindsight is better than your foresight."

Naturally, I looked forward to a time when my foresight would catch up, and I would always be right, like my father was.

Now I am a father, and a grandfather, too, and it doesn't always work out that way. For example, people are asking me "What about that poem you wrote on Stalin's death?" What can I answer but that my hindsight is better now?

At any rate, the poem proved not to be too good, and I long ago discarded it from my "Collected Works."

Nevertheless, I am not satisfied. Paul Ekuard asked: "Has any poet ever lied?" We expect our poets to tell the truth, better than anyone else does, and ahead of time, not behind time.

If life were a poem, we could continually correct and edit it and only publish the final acceptable version in our life work. To go along as I have been doing for so many years, always correcting my errors, in life, as well as in my verses is not to my liking.

I'd like my life to be like Mozart's music—correct on the very first draft.

However, if we were all Mozarts, humanity might not need a Communist Party. It's precisely because we are human that we become Communists, and correct ourselves the only human way we can—together.

"Concretely," as the saying goes, I have been arriving recently at two conclusions:

1. In the atomic age the revolution is to be human;
2. To be human gives you a bond with anybody to be left of the H-bomb.

WALTER LOWENFELS.

Editor, The Worker:

1. Czechoslovakia ships arms to Egypt. It may feel this is just trade, or helps weaken Arab ties to imperialism, or in some long run thus tends to lessen war tensions. But suppose a free debate by the American left leads us to conclude that this act increases war tensions, and hurts our moral and logical position with the American people?

2. It is now fashionable to say

that American Marxists did not have to take a position on Lysenko—obviously this did us immeasurable harm, in view of the position we took and subsequent events. But let us recall we were not dealing merely with an internal matter, with a purely biological question. It was charged that a demagogue, personally backed by Stalin and approved by the Central Committee, had jammed a highly controversial view down the throats of the majority of Soviet scientists who had hitherto not accepted his views. Of course we don't base our position on an art for art's sake approach, or deny wise State intervention. But if examination of the documents and background led us to be highly critical could we afford even to remain silent?

I give these examples to get at the real problems to be resolved by the American left after the lessons of the 20th Congress.

If we subordinate our views to some socialist country's state position, or rationalize ourselves into agreement, do we not become merely a mouthpiece for other people's views, and will we not again end up where we are today? But if we follow our convictions where they lead us, must we not at times put ourselves in embarrassing conflict with the state policy of a friendly socialist country which is often subject to malicious attacks? Of course, in the long run our criticism may be a useful corrective.

A. S.

Dear Editor:

To see the dynamic power of the movements for socialism, for peace and anti-colonialism is the pre-requisite for understanding the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. The might of these movements shows that imperialism, as a world system, is being very sharply challenged by socialism and that war, caused by imperialism can now be prevented.

Imperialism and racial prejudice are on trial before world public opinion. Similarly the Negro peoples movement in America is watched by the colored peoples of the world.

The unity of the American Negro people must be based on the principle of "all-class unity" in this period of repressive imperialism. This does not eliminate the fight

Letters from Readers

Dear Editor:

In Milton Howard's article in the April 1st Worker, he declares that Socialism, once constitutionally established in the U.S., must defend the "right to advocate a return to capitalism." Since when? Is this consistent with the Marxist concept of class struggle? Even the American revolutionists in 1776 made sure that no one advocated return to monarchy, and that every state was guaranteed "a republican form of government."

Peaceful transition to Socialism is desired by all of us. The Communist Party never has and never will advocate violence. But desirability and probability are two different things. The powers which control Standard Oil, General Motors, and the few thousand other corporations will never give up their billions in profits (greater profits than any king or emperor in history ever dreamed of) because the majority of American people decide in favor of, or even elect, a Socialist government. Those forces won't allow a peaceful picket line for a few cents per hour increase without calling out their thugs. The United Fruit Company made sure that the peaceful will of the people of Guatemala would not prevail, and they created considerable violence. What will all these companies do when at some future date the American people want Socialism? Will they step down graciously without a fight? Whom are we trying to fool? Certainly in the next 10 or 15 years, there will be a world realignment of power, with the Socialist camp tremendously strengthened. But this realignment process takes place with constant violence — yesterday, today, and tomorrow — violence instigated by the United States ruling class. When we state honestly that we desire peaceful transition to Socialism, let us recognize with equal honesty the practical impossibility or certainly the improbability of this.

From many discussions, I feel that those rank and file party members as well as many party leaders, cannot accept the "peaceful transition" policy, but remain silent because of the "disruptive" label placed on all criticism in many sections of our party. Perhaps this letter will spur others to write on this subject, now that self-criticism has been recognized as a necessary tenet of our party. Let's work for Socialist realism instead of opportunism, so that people will not say at some future date, "Why wasn't there self-criticism a long time ago?"—J.F.

Editor, The Worker:

Ring Lardner is so correct when he makes the point that the American Communist Party should re-examine itself. It is by far more necessary than to spend time discussing the 20th Congress of the party of the USSR of which we know so little.

There is a great deal of room for self-criticism and general criticism of the role of the C.P. of the U. S. A.

To gain the respect of the American workers it must be earned by taking a forthright position on the

many issues of the day. The C.P. should have its own candidates and its own program and not the excuse that the American workers are not ready for this. The workers are not only ready but in many instances are ahead of the C.P. but are unable to get anywhere, for they lack leadership.

It would be better to go down to temporary defeat and come back fighting than to lose by default and thereby dissolution and dishearten the American workers.

Please accept my contribution for the D.W. and a special thanks for Lester Rodney's splendid articles.
H. Z.

BOLIVAR, N.Y.

Dear Editor:

Here some time ago was an article in the Worker telling of workers in the state getting a wage of 35 cents per hour, and now in today's paper of April 1, an article on page 16 in which Lillian Gates says there are 1,250,000 in N.Y. State who don't earn a dollar an hour.

I've tried to tell this to friends who say there is a minimum law in New York State that forbids less wage than \$1.00 per hour. . . Please explain.—R.S.

(Unfortunately, the articles give the correct picture. Neither U.S. or N.Y. State minimums cover large numbers of workers . . . e.g. domestic agricultural. Other N.Y. legal minimum wages vary from 65 cents to 80 cents an hour—e.g. hotel, restaurant, laundry, cleaning and dyeing, retail trades.—Editor).

Dear Editor:

I want to call our readers attention to the dangers of the enemies of freedom in the South. This week the Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan will hold a Klan meeting in Timmonsville, South Carolina. It will lambast desegregation efforts and call them communists.

Then it can be expected to attack those in the Carolinas who were named by FBI informers as communists at the recent Un-American Committee hearings.

A former Klan leader once told how the purposes of the Klan and the purposes of the Un-American Committee were the same. This certainly must be true because how else do you explain Rep. Walter persecuting decent people who want desegregation and freedom in the South.

Unless the South can get cooperation from the North in establishing democracy here and building unions here all the gains made up North will be ruined.

We would also like to correct another erroneous idea—that there are not many good whites here. There are and there are plenty of them. And still another idea that we feel needs some correction. That the whites here in the mill villages and other similar places—on the farms as sharecroppers are "yokels." Yes it's sad to have to say that some feel so and we must have a correction on this terrible attitude.

fraternally yours,

A Southern White Worker
from North Carolina.