

# SPEAK YOUR PIECE

## About Ahab And Jezebel

Editor, Daily Worker:

Abner Berry's story about the conference of Negro ministers, in *The Worker* Jan. 13, quoted one of them in an interesting reference to Naboth. This is the Old Testament farmer whose vineyard was coveted by King Ahab. The minister described how Ahab's wife, Jezebel, had Naboth stoned to death in order to make it possible for Ahab to seize his property. And then how Elijah confronted Ahab to denounce his act. The minister then drew a fine parallel between Naboth and working men, Negroes, and anyone in the world who is deprived of his rights.

This sent me back to the Old Testament to re-read the story of Naboth (I Kings 21:1-29) and I found it very interesting just how Jezebel went about having the farmer stone. The King had made what he thought a very reasonable proposition to Naboth, either to buy the vineyard or exchange it for another; but Naboth had refused to let it go. Finding the King upset over this setback to his will, Jezebel advised him, "Arise, eat bread, and let thy heart be merry; I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth." So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his (Naboth's) city . . . saying, "Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people; and set two men, base fellows, before him, and let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst curse God and the King. And then carry him out, and stone him to death." Sounds quite modern, doesn't it?

PAULA.

## Canadian-Soviet CP Conference

PITTSBURGH.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Will you please explain to your readers why you have not reported the recent conference of Canadian and Soviet Party leaders on the question of Soviet Jewish life? The first knowledge I had of this important conference was an article that appeared in the Jan. 7 issue of the

National Guardian.

According to the Guardian, Khrushchev declared at this conference that Soviet Jews were largely integrated in the general life of the country; that he disagreed with the idea of establishing Jewish schools; that there is good and bad inherent in every people. He went on to cite some of the negative characteristics of the Jewish people. For example:

"Wherever a Jew sinks his anchor, there immediately springs a synagogue."

That of the thousands of Soviet citizens who have taken tourist trips abroad, only three failed to return. They were all Jews.

That after liberation, the Jews in Chernovitz explained that the reason the streets were dirty was that the non-Jews who had this responsibility had left.

That when the Soviet Union reclaimed part of Roumania, "many Jews chose to return to Roumania rather than to adopt Soviet citizenship."

Don't you think your readers should know of this attitude of the Soviet leaders. Wouldn't this help to deepen our understanding of the nature of the errors committed by the Soviet leadership on the Jewish question and the national question? And doesn't it make it even more imperative that the Soviet leaders who express themselves in such prejudicial and chauvinist terms should know that democratic-minded Americans, socialist and non-socialist, are shocked at such an attitude? In the spirit of fraternalism and internationalism we should point out that Khrushchev's remarks cause untold harm to the cause of democracy and socialism.

It isn't going to help the prestige of the Daily to have your readers learn facts about the Soviet leadership from other sources. We depend on you to arm us with the truth, the whole truth. Please correct your error. Print the report on the conference. And express yourself on it.

Sincerely yours,

—A Pittsburgh reader.

## About "Sharp Criticism"

Editor, Daily Worker:

It shakes me up a bit to read defenses of James Ford's letter and defenses of this type of attack. Its defenders call it, at worst, "sharp criticism."

To me, this type of "criticism" expresses only one emotion, violent hatred. Maybe some people can take tearing attacks lightly, pass them off or even enter into them with enjoyment. Frankly, such bitter inner party feelings frighten me.

If anyone answers that capitalism is based on hatred of hu-

mankind, and we must be equipped with the same weapon, I think I'd flip. I entered the party with a new feeling and a new idea—that loving one's comrades and all decent, honest human beings in general was wonderful and beautiful thing. I met up with a good deal of that idea in the Party, but unfortunately on frequent occasions comradely love was forgotten in the game of suspicions, maligning and "sharp criticism" that resembles of the verbal whiplash of destruction.

I for one don't want an organization where leaders and members make their criticism so "sharp" that it is difficult to decide whether you're being attacked and destroyed personally or whether you're being constructively helped politically. Most people can tell the difference between the two, and all protestations that it "wasn't meant personally" become meaningless.

The final danger in such "criticism" is that often sound careful thinking based on fact goes out the window when rage replaces reason. I think that this happened to Ford, because the points he chose for attack just didn't exist outside his imagination.

—SOMEONE WHO IS NO  
LONGER CONFUSED.

## Suggestions for Better Discussion

CHICAGO.

Editor, Daily Worker:

I have carefully read the discussion material in the *Daily Worker*, *Political Affairs*, and the *Discussion Bulletins*. In the discussion I'd like to see:

1. A lot more political and definite suggestions on how to strengthen our organization, make it more adequately democratic, and release the initiative and energies of Communist Party membership. And with fewer moans and groans, looking toward dissolution, fewer gestures to placate the class enemy.

2. Fewer long articles by full-time comrades, with more factual data and historical working-class analysis on their part. In this respect Foster's articles are incomparably the best.

3. No more cocksure, premature and unbased resolutions by the National Committee, as the one on Hungary.

4. Many more suggestions from Worker's clubs and individual workers.

Yes, I also think it's time for a change — a change to blue denim overalls. I think it's time for "independence" — independence of Wall Street. But not independence of science, not independence of the workingclass struggle.

—Rank-and-filer.

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