

Dear Editor

Letters from Readers

'Baby Doll' Is Good 'Class B'

Dear Editor:

I went to see "Baby Doll" because I was a bit puzzled by the violent anger Cardinal Spellman showed in his denunciation of the film.

I found out very quickly what he disliked. It is not any alleged sexuality in the film, as many reviewers have noted, and as bewildered young men whom I heard in the lounge were telling each other. It was on a religious, not a moral issue that the cardinal condemned it.

The picture shows clearly that Baby Doll refuses to sleep with her husband, and this is the sin that is meant. For the Roman Catholic Church marriage is considered a holy sacrament involving so-called marital duties, and failure to perform these duties is naturally regarded with deep disfavor by the celibate teachers of the doctrine.

However, I am inclined to rate the picture better than you did. It's true, as you said, that it is not a great movie, but it is a very good Class B one, if I may say so. The photography is excellent, the social satire is biting, and the acting by the main characters superior. Frankly, I did not expect it to be as good as it is, and for that reason I am glad to speak a good word for it.

OAKLEY C. JOHNSON.

Baby Doll - Positively Virtuous

BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Dear Editor:

Love, in Baby Doll, is reduced to its common denominator, stark and primitive.

Great numbers of people, in this land of the free, bungle into and bungle out of marriage. And, more often than not they leave in their wake equally great numbers of children, hostages of fortune. Others through sheer desperation, cling to the matrimonial raft and ride it through the stormy seas of life. Still others don't even bother to take the vow and legalize their

partnership. And how many of those who are married really are faithful to one another through sickness and through health until death do them part?

Only by chance is Baby Doll a Southern picture. In reality she is everywhere, north, south, east and west. And, it seems to this correspondent, that Tennessee Williams, if he is saying anything at all, is saying that adultery, under certain circumstances is not only essential but also positively virtuous.

Cardinal Spellman, about whom very little has been heard since the grave-diggers strike, had no choice other than to denounce Baby Doll, and to threaten all of the faithful who might have had a mind to see it with hell fire and eternal damnation. More than any other individual he assured its success, from a box office point of view. As of now even the military brass are of a mind that it shouldn't be shown to the young draftees, either at home or abroad, lest it corrupt their morals and make them less susceptible to the exigencies of the cold war. Something like Oklahoma is more to their taste . . . all bright and fresh, pure western air and sunshine . . . and without a bloody Indian in it.

Even the Worker reviewers have their fingers crossed, as if it were somehow unMarxism to enjoy this primitive spectacle of love 'neath the magnolia blossoms. No report whatever on audience reaction. Were their ears stopped, that they could not hear the spontaneous and thunderous peals of laughter?

Milly Salwen is brilliant up to a point and then she suddenly spoils the entire effort of her review by putting words into the mouth of Tennessee Williams which do not belong there: "Look! See how trivial they are, how stupid." This is what can be properly called left-wing crystal ball reviewing with a vengeance. And David Platt laments that Baby Doll did not rise to the tragic heights of La Strada.

Is it any concern of ours whether Tennessee Williams really loves, or loves not, the People? As a writer his primary business



is to obey his inner urge and write, and without any strings attached to him, and without people putting words into his mouth and defaming his character, Maybe there's a love that is deeper, that is more profound, than our Marxism conception yet realizes.

Maybe we can learn something from the so-called deca-

Youthful Reader Says It in Verse

Dear Editor,

Enclosed find a poem I wrote on the segregation problem in the South. I am thirteen years old and attend junior high school. I read The Worker and so do my parents. Please print this poem: The Negroes in the South should have the right,

To live and work anywhere, day or night,
The right to vote and speak their piece,
Because we all know segregation must cease.

The Negroes of Birmingham have call a bus boycott,
And that is one thing I like a lot.
We must do more than show remorse,
To carry an argument without harmful force.

There are still some things to be carried out,
Like putting the Ku Klux Klan to rout.
These are the things we should all strive for,
And then peace will live forever more.

- CARL

dents, Williams and Faulkner. And let's not be so prone to point the finger, when our own conceptions are so sharply contradicted by audience response itself. Instead of holding the mirror up to Williams let's try holding it before our own faces. -S.K.

"Truth Dollars" For the Worker

Dear Editor:

Clearer Marxist perspectives is the fervent New Year wish of this reader to the publications of our party during 1957. Their need was high-lighted in the "High Spots of 1956" in the last issue of The Worker, which included the gem that the 20th Congress of the CPUSSR "marked a turning point" in Communism because it "inaugurated a democratization process throughout the socialist world."

Talk of this sort would be more fitting in the kept press of Big Business. For one thing it equates democracy with the sort of limited right of political dissent that we possess here in this country.

A Marxist would have assessed democracy primarily in terms of the ownership and management of field and factory, knowing that an equalitarian society in material things is the best guarantee for freedom of opinion. Thus he would have been aware that even during its worst years of Stalin repression, socialist USSR possessed a higher democratic potential than capitalist U. S. A.

Furthermore the "High Spots" analysis smacks of white chauvinism. While boasting that "one-third of the entire world" today is Communist, its author forgets that much the larger part of that one-third is in Asia, and that being well set upon the road to full democracy this larger portion needed no advice from Mr. Khrushchev.

As an after-thought, here is a slogan for fund raising:

FIGHT CAPITALIST LIES WITH TRUTH DOLLARS.

You have had more than 200 of my "truth dollars" and there will be more to come.

JACK REDWAY.



NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS LOOK FOR AN EMPLOYEE WHO THINKS YOU'RE A STINGY SKINFINT!