

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Takes Issue With Ford

Editor, Daily Worker:

James W. Ford's letter in Friday's Daily Worker was one of the most disturbing communications I have read since the "Speak Your Piece" column was initiated.

Not only does Ford characterize the editors of the Daily as "strongly anti-Soviet," not only does he place them "among the most notorious offenders of the fundamental interests of the Negro people," but he lets us know that anyone who disagrees with him can expect to be labelled "anti-Negro."

Now if Ford's views were limited to inner-Party questions, they would be harmful enough. Certainly to call the DW editors "among the most notorious offenders" against the Negro people, flies in the face of sanity and implies a return to the worst mistakes of the struggle against white chauvinism so aptly criticized by Comrade Foster. But when Ford goes on to criticize the Rodney series on Clinton, much worse than an inner-Party affair is involved.

In reading this attack on Rodney for feeling a "little better about these United States" because the White Citizens Council forces were defeated in Clinton, Tenn., one really has to wonder if Ford and Rodney were referring to the same events. Ford, seeing only the efforts of the segregationists, rather than their rebuff, calls the wonderful victory there "nauseating to the status of the Negro people." And he cites so-called Southern liberals who likened the "recent disorder to Soviet oppression of Hungary." (It is interesting that the same analogy was made by Dixiecrats who compared the Federal marshalls who "forced" the white children to go to school with Negroes to the Soviet troops who "forced" socialism on unwilling Hungarians!)

But I am at a loss to understand Ford's gripe. Is he disturbed that there were some decent whites in Clinton? Is he annoyed that the Government insisted on enforcing integration? Is he sorry that the die-hard segregationists lost the Clinton election? Does he deny that what has happened in Clinton, Montgomery and Tallahassee is part of a "movement of great history" as Rodney said? If he answers "yes" to these questions, it is not Rodney he is attacking, but the Negro people's movement in America today.

Ford berates Rodney for allegedly attacking "a brave 'transplanted northern' white wom-

an." Actually Rodney did no such thing. In his article he quoted this woman sympathetically, but indicated that her low opinion of her fellow whites did not jibe with other events, which he cited. But Ford, in order to bolster his position, prefers to chuck these facts out the window.

One can imagine how disgusted Ford must be by the attitude of Rev. Martin Luther King of Montgomery, who insists that these same Southern whites are his brothers. Let's face it. History has passed Comrade Ford by. The doctrine of militant love appears to be winning where militant hatred never gained a foothold.—A.G.

Says Ford Contradicts Himself

Editor, Daily Worker:

The most shocking aspect of James W. Ford's letter of Dec. 28 was not the illogic and distortion but the intense spirit of ill-will it breathed.

Ford states that "anti-Soviet slanders and Negro abuse go hand in hand. In their anxiety to prove that American democracy is superior to Soviet democracy, those who attack the Soviet Union close their eyes to brutal attacks on the Negro people and speak as apologists of the despicable system of Negro oppression." Ford's definition of "slander" seems to be any opinion which is at variance to his own. This kind of undemocratic name-calling, so often used by Communist leaders in place of convincing, factual argument, has been one of the important factors in the loss of membership, prestige and influence by the CP.

But just a few paragraphs later, in the same letter, Ford literally contradicts himself: "Even Southern liberals . . . in a declaration of policy . . . likened the 'recent disorder to Soviet oppression of Hungary.'" "While they are deliberately lying," Ford continues, "because this serves the interests of the bourgeoisie in the Hungarian situation, they cannot be so flagrant as to deny the situation in Clinton. In their declaration of policy they say 'We deplore these denials of basic human rights no less than we condemn similarly brutal denial of the inalienable rights of the people of Hungary.'"

We had just been told that "those who attack the Soviet Union close their eyes to brutal attacks on the Negro people." How can Ford, to use his own phrase, "be so flagrant"? And, I might add, whose eyes are "open" and whose are "closed"?

The above is merely one example of Ford's sophistry and

contradictory reasoning. However, the following statement, it seems to me, is just plain hitting below the belt: "Among the most notorious offenders of the fundamental interests of the Negro people are the responsible editors of the Daily Worker . . . if a Negro opposes their anti-Soviet policy, he became a victim of anti-Negro bias. That is why this article . . . probably will not be printed."

First of all, Ford's letter, which he doubted the editors would have the integrity to print, DID appear. But much worse than gratuitous insult was the unprincipled equation of the DW's editors with "the most notorious offenders of the fundamental interests of the Negro people." Ford must know full well who the latter are: the hooded lynchers, the bomb throwers, the leaders of the White Citizens Councils. By no stretch of the imagination, whatever the validity of the Daily's position may be, can its editors be lumped together with our worst enemies. Such tactics are completely irresponsible and I for one suggest that Ford have the decency to realize his mistake and tender his written apology to the paper.

DAVE S.

About Workers' Living Standards

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Much has been written lately about the matter of absolute impoverishment of the working class. This is an important subject, for the proper estimate of the condition of the American working class is necessary both for program and the tactics needed to apply that program.

I have just finished reading Comrade Foster's Nov. P.A. article "On Mass Impoverishment" and also his Dec. P.A. article "Marxism-Leninism In A Changing World."

On Page 42 of the Nov. P.A. he says:

"These recent innovations in Communist theory and policy do not constitute a weakening or an abandonment of Marxism-Leninism, as so many comrades these days assume, but its development in order to meet rapidly changing world conditions. They are not class collaborationist, but are based on the class struggle."

Three sentences later he writes:

"And they illustrate the folly of those in our Party who would have us dilute, revise, and abandon this fruitful science of the

international movement for Socialism."

From the above it seems that innovations or changes in theory are OK if Foster agrees with them but are revisionist, etc. if he doesn't.

There is a similarity in approach by Comrade Foster to the question of absolute impoverishment. After giving considerable data and argument against absolute impoverishment he concludes by saying (Page 41 P.A.—Nov.) a) "the basic trend in capitalism, as Marx and Engels pointed out, is toward the relative and absolute impoverishment of the workers." Then further he says, "The Communist Party must recognize that the workers now have the organized power to defend successfully their living standards against any kind of attack that may be made against them by the employers during an economic crisis or otherwise." Again this is saying yes and no.

What is absolute impoverishment? Lenin in Collected Works, Volume XVI Page 212, says:

"The worker is impoverished absolutely, i.e. grows actually poorer than before, is compelled to live worse, eat more sparingly, remain underfed, seek shelter in cellars and attics."

Is this the condition of the American working class? It has been reported that there are 17,000,000 workers engaged in manufacturing in the U.S. Add to this those in transportation, building trades and communication and there would be a total of around 25,000,000. Now bear in mind that the labor movement has 15,000,000 organized

and has exacted certain concessions from the bosses. While not reaching the Heller budget the living standards of the American workers are not at the destitution level. Why even in the depression of the '30's the struggles of the people, both economic and political, prevented the hunger standards of Hoover from becoming the status quo.

Mechanically repeating theories does not make them valid. On the contrary danger can result for it will disarm and paralyze the activity of the working class.

Foster will admit to changes of degree. But his reluctance to make basic changes result in unclear and indecisive thinking. His article "On Mass Impoverishment" illustrates this.

Lenin said, ". . . a Marxist must take cognizance of actual events, of the precise facts of reality, and must not cling to a past theory, which, like all theories, at best only outlines the main and the general. . ."

On the basis of the above plus the additional facts available to us all, my conclusion is that absolute impoverishment has not been in operation as a decisive feature of political economy affecting the working class in the United States. Further, I believe the working class through the labor movement and exercising its political action will battle ferociously to prevent any reduction in its living standards. The eventual radicalization of the American workers will come about in their resistance to being driven to extreme impoverishment.

—Steelworker Joe

Ex-Treasurer of Credit Union in Harlem Indicted

John H. Harman, former treasurer of a Federal Credit Union of Rep. Adam Clayton Powell's Abyssinian Baptist Church, was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury yesterday for embezzlement.

Harman was charged with eight counts of taking \$2,619.45 of the union's funds in a four-month period between June and October of 1956.

The jury accused Harman of keeping money collected for the union which he covered by depositing personal, "bouncing" checks.

Assistant U. S. Attorney Thomas A. Dolan, who handled the matter before the Grand Jury, said that the indictment followed the information offered by Federal agents.

Harman became treasurer of the Credit Union after Mrs. Hattie Freeman Dodson resigned that position following her indictment for

tax evasion in 1954. Mrs. Dodson, secretary to Rep. Powell, was found guilty and sentenced to a seven month prison term.

Powell, who was president of the Credit Union, also resigned after his secretary was indicted.

The Union has some 750 members with assets of about \$100,000.

Nixon Asks More Hungarians Admitted

WASHINGTON, Jan. 1.—Vice President Richard M. Nixon recommended today to President Eisenhower and a bipartisan meeting of Congressional leaders that additional Hungarian refugees be admitted to the U. S. on a parole basis with Congress spelling out the exact limits.

Nixon just back from a first-hand inspection of the Hungarian refugee situation in Austria and Germany, did not recommend a specific figure beyond the 21,500 refugees already cleared for admission to this country.