

# SPEAK YOUR PIECE

## Compares Two Films

SAN FRANCISCO

Editor, Daily Worker:

Now that David Platt, the able and durable film critic of the Daily Worker (in his column of Jan. 24th) has admitted his own errors in following the Zhandov-Jerome cultural formula "for stewing in our own juices" may I nudge him a bit towards further self-correction?

I think it is dead wrong for a movie critic to hinge his opinion of the artistic and entertainment value of a movie primarily on an ideological or sociological aspect of that movie. And Platt, carrying over bad habits from the past, does this. For example, he puts "Giant" down as one of the best films of last year and "The Bad Seed" as one of the worst. Now I'll wager five bucks that 80 percent of the D.W. readers who saw these two pictures enjoyed the "Bad Seed" far more than "Giant." The acting, the realism of the characters and situation and dialogue in "Seed" is so incomparably superior to that in "Giant" that they cannot be compared. The portrayal of the two mothers in "Seed" that of the criminal girl's and dead boy's—are heart-rending in their lifelikeness and poignancy. As against this the cardboard posturing of Rock Hudson and Elizabeth Taylor and James Dean in "Giant" is downright silly. And so are the cardboard situations.

To be sure "The Bad Seed" drags in an utterly unscientific theory of the hereditary transmission of criminal behavior, while "Giant" projects a fine anti-chauvinist viewpoint on the Mexican people. But is this sufficient to justify throwing overboard an objective artistic evaluation of the two pictures. I for one don't think so.—C. M.

Jan. 25, 1957

## Genuine Leadership

Editor, Daily Worker:

May I make some suggestions about the Communist Party.

When participating in mass activity the people in organizations we belong to will and should retain complete policy-making control of their organizations, without any reservations.

This would apply to legislative bodies as well as mass organizations even if the Left has helped found these organizations. We must not ascribe to ourselves a function of protecting these organizations for their own good.

Their democracy must not be circumscribed in any way. The people themselves should be taught to run their own affairs.

Leadership must be given by example and argument, not by "fractions" controlling the organizations. The first is much difficult than the second, depending as it does on raising the right issues and winning the confidence of the people. Mass activity must be conceived of in terms of thousands and millions, not in narrow perspectives that have no greater outlook than the formation of splinter groups.

As to the theory of the state, I believe that the exploiting classes never intend to play the game of democracy fairly. The way to combat them is not to imitate them. The broadest alerted democratic activity by the people is the best defense of democracy. The people will have to back up parliamentary power with demonstrations and other means for allowing the masses of working people to participate in and control the government.

Democratic vigilance is necessary. This means alertness to ruling class skulduggery and building majority state power together with defeating exploiting class efforts to maintain minority rule and subvert democracy.

Full democracy means debate before, during and after decisions have been reached. It means no "coopting" of leaders but elections of leaders at all times. Leaders must be responsive to questions raised by members of organizations. We must have unanimity insofar as all participate in working out policies in discussions, but not necessarily in always having full agreement.

Leaders should be voted into

office who recognize our losses in the cold war period were due to our sectarian policies and secondarily to the persecution.

A STEADY READER

## Lincoln's Greatness

TENAFLY, N. J.

Editor, Daily Worker:

This is an appeal to every teacher and preacher in the land to help the children to realize the greatness and sincerity of Lincoln. We need his fine guiding spirit more than ever today and how can we teach our children if we do not realize his greatness. Read Henry Watterson's famous tribute and may it give you the inspiration we so badly need.

"Born as lowly as the Son of God, in a hovel; reared in penury, squalor, with no gleam of light or fair surrounding; without grace, actual or acquired; without name or fame or official training; it was reserved for this strange being, late in life, to be snatched from obscurity, raised to supreme command at a supreme moment, and entrusted with the destiny of a nation.

"Where did Shakespeare get his genius? Where did Mozart get his music? Whose hand smote the lyre of the Scottish ploughman, who stayed the life of the German priest? God, God, and God alone; and as surely as these were raised up by God, inspired by God, was Abraham Lincoln; and a thousand years hence, no drama, no tragedy, no epic poem will be filled with greater wonder, or be followed by mankind with deeper feeling than that which tells the story of his life and death."

CHRISTIANA BERTRAM

## NORTH IRELAND CP STATES

LONDON—While dynamiting and burning continues in Ireland and strong-arm measures are being taken against the Irish Republican Army, the Northern Ireland Communist Party has condemned the Belfast government's attempted "solution" by force.

In a statement this week, the party said the government of Northern Ireland was seeking to extend the abolition of civil and democratic rights to all Ireland. It calls on the working class "to resist all attempts at division from whatever quarter."

The executive of the Communist Party "does not advocate a policy of armed force for a solution of the national problem" nor "for the attainment of its own objectives of a Socialist Ireland," it declared.

The achievement of these aims, it continued, calls for the winning

of support of the major part of the population, and particularly the working population in town and country.

The present situation is a legacy of history, the statement goes on. The so-called "solution" of British imperialism to the Irish national problem in 1921 and 1925 left two Irish states at loggerheads with each other, and the major part of Ireland at loggerheads with the British government.

The actions of the Dublin government "in practice divert the attention of nationalist Ireland to ideological conflict with other countries to whose system of so-