

# Dear Editor

## Letters from Readers

### More Views on Today's Newspapers

NEW YORK.

Dear Editor:

The two views on whether newspapers are better than ever in the issue of Jan. 27, are a welcome start for further discussion of what is a very important subject.

Mr. Roy A. Roberts maintains that newspapers are more responsive to their obligations to reader and community than ever before. Mr. James A. Wechsler says the American press is overwhelmingly owned and operated by Republicans who fix the rules of U. S. political debate.

As concerns technological equipment and typographical quality the American newspapers are way ahead of any other in the world. But as true that fine clothes do not make a gentleman so it is equally true that attractive printing and clear photo-pictures do not express excellence of truthfulness in the news stories and editorial comments.

The American newspapers are big business enterprises. Large numbers belong to what are called chains or single person or corporation ownership. Revenue from advertising has become so eagerly sought by publishers that much of the independence of editors to deal honestly and courageously with social, economic and political questions has nearly vanished. Consequently today's newspapers are very little socially-minded, socially motivated. Their points of view are strongly influenced by the compulsions the profit-motive imposes on them.

Scoops and sensations are common practices. They are in the habit of emphasizing the exceptional rather than the representative; that which is apt to cause the greatest excitement rather than what could induce sober reflection.

During the past 10 years of the witchhunt phobia the newspapers have set a record of reckless falsifications and exaggerations about the guilt of thousands of citizens who have been chosen victims for political persecution. Thus trial by newspapers stands as one of the most flagrant violations of journalistic integrity the country has seen.

No one can study the press without perceiving how large a section of it is employed systematically, persistently and deliberately in fostering international hatreds.

Dr. Curtis D. MacDougall, professor at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, in a speech he delivered some seven years ago, said: "Unless we can ignore all the warnings of our atomic scientists . . . that another war would be the destruction of western civilization, a peaceful way out must be found. The American press as a whole is not helping us find that way."

Are newspapers better than ever? The question needs continuous and conscientious study.

ONE EAGER FOR  
HONEST JOURNALISM

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**Good for Vickie!**

**What About Hood?**

Dear Editor:

In the issue of Feb. 3 there is a story on the front page under the by-line of William Allan regarding the winning of the American Legion award for Americanism by Vickie Wellman, daughter of Peggy and Saul Wellman. What the article has to say about the accomplishment of Vickie Wellman and the pride of her parents, Communists and the workingclass and people in general is thoroughly justified and what I have to say in this letter is in no manner, shape or form an effort to take from her any-

thing which she justly deserves.

My beef is with William Allan and the editors of The Worker who, in the last analysis, are responsible for the publication of the article.

Alongside the article there is a picture of Vickie Wellman and a young Negro, Ezell Hood who also won the same award as Vickie; yet in the body of the article there is not a single word regarding him. Don't Billy Allan and the editors of the paper feel that the parents, the Negro people, the workingclass and the people in general also have the same justified pride in the accomplishment of this young Negro.

Are we and they thus not entitled to know something about him and to have his story played up. It seems to me that a failure to do so smacks of:

1. White chauvinism
2. Sectarianism
3. "Communist" arrogance

Let me briefly explain what I mean by each of these. At present one of the major fields of struggle of the Negro liberation movement is that the integration of the schools. The major argument of the worst white supremacists against this is that Negro children are inferior.

Here is a concrete example of the falsity of this charge, and it appears that the editors are so insensitive to the needs of this struggle that they fluffed the ball on this one.

This has also to do with the question of sectarianism in that all we see in this is the accomplishment of the daughter of a Smith Act victim, without identifying her accomplishment in a natural way with that of the struggles of the Negro people for their liberation, in this way showing the basic identity of the struggles of the Communists, the workingclass and the Negro people.

Its attitude is arrogant in that it tends to say "See how brilliant the Communists and their children are" while at the same time ignoring similar and better accomplishments by others and what is worse in this particular case the ignoring of what undoubtedly is a brilliant young Negro. It seems to me that while the editors of The Worker are in general against sectarianism, and see the need for identifying ourselves with the American workingclass and Negro people, when it comes down to the concrete they show a woeful lack of understanding and an insensitivity of what is required to do this.

The least that the editors can do to make up for some of the harm that has been done is to immediately write up an article on Ezell Hood to be published in the next issue of the paper. This should be accompanied with a public apology by the editors of the paper to Ezell Hood, his parents, the Negro people and the American people in general for their failure in regard to this.

WONDERING

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(This point raised by this reader is valid, though we feel he exaggerates its implications. On checking with Billy Allan, we learned it was not possible to get a story about Ezell Hood—Ed.)

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### Compares Traffic Slaughter to War

Dear Editor:

In regards to your questionnaire, Sunday, Jan. 6th on traffic fatalities, I will endeavor to offer a constructive opinion. First, may I congratulate the paper on tackling a subject of such vital importance, it is both national and international and should become front page material until our people and their government become enlightened and take the necessary steps to halt this means of self-destruction.

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# LETTERS

(Continued from Page 10)

What good publicity for the paper—just like old times.

The above should be handled somewhat along the lines that Lester Rodney used to crack jimcrow in baseball.

Now for my personal opinion, the subject as it exists is a by-product of capitalism. As profit is its primary factor, there can be no real cure for the above dreadful "disease." The least that can be accomplished would be to lower the number of unnecessary victims. You ask is it the drivers, inadequate roads or over powerful cars.

I would say No. 3 and add a fourth, qualification to drive a car. In my estimation 50 percent of the present drivers would find it impossible to renew their licenses. The word "freedom" injects itself here—may I elaborate. Real freedom in a social sense, applied in and by a sane social planning effort would be a great deal less than the bourgeois freedom we know of today. I am certain in stating very few people understand this fundamental fact.

High speed cars are not entirely to blame. In some cases they are a necessity. Progressive thinking people of our time must find the necessary ways and means to prod the Congress to reason with the traffic conditions which face our country.

The Congress of these United States should create a new branch in our federal government with a cabinet post, if necessary. Supervision of all traffic must be a federal matter, as it is too great for the states. It is only a question of time before we will have 100,000,000 cars on the road.

A suggested solution in the foreseeable future appears quite simple. A national automatic speed control system, subjecting all moving vehicles to a set "miles per hour" speed when approaching all towns, cities, etc. Once within a populated area a progressive signal system would then regulate traffic at a safe and sane 15 to 25 miles per hour.

The above matter is of such vast importance it could be taken to the United Nations for I find it comparable to war. Man made implements of convenience should not be allowed to destroy man.

Good luck.

As always

A WORKER