

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Says Times Gives No Balm

Editor, Daily Worker:

Like others I felt that we have suffered a considerable loss in the withdrawal of Howard Fast from the party of progress. However, he could not act otherwise, one must conclude, so long as he found that he could not make peace with himself within its ranks.

But he did not go away, he indicates, in a hostile mood toward the socialist aspirations of his fellows. He still stands for progress and feels friendly toward those who continue in the battle for it.

Therefore, he very justifiably should be (as indeed he is) criticized for going to the New York Times with the defection announcement. Howard Fast knows very well (or should know) that turning to the New York Times, one of the chief spokesmen of capitalist power and reaction, is not going to provide him with the balm his wounds need.

Moreover, Howard Fast must have known that the manner in which he chose to make his decision known would constitute a moral victory to the enemy; and as a person of his stature and great background, and as one who so passionately struggles for justice and himself tries to be fair, he should have, without too much difficulty, found a better way.

This criticism applies with equal justification to John Steuben. And also to Aaron Kramer, who went to the New York Times.

—A. S.

Feb. 17, 1957.

Wants New Look At Tammany

Editor, Daily Worker:

Now that the convention is over and now that a conscientious effort has been made to grapple with our problems and set our leftist house in order, is it not time to take a new look at the Democratic party of New York state, which is to say New York City, for it is here in the city itself that the Democratic party, by virtue of tradition and organization, has its roots and its main activity. And the Democratic party here in the city is synonymous with Tammany, while Tammany is synonymous with corruption. Only once, in the living memory of most of us, have we had an administration really representative of the people, an anti-Tammany administration, and that was under LaGuardia.

Before, and since LaGuardia's death, the infamous tin box brigade has been firmly in the saddle. In this great city by the sea it has become almost a math-

ematical certainty that Tammany domination in politics means political, economic and cultural starvation for the people. And in the last national election it became obvious to many of us that it would be better to lose New York state to the GOP than to see this Tammany influence extended through a Democratic victory. And Tammany itself contributed to its own defeat not only by the method it adopted in choosing its delegates to the national convention but also in its insistence at the convention on Harriman as a national candidate . . . when it was plain to all observers that Stevenson was the choice of the Democratic party of New York state.

We cannot have our cake and eat it too; we cannot give a blanket endorsement of the Democratic party nationally and disregard the Democratic situation locally, any more than we endorsed everything that came out of Moscow. That is only another way of setting political expediency above political principle.

Mayor Wagner is alleged to have said that no Catholic could aspire to national office, regardless of his political qualifications. Mayor Wagner is wrong; his own father disproved this contention. Perhaps no Tammany suspect can aspire to national office. The fact of the matter is that both the Mayor and Tammany took too much for granted and over-rated their political sagacity. It wasn't that the people thought his senatorial opponent the better man; it was merely that Javits was a lesser evil than Tammany.

—ANTI-TAMMANY.

Feb. 17, 1957

Sees Knuckleheads On Both Sides

Editor, Daily Worker:

In this great verbal hassle among Socialist countries today I think we should keep in mind the most important question: Where would the smaller countries be today without the Soviet Union?

Could there be Socialism in these countries (more or less efficient) if there were no Soviet Union. Let's stop kidding ourselves. Either we want Socialism and we mean the Soviet Union or we are talking about advanced bourgeois democracy.

The entire struggle reminds me in a way of a battle between a father and a 10-year-old boy. The son is telling the father, his senior, if you please, that he, too, is free and equal and has the same right as the father. Again let's stop kidding ourselves. In every family there must be leadership. When a 10-year-old decides he can make his own decisions yet depends on papa for the most important things (maintenance of world peace) the boy still has to grow up.

On the other hand, I think the Soviet Union spokesmen are getting into trouble by telling the world that there is only one way to come to Socialism. We have only to look at China to see that this is incorrect. It seems that what is getting mixed up here is the question of form and content. Socialist in content always but national in form.

Which only brings me to the conclusion that there are plenty of knuckleheads on both sides.

—A READER.

Feb. 8, 1957

'DEATH MARCH' IN JAPAN STIRS NATIONAL OUTCRY

TOKYO, Feb. 20.—The death of two young Japanese soldiers following an endurance forced march through a driving rain has touched off a national outcry that the old, brutal Japanese Imperial Army is being revived.

Army officials have admitted certain "excesses" were committed by officers during the forced march but have denied they were "disciplinary brutalities." The officials promised 'administrative measures' would be taken after a thorough probe.

The 'excesses,' based on eyewitness accounts, included cases where officers kicked, slapped or pushed the marching soldiers.

The 42-mile forced march was a contest of speed, endurance and

discipline among three rival companies. It started in a cold, wind-whipped rain. Each man was carrying a load of 66 pounds.

The two victims collapsed and died at the end of the march. One had complained he had difficulty breathing.

Fuel was added to the public outcry by a comment attributed to the commander of the forces in overall charge of the maneuvers. He reportedly lauded the two dead soldiers as "models" to the entire army.

The press played up the incident as a "death march."

The Socialists have persistently brought the subject up in parliament.