

# SPEAK YOUR PIECE

## UAW Convention And Negro Rights

DETROIT.

Editor, Daily Worker:

I have just finished reading the editorial in the April 16 D.W. titled, "The UAW Convention." While I have no disagreement with the points covered in the estimate of the convention, I want to call attention to a serious omission.

No mention is made of a grave weakness of the convention. That was, less attention to the struggle for Negro rights than at any convention I can remember, and I have covered more than 10 UAW conventions.

To reporters like George Morris and myself, covering for the Daily and Michigan Worker, we saw no struggle or effort from any side to try to elect a Negro to the still continuing lily-white UAW International Executive Board. The continuance of this lily-white executive board for the one and a half million member UAW, with its many thousands of Negro workers, men and women, is something that cannot be ignored or passed over without comment in any estimate by a Marxist newspaper like the Daily Worker. Our paper, the Daily and Sunday, have campaigned for years to end this lily-white setup of the UAW top leadership, joining in with thousands of Negro and white workers who have tried to elect a Negro to top office in UAW.

Also left out in the DW editorial was the total ignoring by the UAW convention of the coming "Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom" to be held in Washington May 17, the third anniversary of the U. S. Supreme Court's decision on desegregating schools.

All the years that the workers, Negro and white have been fighting to elect a Negro to a top post in the UAW international leadership seem to have been forgotten by the writer of the April 16 editorial.

No one denies that the UAW is a "pace-setting" union on many questions, but it has to be said and put into an estimate by Marxist newspapers that the UAW shows no "pace-setting" when it comes to changing the insufficiently representative character of its top leadership and electing a Negro worker there.

The acid test from my association with workers on what's what with democracy and equal rights, is where one stands on advancing Negro rights.

So, let's say it in our estimate. This 16th UAW Constitutional Convention held in Atlantic City didn't match up to the acid test of extending democracy by

electing a Negro to the top leadership.

WILLIAM ALLAN.

[Ed. Note: Billy Allan is right. The Civil Rights resolution, along with other major convention topics, was crowded out and at the last moment referred to the executive board. This is in contrast with the generally advanced position of the UAW compared to most unions on the civil rights front in other respects.]

## Eastland And Labor

Silver Spring, Md.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Four New York City newspaper men have recently been convicted of contempt of the infamous Eastland Internal Security Committee. Each of them based his refusal to answer political questions on the First Amendment, which was adopted to protect, among other things, freedom of the press.

A significant issue in all four cases is this very freedom. Can Eastlanders—or any other witch burners—compel members of the press to disclose their political beliefs and associates on pain of going to jail? Can a Congressional committee, through the contempt process, set up by indirection standards of newspaper employment? Can a committee, by questioning newspaper men about their union, attempt to vilify the progressive forces in it?

These questions stick out like a sore thumb. And one might suppose, therefore, that among the most active defenders of the four newsmen would be the labor movement and particularly their own union, the American Newspaper Guild and its New York affiliate. All the more so, since the Guild is constitutionally sworn to uphold freedom of the press.

Yet the unhappy fact is that the labor movement generally has been silent and the Guild has turned down the newsmen's plea for help. No freedom of the press issue exists, Guild leaders assert.

Where is the spirit of Heywood Broun? It cannot all have vanished from the labor movement and, particularly, from the union he founded. It is hard to believe that the present — and, I hope, temporary — ostrichism of the Guild leaders accurately reflects the attitude of the membership towards these four victims and other press victims of the Congressional inquisition.

The AFL-CIO and the Guild by right should be in the forefront of this fight. That is their rightful place. By assuming that place they will be doing a serv-

ice not only to labor but to the democratic rights of all Americans.

VETERAN

NEWSPAPERMAN 4/16/57

## Work To Be Done

Editor, Daily Worker:

I was much impressed by the rebuke made by the Farmers Club on "Speak Your Piece" page, April 18, in its comment: "At this time we say to our leaders stop bickering among yourselves, there is much work to be done." And after specifying some of the work that is to be done, the Club said: "There is a great deal of work to be done and we cannot spend any time fighting amongst ourselves."

Of course we must be clear about the work we undertake and must be united in the high purpose of our endeavors; but we must not let factionalism drag us down to sheer inactivity and stagnation. For example, the renewal of the subscriptions to "The Worker" and the fund drive are dragging fearfully,—more so than at any other time in the history of the paper, which I know about.

Undoubtedly much of this lag is due to the bewilderment and discouragement which many of the supporters of the paper feel because of the ideological and the factional struggles that have been going on inside the Communist Party for a year or more. And the outcome is still in doubt to all but the staunchest optimists.

The editorial policies of "The Worker" and "The Daily Worker" have received much severe criticism during this long debate. Since I have been a sharp critic of "The Daily Worker's" editorials, and still have criticisms to make, I feel that I have some explaining to do to justify my appeals for support of the subscription campaign and the fund drive. Of necessity, I must condense my arguments.

First, there must be a Communist Party in the United States. This is not wishful thinking, it is not a utopian dream. There is in reality a solid economic basis and powerful historical reasons why the Party will survive its inner struggle and unite in a final struggle with American capitalism. But this strong, growing Party will not rise spontaneously. Only by means of hard mass struggle can the Party rebuild itself and rise in power. Mass activity in hundreds of ways must be undertaken in all the occupations and pushed to success. Indeed, there is "much work to be done."

Second, a press is one of the indispensable means by which we can carry

on this work. We must have the means of communication among ourselves and with the mass of workers throughout the country. And to have a press we must start with what we now have, whatever its quality is. It would be very expensive, very laborious, and would require a very long time to reproduce the press we now have, which has survived 33 years of hard struggle, and has acquired the good will of many thousands of working people all over this big country—a most valuable asset which we must not squander!

Third, as for the editorial policy of our press, we can determine that by our own honest, constructive work. The editorial policy of the paper cannot determine the kind of Party that will emerge from the present struggle. We have proof of that already. But on the contrary our hard work to expand the circulation and to raise the necessary funds to improve the paper will be a powerful factor

in determining the quality of the editorials.

It is plain that the big advertisers determine the quality of the capitalist press. Witness "The New York Post." The rank and file members of the Communist Party are the big advertisers in our press. Its character will be determined by their hard, honest labor.

Finally, this is no time for retrenchment or liquidation of our press. It is time for expansion! Let us set ourselves to this task. Its achievement will be one of the means of living down whatever factionalism that persists in our ranks. We make fine speeches about "peaceful coexistence of capitalism and communism." Let us put ourselves in training for such an era by practicing "peaceful coexistence" with our own comrades. But let us now allow "peace" to blur our vision as to our real enemies or quench our courage to put up a fight, if need be, for our high aim.

CHARLES J. HENDLEY.

## LETTER FROM LONDON

# Upper Classes Get Most of Tax Relief

By JOHN WILLIAMSON

Among events confronting the British people while the battle rages over the Defense White Paper and the attitude towards the H-Bomb tests on Christmas Island, are the following:

### BUDGET

In the usual flint-faced British upper-class manner, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Peter Thorneycroft, presented a budget that gave the rich more than one-half the proposed tax reliefs and the upper middle class the great bulk of the remainder.

Tax reliefs are proposed to the tune of 130 million pounds. Of this the surtax payers (those whose income starts at 2,000 pounds a year, in contrast to the average worker's wage of about 500 pounds a year) will save 24½ million pounds the British companies operating abroad will get benefit of 35 million pounds and ship-owners get an investment allowance of 11½ million pounds.

Tax allowances are increased for children over 17 still going to school, which excludes the great majority of working class families. The reduction of the tax on entertainment and sports brings money to the own-

ers, who were quick to announce there would be no reduction in prices.

The most shameful thing is the mistreatment of the old people.

The Tory papers all carry headlines, "Relief for the Old People." Actually the relief is in the form of income tax exemptions for people over 65 if they have an income of less than 400 pounds for couples and 250 pounds for single persons. For the great majority of working class old people, including the four million who receive the old age pension of 2 pounds a week (one million of whom receive supplementary national assistance) there is not a ha'penny relief.

As a very bare bone, there is a 50 percent reduction in purchase tax on a limited group of household goods. The additional "Suez Tax" of one shilling a gallon on gasoline is repealed, but this does not help the worker. For those who have television sets, the license tax is increased from 3 pounds to 4 pounds.

In Parliament the labor Party spokesman, Gordon Walker, declared that a Chancellor of the Exchequer responsible for the budget must stand con-

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