

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

No Time to Close Discussion

CHICAGO, Ill.

Editorial, Daily Worker:

Misgivings have been expressed that the present discussion is losing direction and perhaps tending to degenerate into haphazard expression of grievances. Some writers have criticized Bill Foster and Gene Dennis for a "detached attitude" and impatiently hoped they would soon move in with self-critical discussion and the "right answers."

I submit that such a move would be premature, that the time is not yet ripe for top leadership to sum up the discussion. I submit that the discussion is not running out, it is just getting under way, that its scope is far greater than an analysis of specific past mistakes.

The discussion is beginning to probe deeply into our national history of the past decade. And I submit that a deep understanding of this 10 year period will throw a clear light on the path we may expect the American people to follow toward socialism. A beautiful general introduction to the question has recently been given by Foster in Political Affairs for May, 1956.

What new situation provoked the discussion, anyhow? We see that a powerful ruling class drive toward fascism has been stemmed by the people. International events were important, of course, but our shopmates and neighbors deserve the main honor.

Recall for a moment the massive all-round attack our rulers have subjected us to: a red-baiting attack composed of lies, arrests, jailings, and executions; shrewd propaganda for labor to cooperate with management, soap operas, Arthur Godfrey, Billy Graham, Senator Eastland, and Life Magazine; psycho-analysis, pragmatism, and smart aleck cynicism.

The partial victory against

fascism has had certain features which distinguish it from the common pool of world experience:

1. It took place with a minimum of overt organized activity of the democratic strata.

2. It did not continue forward to a popular front government.

3. Left influence did not play a leading role.

4. The basic ideological and philosophical ideas advanced by the capitalist class were not challenged on a wide scale.

It may be that our transition in the U. S. from the present two-party system to a farmer-labor government (i.e. popular front) will take place as a long drawn out struggle, as a special stage of social development which has not been known in other countries. The advance of the labor movement to leadership of society may take place before the Left is very strong.

Such a stage would be highly complex. It would demand a high degree of independent tactical flexibility by rank and file Communists. In the days of Karl Marx and V. I. Lenin it was indeed possible for one genius to see everything clearly. But society has now developed so far and the interconnection of events has become so intricate that the serious development of Marxist theory can only move forward on a collective mass basis.

-H. K.

The N.Y. Times Barnyard

UPSTATE N.Y.
Editor, Daily Worker:

Henceforward let no leftist point the finger of scorn at the N.Y. Times and suggest, insinuate, or openly say that, the hard heart of the Times doesn't bleed for the farmer (as he is known in the U. S.) or the peasant (as he is known in Europe) for the struggling Times staff literally has its feet in the manure pile and its fingers on the farmers

pulse beat, especially the European peasant-farmer.

How does the Times manage to do this? How does it achieve this proximity with the European barnyard? By authoritative peasant correspondents, no less. Every once in a while you'll find a letter from such a peasant, prominently displayed in Letters to the Times, on the editorial page.

Usually, and in highly polished English, such letters deplore all talk of peace and trade and co-existence through competitive means rather than military means, as is sometimes suggested by the Times editorially. And such peasant correspondents also invariably opine . . . with super-peasant-like directness that the Times, the State Department and the country as a whole, is doing nothing more than permitting themselves to be taken for a ride by what, to any sensible person, is nothing more than red propaganda. Whereupon, the aforesaid, Oxfordian peasant signs his name, and below it the name of the Peasant Organization of which he is the self-appointed representative. That, dear editor and readers, is why Times Square in general and the Times building in particular, has that familiar, down-to-earth barnyard smell.

Somehow these peasant correspondents to the Times always hail from the Ukraine, or the Baltic countries, or the Balkans, or from Poland, and always they are cultured and polished. . . . Oh so very polished, so unlike our own tillers of the soil. It's easy to see why the Times is so partial to them.

One cannot imagine anyone of them walking in the main office of the Times, without first wiping his clodhoppers on the welcome mat and carefully depositing his claw in the cupsidor. Never-the-less, there remains in Times Square a distinct barnyard smell, a charming reminder, too, of how close our free press is to the earth.

"AMERICAN PEASANT"

Sees 3 Basic Weaknesses

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.
Editor, Daily Worker:

In the period since the 20th Congress of the CPSU, there has been considerable discussion by the writers of the paper, leaders of the Communist Party, and the letters to the editor relative to the Congress. In the main these discussions have dealt with the questions of what happened in the S. U. and the other countries, the reevaluation of Stalin, the responsibilities of Krushchev, etc. While this is absolutely essential, and has to continue, the benefits that the American Communist Party will derive from this will depend on how well we are able to see how we developed our own particular American forms of not only the "cult of the individual," but the "cult of leadership" and its concomitant, bureaucracy.

I thoroughly agree with both James Allen and Johnny Gates that it is necessary for our Party and I might add our individual Party leaders to be self critical of our own mistakes. As yet neither they nor any of the other Party leaders have done this.

What I am speaking of is not criticism in generalities, but specific things, particular questions, incidents, etc. And together with this the correction and institution of correct Marxist-Leninist practises.

In this connection the editors of the Daily Worker have to be congratulated on opening the pages of the Daily to the opinions of its readers. However it is obvious that there is not enough space to have a full expression. It is necessary to have special publications to deal with this and other discussions.

Some feel that the cause of our isolation is due solely to wrong policies. Therefore all we have to do is to change our policies and presto we are no longer isolated. This therefore is one of the greatest fallacies.

While we must most vigorously struggle for correct policy, it is also true as Stalin has stated that the life of the policy depends on the organizations of putting it into practice. Therefore it is not sufficient to discuss corrections of policy but simultaneously to discuss what is wrong with our methods of work which prevent us from becoming an integral part of the mass movements of the people, especially that of the working-class.

It is my opinion that at present our methods of work has strong elements of pragmatism, characterized specifically by expediences, which arise out of what in my opinion are the three basic weakness of our Party:

1. The inadequate level of the understanding of the membership and leadership of Marxism-Leninism, especially its application to the U. S. . . .

2. The poor social composition of our membership.

3. The inadequate application of the basic principles of democratic centralism and especially self criticism by our leadership.

GEORGE SAMSON.

A Program To Start On

NEW YORK CITY

Editor, Daily Worker:

So many words have been written on so many subjects, since Freedom of the Press was given to the "people," that I'd like to touch on some other subjects also very, very close to all our lives. I feel the Daily Worker should hammer away, day in and day out, without a let-up on:

• The long, over-due and desperate need for additional AND air-conditioned subways in New York.

• The unbearable high rents demanded from those of us who cannot and will not live in slums.

• A return to the 5 (not 10) cent fare.

-A subscriber to both papers.