

# SPEAK YOUR PIECE

## Sees Revision Of Marxism

Editor, Daily Worker:

I consider Max Weiss' article, which appeared in the Daily Worker on April 5 and 6 as examples of an attempt to eliminate the revolutionary content of Marxism. The following, I think, are the most significant statements.

1) "To start with, we believe that it is possible for the American people by majority decision, to establish a socialist government in our country by peaceful constitutional means."

2) "... looking at the matter realistically by the time our country is faced with the possibility of choosing socialism, most of the world will already be socialist or traveling toward socialism."

Although Max Weiss says, "looking realistically," actually he is not looking realistically because he is in the world of fantasy. How does he know that the United States will be the last or among the last to arrive at the time when the American people will have to choose socialism. It is sheer guesswork, and if it is not on the order of the day then why speculate. Of course, he needs that kind of speculation to help him 'prove' that there can be a peaceful transition to socialism in that nebulous future. It is not accidental that he does not mention the class-struggle in his articles. If one were to take in consideration the class-struggle that does exist in the United States then no such glib conclusion can be drawn.

To speak realistically I think it is necessary to start an analysis of the future course of events on the basis of the facts that exist at the present time. There is nothing in the present relations of class forces in the United States that indicates the possibility of peaceful transition. Whatever might happen in the future will best be judged at the time when the American people are faced with the choice of what kind of transition to make to socialism.

It does not help matters to say that Marxists in the United States are for peaceful transition. The truth of the matter is; that Marxism never 'advocated' revolution or force and violence. Of course it would be fine if the working class could take over the means of production peacefully but history shows that a ruling class does not give up peacefully, violence comes from the ruling class.

If Max Weiss thinks that Lenin's "State and Revolution" is outdated or is not applicable to the United States he has to state so.

I think that what Max Weiss is attempting to do is to revise Marxism a la Browder, new speculations but the same old revisionism.

It might seem as if Weiss' conclusions are similar to the ones that the 20th Congress of the CBSU came to. It is worth quoting the Congress to see the difference. Khrushchev: "Leninism teaches us that the ruling classes will not surrender their power voluntarily. And the greater or lesser degree of intensity which the struggle may assume, the use or non-use of violence, in the transition to socialism depends on the resistance of the exploiters, on whether the exploiting class itself resorts to violence, rather than on the proletariat."

Khrushchev then proceeds to analyze the new conditions that have been brought about by the victories of socialism and the advances made by the working class in some countries where the possibility for a peaceful transition is on the order of the day. But he proceeds to point out that; "In countries where capitalism is still strong and has a huge military and police apparatus at its disposal, the reactionary forces will of course inevitably offer serious resistance. There the transition to socialism will be attended by a sharp class, revolutionary struggle."

I would like to emphasize that the latter characterization describes conditions as they exist at the present time in the United States.

I am very much in favor of an analysis of the American path to socialism but on the basis of Marxism.

MYER WEISE.

## A Talk With a Hardware Dealer

Editor, Daily Worker:

My table companion at lunch is a hardware dealer. As I always read the news while eating at noon our conversation usually centered on current events.

The Westinghouse strike was in progress at the time and because he was pro-management, each day I had to defend the cause of organized labor. Finally it became obvious that he was dedicated to the cause of the anti-labor crusade. Simple state-

ments of fact no longer had any effect. He had to be chopped down to size. I tried it and it had an interesting reaction. I began something like this. . . .

"During the 30s the small farmer, Businessman and labor worked for legislative reforms to bring back prosperity, we didn't solve the problem of the depression but we certainly helped to ease the pain. Lately there has been a mad scramble to make a fast buck and all this seems to have been forgotten.

The small businessman and farmer is in trouble now because in each area of commerce sits a representative of the big banks whose only job is to take over or drive to the wall anyone who is making any money. If your number hasn't come up yet it's only because they still have bigger fish to catch.

It isn't labor that is buying the giant size bottles of sleeping pills and aspirin tablets, they're organized.

It's useless to talk though. . . . You guys are still so pathetically enchanted by the trusts they can spit in your face and tell you it's raining and you would believe them. . . ."

My acquaintance got red in the face and was visibly disturbed.

The next time we met it was just in passing, but he gave me a very warm and respectful 'hello.'

-L. D.

## Capital Punishment Held No Deterrent

Brooklyn

Editor, Daily Worker:

On the question of capital punishment: It always seemed to me that the death penalty is more a matter of punishment and revenge than a deterrent. Everyone fears death. But brave people and evil people will take their chances. The compulsion of the desire for justice that impels patriots to risk their lives for freedom and the evil bent of wrongdoers whose crimes are now punishable by death are facts of life that have endured since history is recorded. And people will continue despite the death penalty.

Capital punishment is a waste of human resources. Society could gain more by confining evil doers and employing them usefully for the benefit of society. I am sure that persons fear confinement as they fear

# REP. KLEIN HITS MOVE TO BAR WIDOW'S PENSION

Mrs. Sadie Van Veen Amter, one of seven appealing an administrative ruling revoking old age benefits, recently received a letter from Rep. Arthur G. Klein inclosing copies of correspondence he entered into on her behalf with Social Security Administration.

In a letter to the Congressman dated April 27, Joseph E. McElvain, chairman of the Appeals Council of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Social Security Administration, said the issue for determination in the hearing now under way here, "is whether employment of Mr. Amter by the Communist Party is covered by the Social Security Act."

Rep. Klein, in his letter to McElvain, dated April 26, stated he was not entirely familiar with the provisions of the law under which

Mrs. Amter's pension was stopped, adding:

"I hold an utter abhorrence for, and disagreed violently with all of the known views of Mrs. Amter's late husband. However, it is my feeling that consideration should be given to the American tradition of not penalizing members of a person's family for actions over which they may not have had any control.

"Because of that very attitude, which is rooted in the American principle of fair play, and if said action of withholding Social Security benefits is not mandatory, I think every humane consideration should be given to the widow, who is a constituent of mine, to enable her to live out her life and not be punished for the actions or the views of her late husband."

death and could be taught to conform to better their conditions. As long as a person can be of use to society he should be encouraged to live and be productive. And we have no right to deprive people of life even if they are not capable of being of use to society. Capital punishment must be abolished everywhere.

-L. D.

## Rotation of Leadership

Editor, Daily Worker:

I have a practical suggestion for a way to curb the cult of personality in the C. P. First, a point of analysis. It is not enough to explain what happened to Stalin by historical factors—the fight against renegades, etc. What is clear to me is that there were personal factors also. Let's put it in a down to earth way—Stalin got a swelled head! Who wouldn't after years in the Kremlin with everybody applauding his every word? Marxists are dedicated people, but that does not mean that they are not open to human weakness.

If Khrushchev stays in his present job for 20 years, it'll be a miracle if he doesn't turn autocratic also. I don't believe in betting on miracles.

What's the answer? It lies in rotation of leadership. Not abolition of leadership, not loss of leadership—but rotation. How would it work? At present, because of police persecution, its no problem for the American C.P. But suppose we return to

"normal" one of these days as we hope? Then I say this: no one should be secretary of our party for more than three years. (Browder wasn't an autocrat when he started either).

Members of the national committee should be elected on a staggered basis, so that there always will be new and continuing members, and the longest period should be five years. Re-election of top leaders would be permissible provided they have spent an interim period of at least two years in other work—such as: State or district organizer of the Party; or in trade union work; or in factory work, etc.

-Old Timer.

## Too Many Big Ideas

CHICAGO, Ill.

Editor, Daily Worker:

A chronic sickness of the American Communist Party is over-exaggeration. Throughout its history it has been a small organization with limited influence and support. This is even more true today. Yet over the years we have operated as though we are a powerful outfit. We launch national plans without consideration of available forces or knowing who will carry them out.

In the unions, instead of patiently and tactfully trying to educate and influence, we often tried to tell them how to run

(Continued on Page 7)

# LETTER

(Continued from Page 4)

the organization.

Another example is the Daily Worker. It costs many thousands of dollars to publish and the circulation is very small. Why not put out a lively weekly paper, one easily read and understood by working people and one that could build up a substantial circulation. It would no doubt eventually lay the groundwork for a Daily when the movement and demand for it has matured.

-R. C.