

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

A Courageous Newspaper

Editor, Daily Worker:

Enclosed please find my \$5 contribution and though, it is small, I am making every effort to help—in this small way.

As a new reader of your paper, I would like to say that your paper is a most inspiring and courageous newspaper; the positive, hopeful feelings certainly are refreshing to me. Needless to mention, I thoroughly enjoy reading it every day.

To Mr. Howard Fast, whose column I wouldn't miss for anything—whose simple, sincere, heartfelt words are comparable to the great Maxim Gorky—I can only say that I hope he will always continue to have a medium for his work—and I for one hope that his column will continue to appear in your paper, more preferably on a daily basis.

From a new inspired reader, who though reading your newspaper—still feels somewhat intimidated at signing her name.

(Editor's Note: The contribution mentioned was sent to the Emergency Committee for a Free Press, with headquarters at 575 Sixth Ave., corner 16 St., Room 301. Send or bring your contributions to keep our paper going to this committee.)

Reply by Max Gordon

Editor, Daily Worker:

In a recent letter a reader, Stanley Archer, questions my remarks, made in an article on Corliss Lamont's book, Soviet Civilization, regarding the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

The article, in the May 10 issue of the D.W., was critical of the manner in which we Marxists have applied the theory of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to our own country.

Archer's view is that the weakness in our position arises out of our failure to explain the theory "clearly in language our fellow-citizens would understand." He notes that the word "dictatorship" provides a "psychological block" and maintains this must be solved and not evaded.

In capitalist society, the state—whether bourgeois democratic or fascist—is an organ of rule of the capitalist class over the workingclass. It is an instrument of exploitation of the capitalist class.

In socialist society, or a society being transformed into socialism, the state is the organ of workingclass rule.

It is obvious that the manner of domination can differ very widely, both under bourgeois

rule and under workingclass rule. Fascist government is quite different from bourgeois democratic government. And under socialism, the conditions under which workingclass rule is established, the existing relations of world and internal forces, national experience and tradition, all determine the manner in which workingclass rule is applied. It will differ sharply from country to country.

Hence I wonder if there is anything to be gained by our continued use of the terms "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and "Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie," rather than those of capitalist rule and workingclass rule. Millions of American workers will have no trouble in recognizing that monopoly capital runs our country today. They will not so readily accept the idea that it is a "dictatorship" of the capitalists.

Similarly, to term workingclass rule as "Dictatorship" is to obscure for the American people the fact that Marxists are advocates of a peaceful parliamentary road to socialism, and of maintenance of civil liberty under socialism.

One final word on this. Our government here has been plagued by a deep-seated anti-parliamentarism which goes back to our origins. One reason, I feel, is the attitude toward bourgeois democracy conveyed, erroneously but perhaps inevitably, by the term "Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie." A national Communist leader, discussing the term in a Political Affairs article a few years ago, maintained that Marxism-Leninism has "always shown that democracy under capitalism is limited and one-sided; democracy only for those who own the means of production, not democracy for the propertyless."

Certainly, democracy under capitalism is limited and one-sided. But when one negates it entirely, what point is there in legislative and electoral activity on the part of the workingclass? —MAX GORDON

Zhdanov's Essays

On Literature

Editor, Daily Worker:

Like others before me I wish to congratulate the editors of the DW for initiating and encouraging the discussion known as "speak your piece." The unprecedented flow of free expressions, criticisms, evaluations are a tribute to the editors of the DW and to an extent a guarantee that things will never be the same. All of which is wonderful and to the good.

Yet, somehow, somewhere I cannot escape the feeling that

the editors of the DW in their anxiety to correct a wrong of the past, abdicate their responsibility as Marxists.

To cite an example: In the DW of Monday, May 28, the "Old-timer," refers to the Zhdanov's essays on literature, philosophy and music, as "the discredited Zhdanov essays," etc.

So far as the "Old-timer" is concerned, it is the opinion of this writer that he or she either never read those essays or if he or she did read them, never understood them.

But, it is not "Old-Timer" that this letter is concerned with. Space does not permit to cite parts from above mentioned essays to prove the "Old-Timer" all wet.

Granting that certain parts of Zhdanov's essays are not applicable to conditions in America or do not apply to conditions here in 1956. That could be said of Marxism as a science. Does that mean that certain writings of Marx or Engels, because they were written in a certain period, under certain prevailing conditions, which may not apply to contemporary conditions in America? Would that mean that basic thoughts and philosophy of Marx and Engels are discredited?

Surely it is not Marx' fault, and if you please, Zhdanov's fault that if we in America have become slaves to quotes and applied a science in a mechanical and dogmatic fashion. Because we are in trouble, and our inability to apply Marxism in a creative way, are we not shifting the guilt?

It is one thing to encourage free discussion. It is something else for Marxist editors to be oblivious or appear indifferent to statements made which are unfounded and hurt the movement. —B.L.

Reading Socialists'

Experience Cited

Editor, Daily Worker:

I am wondering how the exposure of Stalin is going to work out. Here in Reading (Pa.) was the strongest Socialist movement in the United States—2,300 members of the Socialist Party, largest in the nation and Socialists controlled Reading and had partial control of the county. The victory caused the leaders to go haywire and insane over their own importance. Anybody who criticized them at all was fired. This caused a split in the party. The best and most active workers were fired; the disgust that followed destroyed the Socialist movement here. No Socialist has been elected here since the split of

Teachers Tell Jansen Compulsion Will Fail

By MILLY SALWEN

Nobody, not even the head of the school system, can order "voluntary" after-school activities and expect results, a survey of the major teachers' groups showed yesterday.

Protests, if not united, were certainly unanimous when William Jansen, superintendent of schools, announced that next Monday or Tuesday all high school teachers will get a directive telling them "that they just have to end the stoppage" of extracurricular activities.

In issuing the third such directive in six years, Jansen said, "this time we intend to see that it is carried out."

Promptly the High School Teachers Association, in its session Tuesday, reaffirmed its "code of observance"—asking all teachers to continue to refrain from volunteering for after-school activities "until a settlement of the salary crisis in the high schools is achieved."

Earlier, HSTA president Mrs. Concetta Roy had said that passing the "top-heavy budget along with a move to pay certain teachers for after-class work doesn't

come to grips" with the twin issues of poor pay and morale, and the acute teacher shortage.

At the Teachers Guild, one spokesman commented that Jansen will put pressure on the principals, and "then there will be trouble unless the matter is straightened out. They can't mandate creativity."

Earlier, Guildsmen greeted the school board's proposal to pay for time put in on extra-curricular activities: "We believe in the principle of extra pay for extra work. The amount reported is inadequate, but at least it's recognition of the board's responsibility."

The Teachers Union sent a telegram telling Jansen his directive "has aroused widespread resentment . . . and will inevitably fail." The telegram urged Jansen to reopen the salary problems with the mayor and the board of Education.

Diggs Will Chair State Democratic Convention

GRAND RAPIDS.—For the first time in history, a Negro will chair a state convention of the Democratic Party.

Rep. Chas. C. Diggs, Jr., the state's first Negro Congressman, will chair the convention, which opens June 2 here at the Public Auditorium. Principal actions will be to adopt a state platform, list candidates and instruct delegates to the coming National Democratic Party convention.

Two weeks ago, under the pressure of labor, farmers and Negro precinct delegates, will be present, as well as a large Negro representation.

Hundreds of unionists, elected voters, the program committee held open discussions, invited organizations to come to Lansing and give

1938.

Maybe the exposure of Stalin will be good for the Communist Party.

So I'm renewing my subscription to see what goes on. —F.M.

their viewpoints on what has to be in the state platform.

A sample of some of the things the platform committee was told are as follows:

• Governor Williams said there must be no pussyfooting in recognizing a need to put into execution the U. S. Supreme Court's school segregation decision. He said the Democratic Party has to come out clearly on human rights and liberties.

• Robert Kohler, representing the Anti-Defamation League of Detroit, struck out against Michigan discrimination against Jewish and Negro people. He called for an end to discriminatory advertising by tourist councils. He charged that resorts bar Negroes and Jewish people and that Michigan discriminates on housing and social activity.

Alex Fuller, Negro unionist, organizational director of the Wayne County CIO Council was chairman of the meeting that heard over 100 speakers deal with farm questions, highways, housing, for peace, and civil rights.