

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Praises Clark Column, Seeks 'New Method'

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Hats off to Joe Clark from one who disagrees with Joe's basic position on many things and still feels that he has never satisfactorily explained his own "errors" during the so-called "Stalin" era in the USSR.

But in today's columns Joe says many of the things which need to be said—and which are becoming more and more clear to many of us—viz., that the real issue which faces the Soviet party as well as the world communist movement today, is not just that of finding a proper position on given issues—but on the correct use of power within a Communist Party or a Socialist State.

I do not know whether Khrushchev or Molotov is right on many of the questions which are undoubtedly vital in the USSR today, I do know that

a) Khrushchev appears to have the majority of the Central Committee behind him, is therefore not an utter fool and probably represents the real interests of the Soviet people.

b) Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich helped make the first Socialist Revolution of our time, helped build the first Soviet state and defended it successfully along with Joseph Stalin against its enemies. True, such men may have gotten old, senile and lost the "common touch"—but what kind of fools can call them traitors, war-mongers or agents of imperialists.

c) Marxism is a science. The correctness of a policy is determined by life experience—but majorities both here and abroad have been known to be wrong in the past.

Surely it is conceivable that in the USSR equally dedicated Communists can differ sharply—as sharply as John Gates and William Z. Foster in our country—on very important issues such as whether to stress light or heavy industry at a given period—or how best to deal with Tito—without either being a traitor to his country or party.

Here then is a chance for the American party to play a real role in the world Communist movement in terms of our best American traditions. Let us be the first to explore new methods which would embrace the best features of democratic centralism (unity of purpose and action) and Jeffersonian democracy (protection of the rights of minorities).

Let us do away with the ugly word "factionalism" and explore the good old American tradition of caucusing—and let this become a legitimate method of functioning within the CPUSA. A leader is helpless without a following—a rank and filer is a sad sack without a leader. Majorities are not always right and many wrongs both here and in the Soviet Union could have been righted more quickly if the structure of the party provided for a legitimate exchange of ideas which might be unpopular at a given period.

I urge that the reader's page be thrown open to a full discussion on democratic centralism—its theory and practice and that we have maximum participation by leaders, rank and filers, and guest writers on this question.

ISABEL

July 10, 1957

Alan Max is on vacation.
His column will resume
shortly.

Criticizes Clark Column, Terms Editorial 'Correct'

ST. LOUIS, Mo.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Joseph Clark's article on the actions of the C. C. of the CPSU (7/10) deserves much comment. I hope you will allow a rank-and-file comrade equal space to present facts which Clark ignored. Although his article could and should be challenged sentence by sentence, my comments will be limited to those points which I consider most important.

1. Clark consistently uses the word "Stalinism." No scientific Marxist has ever said he fought "Stalinism." Khrushchev publicly stated, he was a "Stalinist." "Stalinism" is a word coined by the imperialists who are "eager to take advantage of the opportunity to erase what was correct in Stalin's work as well as the immense achievements of the Soviet Union and the whole socialist camp up to now, and to create confusion and division in the Communist ranks." (More on Historical Experience of Proletarian Dictatorship).

Clark must be questioned, then, as to whether he is furthering the aims of Socialism by using the word "Stalinism."

2. Clark glosses over the stress placed by the C. C. of the CPSU resolution that the changes in leadership were made because of active factionalism in opposing the decisions of the 20th Party Congress. This also was the emphasis of the Worker editorial.

Does Clark feel that decisions of Party Congresses are so unimportant that they need not be stressed as such?

3. Clark attacks "the lack of basic democratic procedure in the Soviet Union." According to L'Unita, "the four demanded—and this should be noted because it is a point of extreme importance on which the four fought to the last—not only that a decision be made right away but that it be published in the press together with a political declaration which Shepilov had been entrusted to prepare. Only after that would the plenary session of the central committee, have been called, finding itself practically faced with an accomplished fact."

But what actually happened was that 225 members of the C. C. democratically debated the issue and "not one, not a single one supported the four."

On the basis of this report does Clark support the four who tried to railroad the issue rather than democratic debate by the Party's leading body?

4. Isaac Deutscher on the Soviet Union has rather unstartlingly been proven wrong rather than confirmed. The forces of industrialization in the Soviet Union under Stalin caused the Soviet Union and Communism (what Deutscher calls Stalinism) to gain strength steadily. And when Clark says Russia, does he mean Russia or the Soviet Union?

Can't this "foreign affairs expert" distinguish between Russia and the Soviet Union?

5. The Worker editorial on the change in leadership was an excellent piece of writing. One could almost picture the staff working together to present a correct editorial policy. The spirit of Marxist criticism was obvious.

Why then wasn't it possible for some of it to rub off on our foreign affairs writer?

—MISSOURI MARXIST.

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