

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Disputes Joe Clark On Moscow Events

NEW YORK

Editor, Daily Worker:

Joe Clark's article of July 10 concerning the recent change of leadership in the Soviet Union is an article, at best, written from the viewpoint of a liberal bourgeois writer who is trying to understand the Soviet Union. It was not written from a Marxist-Leninist or Communist understanding of recent reality.

Firstly, the article is studded with the term "Stalinism." Why is this term used and along with it all the connotations that Socialism is a sinister and threatening conspiracy?

Secondly, Joe Clark writes, "It would be unfortunate if that basic trend (more democratic changes) were obscured by the methods being used by the Soviet leaders to fight Stalinism." Then he talks about the fight being bottled up in the Central Committee, inferring that the Soviet leaders wanted to hide what happened and why. What kind of methods is he referring to?

In the first place, the development took place very rapidly from June 17 to June 30, were unexpected by the party and started out as a ruse employed by Molotov-Malenkov group to gather the Presidium together.

Allow me to quote Harrison Salisbury of N. Y. Times (July 9): "The opposition group, having made careful plans, asked for a meeting of the Presidium June 17, ostensibly to consider the speeches to be made at the 250th anniversary celebration of the city of Leningrad scheduled for June 23." However, Khrushchev was instead "confronted with a charge that his leadership was 'Trotskyist and opportunist'" and a demand for his resignation.

Then the fight started first in the Presidium and then in the full Central Committee of the party. There could not have been full public debate while the issue was unsettled. However, when it was resolved the Central Committee went to the Party and to the people to explain what happened.

In my opinion, Joe Clark is

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guilty of making an unsubstantiated attack upon the Soviet leaders.

In another part of the article he talks about "lack of basic democratic procedure in the Soviet Communist Party which still persists." How can he make this statement honestly?

Because of the suddenness of the attack in the Presidium and temporary absenteeism, Khrushchev was temporarily voted out as first secretary of the party. Again Salisbury: "Khrushchev refused to accept the vote in the Presidium . . . and demanded that the Central Committee be summoned to consider the situation," because the vote was illegal.

Clark writes that policy issues were behind every conflict and then he goes on: "But this does not mean there wasn't also jockeying for leadership and power."

I agree there was such jockeying, but he very conveniently forgets to mention who was vying for power. He tries to leave the impression that BOTH sides were conducting an unprincipled fight while in reality it was the Molotov-Malenkov group that were the factionalists.

The tone of the article is to defend the four and to obscure the basic reason for their expulsion from the Central Committee. The Pravda articles showed that their differences of opinion on current issues was tolerated, but not their anti-party factionalism and secret meetings which threatened the unity of the CCSU. They were not expelled for their part in the 30's but on their recent conduct.

RED GUM
July 11, 1957

Suggests Books On Socialist Heroes

Editor, Daily Worker:

The death of James W. Ford, whom I'd known as a fellow-fighter and friend for more than 25 years, grieves me, as it does thousands of others in our country and beyond its borders. It arouses in me, too, thoughts of the duty we owe to fallen fighters like him, and I raise my voice to make the following suggestion:

Can not our unified and revived movement undertake the publication of a series of biographies of such heroes, to be published in paper backs, kept to an uniform length of from 96 to 100 pages, and sold for one dollar? Such a biography, based on knowledge and research, should tell the individual human life-story, the struggles and hopes, the sacrifices and victories.

It won't be long, now, before our grandchildren have socialism,

and they'll win it sooner if we provide them with the thrilling stories of socialism's pioneers.

A list of people whose lives deserve telling could be drawn up systematically, perhaps by a congress of writers, perhaps by a vote of Daily Worker readers, or in some other agreed way. As a starter, and going back over the last thirty years or so, I suggest as subjects the following persons: James W. Ford, Owen Middleton, Israel Amter, Edward Strong, Rose Pastor Stokes, Kate Richards O'Hare, Alfred Wagenknecht, Joseph Brodsky, Emanuel Block, Jeanette D. Pearl, Charles Krunbein, M. J. Olgin, Harry Gannes, Emanuel Levin.

I am attracted by all of them, but I think I'd like to take Kate Richards O'Hare or Rose Pastor Stokes as my job, if such a plan is undertaken.

Faithfully,
OAKLEY C. JOHNSON

Are Discussions Bottled Up?

NEW YORK

Editor, Daily Worker,

Joe Clark's column of the 10th on the shakeup in the S.U. is a good one and with which I agree. The point he makes about "the struggle being bottled up in the presidium and the Central Committee" led me to think about the U.S. party.

Throughout the discussion period we recently went through, the point about making public minority opinion (on leading bodies) was made over and over again.

The publication of these opinions would help the party to weigh all sides of a question. This procedure was supposed to be a break with our past habits of just making public the finished product tied up in a neat little package. This gave the appearance of complete unanimity, etc. We found out too late that these higher body decisions weren't always what they appeared to be.

However, this being the case, how come we don't see reports of discussions — pro and con, — these days?

Surely, discussions around policy is being held. I read the press religiously but as yet I don't recall reading anything like I mentioned above.

I agree with Clark on the "bottling up of discussion in the S. U." I also disagree with the discussions being "bottled up" here.

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