

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

What Was the Vote About

Editor, Daily Worker:

I read with interest Joe Lash's report in the Post about the Chick Mason article. And then I read with amazement Sam Coleman's wire to the Post in the D. W.

The Post said: (1) that the N.Y. party had taken a vote to publish Mason's article and (2) that there was a dispute about it between the N. Y. party and Foster.

Coleman (1) denied that there was a dispute, (2) said that Mason's article was submitted in good faith by a party member and (3) did not deny that a vote had been taken, and (4) said that all the party leadership are in direct disagreement with Mason's views.

So what was the vote about? In this uncensored, free and open discussion, conducted in a democratic and not in a bureaucratic manner, did the State Board take a vote on the good faith of a member submitting an article?

I am sorry to say that I no longer believe that the discussion is uncensored, free and open. Moreover, on the basis of the inherent probabilities, I am inclined to believe Lash rather than Coleman.

Sincerely,
-NODAC

Asks to Hear From Foster

Editor, Daily Worker:

Today's DW carries Sam Coleman's telegram to the N. Y. Post expressing the reasons for the forthcoming publication of an article in "Party Voice" by Chick Mason defending Browder's views.

In his wire Coleman says there is no conflict with Foster about its publication. If this is actually so I'm sure the atmosphere could be considerably cleared by asking Foster to publish his agreement. Until he does so I'm afraid I'll have to believe the N.Y. Post. All the logic is on their side.

-CHARLES JONES

P. S. I also approve of the publication of the article. What I object is that Coleman seems to be covering up for the refusal of the national leadership to air their views.

(ED. NOTE: The National Committee meeting story in Wednesday's DW pledges such an airing of views.)

Causes of Isolation

CHICAGO.

Editor, Daily Worker:

The articles by B.J.G. and William Z. Foster in The Worker of Aug. 26 complement and contrast with each other. Both try to bring into a balanced focus the twin factors of objective conditions and subjective errors in isolating the left forces in America.

B.J.G. does much the better job because he pinpoints the very important error of flying blindly into the face of the difficult objective conditions, implicitly denying them in formulating program, while Foster illustrates this very error.

Foster cites the "relatively easy economic conditions" of the post-World War II period as a factor against left trends, but fails to mention the fact that the left (Foster as much as anyone) failed to draft a correct program because of dogmatic insistence that things were terrible or about to become terrible, and further isolated itself by proclaiming "crisis" unendingly.

B.J.G. illustrates how Dennis, among others, is doing business at the same old stand of unreal-

ism in his suggested "must" program for labor, which is impossibly advanced. The left, if it is to have any influence now and a leading influence someday, must start where the people are rather than proudly and ridiculously proclaiming a program which assumes them to be where we would like them to be.

-L.W.

A Poem to Wagenknecht

Editor, Daily Worker:

Here is my Homage to Alfred Wagenknecht:
Unto our common cause you gave your all,
Your energy and brain, your heart and hand,
To free the wage-slaves of capital,
The downtrodden of every land.

-Charles Perkins.

Deputy Secretary Proposal Favored

Editor, Daily Worker:

Some very interesting avenues are opened up by J. W. Ford's proposal for a deputy secretaryship post in the Communist Party to be headed by a Negro.

As is well known, many Negro spokesmen who favor the integration of the Negro workers into trade unions have voiced the sentiment that a liaison organization among colored workers should be created inside the united labor movement. Such an organization, it is felt, would encourage the Negro workers to coordinate their activity around the special problems confronting them. What's more, such organization and activity would stimulate the emergence rapidly of a new generation of colored labor leaders at all levels.

To grant the movement for racial emancipation a special and autonomous place inside the framework of the working class movement will in no way slow up the general struggle but rather solidify the struggle of the working class for its emancipation with the historical fight of the Negro people for social and economic equality and freedom.

The Negro people and working class are today in the vanguard of the struggle against the social system which holds them both in bondage. In a real sense the Negro is the educator of the white, assisting the white worker and the working farmer to discover the real face of our land.

Therefore can we not conclude that the creation of such a liaison within the party expressed by the creation of a top center—a purely Negro committee—not only on an equal footing but dedicated to the special needs of the Negro people—would correspond to the depth and level of the contribution which is being made by our black brothers on the whole front of struggle in our land. . . . I think it would be wise to take two steps forward fraternally:

First—Investigate the implications of Ford's proposal. Elaborate it further into a top-level commission headed by our deputy leader to guide liaison activities within and around the Party.

Second—Issue a slogan for similar organizational steps within every union in the country and stimulate the organization of a National Negro Labor Congress with formal statutes, conventions, etc. within the framework of the AFL-CIO and extending a fraternal hand to the NAACP for collaboration on a pro-labor, pro-liberal platform.—L. Deaty.

A Reply to the "Wiser Marxist"

Editor, Daily Worker:

I would like to thank "Older and Wiser Marxist" for commenting on a previous letter of mine. I am sure that we youth can learn much from our elders in the movement and I look forward to more comments from him and I hope that many others will follow his example.

I personally do not read "Living For Young Homemakers" but I do square dance and I also do the cha-cha. I don't think that the last two have had a bad influence on myself. I find that because I am able to do these things I can socialize much better and meet more people. Isn't this what we should be doing? And furthermore I enjoy these things, so why shouldn't I do them. As a young person in our movement am I supposed to hate these things? Is square dancing reactionary and is the cha-cha anti-working class? Are there any Marxist dances?

Does "Older and Wiser Marxist" propose that for our movies we attend only the "Cameo" (new "Stanley"), for our reading material read only Soviet novels, for our vacations go only to "Nitgedaiget" and for our theatre wait until a workingclass theatre is established? Is this the type of life we youth in the movement should be living? Should we only have progressive friends? . . .

I want to bring the message of socialism to young people and work with them to fight for the needs of the youth. I believe I could do that most effectively if I'm a normal young person and so have their respect and have them listen to what I have to say.

Young Marxist.

Industrial Branches

Editor, Daily Worker:

Reading the discussion from the rank and file, I was not astonished at the wealth of creative thought unleashed with the exposure that Stalin was human and that in the path to socialism many mistakes were made.

We in our own way here had a cult of the individual—we catered, protected, pampered individuals who were leaders in trade unions and other organizations. The C.P. had industrial branches which in many ways became appendages to individuals running for office. Our party instead of becoming a unifying force became a factional force.

The rank and file were listened to but often not heeded—one word from the leader of a union or organization was valued more than the word of a group of rank and filers.

In this way we spoiled our leading people and discouraged our rank and file as in the needle trades, painters and furriers. When some leading rank and filers raised sober voices and showed leadership by example—they were often characterized as Leftist or Rightist to such an extent that they were made ineffectual in their work and they were eased out of positions of leadership.

As one active for half a century in the labor movement and in the Party I welcome this discussion and I am sure that the lessons of history will be well learned and that our party will land on its feet and gain strength.

I believe we have to re-evaluate our industrial setup as it exists in New York where the industrial club is divorced from community and community club leadership devoid of workers.

While I don't advocate liquidation of industrial clubs as a whole, some organizational changes are called for which

would bring about a better balanced outlook.

I believe that with the re-awakening of our importance as individuals will come the re-establishment of collective leadership and democratic centralism.

-M. D.

Thanks Donors in Cave-In Tragedy

Brooklyn.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Please print this acknowledgment to anonymous donors:

Thank you for your kindest contribution and sympathy for the burial of our six unfortunate children killed in the cave-in tragedy.

MRS. MILDRED SCHINDLER AND COMMITTEES

A Valiant Life Is Ended

Editor, Daily Worker:

In the death of Alfred Wagenknecht the workingclass, the Negro people, the American people have lost a valiant fighter. His warm personality, his human qualities, his great capacity as a mass leader endeared him to countless thousands.

We in New Jersey have many wonderful memories of Comrade "Wag." Many old timers still recall his splendid self-sacrificing leadership in the great Passaic Textile strike of 1926. He organized a great movement to take care of the children and in support of the striking textile workers. This was just one example of his great ability as a mass leader.

Many Jerseyans, non-Communists as well as Communists, are saddened at "Wag's" death. It is with both grief and pride that we say goodbye. Grief that his valiant life is ended; pride that the forward movement of Socialism can produce men of such heroic stature as Comrade Wagenknecht.

MARTHA STONE ASHER,

Chairman, New Jersey Communist Party.

[Ed. Note: We received many other similar tributes to Alfred Wagenknecht].

Memories of Wagenknecht

Editor, Daily Worker:

Those of us who may reach the age of 75 with such an honorable record of service to the workers as that of Alfred Wagenknecht might well be proud.

In 1917 when he was secretary of the Socialist Party in Ohio and I was secretary in Columbus he routed me over the state to give out anti-draft and anti-war literature. I was sent to Atlanta and he was sent to the Canton workhouse with Ruthenberg and Baker.

It was not until a few months ago at the Foster dinner here in N.Y. City that I met him again. He showed the same brave spirit as we spoke of old times.

To his family and comrades I send greetings and sympathy in their bereavement.

Each day at mass I will remember him in my prayers along with Debs, Mother Bloor, Berkman, Sacco and Vanzetti, for there is no time with God, and there is peace always for those who have made the good fight.

For the better world,

AMMON HENNACY.

Lessons of Two Conventions

Editor, Daily Worker:

I have been extremely interested in the comments on the two conventions just held.

I have been ill so I spent my time listening to every long speech and all the comments on these two events. Now I too have some ideas and they tie in a bit with some of the ideas

around the discussion going on in the Communist Party.

It seems to me that a long problem of the left consists of how to maintain our own principled political ideas and at the same time evaluate honestly the situation in our own country. Evaluate without superiority or tongue in cheek. See life as it is in this country of ours and the people as they are as they go about the business of democracy under the conditions of today.

Now just what impressions did I get of the convention? First I took note of the difference between today and four years ago. Then every one seemed to be outdoing the other as to who could rebait the most fervently and fiercely. Today the emphasis is on who can be the best friend of the people, who can bring peace and prosperity best to the nation.

Certainly the two civil rights planks were more or less victories for reaction. But both parties were under the necessity to have a battle on those planks. That is the significance. The issue did really reach the conventions.

The struggle that went on in both parties was a very real thing and very different from four years ago. Also peace. It was a burning issue and was in every speech made. Does it really matter that a lot of it was demagogy? Is it really the issue that many spoke for it who have worked hard against it? Wasn't it true that many of the ruling class really hated the war against fascism and always felt it was the wrong war? They fought it and won.

It isn't necessary to give blank checks to or blind acceptance of any candidate. But it is necessary to see the deeper trend of the times and the conditions and the people. Even the most reactionary of the candidates, Nixon, felt pressure to cut rebaiting to the minimum and speak for peace and prosperity and the welfare of the people.

Are subjective intentions the whole story? His speech will pressure the Democrats even farther along the road of peace and civil rights.

And while we look, understand and know the great struggle of forces for reaction; or progress it is arrogant and superior of us to endlessly carp and snipe, and it does not accomplish what we are after: Always we are faultfinding.

Now our own ideas of how to get to peace and prosperity for our country differ very much. Our whole approach is different, it is true, and we need to speak of this, speak positively of what we feel to be needed at this stage for the next step. But we judge by ultimates. It's not socialism, so nothing is good.

We are in a vast hurry, we of the left. We are impatient of the steps and make most of our criticism, with socialism only as our standard of wrong and right, better and worse.

I have made one deep resolve, that never again so long as I live will I work with my fellow Americans with my tongue in a superior cheek. If I do not honestly believe that what we are doing together is not good I will not do it. I do not have to be naive and believe that a Franklin Delano Roosevelt is bringing socialism, but I can honestly believe he is doing many things our country badly needs him to do.

And this attitude can be true and in far greater measure than we have been able to encompass for many, many years. It ties into our superior attitude to humanity's need for its many religious feeling, its play needs, and its political needs, at any given moment in history.

SARAH V. MONTGOMERY.