

# SPEAK YOUR PIECE

## Differences Of Opinion

Editor, Daily Worker:

Three weeks after the event, John Gates' lengthy article on the demoting of Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, etc., appeared under the heading "The D.W.'s attitude on the recent Soviet changes." This article raises many questions about (1) The actual ouster of these comrades from leadership and (2) The political approach of the editors to current events.

While there is much to chew over in Gates' article, there are a few points that immediately cry out for fuller explanation.

Gates quotes, approvingly, from the initial Worker editorial: "... a wide public discussion (should have) preceded the meeting of the Central Committee." Now according to reports published in the N. Y. Times as well as a number of other papers, a meeting of the Presidium of the CPUSSR was held in June at which time a demand was raised for the removal of Khrushchev on charges of opportunism, etc. . . . Khrushchev, in the minority, claimed that the vote of 6 to 5 against him and his policies was not binding unless carried by the majority of the Central Auditing Commission. The C.C. and the C.A.C. were immediately called into session and a full scale, eight-day debate on the charges of Molotov, etc. took place. Within the context of these surprising, new developments, does Gates seriously think that the correct policy for Khrushchev should have been to call for a public debate?

First, an immense public discussion took place in the Soviet Union between the beginning of 1957 and the recent conclusion of the session of the Supreme Soviet.

Second, charges of "opportunism" and "incorrect approach" leveled at Khrushchev could only be handled intelligently by those with whom Khrushchev had the most intimate dealings, i.e. the highest party organs.

Third, the attempt by Molotov, etc. to oust Khrushchev was not simply a question "of raising

a dissenting viewpoint for discussion." It called for immediate action—action which could be taken legally only by the full Central Committee and the Central Auditing Commission. . . .

But what is really at the heart of Gates' article is the discussion about "differences of opinion."

Gates mentions: "Some of our readers think it is intolerable if the foreign editor of the Daily Worker gives a differing interpretation of an event from that expressed in the editorials of the paper or by the editor-in-chief. I do not think so."

Now I don't think it's intolerable, but I'm concerned. How is an editorial written in the Daily? Gates and the staff sit down and discuss an approach, we hope, **based on available facts.** We, the readers get enough of "opinion," adulterated and unadulterated. But we don't get enough of **scholastic opinion** which is based on and presents factual material to buttress its position!

Certainly the right of dissent is important, but we can't agree that "everyone is entitled to their opinion" period! Is the function of the Daily to become an organ of **opinion** or of **fact**? Why is it that so many of our fellow readers were impressed with articles by Art Shields, Virginia Gardner and others that dealt with a **factual** approach to current events? Why were so many of my acquaintances so avid to read the series on Puerto Rican workers in the N.Y. Post? We must ask ourselves, why is the fund drive and the circulation of the Daily Worker in such a precarious position?

My feeling is that our paper is losing much of the crusading spirit that moved thousands of us to buy papers like PM and the Compass. We are content to spout propaganda, rather than collate and relate facts.

The biggest need of the Marxist movement **today** in the U. S. its revitalization and a great role must be played by a newspaper which is not content with printing "opinions" alone, but which will arm us with the **truth** and the inspiration to struggle for it.—H.B.