

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Profound Approach

Editor, Daily Worker:

You are doing a magnificent job—content of the paper is unprecedented in quality—or maybe it's just my newly developed ability to think a little more deeply, that has added a new dimension to your consistently profound approach to the unfolding scene.

Could we invite non-Marxist figures to write for the paper—labor, civic leaders, celebrities, letting them state their own viewpoint what ever it might be?

Could we offer to take subscriptions to paper of other groups if they would take subscriptions to ours?

—A. L. and H. L.

Theory and Knowledge

Editor, Daily Worker:

I agree whole-heartedly with Herbert Aptheker's statement on the need to acquire knowledge about the world around us, and especially nearest us, in order to be effective. Marxism is an approach to reality, not a substitute for it. It is heartening to see Aptheker state his point of view entirely in his own words, in spite of the fact that he might have culled so many quotations from Lenin to "prove" it.

Aptheker, as it seems, addressed himself mainly to Marxist scholars, many of whom have spent their energies in spinning equations out of such formulas as they thought they saw in the Marxist classics, instead of forming conclusions on the basis of a thorough knowledge of their subject.

Yet the problem of confusing theory with knowledge, or substituting theory for knowledge is important for all who deal with ideas, as all do. It leads to the kinds of trouble the Marxist movement throughout the world has been suffering from these past years.

Khrushchev stated that one reason Stalin maintained himself in his position was because he was the most powerful Marxist theoretician. Is this not a slander of the term "theory." Can a theory be meaningful, can a man's thought processes be powerful when based on such realities as we have recently learned of? Stalin perhaps was the best dogmatist and maintained himself because of the failure of the Soviet Party as well as all others to distinguish between theory and dogma.

For dogma, theory divorced from reality, is the best tool of oppression short of violence. It is a sanction which cannot be challenged without knowledge. How many are in positions of leadership in the party, not because their ideas have met with success in the real world of politics, but because they have buffalooed the rank and file with empty phrases, slick sentences and lengthy quotations?

How many husbands oppress their wives, how many individuals dominate their acquaintances with that verbal facility, that omnipotent gesture which is based on the discovery that it doesn't matter what you say if you're quoting an authority. That is why reality and a knowledge thereof is democracy's best friend.

—P. R.

People's Organizations

Editor, Daily Worker:

When reviewing our past mistakes, we mention many of our left sectarian political positions. Related and stemming from our left sectarian position is our attitude and relationship to mass organizations. We are not convinced of the importance of peoples' organizations and the necessity of our being members of these organizations, helping to strengthen them, learning from them, and making a progressive

contribution to them.

At this point I don't want to name the specific organizations, but they are important because each one is a grouping of people where ideological, political and practical problems are discussed, developed, and put into action. These are places where "ideas" are not and cannot be jailed. These are the places where "diverse and new ideas" are not merely accepted but sometimes looked forward to.

Why aren't many of us in these organizations? Various reasons:

1. We considered some petty bourgeois, and therefore of no value.

2. Underestimation of the democratic ideas and attitude of the people.

3. Inability to discuss with people who differ with us.

4. Laziness (physically and mentally).

5. Incorrect estimate of the relationship of forces in the country. (Failure to see need to win middle-class to fight for peace, democracy, Negro rights, etc.)

6. Isolation due to raising super-left issues.

7. Failure of leadership to break with sectarianism and also their failure to allow people in organizations enough flexibility (lack of democratic discussion and underestimation of people in organizations and their opinions on policies, etc.)

What can be done to alter the situation and give us strong roots among the people?

1. Make mass work a standing point on every agenda.

2. Begin a more detailed study of organizations by clubs and other groups.

3. Convince our groups collectively and individually to become members of organizations and follow up to see that this program is carried out wherever possible.

4. A national historical study into organizations in the U. S. which have played a significant role in the development of our country since its inception and publicizing the results among us.

5. Closer relationships between leadership and people in mass organizations on a regular basis in order to get reports from them and also to give our people in the mass organization guidance so that they can work correctly.

—A. W.

Selfless Contributions

Editor, Daily Worker:

I see that a "Brooklynite" defends the use of the term "irresponsible huckster" applied to William L. Patterson. I haven't seen the original letter by H. K.—but with all my heart I revolted against it—and I felt ashamed that the Daily Worker allowed it to be printed in a paper whose readers are so familiar with the selfless and courageous contributions to American civil and social welfare by Patterson.

Would Brooklynite kindly look into the dictionary—as I did just now—it says a huckster is "one who retails small articles; a mean tricky fellow." To apply such a term to a man such as William L. Patterson is not self-criticism but arrogance of the worst sort. I protest it!

ESTHER CARROLL.

How Is CPUSA Doing?

Editor, Daily Worker:

Re the June 6, 1956 editorial, "The Khrushchev Speech":

So now you're thinking for yourself. Swell. But about what?

How about the job at hand? How about some organization and leadership? Your job is not "straightening out" the Soviet Union's leaders, but developing ones at home.

Granted the two are not mutually exclusive, but do you

really think the present situation here is such that it does not require the fullest attention?

The Soviet Union's been doing alright; but has the CPUSA? —D.I.

Smith Act Trial

Editor, Daily Worker:

It has been very heartening these last few months to find the Daily Worker writing and fighting for a policy that would place supporters of socialism on an American democratic footing and that would be better understood by the American working people.

None-the-less it has been disheartening to see that you don't give ample and sufficient coverage to the Smith Act trials. The latest trial has come and gone. They have been convicted—Trachtenberg, Jackson, Charney and the others—and I dare say people hardly know there was a trial and another group of Communists face long prison terms.

It's a weakness that the DW, having been so consistent and correct in its position these past few months, has negated it by failing to develop and carry on a fight in behalf of the defendants.

—D. T.

2 Parties Needed

Editor, Daily Worker:

The question of what kind of party the American workers need should be answered in terms of its ultimate task, not on the basis of what kind of party can presently flourish. Indeed, two parties are needed in America and both are our responsibility.

The politically undifferentiated and indefinite body of unattached radicals, progressives, liberals, Negroes, trade unionists, farmers, small businessmen, professionals, dissatisfied and frustrated Democrats, lost Socialists and tired Communists (who have, they say, "wasted" years of their lives) are all but clamoring to be organized into a new party, an ordinary kind of a party.

They are right. Such a party must split from the Democrats whose foreign policy is bi-partisan, whose best domestic planks are lesser evils and whose worst crime is betrayal of civil rights. The labor movement must be the backbone; no more 1948 contrivances. The Communists (those who remain), together with the tired Communists who are raring to go, must use their science and perspective to provide cohesive statesmanship.

But is that the solution for the Communists? No. A Communist Party is also necessary, even although not demanded by the people. It must be a Marxist-Leninist party, with democratic centralism and discipline. Let us not all be discouraged by our small, battered party. Lenin had no mass party in 1917, but he had that special kind of party. It led the way.

Our task may be even greater. Instead of the Czar's shaky government resting on backward means of production, we face monopoly capitalism, which by definition is never more than a step from fascism. Even now, when we are weak, the government, which speaks and rules for the "power elite," outlaws those who worked for a peaceful transition to a Socialism not regarded as the order of the day.

When Socialism becomes the order of the day, because our people's government cannot solve the contradictions of capitalism, what then? Are we to believe a change in the relationship of world forces, of domestic forces, will reduce all enemy forces to ineffectiveness? No. It is for then that we need a party, capable of ruling.

—J. W.