

# Letters from Readers

Following are more letters in the current discussion of American Marxists and the Soviet Union. Letters over 300 words cannot be printed in full.

## Why Wait for the Russians?

Editor, Daily Worker:

The discussion now under way in the Worker and Daily Worker on the Soviet Party Congress seems likely to bring some long-needed and healthy reevaluation of American Marxist thinking.

The article in today's Daily Worker by William Z. Foster is good in many respects. Many points he makes—notably, that American Marxists should neither “rush indignantly to the defense of Stalin nor tear him to political shreds”—seem very well-taken. However his article contains certain statements which I, for one, find disturbing.

He says, for example, that the reevaluation of Stalin “can be done most authoritatively only by those leaders who have worked closely with him in the Soviet Union,” and later that the nature of Stalin's errors “will be made clear in the review . . . now getting under way in the Soviet Union.” (my emphasis). He seems to be suggesting that American Marxists should not themselves attempt to reevaluate the Stalin era but should leave this to the Russians.

Now if there is one central point to the present reevaluation now taking place in the USSR, it is that nobody is infallible. Stalin certainly was not—and Khrushchev is not. Undoubtedly the Soviet reappraisal of Stalin will be far more comprehensive than any which “outsiders” will produce, if only because the Soviet leaders have access to far more information. But this is not to say that American Marxists should accept automatically and uncritically the views of the Soviet leaders—who are, after all, not without responsibility for Stalin's errors. It seems all too clear that there has been a good deal too much “leaving it to the Russians” already.

T. E.

## Stalin a Great Statesman

Editor, Daily Worker:

At a recent meeting a report and evaluation of the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party was under discussion. One person in the question period said that in her opinion there was entirely too much hero worship, and that she felt that perhaps innocent people were executed because of certain errors on the part of the Russian leadership, and that there was perhaps no criticism because of that hero worship and the fear of challenging a great leader. In this she cited the trial of the doctors who were evidently framed.

It seems to me that many of us who are not good swimmers are jumping off the deep end.

The challenge that the leaders at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party have brought to the rest of the world, that is to the capitalist governments of the so-called free world, the challenge of economic competition, is a wonderful challenge. That is the essence and the best that has come out of 20th Congress.

But it seems that what many of us are concerned about is the mantle of silence and seeming negation of the Joseph Stalin era. I too was somewhat distressed by this particular feature of that Congress. That Joseph Stalin has probably made mistakes is very possible, but the fact remains that Stalin led his country through its most crucial

and trying years, from the time that he took over the leadership until the beginning of reconstruction. World War II which makes Stalin loom up as a great statesman, if not the greatest in his time.

But that should not prevent us from seeing clearly that what the 20th Congress brought forth, the present necessary changes, and the economic challenge to the still existing capitalist governments is correct and good for all the peoples of the world. However, I must reiterate that Stalin in spite of errors, must be judged by the Russian people even as we Americans judge our historic heroes, our Thomas Jefferson, our George Washington and our most loved Abraham Lincoln.—C. S.

## Helped His Country To Survive

Editor, Daily Worker:

You asked people to state their views regarding the new Soviet policy to replace the one-man Stalin leadership with a collective leadership. This may prove, as the saying goes, “Two heads are better than one.” Personally I don't think there are too many people in this country of ours who are able to pass judgment or form opinions during times of tumult and confusion.

As an ordinary individual I can only state with all credit due their collective leadership they could probably recall that the one man whose name they are trying to erase has done more to organize that great country of his and enabled his people to survive than any collective forces, we hope, will be called upon to endure. The one man in spite of some mistakes will live in the minds of millions.—JOAN.

## Yugoslav Press Interprets Notes on Stalin

The implications of Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin and the reported demonstration in Georgia had been misinterpreted in the West, it was stated this week by Borba, the Yugoslav newspaper.

An article from the paper's Moscow correspondent said the process now under way was not understood by the West.

“This process is not an affair of personalities and will not, as some think, lead to internal weaknesses,” the article stated. “The further clarification of events is here (in Moscow) considered as an internal affair of the Soviet Union. It will take place peacefully.”

The Yugoslav newspaper Politika, in an editorial, said that the possibilities of peaceful co-existence were becoming all the better as a result of the latest developments in the Soviet Union.

“The successful outcome of Lenin's revolution was followed by an era of Stalin's obscuring these successes,” this editorial declared. “It did not destroy the revolution, but it did sufficient harm to compel the leaders of the Soviet Union to repudiate it with particular frankness in order to be able to pave new roads. . . .”

Sweden's Communist daily Ny Dag said: “The criticism of the cult of personalities testifies to the strength of the Soviet Union's Communist Party and its leaders.”

The Swedish Communist publishing company said it would still publish its new cheap edition of Stalin's works.

The Swiss Communist paper Voix Ousvriere said Western reports of Khrushchev's speech apparently contained falsehoods.

