

More Letters about the Soviet Congress

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

We Criticize— And Advance

Editor, Daily Worker:

In protest against yesterday's persecution of the Daily Worker by the Eisenhower Administration, my wife and I herewith pay for an advance subscription for 1957.

We take this opportunity to thank you for the prompt and frank discussion you have initiated on the Stalin question. We like very much the opening articles by Alan Max and William Z. Foster, and also the later discussion, notably the very helpful series by George Morris.

We wish to ask that this discussion continue indefinitely, and deal with both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the United States. In regard to the former, we hope for details on such cases as Bela Kun — the original charges, the punishment, the restitution. We do have to make restitution for all mistakes, but, as Marx said long ago, we have nothing to hide. We criticize, correct, and advance.

Incidentally, we have heard nothing to date about the U. S. Government officially regretting

miscarriages of justice in the cases of Sacco and Vanzetti, of the Molly Maguires, of Albert Parsons and his comrades, of the Rosenbergs. We trust the Daily Worker will be on the alert to let its readers know if Washington attempts any painful self-criticism along this line, or undertakes any massive re-evaluation of its Cadillac policies here and abroad.

—OAKLEY JOHNSON.

Independent Thinking

Editor, Daily Worker:

It is good to see so many of our people jarred out of their complacency by the present discussions and reevaluation of the role played by Stalin.

Some of our mistakes over the past years have been very sad. And why? It has been no secret that the theoretical level of the Marxist movement has been less satisfactory in the United States than elsewhere. The situation continues unsatisfactory even though the last few years have registered important developments in the scientific application of Marxism to the American scene.

The special strength of capitalism in our country has made possible an almost unopposed foisting of pragmatic, uncritical, and subjective thinking habits onto the American people, especially during recent years.

It is impressive how well the

population, Marxists included, has withstood such a massive onslaught and fought back, although often with unclear vision. Yet damage has been done. Marxists who take part in the activity of the large established non-left organizations will tell you of a still widespread lack of initiative and confusion among the people. And a significant portion of the Left has been so affected also. Far too many of our people are crudely dogmatic and inclined to accept a "line" passively and without active thinking.

Let us understand that our weaknesses represent a certain capitulation to the short-sighted, huckstering, anti-intellectual methods which the ruling class tries to force on the nation. And what conclusion follows? We must aggressively pick up the banner of independent thinking and carry it forward. We need independent generalizing of our experiences in life. We need this on a mass basis as the elementary condition for our progress.

—H. K.

George Morris Article Lauded

Editor, Daily Worker:

In the story of the vast and irreversible advance of socialism and immediate planned prospect of further achievements, with the consequent strengthening of the forces of progress and peace the world around, as unfolded at the 20th Party Congress,

CPSU, the self-criticism which took the form of exposing and repudiating the cult of the individual leader, and the reassertion of a democratic, accountable collective leadership from top to bottom of Party and state, was a relatively small although salient and vital feature.

That this feature of the Congress should have loomed so large and misshapen and emotional in our press, our thoughts and discussions, is a measure of the extent to which we have all been spellbound by the obviously anti-Marxist, essentially bourgeois cult of the leader.

This feature being inflated out of all proportion to its proper place in the context has, unfor-

tunately, much obscured that context, so triumphantly charged with encouragement for us all. We have all been infected, in varying degrees, by the romantic vulgarities of bourgeois interpretations designed deliberately to darken understanding.

I am encouraged by George Morris' first article on the Congress (D.W., 26 March) to expect a balanced digest and perceptive comment in which all phases of the work of the Congress, not at all excluding its healthy admiration on the distortions arising from "Great Man" cultism, will be reviewed and assessed in their true weight and bearing on our present tasks.

—FRANCIS SHEEHY

Autotown Alley

DETROIT

CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE in UAW locals these days are finding that the rank and file want "production" on battling shop conditions. not just big talk and resolutions. We know one big man in serious trouble for not "producing" according to rank and file estimates. Another big man on the East Side of Detroit has just learned he is scheduled for "replacement." Same story, he didn't "produce." Workers in both places think big guys got "soft."

★

CONSIDERED THE BIGGEST tactical boot of the year is the no dice edict by the UAW International on the skilled workers' demand for a 10 percent raise. If there is a sure way to drive dissatisfied elements into the dual union setup of the Society of Skilled Trades, that's it. All talk of "sanctity" of contracts isn't going to be the answer, particularly when Walter Reuther himself has described contracts as "living documents."

★