

Dear Editor

Letters from Readers

The views expressed in the letters printed below do not necessarily reflect our own. However we are glad to present their opinions and invite others to write to this column.

Paths to Stronger Socialist Movement

Editor, Daily Worker:

I have heard objections to the fact that you devoted eight previous pages to the Khrushchev speech on grounds that an American paper should not be so concerned with Russian affairs.

I believe that Worker readers needed to read that speech in full: We must be aware of experiences—both positive and negative—in the first and most powerful Socialist country, so that we can adapt the good and avoid the bad.

While my reaction to the terrible recital of repressions was one of glazed horror, I felt that this recital drove home more powerfully than anything else could how essential it is for all Marxist-Leninist everywhere to work collectively and democratically



ally and to think for themselves creatively. When there is too much adulation of leaders, past and present, the very least that can and does happen is that we become parrots mouthing stale phrases, incapable of thinking for ourselves—or too lazy to try it.

Two years ago the Communist Party leadership in Michigan rejected an invitation extended to all parties to participate in a pre-election forum sponsored by a discussion group which was led by an expelled member. The prevailing CP attitude then was one of violent antipathy for any group said to be tinged with "Trotskyism."

I said then we must not be afraid to present our views to any audience if we believed in ourselves and in the ability of Truth to triumph, that we should gratefully welcome any chance to convince even one more individual. Now I would add that we cannot afford to be willfully deaf to the views of any individual or group professing the aim of socialism, but disagreeing with us. Now we know how wrong we can be!

Even our long-standing abhorrence of Trotskyism must be re-examined. In Lenin's day, Trotskyism was considered a trend within the working class movement. It was the 1937-39 trials in the Soviet Union—which now turn out to have been stacked—which convinced us that Trotskyism was the twin of fascism. In his report, Gene Dennis speaks of the "unreconstructed Trotskyists who were and are out to pervert Marxism and to exploit the difficulties of our party, in the manner of vultures."

By indirection, Dennis indicates that there is such a thing as a "reconstructed" Trotskyist, and with this too I would agree. The group around the American Socialist Monthly takes its stand in favor of the socialist developments in Eastern Europe and China, in favor of UN recognition, of East-West trade.

It takes a strong stand against McCarthyism and Eastlandism and all the repressive laws in the country, and pushes for amnesty for victims of the Smith Act. Sure, some of them may be sinister characters hoping to divert the working class movement at some strategic moment—but then again, can we boast that

there have not been agents-provocateur and stoolpigeons in our midst?

Let us discuss and work with them—as with other groups whose aim is socialism—so that eventually a bigger and stronger party of socialism can be forged. Let's not re-hash the past ad infinitum. We must face the future, and if we have divested ourselves of the cult of leadership, and are doing our own thinking, we need not be afraid that anyone can lead us astray or into the swamps of endless and barren discussion.

—H. T.

Want to See Housework Articles as a Pamphlet

Chicago.

Dear Elizabeth Lewson,

We, as a small group of Sunday Worker sellers, enjoyed reading your series of articles the past couple of Sundays and thought they were very good. We are referring to the articles about "Women working 100 hours per week," etc.

We thought it would be a good idea to have the same published in booklet form.

We are hoping this can be done, as we feel sure they will sell very well. Many of our readers do work hard. We feel all women would appreciate a booklet understanding their problems.

We further suggest it should be a five cent pamphlet which would reach a broader section of the working people, especially people with small income.

JESSE RICHARDS, Chairman.
JEANNE NEIMARK, Secretary.

Douglass-Lincoln Freedom of the Press Committee.

Men Not To Blame For Home Drudgery

Dear Editor:

As a union sister, I defend my brother, the working man.

M. H., in the Worker, June 10, asks that husbands do household chores and stay home from some union meetings. That is her solution to the "Housewife Question," which she wishes other people understood more. Yes, the problem needs more understanding, understanding by herself and other housewives. M. H. knows the drudgery, the long hours, yes. But her relationship in the total economy she does not yet see. It is the system of individual housework, not your husband, that is the cause of your problems.

Your husband does underestimate your role outside the home. What about you? Don't you underestimate him as a working man and as a trade unionist?

Your husband is a worker. Working conditions today are hard. The boss is looking for excuses to fire you if you won't do the work of two people. On top of all this you blame your problems on him.

No, M. H., it is not so simple. Nothing is to be gained by expecting your man to give up his union meetings.

As Elizabeth Lawson's articles state, "The answer must lie in social, not individual, channels." Read them again, especially the last one, with an open mind.—E.M.

Open Letter

To Paul Robeson

To Mr. Paul Robeson:

I do not have your address but since these remarks are not only for yourself but for all to know I am sending this letter to you as a public one in The Worker.

It made good reading to see the remarks you made before

Equal Pay for Equal Work, Say Women at World Meet

(By a Special Correspondent)

BUDAPEST — Women of 50 countries were present at the First World Conference of Women Workers which opened here June 14. The Conference was called at the initiative of the World Federation of Trade Unions. Parvathi Krishnan, president of the

Plantation Workers Union of Anamalai, India, opened the sessions. "The day is past," she declared, "when men must work and women must weep. The need for working women to struggle and organize is now recognized."

The fight for equal pay for equal work for men and women was the subject of the report by Germaine Guille, secretary of the French General Confederation of Labor. "This principle," she stated, "is not only a matter of social justice, but also the best means of achieving unity among men and women workers." Only eleven countries have so far ratified the International Labor Organization's Convention No. 100 on equality of pay. Miss Guille pointed out. She then presented statistics showing that in the United States, for example, women's wages are 71 percent of men's.

The reporter dealt at length with a practice followed in many countries and especially applied to women workers of sending work from the factory to be done at home. This system permits employers to avoid any collective agreements, to pay wages far below the average, to evade taxes, social insurance, accident insurance, and to violate laws on working hours. In many countries the amount of factory work done at home is increasing. Thus, a survey conducted by the Italian General Confederation of Labor in the single province of Tuscany showed that from 1936 to today, the number of such workers increased from 18,000 to 70,000. The labor movements of France and Italy have condemned this method of work and have put forward parliamentary bills to give women who take work home, the same economic and social rights as those employed in factories.

ALSO DEALT with in the opening report was the discrimination practiced against women in the professional fields. It was found that, in general, women in the capitalist countries find it difficult, in some cases impossible, to get higher technical qualifications and to use these qualifications if they do get them.

the un-American Walter. As a Southern white man I am very glad that you said them. The racist ideas as represented by that shameful Walter needed deflating badly. How much, how much we here have and are today suffering from the "Jim-crow" way of life! For whites it means a poor living economically and culturally. We suffer from a lack of freedom because the sick, heavy rule of "conformity" is a despot over all here. If it is a crime to belong to the NAACP it is also a crime to think anything that is not pro-segregationist.

You did well, Sir, before that unpatriotic committee. Walter an American? Then Hitler deserves the American flag. Eastland a champion of democracy? Then let us give up all hope!

Mr. Robeson and Mrs. Robeson (for she too is well loved by whites and Negroes in our Southland) what words can we say enough to express our happiness at your stand in telling these real un-Americans just what they truly are?

What are we so afraid of indeed that we need to hide and that we need fear that we can't let you out of the country to travel, if there is something so bad in our country, then pray with the Lord's courage we can face it and change it. I for one, voicing the thoughts of many here say, and say again!! LET PAUL ROBESON TRAVEL!

White Southerner.



Miss Guille's report included facts on the advances and setbacks in the fight for maternity insurance in various countries.

Reporting the following day on the situation of women workers in Czechoslovakia, Marie Radova, president of the Federation of Commercial Workers, said that equal rights between men and women is a fundamental principle of life in her country, and that equal wages for equal work are part of the law. Nevertheless, she discussed frankly certain shortcomings still to be overcome before it can be honestly stated that women have the same opportunities as men. Chief of the difficulties is a still insufficient number of commercial social establishments, such as public laundries, public eating places, day nurseries, and so on. The rapid building of such establishments is one of the main demands of the women of Czechoslovakia today.

A worker from Senegal, Fatou Diarra, described the struggles of women in Africa for equal pay, for the opportunity for Africans to hold the better jobs, for schools for girls to combat illiteracy.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT of the Shoe Workers Federation of Finland, Rakel Matveyev, stressed in her speech the need for unity between men and women workers. "The recent general strike," she said, "awakened our workers to the need for this unity." Equal pay for equal work, maternity leave, day nurseries, and more and cheaper commercial services are the major demands of the women of Finland.

Teresa Noce, president of the

Trade Unions International of Textile and Clothing Workers, stressed that textiles is one of the world's leading industries employing women, and the textile unions must make the welfare of women workers one of their main concerns. "The opinion still exists," she declared, "that men must work and men must be the boss at home. However, the increasing number of women workers is breaking down this concept."

What can be done for women in a socialist country was brought home by the report by Emma Winkler, a worker in a locomotive factory at Annendorf in East Germany. This factory has infant nurseries and kindergartens for children under school age, and a well equipped polyclinic. These facilities for child care, as well as a variety of commercial services, are making it possible for women to work and to obtain higher training and use it.

"A national petition is to be launched in Australia," said Catherine Williams, "which we hope will receive half a million signatures collected on the job, demanding that the national government honor its agreement with the I.L.O. on equal pay, which it entered into in 1951 and has done nothing about."

IN THE COURSE of the sessions, the delegates rose to acclaim the entrance into the hall of a group of Hungarian peasant women who entered wearing the traditional peasant dress. They brought with them a gift of fruit and vegetables, culled from their own fields and orchards, as a sign of friendship. Their spokesman said that the women in the Hungarian countryside, at present busy with their harvest, are following the work of the conference closely, and asked the delegates to accept their gift with the love and affection with which it was offered.

A Poet Affirms Belief in Socialism

Dear Editor:

What about the 20th Congress? I am asked. Do you still believe in Socialism?

Of course I am horrified at the revelations—who isn't? I am horrified, not at socialism but at the terrible cost by which human advance is made; at long drawn-out hold that capitalism has on us. Even under socialism, its claws reach out and help to murder people. . .

I am filled with anger and hatred—at death—passing its shadow, like an eclipse, over the sun that moves on.

Life is pure flame, said Sir Thomas Browne, and we live by an invisible sun within us.

For me, that sun is Socialism.

A belief in socialism doesn't wither like a flower, or grow old and die like a person.

A belief in socialism is a belief in history, in the fortitude of human ability to organize for the Ice Age and the Heat Age that lie ahead.

It's a belief in science, in the fact that whether I or any one individual believes in the laws of gravity the rivers, no matter how they turn and twist, flow into the sea.

This is my affirmation, my chant to those who live and those who have died in the terrible struggle to remake the world.

Each person has his own rate of metabolism; mine digests all my experience into a poem. Otherwise, what have I got to say that others cannot say better, clearer, simpler?

Thus, in jail I wrote—

... We have nothing to do with suns and stars
or love that lights up Dante's Paradise,
but in the limbo of my prison bars
hardly seeing what my pencil writes—
the vision that all living lovers' eyes
can see—beyond the prison of our age,—
"forever free, forever loving lives—
makes up for all our broken yesterdays.
And all the light years since the world's first sun
are in this science that's just now begun.

Walter Lowenfels.