

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Would End Splits In Workingclass

Editor, Daily Worker:

Speak Your Piece has been very revealing of the diversity of progressive ideas.

About getting together persons of different opinions in one organization:

As a worker I have seen the harm these differences have had in our union. Progressive union members in the past have boycotted union political activity that was not started by themselves. The AFL's L.L.P.E. (Labor League for Political Education) which is now COPE (Committee on Political Education) was boycotted by many in favor of the American Labor Party. Was this a help to the workers?

I think it wasn't. It drew the advanced workers away from union activity into the hash-pot of middle class progressives. And the workers who didn't go along were looked down upon and considered unenlightened, backward, asleep, corrupted.

There were outside political groupings besides the ALP; the Liberal Party, Trotzkyite parties; different Jewish Socialist and Zionist groups. All tried to get a following and in doing so instead of uniting workers created divisions among them.

The division has been harmful, first by keeping the level of united political action low, second by getting working class leaders fighting one another, third by getting rank-and-filers set against each other.

This is no good. There has to be an end to these divisions among workers.

I don't suggest that we or other workers drop out of the organizations they belong to. Better than that, these organizations should get acquainted with each other to find out what they have in common, forming a political alliance to further their common aims.

All these groups have the following in common:

1. Membership is working class, in varying degree.
2. Desire for peace.
3. Dislike of big monopolies which control American economy and politics.
4. Desire for some kind of socialist economy.
5. Sincere belief in the American people, and the revolutionary foundation of our government and the heritage of patriotic Americans.

Eugene Dennis' proposal for a mass party of socialism doesn't appeal to me because it doesn't take into account this political split in the working class. As

proposed, such a mass party would be just another political grouping to keep workers fighting each other.

We need instead an alliance of all existing socialist-minded working class political groups to heal this split.

—ERNA McNEIL

For a New Study Of U. S. History

Editor, Daily Worker:

In answer to Earl Durham's letter of July 6, I would like to propose an undertaking which I think is very much needed in the American progressive movement today, and which would be a general program providing an exciting challenge to any youth progressive group.

Generally, this is a critical analysis, from a Marxist point of view, of U. S. history, from some time before the Revolution to the present day. This of course is an immense undertaking, and I propose it only as a very general idea, or direction. I do feel, however, that a general critical evaluation of America's past, with an ultimate aim towards building socialism in the United States, is something which is sorely needed in American Marxism today.

It is necessary to point out that U. S. history is a very complex phenomenon, which does not fit into any strict pattern or system (which many people have tried to do), and one which in a great many ways is completely different from that of any other country. Therefore, I feel that a strict scientific analysis, from a dialectical and historical materialistic point of view, is of the utmost importance in today's search for America's "Road to Socialism."

We hear a great deal about the "American tradition," both from left and right-wing groups. However, we find that on a little closer examination, this "tradition" is a very confused concept, at best, and is certainly open to very different interpretations. Such a study as I propose would ultimately take up this question, and try to discover what factors go to make it up, how it evolved and developed, what factors influence or retarded its growth, and how it has been changed today.

Also vital, of course, would be an analysis of the progressive movement, the growth of class-consciousness and the struggle for socialism, and the various factors influencing this in the United States.

—A Non-League Student.

The Debs Heritage

Editor, Daily Worker:

The worst kind of communist self-criticism is directed at other parties, forgetting their tremendous successes while we have come haltingly along the way they have shown us. We readers have had enough of this anti-Soviet Union stuff, reminiscent of Lovestone, Eastman, Lyons, Schactman.

Foster's July 2 article is a breath of fresh air, clearing the atmosphere. It is followed by the CC of Soviet CP's resolution, a cleansing breeze.

Returning to criticism of our Party, let us beware of infatuation with the American democratic tradition. It is not the only American tradition, nor are its virtues unique, nor sufficient to enable us to postulate a peaceful transition. That tradition is more than matched by the European workers' long experience with political organization. Every German worker read a working class paper until Hitler came to power.

Infatuation with our own democratic tradition is leading to an American political exceptionalism as dangerous as the Lovestone and Browder brands of economic exceptionalism.

It is good of R. N., July 3, to assure us that no responsible leader is abandoning the class struggle for the mirage of peaceful transition. The record of Weiss and company is to the contrary.

It is cynical of us to babble of peaceful transition when U. S. conscripts and agents are placed around the world to perpetrate counter-revolution wherever Socialism or simple democracy shows its head.

Let us pick up another tradition. The million votes for Debs and the Appeal to Reason circulation were built on fighting for Socialism. We lost that heritage, first by sectarianism and then by objective anti-Socialism adopted on the pretext that Socialism is not the order of the day. One can read the D.W. for a year without learning about Socialism and the workings of capitalism.

—J. W.

Why Didn't Our Generals Know?

Editor, Daily Worker:

In respect to the conduct of World War II, if Stalin's flagrant sins of omission and commission are true, as Khrushchev charges, this opens up a challenging field of speculation.

It is certain that intelligence

agencies were engaged in accumulating for their governments top secret data on blunders not made currently obvious by military setbacks.

During the war, no such secret, derogatory information could have been released no matter whom it involved. But when he launched the cold war at Fulton, Mo., is it conceivable that Winston Churchill would have left such valuable ammunition unused?

Had he had in his possession any information paralleling the charges made by Khrushchev he would certainly have used it. To have downgraded Stalin in the eyes of the Western world would have been a fillup to the cold war. Furthermore there could have been hope that the revelation of Stalin's grave shortcomings as a war leader might ultimately reach the Russian people, embittering them in the knowledge that, under wiser leadership they need not perhaps have suffered such tremendous loss of life and territorial devastation.

The British and American high command must certainly have been briefed on some of the derelictions now laid at Stalin's door. But no postmortems were forthcoming after the war from such figures as Eisenhower, Marshall, Montgomery and MacArthur, qualifying praise of the Russian war effort by intimating that victory was achieved in spite of their comrade in arms.

If there is substance to these particular charges, then a number of distinguished figures should not only occupy stools of repentance for lost opportunities but sit thereon wearing dunce's caps and the word "intelligence" removed from the title of our Central Intelligence Agency.

MURIEL I. SYMINGTON.

Sees New Era Without Dogma

Editor, Daily Worker:

I can't say I agree with Mr. Foster's emphasis on the positive achievements of the CPUSA. The reason for the many bitter letters sent to you, and which you have had the courage to publish, is that the estimate of many many people is quite the opposite, that the negative is so tremendous that the positive are minuscule.

The "positive" approach has been one of the oft-used rationalizations used by the CP leadership when criticisms have been raised the 20 years I've

been around the left. I've used it myself.

I believe the consensus of opinion is that the CPUSA leadership has proved itself incapable. (By the way, has any kind of consensus of opinion been taken of the CP membership as a whole on the soul-searching taking place, or are we continuing to take the opinions of the vocal few as expressing the general sentiment.) It's not that they weren't in contact with the masses of the Party and those outside the Party, as some have said. The truth is, as Joe North admitted of himself recently in one of his columns, they just didn't listen.

The leadership was dogmatic and bureaucratic. How is it that not one critical voice was raised among the leadership as the membership rolls declined sharply? Where were the voices of our leaders when people protested against dogma, sectarianism, and all our other left-sectarian ills? One found them mainly on the side of the left-sectarians, for the leadership set this sectarian line and example.

Well — thank somebody or other—the leadership has finally discovered what many members knew all along—we were suffering from the cancer of leftism.

The great—and I mean great—tragedy is that we made this discovery after so many undogmatic people left us, and we ourselves have sectarianism so ingrained in our marrow that we can't but think and talk in our unique language: dogma.

The great opportunity is that we can finally—after 10 these many decades—begin to torturously develop a really American Marxist Party, to develop real undogmatic leaders and members. It will take some years, but it would have taken longer if we had to wait more years before discovering our cancer.

Such forces will be needed in the inevitable battles which are bound to take place in our country.

The development of a real American Marxist Party will require, however, a real American Marxist leadership. Are there any such in the CPUSA? I hope there are, and they come forward; or that some of the current leadership can prove they can become such.

Certainly the development of such a process requires dramatic changes in leadership now, as heralding the start of a new non-dogmatic era in the CP.

DICK McGRATH.