

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Gains That Should Not Be Destroyed

Editor, Daily Worker:

Lenin wrote his "State and Revolution" when Russia was under the rule of an absolute monarch. And the main tenet of that work, the theory of the necessity for liquidating the old state apparatus when an old ruling class has been superseded by a new one, was in large measure justified when applied to that time.

Can the basic theory inscribed therein be universally applied?

As internationalists, should not our basic theory consider all that is worthy in all countries?

There are in capitalist states a number of institutions, which are part of their state apparatus, which should definitely not be liquidated when those countries attain socialism:

1. The right of trial by juries which are not hand-picked but are democratically selected. The lay judge in the Soviet Union, whose functions are the closest comparable to those of the juror in the U. S., is not selected in the same manner as that juror.

2. Rotation of leadership. The most conservative forces, representing the wealthiest sections, in the American Revolution advocated a president for life. The most democratic forces wished the presidency to be for a term of two years. Certainly the dangers of autocratic rule were here envisioned and avoided.

3. Checks and balances among executive, legislative and judicial branches of government and the separation of powers. Such a structure might provide a useful check against incorrect policies and on the abuse of power in a Socialist society.

4. The right of many appeals. Let us contrast the executions of many top cadres in the Soviet Union, most of which were unknown and none of which were protested, to the appeals to the judiciary and executive branches of the American government which attracted attention far and wide and resulted in national and world-wide protests in the Tom Mooney, Sacco-Vanzetti and Rosenberg cases.

And shall the advocates of So-

cialism negate and disregard the hard-won rights won by the toiling masses in bitter struggle from time immemorial, rights which in many lands are part and parcel of the state apparatus, by speaking contemptuously of bourgeois democracy?

There is no such thing as bourgeois democracy. The wealthy have always fought against democratic rights. And the masses have fought for and won them. We in the U. S. live in a society where there are two kinds of rights: Bourgeois rights and democratic rights and democratic rights are the people's.

To eliminate any of these democratic rights embodied in any capitalist state apparatus in the change to Socialism is to have contempt for the finest accomplishments of civilization. In the U. S. the success of any movement for Socialism depends upon how well it incorporates into its body of principles and its organization the nation's democratic heritage.

AL JACKSON

Convention Suggestions

Editor, Daily Worker:

Now that the date has been set for the Communist Party convention it is important for the membership and (especially) the leadership to start making plans to guarantee that there will be adequate rank and file representation.

Although finance, etc. may be problems here, the primary one is the question of legality and exposure. Even if there are no more important legal developments along these lines from now until February, this would be a great problem. However, with the possibility of an unfavorable Supreme Court decision in either the Lightfoot Case (membership clause of the Smith Act) or the SACB Case (registration of Party members under the McCarran Act) it will be an extremely difficult task to hold an open and representative convention.

Of course, it would be quite simple to "pack" the convention with the "known Communists" who hold positions in national, state, and local leadership bodies

but, it seems, to me that this would be precisely what we should try to avoid if we want to see a real "grass roots" thrashing out of problems and decisions.

I hope that I am not getting panicky or saying that such a democratic convention is impossible, but I am trying to say that this problem cannot be ignored starting right now. It will be doubly important and difficult when applied to members in industry.

Allow me, also, to comment on Foster's recent article, I think that Foster is developing a semi-paranoia about Browder. He seems to see a Browderite lurking behind everyone who is critical of leadership and wants certain basic party changes.

Nonetheless, it is better to see his views in print than to see the continuing silence of the other leaders who, I fear, are biding their time with careful phrases in the little they do write so that they can "jump on the bandwagon" once such a "bandwagon" starts rolling and thus maintain their leadership.

In a letter which appeared a short time ago, I asked that the constitution of the Communist Party U.S.A. be printed by The Worker and used as a basis for discussion. This is really a need. Our local branch decided to have such a discussion and found extreme difficulty getting copies even when we went to the section. I sure hope that people who agree with that proposal will write to the paper and say so.

A Devoted Friend.

Foster's Stand Defended

CHICAGO.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Foster is absolutely right for the most part, on the present occasion. Our leaders have perfectly obviously been displaying "an eagerness to find real or imaginary mistakes, and paying little attention to anything else."

But according to G.P., even to make such an observation is to "defame" and "impugn the motives" of persons who may not agree! Talk about bureaucracy! Who's trying to shut critics up this time, Foster or

G.P.? Sure, at the end, he decides that Foster "is correct in speaking out." But all that means is that he generously allows Foster the right to be a "defamer," if he wants to!

That's like kids' spitting on their candy before allowing their playmates to "take a bite, if you want to."

G.P. demands that Foster "start demonstrating" that our party despite errors has followed a basically correct line.

The question all along has been when those leaders who are trying to demolish everything that our Party has stood for would start trying to "demonstrate" THEIR charges. They don't because they can't. They simply fill page after page of The (Sunday) Worker with florid say-so's. Why doesn't G.P. demand of THEM any "demonstrations if their position is so demonstrable"?

Let G.P. himself try to "demonstrate" what he means by our "not having organized the tactic of retreat when it was necessary and when the people realized it." Let him try to state specifically what should have been done that wasn't attempted, and all the losses it would have saved us, and exactly how.

Foster's article is for the most part a genuine Marxist analysis. G.P.'s letter is shallow pragmatism: We lost ground under the onslaughts of the billionaire pro-fascists, and that proves we were all wrong. In a different country the Communist Party grew, and that proves we could have grown. No need for any analysis of any objective differences! Never mind the law of uneven development, much less understanding it!

Our leaders keep talking about how we allegedly were always haranguing that "war was just around the corner." When did we ever make that statement even once!

We said that the imperialists would spring World War III if the peoples everywhere did not intensify their peace struggles—and it was true!

And our leaders keep telling us that we "overestimated the fascist danger." In what words did we "overestimate the fascist

danger"! We said that it was "real," but that fascism had not arrived and that it would not arrive if the struggle broadened—and it did broaden! And it was under the heroic examples that we set first that it broadened!

And if we modeled our Party structure along the lines of Lenin's, automatically that means it was a mistake from the start! No one has to prove that our analysis that accompanied our adoption of it was all wet. No one has to try to prove that something else might have been better, or could even have left us a Party at all. It's enough to show that it "imitated Russia" and no other proof is needed nowadays that it was a mistake.

At one point, G.P. is very right. Foster makes a most ignorant concession, which is quite irrelevant to his main thesis, however, to the "theory of disaster," i.e., that the masses cannot learn from victories as well as from defeats! (As if they didn't learn tremendous lessons from their New Deal victories!)

I myself am no idolator of Foster, and am often very critical of him, but here (with the exception noted) he is plainly correct in a matter of greatest importance.

—A. B.

Seamen Want Vanguard Party

NEW YORK.

Editor, Daily Worker:

THE SEAMEN'S Branch of the Communist Party at a regular meeting unanimously adopted a motion that we reject any and all proposals, ideas, or trends that go along with the proposition of dissolving the party. All proposals or ideas in regards to broadening our party, or changes in our party structure should be made clear to eliminate the possibility of a smokescreen to dissolve our party. We are for the strengthening and mobilizing of our party to play the vanguard role of the American working-class in our every-day struggles and for socialism.

Seamen's Branch of the Waterfront Section of the Communist Party U. S. A.