

# SPEAK YOUR PIECE

## Claudia Jones Writes About Her Father

LONDON

Editor, Daily Worker:

Through the columns of the Daily Worker, I wish to express my deep thanks to my former associates, friends and neighbors who sent me warm notes of sympathy on the recent death of my father. While I have already written personally acknowledging messages of condolences to the National Committee of the Communist Party who cabled their condolences, and to close friends, there are many to whom my enforced distance makes it impossible to convey these sentiments.

My father was the essence of gentleness, understanding strength and compassion. I confess to being biased because he was my father, but I speak of gentleness and strength and compassion in a wider sense—in the sense that he himself once expressed before a public audience at a meeting of Families of South Act Victims and National Committee to Defend Negro Leadership.

On this occasion, speaking about my views which were different from his, my father stated that while he did not agree with me in every respect, he respected my right to my beliefs. I remember that I made the theme of my response to this my assertion that what my father then expressed was all we required of progressive and peace fighters who seek to restore the Bill of Rights in a world of peace—mutual respect for each other's beliefs.

If now, I first recall in writing this letter on the loss of a dearly beloved, it is because it was the essence of the relationship of my father and me, the mutual respect for each other's views. In a sense, if not muting grief, which, is after all a personal thing, it does help me to cherish ever more greatly his memory, for our relationship, father to daughter, had its share of richness, which ordinarily while enough, was transcended by this fine quality.

So many are the things I cherish; my father's unfailing correspondence two or three or more times a week when I was ensconced for my political views in the Federal Reformatory For Women in Alderson, W. Va.; his understanding that its genteel title had nothing in common with the actual conditions of prison life and particularly for political prisoners; his visits to me in that jimcrow town where accommodations and experiences often roused his wry humor, stemming from the sure knowl-

edge that these practices were even then being undermined in the rising movement of the Negro people's freedom movement and that of their allies in the South and throughout the land; his aggressive fight, compounded with gentleness before the Parole Board, the Congressional Committee, the British Consular Office against the heinous Walter-McCarran deportation law; and on platforms before people of whom he wrote to me in prison he had come to understand wherein lay the mainspring of my (and their) dedication to the struggle for social progress.

I cherish too the heritage he infused in me; my pride in our African heritage; which as a young child I came to know in his own active fight during his early years in support of struggles for African freedom and in his editorship of a West-Indian American newspaper during the thirties. I cherish the encouragement he instilled in his children to "think and fight for what you believe to be right."

Even as he lived then—this gentle compassionate man who had strength and conviction that man's upward climb was inevitable—he died. He was an honorable man, my father, and to know that my love for him and my pride is shared by so many is consolation in great measure for one's grief. It is also the balm that eases human pain at moments when such pain must be mastered.

—CLAUDIA JONES

## Youth's Voice in Speak Your Piece

Editor, Daily Worker:

It was a heartbreaking disappointment for me to read Eugene Dennis' report to the National Committee of the C.P.U.S.A., "The Communists Take a New Look" and not find a single reference to the problems of youth and party policy on youth work.

Doesn't a new look also include a new look at the youth question?

Was there any mention of the youth at the N. C. meeting? If not—why not! Were there any youth in attendance at this meeting? If not—why not! If there were any youth present, were they given the opportunity to present their views. If not—why not!

As a young Marxist working in the youth movement I believe that the Party made many of its greatest errors in the past few years with regard to youth work. I have looked in vain in "Speak Your Piece" for the beginning of some discussion on this. I have looked in vain for some mention

of this in articles by Marxist leaders that have appeared recently. I have looked in vain for this in the pages of Political Affairs.

The omission in my opinion is a serious error. How long are we going to allow it to continue?

As a member of the Labor Youth League I can say that there hasn't been any discussion by the membership of the League on the new developments. Some of us heard some time ago that national League leadership started discussing the past work and role of the League soon after Geneva. Some organizational changes have since been made. But the discussions and the changes have remained with the top. The membership has not been encouraged to and has not been given the opportunity to participate.

Speaking for myself and those who I have discussed this with I can say that this has created a most frustrating situation. It has affected our thinking and our work. Some of us had been asking questions for the past few years. Discussion was discouraged; our questions were unanswered and we just plodded along without much effect. Now to our great regret, and after the 20th Party Congress and the wonderful things that have been happening in the Marxist movement since then, we find ourselves as neglected as ever.

I urge all Marxist youth to let themselves be heard from. We are lagging dangerously behind the whole Marxist movement. "SPEAK YOUR PIECE" NOW!

—YOUNG MARXIST

## "Alarming Paradox"

Editor, Daily Worker:

The DW has correctly hailed the move toward rapprochement between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia that are taking place AFTER the revelations of the violations of Socialist principles that had occurred in the S. U.

Everywhere throughout the world the revelations of the tragic violations that took place in the S.U. has become the occasion for broadening and strengthening the ties of solidarity between peace loving, progressive, socialist and democratic peoples and movements.

However, I'd like to point out an alarming paradox that has been developing in editorials and articles in the Daily Worker and the Worker. These editorials and articles use the occasion of the revelations of violations of Socialist justice in the S.U. as the occasion for contributing toward weakening instead of strengthening the bonds of workingclass

and democratic international solidarity.

The latest example of the tendency of the DW to treat the occasion of the 20th Congress in a way that is in conflict with national and world trends and opportunities are the editorial "Comment on Khrushchev Speech" in the June 10 issue of The Worker and today's (June 14) column by Abner Berry.

The tone and spirit of both the editorial and column represent first of all a violation of the very principles of socialist internationalism and democratic unity now experiencing a new and broader rebirth throughout the world. I suggest a little less breastbeating about past blindness and a little more modest self-examination about PRESENT manifestations of political blindness.

Several weeks ago the Daily Worker printed an article by Eugene Dennis entitled "In Sorrow and in Perspective." I think that it would be a real contribution for the DW to reprint Dennis' article as a first step toward correcting so much that has been wrong and harmful in many of its recent articles and editorials. In discussion with my friends over the past few weeks it has always been helpful to refer to Dennis' article by contrast to some of these incorrect tendencies in the Daily Worker that could best be described as "in arrogance and without perspective."

The DW placed the matter of a new party of socialism in a way that is indeed with perspective. A new party of socialism will not emerge out of subjective reactions to revelations of misdeeds that took place within the country whose deeds help to make a brighter future for all mankind. It will not emerge by treating the mistakes of American Communists as constituting a "debacle" Abner Berry talks about.

Such sweeping statements represent unconscious evasion of real criticism and self-criticism, disguised as "self criticism." Further, it tends to reduce all our errors as flowing only from the mistakes we made in relation to developments in the S.U. in the past.

—HARRY MANN

## Soviet Policy On Middle East

Editor, Daily Worker:

I have been a constant reader the Daily Worker for many years and am very pleased with your

new feature "Speak Your Piece." It fills a much-needed void.

I look forward expectantly for a hint of indication on your part (editorial, that is) in which you voice one word of criticism of the policy of the Soviet Union in relation to the Middle East crisis. The Soviet Union is arming the Arab League nations, thus deepening the crisis that exists. . . .

It is morally unjustified for a socialist nation to sell arms to an aggressor, an aggressor who once beaten wishes to return to battle to murder the nation which is a creation of the United Nations and a nation which the Soviet Union helped bring into being.

—CONSTANT READER

## Convinced and Enthusiastic

Editor, Daily Worker:

Wonderful column by Alan Max June 21! We were among those who felt the first "break-through" editorial on the Rajk case was "going off the deep-end." This was before we were knocked out of the intellectual box we've been in by subsequent developments and discussion.

After the Khrushchev "closed speech" editorials and the one on the statements of the Italian, French and British Communist Parties, we can only feel terribly proud that at least the Daily Worker, is not lagging behind the other bigger parties in clarity and frankness.

If there were such a thing as Party-wide popular elections for the National Committee, John Gates and Alan Max would get our votes—and leg-work besides.

—TWO CLUB MEMBERS

In reply to several inquiries, we do find it necessary to cut some letters, mainly because of space problems. In keeping with good labor newspaper practices we urge readers to keep letters under 300 words if possible. Keep them coming! Readers are invited to write about any subject and to speak their minds critically or any other way they please.

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