

The Value of Criticism

by Robert Minor

THE comradely attention we American Communists give to the opinions of our French comrade Jacques Duclos is due to causes more profound than any that may be suggested by the laughably stupid speculations of some of the press.

All enlightened workers know that the labor movement, in its very nature bears an international character and spirit. The Marxist movement, an inseparable part of it, expresses the very essence of this internationalism of labor's outlook on



all of the problems of every country in the world. But, beyond the labor movement, the problems of life and death of all individual nations, for every true patriot and democrat, have been proven in this war to be capable of solution only in their relationship to the great decisive currents of world history.

TAKE an example. Nine years ago a glorious woman Communist of Spain raised a slogan: "Madrid will be the tomb of fascism!" That slogan sounded around the world. It entered into the consciousness of the workers and all advanced sections of people all over the world. The policy of struggle at all cost, to death itself, expressed by this slogan, brought understanding of the Spanish war. It was shown, not as an isolated event, but as a struggle affecting and being affected by the course of events in the whole world. Thousands of young men, workers, intellectuals, professional people, liberty-loving men of all countries, made their way to Spain as volunteers to fight against the invasion of the Spanish Republic by the fascist powers, Germany and Italy. They were able to see that they were taking part in a sacred cause of

all mankind. Some 3,000 young Americans, British, Canadians and Irishmen formed the Lincoln Battalion of the International Brigade and fought through the greater part of 1937-39 in the heroic Spanish army; half of these 3,000 died on the battlefields of Spain.

If anyone sticks his head in the sand of a narrow national outlook, it might appear as though the slogan raised by Dolores Ibaruri that "Madrid will be the tomb of fascism!" had failed, and your whole outlook upon the world today would be distorted.

But the slogan of La Pasionaria proves to have been fully valid, to have influenced the course of history, to have forecast the ultimate outcome of the struggle at Madrid in 1936. The struggle for the conquest of the world that was begun in Ethiopia and Spain by the fascists—for the reason that it did not immediately and directly make Madrid the tomb of fascism—could not but mount into a huge world war. It cost many millions of lives and the momentary ruin of most of the countries of Europe; all of France had to go down to Nazi conquest and slavery and butchery, Poland, Holland, Norway, Yugoslavia, the major part of Europe was conquered because the making of Madrid into the tomb of fascism was postponed. The swollen power of fascism surged more than 2,000 miles beyond Madrid, to the Volga River.

But at Stalingrad the essential substance of the slogan "Madrid

will be the tomb of fascism!" was brought to reality. When Stalingrad became the tomb of fascism, it became certain that also Madrid, and all of the cities of the world, and all the countrysides, will be made the tomb of fascism.

In the great searchlight of the relationships of all of the phenomena of all countries on a worldwide scale, we can see the magnificent soundness of the slogan raised by the Spanish Communist woman in Madrid nine years ago.

THE problems of all countries can be seen and evaluated correctly only by placing them in relationship to the whole course of worldwide events of this tremendous time. Seen narrowly, these questions cannot be correctly judged, because the phenomena with which they interact and which share in determining the outcome are worldwide phenomena.

The effect of the healthy criticism we receive from our French comrades will be of great value to us. That they are frank is only typical of the method of our great movement. The views expressed are essentially correct and of extremely high importance.

Of course, we can't stop with this, but must draw conclusions, and we will. The first lesson is that of the value of the internationalism of the labor movement, and of the criticism that comes in the light of it.

— Worth Repeating —

ARGENTINA is denounced as continuing its fascist practices by a leading editorial in the Chicago Sun of June 2, Time for a Showdown with Argentina, in the course of which it is said:

To put it mildly, it is an anomaly for a government which practices such a Fascist reign of terror against Argentine democrats and friends of the Allies to be represented at a conference drafting a world charter for security and "human rights." It was a craven surrender to reactionary forces when the U. S. delegation joined the fight to seat Argentina there. What now is transpiring blatantly violates the Buenos Aires government's obligations under the Act of Chapultepec and as a member of the United Nations.