

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

40 Hours Pay for 30 Hours Work

MIAMI, Fla.

Editor, Daily Worker:

About a year and a half ago it was suggested that the Daily Worker advance the "40 Hours Pay for 30 Hours Work" slogan to primary importance in its news and feature columns, instead of giving it an occasional article which then merely reflected, rather than led, the first workers' demands of 40 for 30.

The main reason cited for the need of a change of emphasis was the foreseeable likelihood under capitalism) of even greater job-dislocations and unemployment caused by the continuing growth of automation, consolidations and general technological improvements and speedups that were resulting in further per-capita production increases. The Daily Worker ought to at once begin showing the workers the how and why, industry by industry, the 40 for 30 is possible and necessary, and to do this before the actual blows of mass layoffs and unemployment hit the workers.

The Daily Worker should stress the 40 for 30 slogan as the major lever to best unify the labor movement—in meaningful fact, and from the bottom—for the development of struggles in their immediate and long-range interests.

The 40 for 30 is concrete and easily understood by all workers. It reaches them over the head of any reactionary in and out of labor's ranks. It is a clearer, more necessary, rallying call than the misnamed and misleading "Guaranteed Annual Wage" (GAW). A building trades worker, for example, who frequently goes from one employer to another, understands a Six-Hour Day with Eight-Hour Pay, whereas he is left cold by a vague GAW, I think.

In the same way, the Legal 30 Hour Work Week should be raised as a political slogan (remember how the demand for a legal 40-hour work week was

both labeled and libeled?).

This, in an issue for labor political action. For it has the dynamic of personal immediacy to propel great masses into movement on every level, everywhere, which realistically a Taft-Hartley Act, for example, does not have.

CHARLES SMALL

Is There a Time For Half Truth?

NEW YORK

Editor, Daily Worker:

Anna Louise Strong's recent article strikes me as a generally balanced and illuminating discussion of the Stalin era. But in one respect she seems to be still kidding herself. She says that had the present Soviet leaders spoken out sooner they might have been "rightly shot" because "whether in a strike or in a war . . . there are times to criticize and times to shut up and take orders."

As to soldiers in a war, this is true—sometimes. As to strikes, Miss Strong is talking through her hat. Sure—when a strike is voted everybody is expected to go out—and scabs can expect rough handling.

But does this mean that those who disagree with the leadership on strike tactics, or on what terms to sign a contract should "rightly" expect to be slugged? Not in any decently run union! There is a big difference between holding criticism within certain bounds—where a crisis situation makes it necessary—and suppressing it altogether. Does anybody doubt that the USSR would have been stronger, not weaker, had it been possible for Soviet citizens to criticize the jailings and shootings of honest people?

Miss Strong seems to be trying to rationalize away her own responsibility in helping to spread the incomplete and distorted picture of the USSR which too many of us accepted for too long. All of us "laymen" certainly ignored many obvious facts—notably the ridiculous and disgusting adulation of Stalin. But

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.

on many things we have the excuse that we did not know—because we relied on the good faith of the "experts" (such as Miss Strong, Joe Clark and others) who had studied the USSR or even lived there.

Miss Strong did know—she admits it—that there was "something wrong in the USSR." But she never told us, because it was "not the time to spread suspicion of the first socialist state."

This argument is based on the assumption that there is a "time" to tell the whole truth and a "time" to tell half truths.

It is a false argument—first, because truth has a habit of catching up with even the cleverest distortions, as Dulles and Brownell are finding out. More important, it is an argument which implies that the people can't understand the whole truth—even including bitter facts—but have to be spoon-fed on syrupy half-truths. Anybody who believes the American people must be spoon-fed is wasting their time preaching socialism. The capitalists will always have bigger and shinier spoons than any socialist group can afford. Telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth is not a political tactic, depending on the "right time." It is, or ought to be, a fundamental principle of anyone calling themselves a socialist.

ALEX LESLIE

The State's Judiciary

Editor, Daily Worker:

It was distressing to me to see in your April 26 issue the item,

"Judges Charge Medina Deals In Untruths."

Unless I am completely amiss in my understanding of the facts, Medina's charges leveled against the Judges of the State's higher courts have a sound basis.

Rarely is the hypocrisy of the so-called two-party system laid as bare as when the Republicans and Democrats get together and present a single slate of judges to the electorate for the highest courts in the State. It is not surprising that many incompetent and inadequate judges result from this "log-rolling."

The paper opened itself to the charge of "baiting" when it attacked Medina without considering the merits of the specific instance.

We should not stoop to such tactics. Our dislike of this contemptible character should not becloud our sound judgement.

As an after thought, I have often felt the paper would be better served by more intensive rather than extensive coverage. To me, at least, the small news items on Pages 2 and 3 rarely seem newsworthy.

—S.S.R.

Let Newspaper Editors Tremble

Editor, Daily Worker:

Dear Sir: Allow me, a political independent, to congratulate the Worker on Speak Your Piece. It would be unfortunate indeed if this innovation were allowed to fade out through mere lack of audience participation, and I therefore urge all men and women of good will, whether they be well heeled or very poor, scrub women or stage stars, kings or commoners, regardless of race, color, creed or political faith, to sit down occasionally and unburden their immortal souls, to Speak their Piece. For not only is it something rare and new in American journalism . . . in the sense that readers are invited to express their opinions on the most controversial matters of our day, it also was instituted by the very

people who are supposed to be the willing political agents of some unspeakable red devil.

What is the Daily Worker conspiring to do in Speak your Piece? What dark and sinister motives now lie in its Marxian subconscious? In brief, what's cooking, what is it up to?

And well might hardened New York newspaper editors tremble in their boots as they await the evening edition of the Daily Worker. For the undreamed of, the unheard of, has happened; a newspaper that actually believes what it preaches, that actually practices what it preaches, now appears in their very midst.

Can anybody supposedly sane imagine for a moment the lordly Times or the corseted and respectable Herald Tribune even encouraging, let alone tolerating dissent in letters addressed to their respective institutions? One might as well expect Hell to freeze over, especially when such dissent takes to task their most cherished illusions of the free world or their particular political darlings such as the Tribune's Nixon. As the English say; "It just isn't cricket you know."

—INDEPENDENT.

Tricky Dick

Limerick

Editor, Daily Worker:

There was a young man named Nixon,
With a yen for creating friction.
So sugar and spice,
And everything nice,
Were laid on to improve his diction.

—DAM O'CRAT

CORRECTION

We regret that in our May 4 issue a letter was signed A.G. through error. It was by R.G. Ascher.