

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

No Country Needs Capital Punishment

Editor, Daily Worker:

I would like to take issue with the letter by A.S. in the April 19 Daily Worker.

A.S. says that capital punishment exists in socialist countries as a security measure and in capitalist countries as an instrument of terror against the people. He concludes that capital punishment should be abolished in capitalist lands but not yet, necessarily, in socialist countries.

This position, if it makes sense, relies on the premise that the security of a socialist state can be menaced by individual traitors even from jail. Such a premise is not only unrealistic but is characteristic of the kind of thinking that led to miscarriages of justice in socialist lands.

One of the important arguments against capital punishment is that those who receive it, if found innocent later, cannot be restored to life. This is true under any system, even socialism, because even with eternal vigilance, even with proletarian justice men can make mistakes. —E.W.

Space Is Valuable

Editor, Daily Worker:

If James Allen were in ancient Sparta, he would spend his life in jail; he uses 25 words where five words could express his idea clearly. Daily Worker space is so limited J.A. has no moral right to monopolize it for his professorial dissertations.

Please give the valuable space to, if nothing else, quotes from Marx and Lenin showing how their teaching is confirmed by current history of our daily struggles for peace, freedom and security. Yours Since 1903

More Letters From Factories Needed

KANSAS CITY, Mo.

Editor, Daily Worker:

The discussion in the paper is healthy. Criticism will not weaken the American Communist Party but strengthen it. I don't like so much space given over to leading Communists who write long articles. You should print more letters from workers in the mines, mills and factories. I want to know what they have to say.

The new road will bring thousands of new workers to the Communist Party. The capitalist class already knows this. They hate us, fear us and respect us all at the same time. Many of us will not be alive

to see communism but we are living for our children and our children's children. Let every Communist stand firm. There are victories ahead. —J.P.

Asks Program Of Action

AKRON, O.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Why continue to fool around with tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee as Earl Browder used to refer to the Democrats and the Republicans?

I believe the record proves that neither of the two old parties are very much interested in a real progressive change that would benefit the working class so they wouldn't have to work themselves to death to merely exist.

Some say: "Just let me work a few more years and I will save up enough so I won't have to work so hard." Along about that time the grim old reaper calls to plant us for that long rest.

If the Communist Party had a program of action, then the people would learn what communism is. —J.D.

Two Important Admissions

CENTRAL ISLIP, L.I.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Seldom in one day do we get two such admissions as the paper "Newsday" carried. Admission No. 1 Adlai Stevenson tells the American Society of Newspaper Editors that not our country but the communists are giving leadership and hope for "release from squalor and colonial bondage."

Admission No. 2 is in the column by Marquis Childs:

"It is now painfully clear that the three Western powers . . . have failed to agree to any unified approach to the problem of Arab nationalism and the oil in the Middle East. It is precisely this reason why many Mid-Eastern countries begin to look to the East to the Communist world to help them. . . ."

These statements show the tremendous changes taking place in the world. This impetus frees many political forces in our country and the world to make an about-face in their attitude on coexistence. —M.D.

The Slogan of Self-Determination

Editor, Daily Worker:

Let's really evaluate some basic tenets of an American Marxist movement instead of reiterating for the umpteenth time that it is time to do so. Why so slow?

My feelings are that—

—On the question of "Negro

self-determination" we have been very rigid and self-righteous.

The Negro people are bound together by a history of struggle, strong ethnic-cultural ties, and racial sameness. They are entitled to and are fighting for an equal stake in America and her bounties.

The demand for first class citizenship is the demand in the south as well as in the north.

The gains in the labor movement (industrial integration), the movement for voters' franchise, the Montgomery bus struggle, and the Autherine Lucy case point dramatically to the direction which the Negro peoples movement in the South is taking.

The theory of the nation within the nation including the concept of a Negro majority in various counties—the Black Belt hypothesis—may have been valid at one time. However, the Negro minority dispersed throughout the land and the much diminished Negro majority of the southern counties today does not see eye to eye with us. The Negro people are not calling for National Liberation but are demanding First-Class status. —W.A.L.K.

The USSR And Israel

Editor, Daily Worker:

The ideological blindness that the American Marxist movement will have to overcome if it is to develop a truly realistic approach to the Soviet Union is, unfortunately, aptly illustrated by two recent "Daily Worker" stories about Israel. On Friday, April 13, when Mid-East news was most forboding, a front page editorial called for four-power talks to prevent war. What was lacking there, and in all the "Worker's" handling of the Arab-Israeli conflict, was some assessment of the shortcomings of Soviet policy toward the Middle East. For the Soviet failure to recognize Israel's right to national status, in recent months, definitely encouraged Arab aggressiveness; at the same time, this omission smacked of a willingness to be silent toward this aggressiveness in order to buy Arab friendship for the Soviet Union.

The new Soviet memorandum on the Middle East radically altered this situation, and contributed to peace in the area, by endorsing Israel's continued existence. The "Daily Worker" greeted this pronouncement with a four-column headline. But this response indicates that "Worker" reporters were aware of the political vacuum previous Soviet silence had created. What

is a welcome statement on Tuesday was obviously a needed statement on the previous Friday, or a week or a month before.

Do we believe Socialism is so fragile that its present mistakes can not be discussed? Unless we are willing to do this we will again become prisoners of the need to rationalize all events from already agreed upon conclusions. Our potential allies among the American people have shown that they will only work with a truly independent party. Only by thinking honestly, even when the conclusions are not easy to face, can we prove ourselves.

In Friendship, —H.L.

[Ed. Note: It is not true that the Soviet Union failed "to recognize Israel's right to national status in recent months." The DW published statements by Khrushchev to Harold Wilson and by Ambassador Zarubin to the American Rabbinical Council defending Israel's "right to national states."]

Coexistence With Religion

Tampa, Fla.

Editor, Daily Worker:

I started thinking . . . if Marxism, needs re-evaluation and renovation, much or little—if East and West need to co-exist peacefully and to exchange goods and visitors (and they do)—then perhaps there is room to recognize the need for a kindly tolerance toward religious beliefs in this day of great "new looks" and new coalitions and united fronts and co-existence. Let the market place of ideas, without ridicule, finally settle the matter of spiritual or religious beliefs, as we meanwhile seek socialism (in THIS world).

Please ask Gene Dennis to furnish you for periodic publication with a concise statement as to the requirements for becoming a member of the Communist Party.

—A READER.

We Have Lots of Time

Editor, Daily Worker:

This discussion is good. All the letters and articles — sad, amazed, self-righteous, indignant, taking sides, critical, self-critical and constructive—indicate a stirring to the very depths of the Communist Party which is what we need.

The XXth Congress has clarified issues and put them into action. Its work is an inspiration, but this does not mean even now that it is wholly correct. It points to the corrective which is not only collective leadership, but

also collective criticism or speak-upism. This is especially important for us in America for we have a national tendency to sit in the bleachers and let the other fellow take the responsibility for making decisions.

Moreover collective leadership means more than leadership by a committee instead of an individual. It means more than listening to the rank and file. It means educating the rank and file so that they will be able to express what they "know in their hearts," and "feel in their bones." This kind of education can not be confined to study at the Jeff School, indispensable as this is. It must include Mao's type of study: detailed study of the concrete situation in our area—not only in our own country or city or union, but even in our own shop, PTA, organization, block or household—studies of the problems, needs, habits, personnel.

It must include the widest discussion, cut out the bureaucracy which comes to a meeting with a prepared agenda and refuses to discuss what's on the people's minds because there is not time. We have, as they say, all the time there is. Let's use it to wipe out war, poverty and segregation in this generation.

A. S. T.

On Reading Foster's Book

Editor, Daily Worker:

In reading Foster's "History of the Three Internationals," an authoritative and informative, historical-political text book, I came across the following passage so applicable to certain progressive circles in this country today:

"The 'left' sectarian is one who tries to take short-cuts to the revolution, who seeks to bypass the elementary problems of mobilizing and leading the proletariat. Lenin points out many 'leftist' weaknesses, including a rejection of participation in parliaments and in political elections; a refusal to remain members of conservative trade unions, a rigid, inflexible attitude towards political problems and organizations generally . . . and failure to utilize all legal opportunities . . ." p. 295-6.

D. L.

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