

# SPEAK YOUR PIECE

## Where Is That Iron Curtain?

EMMET, Idaho.  
Editor Daily Worker

This letter is more of a complimentary nature. I sure do like your writers, most of them. Here I just finished one piece by Abner W. Berry in Tuesday's, April 24 issue concerning Paul Robeson.

I think it is just a dirty shame that our outstanding citizen has to take such scandalous treatment. The capitalists are always shouting about Russia's Iron Curtain, Robeson has found out where the Iron Curtain is.

I sure liked Abner W. Berry's article. Another one I liked is by Wm. Z. Foster, "The Decaying NATO" written in Monday's April 23 issue. I don't care if NATO does disintegrate—it never was any good anyway. Good riddance.

When they tried to seize the Daily Worker I wrote a letter to Attorney General Brownell. Told him I considered it my right and privilege to read what I like. Told him they must be afraid their system can't stand the test. Yes, I needled him a bit. I'm afraid if they'll repress one thing they'll repress something else.

Joseph Clark is also another good writer—also Howard Fast, Erik Bert, and lots of others.  
S. L. G.

## Wasn't Democracy The Issue?

Dear Editor:

I have some questions regarding Part I of Max Gordon's article on Socialism and the Elections. Certainly agitation for Socialism in the recent past, particularly in the period of the Korean war and the vicious attacks against the leadership of the Communist Party, declined almost to zero. But isn't it true that the decisive reason for this was that history imposed upon the Communist movement the immediate, urgent tasks of preventing World War III and the growth of a fascist U. S.? Is it not true that the most serious weakness of the Communist movement was not that it did not propagate Socialism, but that it was isolated from the main stream of the working class? If we are to bring to the workers the truth about Socialism, it follows that we must be a part of them and not some group of wise men sitting by ourselves as isolated leaders.

2. While the world socialist movement has had an impact upon the bourgeois approach to segregation and discrimination here, in my opinion the decisive reason for a more democratic position has been the influence on the whole of the national

liberation movements, including the heroic struggles of the Negro people in this country. It is of course evident that many of these all-class movements have a fraternal, warm relation with the countries of Socialism because of their consistent struggles against colonialism and racism. Hence, it is in fact, a combination of the world socialist movement, the national liberation movements, and the American working class that have forced these concessions from the bourgeoisie.

3. Now I would agree with Max Gordon that there exists a need for the agitation of Socialism, for extending its ideology among the working class, Negro people and small farmers, and, of course, relating it to their problems. But when Gordon raises the question of whether we need to place our main emphasis on developing unity with other socialist trends in this country in order to use our combined strength to expand socialist education, then we have to raise the question of the content of that socialist education and the propriety of "main emphasis."

Who is against the unity of socialist trends if their aim is to propagate the necessity of the working classes owning the means of production? Not I. But the problems involved are immensely more complex and I would agree with Mr. Gordon that they need looking into.

H. B.

## Socialism And Elections

Editor, Daily Worker:

Max Gordon's article "Socialism and the Elections (I)" is interesting and constructive... except for one paragraph. By calling for a "deep-seated reorientation" to achieve "thoroughly American working class movement" which does not take its lead from the (foreign Marxist) movements." Max Gordon implies that the U. S. Communists have been taking its leadership from foreign movements all along. This of course is not true. But it is just what the McCarthyites search to find in the Daily Worker!

Let's try not to spoil good writing with careless formulations.  
Sincerely,

H. J. L.

## Wants Group Opinions Too

CHICAGO, Ill.

Editor, Daily Worker:

My Communist Party club has asked me to convey the following thoughts about the very welcome public discussion now flourishing via these columns.

Few of the letters we've seen, no matter how valuable otherwise, seem to reflect the thinking of anyone but the immediate author.

We would like to suggest, even urge, that while there be no bar to the acceptance of any letter, those which are produced out of the fire of give-and-take in a club be given special recognition of one kind or another. We do not intend to imply that clubs hold up their letters until unanimity is reached; majority and minority positions, if taken, should be communicated; in fact, as many differing views as have been fought for should be revealed to the scrutiny of the readers.  
—L.L.B.

## On the Right To Secession

SEATTLE, Wash.

Editor, Daily Worker:

In discussions on the Negro nation in the Black Belt and its theoretical right to secession, Stalin's "Marxism and the National and Colonial Question" has been and still is quoted as a standard work. But his "Marxism and the National Question," published in 1942, contains some later material which has been overlooked. In a report to the eighth All-Union Congress of Soviets on the constitution of 1936 (see Page 220), he explains why Autonomous Republics in the Soviet Union do not have the right to secede:

"What are the grounds for transferring Autonomous Republics to the category of Union Republics?"

"There are 3 such grounds. First, the republic concerned must be a border republic, not surrounded on all sides by USSR territory. Why? Because since the Union Republics have the right to secede from the USSR, a republic, on becoming a Union Republic, must be in a position logically and actually to raise the question of secession from the USSR. And this question can be raised only by a republic which, say, borders on some foreign state, and, consequently, is not surrounded on all sides by USSR territory. Of course, none of our republics would actually raise the question of seceding from the USSR. But since the right to secede from the USSR is reserved to the Union Republics, it must be so arranged that the right does not become a meaningless scrap of paper. Take for example, the Bashkir Republic or the Tatar Republic. Let us assume that these Autonomous Republics are transferred to the category of Union Republics. Could they logically and actually raise the question of seceding from the USSR? No, they could not. Why? Because they are sur-

rounded on all sides by Soviet republics and regions, and, strictly speaking, they have nowhere to go to if they secede from the USSR."

This reasoning is of a general nature, and it would seem that it cannot be regarded as limited only to the Soviet Union. Would it, or would it not, apply to the American Black Belt? I suggest that this point should be carefully considered.

B. F.

## Mixed Feelings On May Day Rally

Editor, Daily Worker:

It was a beautiful day for a rally. Union Square was filled with people, we met friends we haven't met in years, people all agreed it was a "good rally", fine attendance, but now that I'm home again, I find that I have mixed reactions about it.

I remember the May Day demonstrations of a few years back. How excited we all were. The glow of pride in the working class I remember especially the last parade—in the midst of war hysteria—the dove of peace was raised aloft and we sang out with the promise of peace on earth, good will towards men.

Today's meeting (for it was really not a rally) had people attending but not participating. People chattered with each other, speeches could not be heard.

Perhaps the Left cannot march on May Day today. But have we really solved the challenge of a May Day rally? The working class in other countries where demonstrations were repressed possibly managed to hold May Day demonstrations that meant something.

If we cannot get well known trade union leaders to speak what about non-Communist left groups? How about a pageant or group singing or local groups attending in traditional costume with some sort of organized program.

May Day belongs to the American people—we should not allow legal limitations destroy the spirit of this holiday for us.

I'd like to see other readers' comments on this.  
—E. S.

## Saw Sectarian Policies Here

PHILADELPHIA

Editor, Daily Worker:

The period following the reconstitution of the Communist Party was marked by loudly proclaiming that war and fascism was not inevitable. Yet practically every major action carried through reflected the belief in practice that they were inevitable: The founding of the

Progressive Party in which we participated, represented a desperate stand to form a mass party despite the lack of a working class base, our dogmatic position on the Marshall Plan which resulted in complete separation from the organized trade union movement; we often supported the foreign policy of the Soviet Union without seeing the implications on our domestic scene.

Finally, following the outbreak of the Korean war the severe measures of security that were taken all but wrecked and isolated our movement.

These problems and many others must be faced up to.

A PHILA. WORKER

## Faces Jail For Defending Labor

Editor, Daily Worker:

For several years now, I have been a fairly regular (volunteer) contributor to your paper under the pen name of Harold Castle. Under that "by-line," I have covered stories on the Indiana scene, such as the story of the Studebaker wage and contract struggles, the steel situation in Gary, the Perfect Circle story, the Indiana election battles, the attempt to outlaw Robin Hood in school libraries, the struggle to organize the Civil Liberties Union and the civil rights struggles including the Till meetings and the meetings in support of the Montgomery bus fight.

I have recently been indicted under the "membership provision" of the Smith Act, charged with membership in the Communist Party, though there are no allegations that I personally sanctioned force or violence of any kind. I believe my real "crime" is my interest in and support for people's struggles such as I reported in the pages of your paper.

That clearly not being a "crime," a crime had to be INVENTED. And, as always, the only crimes committed under the Smith Act are those perpetrated by the government itself against innocent victims.

I intend to do all in my power to prove to the people of Indiana that this is the real reason for my persecution, a persecution which benefits not them but the auto and steel corporations, the racists and reactionaries.

I intend from now on to write under my given name (although it is common journalistic practice to write under a "pen name") in order to further demonstrate my concern with the people's struggles and to make it further apparent that this is the reason the Attorney General wants to put me behind bars.

Yours truly,  
EMANUEL BLUM.