

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

How to Stop Bureaucracy

NEWARK, N.J.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Our movement is today confronted with a fact that is in staggering contradiction to our theories of a Marxist Party and a socialist state. The historical fact is that in the most advanced Marxist party in the world it was possible for a bureaucracy to establish itself. It is also clear that this bureaucracy, determined to perpetuate its control of the Party and state, was able to negate the basic Party principles of "democratic centralism" and "criticism and self-criticism."

Needless to say, in the light of the fact that this could happen in the "model Party," it should be no surprise to find the same thing in a great many other Parties, including our own.

We have, all along, assumed as a valid theoretical concept that it was inherent in the very nature of a "party of a new type," as advanced by the Bolsheviks, that it would at all times have a completely selfless leadership, fiercely devoted to basic Party principles of "democratic centralism."

After a decent interval of mourning for the death of one of our most cherished illusions, it seems to us that we must proceed in the direction of developing the firmest organizational guarantees that we can devise to assume that we have an organization that is both democratic and effective.

Among such guarantees should be Party regulations that would rigidly require conventions and plenums at maximum intervals.

Secret ballot elections for all offices from top to bottom.

All decisions, policy statements and "authoritative theoretical contributions" to be approved by the appropriate collective body before being enunciated.

No expulsions except for deliberate violation of a decision made by an appropriate collective body, or for proven acts of treachery to the working class.

The firmest proof to be required before charging a Party member with being an "enemy agent," particularly where expressed political differences are involved.

Strict accounting of party funds to the membership.

Mechanisms for guaranteeing the infusion of "new blood" into the leadership constantly.

Prompt removal, and a program of rehabilitation if possible, for leaders who have proven incompetent, corrupt, dishonest, immoral, bureaucratic, cowardly, or otherwise unsuited to positions of leadership—this program of removal of unsuitable leaders to be bolstered by the right of recall by petition of a stated percentage of members—electors.

A minimum amount of Marxist training as a requirement for membership.

An organized program of Marxist training at all levels.

Problems of "security" to be met in a way which will guarantee "democratic centralism," and not be allowed to become a facade for bureaucracy.

Intelligent and thorough scrutiny of the manner in which Party members live and conduct themselves personally as one of the best ways to guarantee the security and integrity of the Party.

These few proposals are put forward in the hope that our coming Party convention will see fit to adopt a program along these lines. History is a harsh taskmaster, and has strewn the path of progress with "Parties of Socialism" which in their day were unable to meet the necessity for change and development.

Our Party, we believe, is now at one of these historic crossroads. The decisions of our convention will decide whether we are going forward to a new, reinvigorated broader party of Socialism, or whether we wither into a small, bickering sect. If we follow the latter course, it is inevitable that a new Party will arise from the ashes of the old.

Two Newark Trade Unionists.

Criticize Editorial On Poznan Riots

Editor, Daily Worker:

Your editorial of July 2, "The Poznan Tragedy," I don't like it at all. Your heart bleeds for the workers killed in the course of their rioting and insurrection. How about the workers, worker-soldiers and worker-police-men, loyal to socialism, who were killed putting down the rioting and insurrection? No grieving for them! I think your editorial is a justification for the rebellion and an incitement for future rebellions in the socialist countries under the cloak of "democratization."

The editor who approved printing this editorial should be removed immediately before he disrupts the Marxist-Leninist movement in this country. Let's stop standing on our heads!

Astoria Reader.

More About the IAM and the UE

ORANGE, N. J.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Comments I heard in the field, on my recent trip, on columnist George Morris' contention in the June 18 issue of the "Daily Worker" (in answer to my letter to the editor) that the IAM is not a craft union, leads me to return to the debate. Already there are those who say that it is all right to take UE people into the IAM since George Morris said it is not a craft union. This, of course, whether intended or not, adds to the problems of the people in UE.

The IAM has been historically known in the trade as a craft union although it has a number of industrial workers. It was certainly presumptuous of Morris to redesignate this union as an industrial union even if his analysis was proven correct, which I do not think it is.

At the merger convention, the IAM submitted 630,000 members, approximately 400,000 of that number is craft. The major areas of craft organization are railroad shops—all white; tool and die shops, predominantly white; machine and maintenance repair, garage mechanics; business machine servicing, typewriters, adding machines, cash registers and so forth. Union leadership is of craft with the ancient craft outlook.

Business agents of locals are selected or elected by the Districts and not directly by the people even in industrial shops. In large cities such as Chicago, where IAM has industrial plants, it divides the workers into craft and industrial basis, based on geographical location of the people and not based on industry. The bulk of the industrial workers that IAM does have is in the aircraft frame industry.

My contention that the IAM has no contractual or organizational set up in the electrical industry is absolutely true. In GE, Westinghouse and the other giants, they have single shop contracts and no Conference Board where the chain workers work out their problems and bargain together collectively, such as exists in the UE and the IUE. I am sure Morris knew this with regard to this industry.

I therefore cannot understand his dragging in the contention that IAM has some chain setups

somewhere else in other industries—certainly not this industry. It is interesting to note that the GE workers in District 3, confronted with this undemocratic set up, refused to go along with the former UE leadership into the IAM.

With regard to the stake of Negro workers in this particular industry Morris seemed to take this lightly. No Negro workers that I have spoken to on this question, those in UE and those who recently left, were in favor of voluntarily going into a union like the IAM, freezing their status quo, if a more democratic choice was available, such as exists between the UE and the IUE. Furthermore, most of them who expressed an opinion sharply condemned the steps taken by the leaders of District 3. Most Negro workers do not wish to be abandoned to the tender mercies of the spontaneous action of somebody in a future day. They have had almost 100 years of trying to win the democratic fight with these craft unions, and it would certainly be silly of Negro men and women workers not to wage a vigorous fight to protect the gains they have made.

I am enclosing a set of clippings from the "Cleveland Call Post" covering the recent trial of the IBEW conducted by the Cleveland Community Relations Board for discrimination against Negro electrical-journeymen. The IBEW and the other craft unions are defying the whole city of Cleveland to prevent Negro craftsmen from working. This also involves control of the School Apprenticeship Training Program by the craft unions which excludes Negro apprentices. The IBEW was found guilty.

They continue in defiance of the Board and the city of Cleveland. Their defying attitude so far has the backing of the craft unions in town. A major all-out fight with the craft unions is shaping up in this great industrial center. It is hard to picture the Negro workers in Ohio wanting any part of these outfits until some democratic concessions have been wrung from them.

It was the solemn duty of the UE people in District 3, who went into the IAM, to fight for those democratic concessions—to say nothing of the problem that fragmentation creates.

I feel it to be my duty to protect the democratic advances we have made and to fight for new ones while advancing the fight for labor unity.

I think it was a little below the belt for the paper to see fit to place Morris' answering column side by side with my letter to the editor. I believe it is, the same kind of unfair debate that the "Daily Worker" has criticized the big press for time and again.

—ERNEST THOMPSON

Cult of the Labor Bureaucrat

BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Editor, Daily Worker:

As a reader and supporter of this paper since its birth I'd like to say a few words on how it appears to me now after so many years as a source of education.

I have always respected and admired all who worked and published this working class Daily.

Since Mr. Khrushchev made his clumsy attack on Stalin you all fell off your chairs and didn't get back on them yet. Only Alan Max, thank God, got back to his old place, to Point of Order.

It looks like you are all sucking your thumbs and waiting for the capitalist press to print their usual reliable information about Stalin's crimes and you rush to reprint it. Friends, I am class conscious.

I very seldom read the rich men's press but at present I can't read the Worker either. Khrushchev doesn't seem to be worried or emaciated about Stalin's crimes but the Daily Worker is. The majority of letters being printed in the Daily about Stalin's crimes are all playing follow the leader.

Are you looking for the cult of the individual? Then why go so far away? It is visible right under our noses. Just peep in a little in the needle trades at Dubinsky's empire, in Meany's empire, in Reuther's empire and all along the line in the whole labor movement. It is inherent in the capitalist system and their organizations and adopted by the labor movement.

When the working class takes power their leaders take over all the functions of the rich and powerful and a privileged crust is formed immediately. The top leaders look down at those at the bottom and those at the bottom look up for favors for advancement.

The cult is growing by leaps and bounds. If and when the working class will be able to create their own organization that can do away with privileged upper crust officials the cult will shrink to a minimum.

—A READER.

Mention of Browder Held Gratuitous

FLUSHING, L.I.

Editor, Daily Worker:

William Z. Foster's "Stalin Cult of the Individual" makes many telling observations.

However, a glaring weakness in this otherwise fine article was his gratuitous mention of Browder in two instances, apparently, to bring the point home to us.

It was shocking and disappointing to see this display of "venting of spleen" take the place of a measured, logical presentation of all the facts. These facts should include the excesses following Browder's fall from leadership, the summary expulsions, the bureaucracy, the wrong decisions trickling down to the membership.

This approach of Foster's shakes one's confidence that the membership should expect "all the news that is fit to print" on the subject.—S.S.R.

Scholarship Needed In Russian History

Editor, Daily Worker:

I am happy to see by Joseph Clark's letter in the issue of July 4, that a staff member of the Daily finds that my criticism of one of its editorials was substantially correct. I am glad, too, that Joseph Clark, in that connection, rejects "breast-beating." I would add the necessity to avoid befouling one's own nest.

May I suggest that Joseph Clark exercise more caution in asserting what others "must have been aware of?" Of what he, himself, was aware, he is the best authority; as to others his testimony is not impressive.

Joseph Clark thinks my scholarship sound in areas of my own specialization, but wants to know why it was not equally sound in Russian history. The question answers itself—my scholarship is in the area of American life and history. That is why I did not write about Russian history.

I did read several of the works of those supposed to be sound in that area and these included varying points of view, from Gerald T. Robinson to Joseph V. Stalin. I also followed with some care the writings of those in Russia whom I felt certain I could trust, such as the Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Harry F. Ward, Pat Sloan, the Webbs, William

Z. Foster, Tim Buck—and Joseph Clark. And with practically everything they did write I am still satisfied that they reported truthfully and accurately. But, as Togliatti said recently, "Of the things now revealed I could not know and did not know anything."

Joseph Clark says that I "dismissed I. F. Stone's recent report from Moscow." What makes him say I dismissed it? I did not dismiss it; I raised it in all seriousness as an example of a real problem that must be tackled in terms of careful, critical, and friendly examination of the truth about the USSR, in its entirety.

We need expertness in Russian life and history (as in everything else). We need in that area the kind of real scholarship that will successfully challenge the outpourings of the so-called Russian institutes of a dozen American universities; that will sift the truth from the reams of lies. This is the problem, and for many months, indeed for years, I have been calling for some kind of organized attention to its solution, and certainly I have not been alone in this. Here we will be as critical as scholarship always is. Most certainly Socialism thrives on the truth, it does not fear it.

—HERBERT APTHEKER.

Suggestion for CP Constitution

PHILADELPHIA.

Editor, Daily Worker:

In some trials of the leaders of the CPUSA, defense witnesses and lawyers have been forbidden, by the judges, to mention the Declaration of Independence or to compare the similarities between it and the writings of Marxism; they have also been forbidden to mention the inherent right of every person to self defense.

The basis of these rulings is one or more technicalities. These technicalities might be overcome by the simple act of the National Committee in amending the preamble of the Party's Constitution, by adding the Declaration of Independence and statements about it; also statements about the right of self defense of individuals and peoples; also statements expressing any thoughts which they have been legally barred from presenting in court. Anything that's in the Constitution cannot be held irrelevant to these trials and their appeals.

Of course this action would be subject to the approval of the next Convention.

PHIL O'MEL.

Mutual Confidence Found Absent

Editor, Daily Worker:

During Stalin's rule it seems that the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not trust the Presidium of the Central Committee; and the Presidium did not trust the Central Committee; and the Central Committee did not trust the membership of the C.P.; and the Communist Party did not trust the Soviet people.

Although very much simplified, this, in essence, is what happened. And it adds up to a fine kettle of fish.

—SUNNYSIDE READER

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