

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

The Will to Believe

Editor, Daily Worker:

Like Max Gordon, I believe that Herbert Aptheker evades the issue. His complaint about the difficulty of obtaining reliable information about the Soviet Union does not, on a little examination, hold water.

That Communists, in common with many others, were ignorant of the more gruesome aspects of Stalin's regime is understandable; also, their unwillingness to believe unconfirmed reports of atrocities, such as the liquidation of Jewish leaders.

The real offense lay in being blind, to reports that painted the Soviet Union as less than a perfect democracy.

All this despite a mountain of evidence from sources not hostile but friendly to the Soviet Union. Read Walter Duranty's "USSR" where you will find all the evidence needed to prove that the Soviet Union was a dictatorship under Stalin and not a "Socialist democracy."

Or take Joshua Kunitz, an authority on the Soviet Union and a sincere friend. When he was compelled by the evidence of the Soviet press itself to declare that Anti-Semitism existed in the Soviet Union on an official level, did he gain a respectful hearing from Aptheker? Or did the latter join with other "progressives" in ridiculing this great scholar?

And what about dispatches from the Soviet Union itself, passed by the Moscow censor? In 1937 such a dispatch reported the arrest of Bela Klun as an "enemy of the People." From that time he was no longer heard of. A world famous Communist leader could completely disappear, fate unknown (such reports being frequent in the years 1937-1938.) What, to this, was the standard reply? "In the Soviet Union, the only ones who have no civil rights are Fascists."

And what about the fulsome, sycophantic adulation of Stalin, unthinkable during the time of Lenin? Or the case of the Kremlin doctors, with the multitude of questions it raised about the most hallowed conceptions? Did Aptheker swallow the official explanation given at the time that such a gigantic frameup was the work of a minor official?

That people with a high order

of intelligence and ability could so completely close their eyes and minds shows the great power of the will-to-believe as well as a heresy-hunting and fear of expulsion for non-conformity.

—Paul Diamond.

Young People And Socialism

Editor, Daily Worker:

Congratulations to the Daily Worker for making its pages available for the healthy exchange of ideas on the American path to Socialism. It has made possible open debate on questions that are vitally important to the welfare and future of our peoples and our country.

A few of us in the Labor Youth League have concluded that we would like to welcome also, ideas and opinions on the role that young people can and must play in the struggle for socialism in our country, from your readers. So far we have noticed only one letter from a "Young Marxist" giving his opinions on the future of youth; how the "new look" affects the Labor Youth League, and the concepts of youth and socialist ideas.

The Labor Youth League, at its National Council Meeting held on May 19 in New York began to open many new questions for discussion in our organization. Such questions as: Is the League the wrong kind of youth organization? Is there any basis for a youth organization with a Marxist educational program? Is there a need for something broader, which young people will be more willing to join? And many others.

The discussion on these and others questions are proceeding in our organization in the liveliest and healthiest direction, and we would like to encourage others not in the League to add their thoughts also to ours.

We have material available that show some of the initial trends in the discussion that we will very willingly supply upon request. Please write us at LYL, 159 W. 23 St., New York 11, N.Y.

—EARL DURHAM,
Acting National Chairman, LYL.