

# Dear Editor

## Letters from Readers

### Learns of Nuclear Danger From 'Worker' Articles

BELLAIRE, Ohio.

Dear Editor:

Some weeks ago I received a flyer from one of your distributors. I found it most interesting. I was vaguely aware of the dangers to the general population as a result of the nuclear tests.

I was shocked to learn of the omission in the general coverage of the news. I read some of the articles in your paper and was amazed at the full coverage of this article. It gave me some insight on what I only vaguely suspected.

I am ordering an additional 100 copies of this flyer to pass on to my associates, in order that more of us may become more aware of the dangers of these nuclear tests.

C. B.

### Disputes Bach Critics, Says Composer Served People

Dear Editor:

The letters to the Sunday Worker relating to Ben Levine's column on J. S. Bach have raised some interesting questions. Letter-writer J. J. complains: "That J. S. Bach was outstanding in his day, no one disputes—but whom did he serve? Not the people, but the church."

But music did not develop in a vacuum. The development of music is influenced by the nature and the requirements of the society which it serves. The fact is, that in Bach's time the bulk of the composer's audience was in the church and that is where the composer served the people best.

Letter-writer J. J. would be interested to know that the churchgoers who heard a contemporary performance of Bach's St. Matthew Passion were bewildered and shocked and compared it to an operashow. Bach's music was different from his predecessors because he employed a dramatic musical style using soloists in contrast to the choral expression of the earlier composers.

Bach's music had a passionate personal affirmation due in part to the shift in emphasis from the acceptance of religious authority which was characteristic of the Catholic faith to the emphasis of the Protestants on an individual interpretation of the Bible.

I'd like to close this letter on a present-day note. An item in the newspaper recently said that the government of Puerto Rico allocated a large sum of money for a symphony orchestra. In the United States we have no government sponsored agency for composers or musicians.

There is a Fine Arts bill in the Congressional hopper which has been endorsed by many notables. To me, as a musician, it seems ridiculous that in this great city of New York amidst wealth and prosperity the only hint of government sponsorship of music is an occasional concert which acknowledges the cooperation of the Department of Parks for permitting use of Central Park Mall.

ROSE.

### Finds Mike Gold Column On Howard Fast 'Unworthy'

PHILADELPHIA.

Dear Editor:

I am glad that in his latest Worker column (Aug. 18), Mike Gold recognizes that Howard Fast "contributed many fine novels to the democratic literature of America," and that "for a few years he gave freely of his talent and devotion to the socialist cause." I thought Mike was unfair and blind in a previous column when he couldn't see anything at all about Fast that was good.

But I must say that even in this latest amended appraisal, there is something unworthy about the way Mike thinks and writes. His column is full of tricks to give the impres-



sion that by leaving the Communist Party, Fast has chosen to join the enemies of socialism.

Trick No. 1: Mike says that to announce his withdrawal from the Communist Party, Fast "chose the N. Y. Times and its specialist in anti-Soviet war (Harry Schwartz). I find something repulsive about such a choice."

Now if Fast had asked that his story be given to Harry Schwartz (the worst red-baiter on the Times), there certainly would be something repulsive about that. But everyone knows that when someone wants to make a statement to a newspaper, he doesn't pick the journalist who will handle the assignment. (Not that it really makes any difference, since the paper's policy must be carried out by whoever is assigned). No, Mike. Fast chose only the N. Y. Times. Make something out of that if you want to. But you have no business to say that Harry Schwartz was his choice.

Trick No. 2: Mike says "It wasn't very nice (for Fast) to bait the fine Russian author, Boris Polevoy, formerly his friend, in the pages of the Times."

To bait anyone, anywhere, is not nice. To bait a friend is despicable. But Fast made a charge: that authors in the Soviet Union were not free under Stalin, and are still not free. And he backed up his charge with facts. Fast may be wrong. Perhaps Mike can show that. But Mike knows the meaning of words too well to use that ugly word as a description of Fast's letter.

Mike used several other tricks—one even to suggest that Fast is in favor of an H-bomb war.

May I suggest that Mike write a third column about Howard Fast, and in this one, let him confine himself to the question I suspect is really bothering him, namely: Can Howard Fast remain true to the best in America even if—in 1957—he quits the Communist Party? And this time, let's start with the full truth—that all his life, Fast has been a champion of the people.

As for my own prediction about Fast, I am guided by the principle "By their works ye shall know them." And I look forward confidently to his next book.

JOSEPH POSNER.

### Enjoys Articles That Hit Against Smoking

Dear Editor:

I have enjoyed your articles on smoking in the Sunday Worker. I also appreciate the fact that our paper is sinking its teeth into "pork chop" news. As a former smoker I am contributing a little material to help your articles along. Perhaps there is merit in the following and we can help others.

Cigarettes—We all know smoking is injurious to everyone's health—tobacco is bad. But what about the following:

Lighters—Automatic lighters use all kinds of fuel which throws off a black smoke and is inhaled as one lights a cigarette. Could this not be injurious also?

Matches—The modern match is made of paper and sulphur and when lit and inhaled may be injurious also.

To date I have yet to read any scientific articles on the above subject. Perhaps you can develop the above data into something sensible.

As for myself I definitely advise against the use of any kind of fuel lighters. Good luck.

A WORKER.