

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Urges Careful Study Of Khrushchev Report

NEWARK

Editor, Daily Worker:

Some people have raised the question as to whether the Daily Worker should have printed the Khrushchev report dealing with Stalin and the cult of the individual.

I am astounded by such thinking! Not only was the DW correct in printing the report and making it available to thousands of progressives and Party members, but it is my humble opinion that it's too bad the DW was not able to scoop the New York Times and print it first.

There is nothing in the Khrushchev report that we want to keep secret. (And even if we did, we do not have the power). But a true Marxist disdains to conceal error. A real Marxist is not afraid to examine all facts—regardless to what conclusions such examination may lead.

All Marxists should study the report carefully. There are many lessons—some of which completely upset the doctrine, dogmatic and erroneous ideas that we held—to be learned from it. The DW is to be congratulated rather than criticized for printing the report.

Congratulations are also due in the main for the "Speak Your Piece" section, and for the generally correct and hard-hitting editorials. I say this even though I might have differences both in regard to some aspects of different editorials and to some of the letters you have printed.

CHARLES NUSSER

Finds Excuses Unsatisfactory

Editor, Daily Worker:

Like so many others, I have been reading with the utmost care the Times reprint of the secret Khrushchev report to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR. While the text is not an official release, I have little doubt that it is in essence authentic.

That all of us are astounded and overcome is not important at the moment. What is immediately important is to determine how did all this come about and what does it mean.

To me there emerges one proposition which is inescapable. If, after the collective leadership left by Lenin, Stalin acquired so much power in his own hands, then all in the

leadership who acquiesced in such concentration of power are fully responsible for what followed.

If after the concentration of power in Stalin's hands those in the leadership with him supported his now criticized policies knowing they were wrong, they are despicable scoundrels who should not be entrusted with the responsibility of fanning a breeze in a hot room. If they supported those policies believing them to be right, they are just as much fools and demons as they now make out Stalin to be and should be required to spend the rest of their days in the factories and farms producing something useful for the Soviet Union, while others who have not made their horrendous mistakes are brought up into the leadership.

If their excuse is that it cost your life to resist Stalin and that it was not worth it, not only is this a confession of amazing moral decadence, but it suggests waiting until the malefactor dies as a proper course for coping with the most serious perversions of Marxism-Leninism and the most degrading transgressions against human dignity.

This does not satisfy me. As a matter of fact, the whole Khrushchev report, with its lengthy, detailed, documented, vitriolic indictment of a dead man while scarcely referring to the role of his co-workers, leave me with many misgivings. It reminds me of nothing so much as a man sitting in judgment on himself. Few men are capable of doing that. Certainly not men who remained mute for 20 years while witnessing gross violations of their profoundest convictions.

They say Stalin wrote history in a certain way, his own way. Now they are writing it in another way, their own way. Time will write the real history. I am sure that time will demonstrate that true history is never written by men who wait to write it until those who could have disputed it with them have died.

A WORKER.

Honest Airing of Mistakes Needed

Editor, Daily Worker:

I have read Gene Dennis's report and am filled with sadness and disappointment. It lacked courage, forthrightness and even the necessary thought

and planning such a report to the membership deserved.

True, it listed in a disorganized way a series of calamitous errors made by our leadership during the past 10 years. However, these could no longer be evaded. The members, especially those ("right opportunists") who maintained their mass ties, especially trade union base, only because they refused to go along with such leftist policies, had voted with their feet. The sketchiness with which these grave errors are dealt in the report can bring no understanding to the membership of what really happened. Is that what was intended?

... And why the stubborn resistance against taking another look at the hidden records of the so-called Browder era. Can anyone deny that his mistakes were shared equally by the present leadership as were his achievements. I honestly believe that in a real atmosphere of comradely debate and discussion, the entire party could have been won to a correct position... possibly Browder too. And let no one be too quick to cite Browder's drift since then. Human beings can be driven by witchhunts and smears to do many things. (Tito, for example, many of our American leading trade unionists... the victims of the Soviet "confessions" etc.).

Let us be big enough to admit that during the war years we made great strides out of our isolation, began to perform like Americans and patriots, and our mistakes are overshadowed by the ties we established in many areas of American life. Why spitefully destroy this chapter in our history just because Browder was a part of it? He also happened to head our party when we made solid contributions in helping to organize the mass production industries.

It's high time we buried the factional hatchet we have used for years to silence all differences. Let us instead sharpen our ability to win support by honest and comradely debate.

The Party of the Soviet Union made more criminal mistakes, perhaps because they had more power. Nevertheless they are rapidly restoring their prestige and the confidence of the mass of people at home and abroad. Why? Because they revealed their errors courageously and forthrightly and proved their sincerity by blazing a Socialist path

of new and radical changes in world relationships and inner democracy.

Can we honestly say that Dennis' report blazes a path of bold new radical departures from the floundering of the past period? The fearfulness with which he treats past errors guarantees that he cannot face up to the type of party and tasks that would catch the eye and ear of American labor.—FRAN.

Aptheker's Approach

Editor, Daily Worker:

Thank you Herbert Aptheker. "Fuller and more scholarly study" is the crying need right now to answer a host of burning questions for both the American Communist party and the shocking revelations coming out of the first Socialist country. It is not enough either empirically, or carelessly to blame or praise. The serious kind of research and study that is evident in all the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin must be done by Communist parties all over the world. This is a new situation. The growth and consolidation of a group of socialist countries pose enormous theoretical questions economically and politically.

The lazy looking around and then coming up with answers, "the people want this the people will do that, the people need this, is no longer enough. We will stumble from one unhappy error to another unless somewhere in the world some Marxists really study the economic structure of the world today, capitalism at this stage, and the political superstructures as they reflect this stage of capitalist and socialist relationships.

In reading Khrushchev's speech, it seems to me the cult of the individual is still in full flower. True it is now not praise but blame. Stalin, it would seem, is to blame for it all. Nowhere does Khrushchev really analyze in a Marxist way the trends and forces that could lead to such a situation in a socialist country. The long night of terror that those old revolutionaries went through to build their state? Economic conditions, international forces? No not even one effort to place Stalin in history, and the period he lived and worked in. No matter how evil were the final years of Stalin, a balanced report could and should be given by any Marxist. No, it is intensely bitter, personal

vindictive and narrow. The very awfulness of those deeds demand they be analyzed, not just reported. The cult of the individual is far from enough to explain the past or guide the future. If a leading Marxist in the Soviet Union could give that type of personalized report and have it acceptable to the leading Committee of leading Marxists of a Socialist nation, I suggest that they are not through with their errors and that perhaps others may have to do the job of explaining and analyzing what they left undone. This is way I welcomed Aptheker's approach so warmly.

—S. V. M.

"Never Again Will We Be Silent"

Editor, Daily Worker:

About the only legitimate quotation one can resort to these days, after reading Khrushchev's crime-tinged account of the crucifixion of civil liberties in the USSR under Stalin, is Hamlet's admonition to Horatio; "There are more things in heaven and on earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy."

People might argue that, never having experienced it, they did not recognize its importance, either in the socialist scheme of things or in the lands outside the socialist sphere. And they might also point to the rank injustice that was the rule in the USA during the cold and minor hot wars, when Joe McCarthy was prosecutor, judge and jury. Never-the-less the Left was not silent about Joe and his unholy works. Which is all the more reason why it should not be silent now about what took place under Stalin or about what is so obviously lacking in the way of civil liberties under the New Look in the USSR, regardless of the protestations of Khrushchev & Co.

We are impressed mightily by the sum total of USSR achievement in science and industry within the short space of 40 years, but we are also now conscious, to an extent heretofore unknown, that these massive achievements were excessively costly. For what is more costly than the broken heart and the crushed spirit of an innocent or even errant man or woman. And what price salvation when this isolated instance is multiplied by hundreds of thousands, ... perhaps even millions? And

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