

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Karl Marx And Russia

Editor, Daily Worker:

In this column of Aug. 28, Joe Clark stated: "The stern fact is that 108 years ago Marx and Engels wrote a Manifesto based upon the struggle for socialism in Western Europe . . . it was victorious in precisely that part of the globe with which Marx did not deal in his Manifesto and in most of his writing. It would seem that Marxists who follow a scientific method should address themselves specifically to the problems of Western capitalism and Western socialism."

Clark seems, in this passage to separate Leninism from Marxism, and, to put Leninism on the shelf in the West.

But Clark distorts history. The fact is that Marx and Engels were extremely interested in Russia, and had to be, because the Tsar and his armies were the backbone of the counter-revolution in Europe at the time the Manifesto was written. The main slogans of their paper, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, at that time, were "for a united, democratic Germany" and "for a general war of revolutionary Europe against the great backbone of European reaction — Russia." (Engels, Marx and the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*). They hammered away at this theme in the pages of their newspaper.

As to why Marx and Engels did not include Russia in discussing the opposition parties referred to in the Communist Manifesto, Engels himself explains

this omission in the preface to the Russian edition (1882):

"It (the time when they wrote the Manifesto—EB) was the time when Russia constituted the great backbone of European reaction. . . . The Tsar was proclaimed the chief of European reaction. Today he is the prisoner of (the) war of revolution in Gatchina and Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe."

He noted that the "Russian Revolution" might become "the signal for the proletarian revolution in the West." Could such insight come from a man who had only a passing interest and acquaintance, with Russia and who, mechanically separated Western capitalism and Western Socialism from Russian affairs?

This is not an isolated reference. In the Marx-Engels Correspondence, Wishart edition, there are references to 15 letters (this is "selected" correspondence), in the index, under "Russia," dealing with the item, "revolution, inevitable in," covering the period from 1851 to 1893!

If Clark does not think Marx dealt "with that part of the globe," the Russian revolutionaries of the time had quite a different view of him. The fact is that they designated Karl Marx himself as the Russian representative to the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association! (Letter 140, Marx-Engels Correspondence, Wishart Edition).

Apparently Marx took his as-

signment more seriously than Clark has taken it since. On Sept. 27, 1870, he wrote to Sorge: "Russia has long been standing on the threshold of an upheaval, all the elements of it are prepared. I have studied conditions there from the original Russian sources, unofficial and official (the latter only available to a few people but got for me through friends in Petersburg)."

A little of that "study" which Clark so patronizingly urges on everybody else hardly reveals a Karl Marx who did not deal with Russian problems!

Engels corresponded with the Russian revolutionary Danielson, and while he did not presume to give answers to immediate tactical problems from which he was removed, he studied deeply the basic developments of Russian economy. He foresaw the development of capitalism in the countryside, a question over which the Russians were engaged in a bitter ideological struggle. This view of Engels was confirmed in Lenin's later study "Capitalism in Russia," in which he laid the basis for the class differentiation on the land and revealed the basis for the alliance of the workers and the peasantry.

I wish to identify myself with the criticism of Clark's view of "Western" Socialism made by James Ford, in his recent letter. Leninism is not a purely Russian or "Eastern" science as opposed to allegedly "Western" Marxism. If today, a new relationship of forces in the world alters certain propositions of Leninism, it does

not do so unilaterally for the "West." The new proposition that a peaceful parliamentary transition to socialism is possible, as Allan Dulles noted with alarm, is true not only for "Western" Italy and France but for "Eastern" Indonesia as well!

Clark uses his novel "theory" to snipe at the French Party, at which he seems particularly peeved, I think, because it kept its bearings in the recent difficult period and didn't shock itself into a state of nervous political collapse. He holds up the Italian Party and Togliatti as his "Western" ideal, which has a non-Russian approach to socialism, with its approach to the Socialist Party and its slogan of "an opening to the left."

Of course, the approach of the Italian Socialist Party is correct. But who says the French Party would not welcome an opening to the left and a united front with the Socialist Party? Unfortunately, for certain historical reasons, related to the long consolidation of fascist power in Italy, Guy Mollet is not Nenni. It is not easy to have a coalition with the Socialist leaders to carry out the policy of NATO and colonialism in North Africa.

If Sarragat were in Nenni's shoes, Togliatti would also face a different problem.

Reading Clark, one would think the French Party never heard of a People's Front Government or that it had not been expelled from participation in the French government with the

beginning of the cold war!

The French Party has to take into account the specific features of the situation in their own country, not in Italy. This is a point which Clark always makes—in the abstract—without "studying" the relationship of class forces in either country. So, in effect, he baits the French Party for not taking the Italian Path to Socialism.

I think there is some of this same approach, as from his political Mt. Olympus, Clark views the rate of progress of various socialist countries in correcting their errors, in making democratic or liberal reforms, etc., etc. He does this not by a serious "study" of the relationship of class forces in each country (say, Poland as against Czechoslovakia), of the state of development of their productive forces, of the specific history and traditions of their peoples but rather according to his own blueprinted "ideal" of what they should be doing and at what rate.

—MANNY BLUM

Daily Worker

Published daily except Saturday and Sunday by the Publishers New Press, Inc., 25 E. 12th St., New York 2, N. Y. Telephone ALgonquin 4-7954.

Registered as second class matter Oct. 22, 1947, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

	3 mos.	6 mos.	1 year
Daily Worker only	\$4.00	\$7.00	\$12.00
SUBSCRIPTION RATES			
(Except Foreign)			
Daily Worker & Worker	4.75	8.00	13.00
The Worker	2.00	3.50	