

What Will The Worker Say? Here's What

NEW YORK newspapers such as the Times and the Post last week gloated over Moscow revelations that the central committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had made public sharp and fundamental criticisms of Stalin, his methods and his policies over a long span prior to his death three years ago. Editorial and feature editors were elated at the "shock" and "embarrassment" they anticipated or observed among leaders of the American Communist Party, and they demanded, "What will the Daily Worker say now?"

The facts were that the Daily Worker had considerable to say, both in articles and editorials and in letters to the editor from its readers which began to appear in quantity.

Managing editor Alan Max, in a column March 13, acknowledged that "any Marxist who says he has not been jolted is either not being honest with himself . . . or minimizes the extent of the developments now in progress in the Soviet Union."

"Many things," Max continued,

"bother a person like myself. Where were the present leaders during a period when they say that collective leadership was lacking? What about their own mistakes . . . ?"

Max then went on to suggest that American Marxists "also need to give thought to our own role in accepting many things about the Soviet Union which Marxists in the Soviet Union are now criticizing. After all, whatever positions American Marxists took, they took of their own free will."

Self critically Max noted that "we went overboard in defending things like the idea of Stalin as infallible, in opposing any suggestion that civil liberties were not being fully respected the Soviet Union." While defense of the Soviet peace policy was proper, he said, going overboard on these other matters was wrong and self-defeating, since it made it more difficult to win the ear of fellow-Americans on more basic questions. This could have been avoided if American Marxists had stood more firmly on their own feet, he said.

THE DAILY WORKER of

March 16, featured an article by William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist Party on the "reevaluation of Stalin's work" which said that the present leadership of the Soviet Communist Party had demonstrated its ability to make such a political examination. One thing which has become clear, Foster said, was that "Stalin made serious errors in his failure to develop a real collective leadership."

"This undoubtedly tended to hinder the initiative of other leading forces and also to distort, more or less, the line of the Party," Foster wrote, and posed a number of further questions which he said the continuing reevaluation would no doubt answer.

"Meanwhile," he said, "our task is neither to rush indignantly to the defense of Stalin nor to tear him to political shreds."

"In facing up to the reevaluation of Stalin's policies and prestige," said Foster, "Communists and other left forces must be doubly vigilant not to fall into the bourgeois trap of making a negative and destructive sum-up

of those whole situation." It is necessary to keep in the forefront of the discussion, Foster said, the important achievements of socialism and the Soviet Union under Stalin's leadership. But for the many serious mistakes made as a result of the lack of collective leadership, Foster said, "in all probability, Socialism would have made still more rapid progress than it has done."

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THE NEW YORK POST gleefully announced that the American Communist Party was suffering "internal agonies" and commented that "the whole edifice of the Stalinist faith has been shaken." The N. Y. Times professed to see "indications of another split in the American Communist Party" in what it called the "contrasting statements" of Max and Foster.

The Daily Worker of March 19, editorially denied the alleged "split" and pointed out that writers, contributors and readers of the paper were "agreed . . . on the epochal character of the 20th Congress not

only for the cause of socialism but for the cause of what interests the American people most—world peace." The editorial chided the Post for seeing in the Alan Max column the sign of a "crisis" among the left. "The process of self-criticism, which will inevitably be stimulated now in the Communist movements in each country will only serve to strengthen their ties and influence with the rest of the people in behalf of peace and democracy," said the editorial.

"If Marxists in America see the need of reappraising their own work, it is not through lack of confidence in themselves or in socialism," said the editorial. "It is in order to help the American people in their struggle against monopolists who have divided them, exploited them, robbed them of their liberties and rights and endangered the peace."

Suffice it to say that the newspapers who demanded: "What will the Daily Worker say now?" did not bother to tell their readers what the Daily Worker did say.