

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

Bob Thompson Lauds Daily Worker's Role

NEW YORK.

Editor, Daily Worker:

Please forgive me for delaying over long in expressing in a public way my deep appreciation for the splendid role of the Daily Worker in initiating and sparking the campaign for my release.

Let me say very simply that I do not believe that I would today be outside prison walls if it were not for the existence and initiation of the Daily Worker. It is your highly-to-be-valued forward-looking attitude with its aggressive analysis and exploiting of the new in situations that enabled the Daily Worker to play this part.

I regard the part played by the Daily Worker on the small matter of securing my release as typical and symbolic of the modest but vital and sparking role of the paper on the larger issues confronting the working people of our country.

Of course, if I may be permitted a personal note, I would not expect a paper under the editorship of my old comrade-in-arms and staunch Party leader, Johnny Gates, to play a different role. Twenty-odd years ago on the battlefields of Spain we first met and learned how to fight shoulder to shoulder against a common foe while occasionally debating to our own and our Party's mutual advantage various problems of how best to fight that foe.

I would like also to express warm appreciation for the outstanding part played by my old colleague and executive editor of the paper, Si Gerson, in the campaign for my release.

Again, let me thank the entire staff of the DW for the splendid part this vital working class paper played in securing my release. I assure you the Daily Worker is in the deepest sense my paper and that my best effort will be put into its heroic struggle to survive the present financial crisis, to expand the number of readers, and to enhance its vital role in the life of the working people and progressive forces of our country.

Your old friend and comrade,

BOB THOMPSON

July 26, 1957

Future of the Jews In the Soviet Union

WASHINGTON

Editor, Daily Worker

Argued often by Soviet spokesmen anent the question of picking up the pieces of shattered Yiddish culture in the Soviet Union is that the Jewish masses themselves are evidencing no clear desire for such restoration.

But imprinted deep in the consciousness of the Soviet Jew is the painful awareness of the penalty for active participation in the Jewish cultural movement—imprisonment and execution—

all too recently visited upon certain persons in the name of a reactionary and nonsensical political theory that confused the natural desire and striving of a people for cultural self expression—a desire hitherto recognized—for Zionism and for such misbegotten political monstrosities as "cosmopolitanism."

Progressive people in this country interested in this question are confused by the fact that Jews are making long strides in the Soviet Union and ask themselves how one can be carping as to level criticism at Soviet officialdom in the face of such evidence. Plainly there is a contradiction here that is to be faced: let a Soviet Jew slur over, minimize, or negate in some way his racial background and everything is just dandy; let him exhibit a natural pride in his cultural heritage, endeavor to transmit this feeling to others of the same background, let him work toward the fullest flowering of Jewish culture and the reemergence of a healthy Jewish ego, and he finds that he is going counter to Soviet political and social currents.

Is it true then, as Steve Nelson remarked in a contribution of this to the historic debate in the Daily which followed the Khrushchev revelations at the 20th Congress that, as regards Jews, Soviet policy is one of assimilationism? If this so, it constitutes not only a departure from Leninist policy on the national question but, to state it baldly, a brutal deprivation of the chance after centuries of physical and social hurt for the Jews to begin to reassert themselves, not merely as racially anonymous individuals, but as a distinct social identity with the historic task of expunging through its creative efforts the vile stereotype of Jew imbedded deep in the consciousness of masses of non-Jews by hundreds and hundreds of years of unbridled anti-Semitic agitation. This historic task, which lies squarely athwart the path toward final solution of the so-called Jewish question, is a task that no Jew or progressive person can shirk; it constitutes an unpaid debt owed to the Jewish people and to untold numbers of Jewish martyrs and sufferers to whom assimilationism as a policy at this stage in history can only represent betrayal, tacit affirmation of the cry of the anti-Semite that the Jews as a people have no rightful place among the peoples of mankind, that they constitute some sort of social leech parasitically attached to the social organism.

It is an idle notion, without intellectual or political validity, to regard complete and immediate cultural absorption as the policy best corresponding to the needs of the Jews of the Soviet Union in this period. At best it simply puts off the day, the process of assimilationism notwithstanding, when the question of calumnious allegations about

the Jews stuffed into recesses of the human brain and fed by secret springs will again rise to be dealt with.

For the fact is, as Mao Tse Tung indicated, contradictions do exist in Socialist societies at their present stage of development, the televised remark of Mr. Khrushchev to the contrary notwithstanding. The pervasive economic fact is that the era of general abundance has still to be ushered in, and commodity scarcity with its inescapable corollary, inequality in the distribution of goods and services, still looms large on the Socialist landscape.

I submit that even in the absence of capitalist exploitation there is a psychological basis here for social resentments. Bureaucracy, favoritism, sinecures within the huge governmental apparatus may not be necessary accompaniments of Socialist regimes, yet they do exist and constitute another source of social friction. Not even education and legal prohibitions can be said to be completely fool-proof safeguards against accretions from these sources to the old poisonous stream of anti-Semitism.

There is no substitute for complete and unalloyed application to the Jewish people of the Leninist policy on the national question, a wholehearted return to the conditions that existed prior to the period of wholesale destruction of Jewish cultural institutions and provision by the Soviet government without stint of all the cultural facilities necessary to bring about a renaissance of Jewish culture in the Soviet Union.

A READER

P.S. For obvious reasons I am compelled to withhold my name.

Finds Attacks Overemphasized

MINOT, N. D.

Editor, Daily Worker:

In the Daily Worker of July 22, 1957, page 6, there is a news item headed, "Pravda Continues Attacks on Molotov Group."

Khrushchev and Bulganin went out of their way to emphasize the same thing while traveling in Czechoslovakia.

I want to say that here is something that is uncalled for, this persistency constantly to keep "rubbing it in" about the misbehavior of the "deposed" Soviet leaders. It smacks of hate and vindictiveness and serves no useful ends in the USSR nor elsewhere in the world. These attacks are overemphasized and they do not bolster Khrushchev's prestige in his own country nor outside of it. They are a sign of weakness not strength.

Another quite obvious mistake was when Bulganin and Khrushchev traveled in separate cars in the Prague parade, with Khrushchev taking the lead. This conduct did not serve the ends of unity but made for disunity and

OMAN & OIL

By LANCE SAMSON

LONDON

Protection of oil profits is the aim of the British Venom jets and the British-officered troops being used in Oman.

This does not only include potential profits from oil finds in Central Oman, but also those from the world's greatest known oil pool at Kuwait and Bahrein.

For ever since Suez, when, in Kuwait and Bahrein, opposition to British 19th century gunboat methods was clearly shown, the British government has been nervously aware of the increasing Arab national independence movement in these Persian Gulf oil states.

In Kuwait the local opposition to the pro-British ruler is so strong that three Opposition leaders have been sent to exile on St. Helena.

Anxiety over Kuwait is not surprising. From no oil output previous and a relatively small one by 1946 production had soared to 55 million tons by 1956, with huge reserves.

And 50 percent of the Kuwait oil profits go to British Petroleum, the other half to an American oil giant, the Gulf Oil Co.

Now the government fears the unless it takes "strong" action over the fighting in Oman, pro-British Persian Gulf rulers will lose faith.

So Sir Bernard Burrows, the British Political Resident in the Persian Gulf—headquarters Bahrein—was hurriedly recalled from holiday and sent flying back to his territory. The British Consul-General at Muscat comes under him.

Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd presents the intervention by force in Oman as help to an old ally against unruly subjects, aided in revolt from the outside.

Elsewhere the fighting in Oman is depicted as a conflict between a political and spiritual ruler.

Here are the facts:

Oman, its predominantly Arab population estimated at 550,000 with a 1,000-mile coastline, first had an independent Imam ruling in inland area around his capital, Nizwa, in the middle of the eighth century.

The country is by nature divided into a coastal plain, ranging from ten miles wide to almost nothing; a range of mills in which Nizwa is situated; and a desert plateau stretching into Saudi Arabia.

For centuries the Sultans of Muscat ruled no more than the coastal plain. In the past hundred years their grip on that has only been upheld against their own subjects by the repeated use of British troops and British guns.

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In 1913 the Arabs in a large area around Nizwa again rose and or-

divided counsels.

How different the situation would have been had Bulganin and Khrushchev rode in the same car and riding together with the Czechoslovak President and Premier and the first Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party—all sitting side by side in the same automobile! That would have demonstrated unity. Solidarity and strength to the man in the street.

— ALFRED KNUTSON.