

Correspondence

Dear Theoretical Review:

I have enjoyed reading and have learned a great deal from *TR* over the last two years. Your rigorous (but not rhetorical) treatment of difficult questions is, unfortunately, too uncommon within the Left.

I especially liked and have tried to spread the ideas of your two-part series on Stalin in *TR* #8 and #9. As Paul Costello pointed out in *TR* #14, one's view of the "Stalin era" (both in the world and in the U.S.) greatly affects current practice and needed theoretical work. *NNMLC's* and *TR's* differing views on democratic centralism was especially revealing.

Enclosed is a sustainer subscription. I hope you can continue your good work.

D.W.
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Dear Theoretical Review:

I've found your history of anti-revisionism in the domestic communist movement, which you've been detailing since issue 11, to be extremely interesting and enlightening. Much of it, especially that concerning the struggle within the CPUSA, I had previously been only vaguely acquainted with. So, if for nothing else, you've provided a useful service in collecting and publishing this "hidden" history of our movement.

In future issues, I'd like to see reports on anti-revisionism as it presently exists in the CPUSA (if in fact there is still such a tendency within the Party), as well as what, if any, Marxist-Leninist current is present today inside the Soviet and Eastern European Communist Parties.

R.S.
Hudson, Mass.

Dear Theoretical Review:

I look forward to new issues of the review and have a high regard for the obvious rigor of your endeavor.

Let me take this opportunity to make a few informal, not very well thought out comments on the political direction of the Review. I think you are doing a service in raising the level of theoretical debate within the "ml movement," in familiarizing your audience with important theoretical contributions made in recent years by Althusser, Bettelheim and others, and attempting to apply these ideas to our own history. I fully agree that previous "analysis" of the origins and nature of "revisionism" in the CPUSA, and in the world communist movement have been extremely superficial if not plain misleading. But it seems to me that the deformity of "Third International Marxism" (which until recently "anti-

revisionist" forces have been unwilling to confront) raises deeper questions about the nature, the content of "authentic" Marxism, a Marxism not deformed by sterile, economist and anti-democratic ideas, you have attempted to expose. I don't think reaffirmation of certain traditional "Leninist" principles (e.g. support for the "vanguard party," opposition to conceptions based on the "peaceful transition," repeated over and over again not only in the OCIC's principles of unity but in all the "new communist" movement's literature) is adequate. What is needed, it seems to me, is the elaboration of theoretical and strategic conceptions for the struggle for socialism justified by and grounded in the reality we confront today, in the United States and the world, not justified by self reference to a certain intellectual and political tradition ("Marxism-Leninism"). In other words, I, and I think others, have difficulty in figuring out what's the "baby" and what's the "bath water"; and reference to essential tenets of the Leninist tradition don't help.

I hope in future issues you move beyond your critique of current "anti-revisionism" to an elaboration of the strategy for building socialism in the U.S.

Thank you for your contribution to date and for the complimentary issues.

P.H.
New York, N.Y.

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