

LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Sir:

I wish to take issue with a statement in the report by Dr. Max Rieser on the International Congress for the Philosophy of Science, which appeared in the October 1955 issue of your journal. It reads: "As for an explanation of the unexpected absence of the scholars of the satellite countries, it should be borne in mind that they were all educated and grown up before the communist revolutionary upheaval and therefore naturally more susceptible of defection from the Marxist orthodoxy than the Russians. . . ."

Whether or not one agrees with Marxism, the use of the phrase, "Marxist orthodoxy," as if that was synonymous with Russian Communism, is inexcusable in a theoretical journal. Precisely because the Russian philosophers are what they are—mouthpieces for the political regime—it behooves us who are *not* "state philosophers" to be most scrupulous in our analysis of any philosophy, especially that of an opponent. In 1943 the Russian theoreticians admitted that all teaching of Marxian political economy had ceased. (See translation of article from *Pod Znamenem Marxizma* in the *American Economic Review*, September 1944.) They proposed that in resuming the teaching of political economy they no longer follow the sequence of Marx's *Capital*. In my commentary, "A New Revision of Marxian Economics," as well as in my rejoinder a year later, "A Revision or Reaffirmation of Marxian Economics?" (see the *American Economic Review*, September 1945) I pointed out that this revision in the Marxian doctrine of the law of value and surplus value involved nothing less than a break with the dialectical structure of Marx's greatest theoretical work, *Capital*. It was not long thereafter that Russian Communism broke with the whole of dialectical philosophy. In 1947 A. A. Zhdanov addressed a congress of "philosophical workers" and demanded of them the discovery of nothing less than "a new dialectical law—criticism and self-criticism" to substitute for the Hegelian law of development through contradiction. Between 1947 and the appearance of the Russian delegates at the 1955 International Congress for the Philosophy of Science, their departure from "Marxist orthodoxy" should be obvious to anyone who does not confuse what the Russians say about Marxism with what Marx himself wrote.

The Russian totalitarian state has very compelling reasons for wishing to usurp the name of Marx. The whole might of the regime is mobilized to force an identity between the two opposites—Marxism, which is a theory of liberation, and Russian Communism, which is the practice of enslavement. Why, wittingly or unwittingly, become a part of that conspiracy with such loose formulations as "Marxist orthodoxy" when what was evidently meant was adherence to the Russian Communist Party line?

Yours sincerely,
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