

## STATUS OF THE PARTY

Our Party is in a serious crisis, reduced in numbers, morale at a low point, uncertain as to its course, and with a lowered political influence and prestige. Among the more important factors which have contributed to this situation are:

We faced a number of critical objective situations such as the actual war danger as evidenced by the notorious "get tough with Russia" policy; atom bomb diplomacy; the Korean war, etc. This tense atmosphere stimulated McCarthyism and other efforts to destroy civil liberties. This was reflected in severe attacks against the trade union movement, the foreign born and the Communist Party.

The impact of the serious developments in the world communist movement as represented by the 2nd Khrushchev report and the Hungarian situation, etc.

These are only a few of the adverse conditions we were faced with. Despite these, our party made contributions in several areas such as the promotion of peace, the fight against McCarthyism, where we were the first organized body to expose the danger it represented to the civil liberties of our country. There is no field of struggle for human rights in which Communists did not make contributions.

In spite of some achievements under difficult conditions, a number of serious errors were made. Objective conditions do not make the errors for us, they determine the conditions under which we function. We feel that our main errors were of a leftist nature.

However, we disagree with the statement made on page 53 of the draft resolution which says, "These left sectarian mistakes are the main reason for the unprecedented degree to which it was possible for Big Business and its political representatives to isolate the party."

We feel this is a superficial, inadequate and unscientific estimate of the basic errors. It fails to answer why for years the same dogmatic errors plus other errors took place without correction. We propose the draft resolution to state:

'Many of the problems of the party arise from the fact that we have in effect abandoned Marxist-Leninist science as the fundamental weapon of our movement. We have also discarded the scientific method in developing our program and carrying it out. This is seen in the fact that:

- a. We have made no important contributions to that body of knowledge and laws formulated by Marx, Engels and Lenin in spite of the tremendous development and growth of society in the last 30 years.
- b. We have as yet neglected to describe scientifically the particular and unique nature of society in our own country as reflected in its social and economic institutions.
- c. By neglecting to expose our theory and practice to the test of experience and complete discussion, we have repeated our mistakes, drawn incorrect conclusions, and lost confidence of large sections of the American people. We have failed to take into account the status, the thinking or to maintain a consistent approach to the working class of our nation and to develop a working class approach to all major political problems. This flowed from a failure to truly understand the role of the working class in the struggle for socialism. This basic weakness resulted in the development of an incorrect tactical and political line on a whole series of questions in the course of our party's work over the years.
- d. It has been a complete disavowal of the scientific method to presume as we have, that we are infallible and at the same time the sole proponents of correct policies.
- e. We have made dogma out of science by demanding in effect that objective



reality conform to our theories rather than evaluating our theories in the light of their correspondence to objective reality. For example, we have stubbornly clung to classical formulations regarding an "imminent" economic crisis, and only recently have we considered the possibility that our basic formulations rather than our tactical approach were incorrect.

- f. Our bureaucratic methods of operation, which stifled discussion and put us in a position of discussing merely the application of decisions already arrived at by higher bodies and passed down as directives. This created not only a gulf between the membership and the leadership but resulted in the complete isolation of the leadership from the masses of people and their organizations.

The struggle for socialism necessitates the existence of a political organization of the working class and its allies, based on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and which participates in the daily struggles to advance the immediate interests of the American people and strives to win their support for socialism. Despite its errors, our party is the largest organized Socialist group in the U.S. Adequate time is necessary to properly assess and correct our errors and to properly analyze the vast changes nationally and internationally which in themselves help determine the nature of the required changes in our party, its policies and program.

Therefore, we recommend that this convention go on record as placing before the party as a central task the developing of a socialist doctrine and political program that shall be compounded of American traditions and experiences, as well as the experiences of workers throughout the world, and scientific socialist theory creatively applied. Such program must address itself primarily to the task of establishing first and foremost the character of our party as a working class organization and shall base itself upon the development of the struggle of the working class for its immediate interests and its socialist goal as the central and most important facet of our program. To this end we favor the maintenance of an organization which guarantees the fullest discussion, and recognized the right of dissent and minority opinion. We further recommend any necessary changes to insure the above be made at this convention and furthermore, we go on record favoring the convening of a convention and/or delegated conferences a year from now so that the continuing discussion can be translated into further necessary changes.

approved by Convention with 6 opposed