

Correspondence...

Critique of the Communist Party's New Program

FEW PEOPLE will challenge the American communists when they boast that their New Program is "unique." The *New Program of the Communist Party U.S.A. (A Draft)*, which appeared in February, 1966, is indeed "unique" when compared with the standard prospectus of other political parties.

A political program should be concrete. It should spell out the plan of procedure and the methods to be employed in constructing the society desired by the party in question.

Not so the CPUSA *Program*. The communists offer no constructive plans. Their concern is demolition and their constant objective is destruction. In this respect they follow the example of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution. The *Program* gives no outline for the construction of the "socialist" system and says nothing about the process through which the old society is to be replaced. Instead, one merely finds dreams for a better world and empty slogans revealing the ideological indigence of Marxism-Leninism.

Urban renewal is a case in point. The *Program* deplors "the nerve-jangling chaos" of our cities and the congested centers into which "downtown interests" compress economic life. The Party condemns the ever bigger traffic arteries, and the pollution by industry of air and water. Rational urban development can only come with "socialism." Other means of waste disposal will be installed and the "city beautiful" will become practical reality. Who is there to reject this lovely dream? But by what magic will "socialism" discover these "other means of waste disposal"? By what miracle will New York become a "city beautiful" without pollution or traffic jams? The *Program* does not say. It simply insists that present society must be destroyed. Down with the air-polluting industry! Away with "downtown interests"! Demolish the present complex economic organization! The communists see their program as a call to "weaken," "break-up," "repeal," and "outlaw." And on the ruins springs up a mirage: "full employment," "cradle-to-grave social insurance," "soil and timber conservation," and a "modern rapid transit system."

The path toward total destruction traverses three phases. During the first—the

present—the communists exert political pressure to modify existing centers of political power by means of tools which they define as "popular mass movements." During the second, the Party plans to advance from political pressure to a contest for political power. In the third phase, the "constricting bonds of capitalist society" will be torn asunder and the Party will reconstruct our way of life along "socialist" lines.

The *Program* is silent on the situation in which the "constricting bonds" are likely to be ruptured in the United States. We may assume that they are thinking of complete disorder.

Since we live in the present, our main concern is with the first phase of this grandiose project. What are the "popular mass movements" through which the Party hopes to exert political pressure as an initial step toward the destruction of the existing system? And what is the role these mysterious "movements" are playing in and outside the United States?

The "movements," says the *Program*, arise over a myriad of issues, including peace, civil rights, resistance to conformity, and an enlarged conception of academic freedom. As does the Party, the "movements" avoid practical suggestions in dealing with social and international problems. In 1917 in Russia, marching crowds, as a preliminary to the destruction of Russian democracy, called for a vague "peace to huts, and war to palaces." Today's marchers clamor to "stop the war in Vietnam, and start war on poverty."

Promotion of anarchist pacifism has become the Party's immediate objective. American communists have seized upon "the great guilt feeling" in vogue among middle-class liberals in order to encourage an atmosphere of irresponsible negativism. The tendency of modern society to abandon past American ideals and principles provides fertile soil for the implantation of CP sentiments among idealists. Instead of seeking practical answers to the problems of today, victims choose the easiest solution, namely street protest—a method highly prized by Lenin as a tool of political destruction. Prevailing among the guilt-complexers is the view that any action is healthier than apathy. Hence they espouse all moves against the status quo, even to the point of self-

immolation. The possibility that apathy can be cured and turned into productive action is overlooked. So is the fact that destructive action is final.

The eagerness with which intellectuals accept doubtful slogans has attracted the communists to the American campus. The intellectuals and college youth are in the center of the *Program's* attention. "If the wonderful vitality, initiative, daring and idealism of youth are to be effective instruments of social change, they must be employed not blindly but with cool calculation of the social forces in contention." At colleges and universities, representatives of the Soviet "peaceful coexistence" line join with spokesmen for pro-Chinese groups in advocating the overthrow of the American system of government. And even on the campus "popular movements" play a major role. According to the *Program* the diversity of the "movements" has made it inadvisable to unite them internationally along the lines of the Third International, which went out of existence in 1943. But communists on campus tell us that although diverse, the many movements are actually one single movement which appears under various "umbrellas." There is, they avow openly, the civil rights "umbrella," the War on Poverty "umbrella," and the "umbrella" of the war in Vietnam. The CPUSA fulfills its role through participation in the movement, within all of whose branches it is forming strong components. Communist effort is directed at synchronizing activity and bringing about unity of purpose.

Despite the tactical diversity, the ultimate "socialist" solution is never out of sight. The "popular movements" are deemed to be seedbeds in a process which will result in new political alignments that will culminate in "socialism."

With the help of the "popular movements," the Party plays havoc with U.S. foreign policy. The "movements" march in all non-communist countries. At home and abroad, they are portrayed as a powerful force opposing the American government. Convinced by incessant propaganda, periodicals in Europe assert that "the struggle conducted by American pacifists and liberals is acquiring world importance" (Paris, *Esprit*, March 1966). The "movements" arouse fear and hatred of America throughout the world. These highly vocal groups,

contending that under the impact of popular protest the collapse of U.S. foreign policy is imminent, undermine American prestige abroad. Foreign rulers unconsciously succumb to their suggestive influence. Statesmen of friendly nations show a tendency to reconsider past ties with Washington or exhibit reluctance to accept new proposals for closer collaboration with the U.S. The conclusions drawn by the leaders of countries at war with the United States who think that "popular movements" represent American public opinion have even more tragic consequences.

Interference of "popular movements" in international affairs has brought about a situation unprecedented in history. The United States now finds itself with two foreign policies, one promoted by the government, the other by an anonymous Movement claiming to speak for the American people. Under the pretext that foreign affairs are within the scope of the "ordinary man," the communists support any and all action opposed to U.S. foreign policy. Individual Americans, with little or no background in international politics but elated at the world mission which is thrust upon them, fall an easy prey to the temptation of acting as the Movement's emissaries. They travel to distant and even hostile countries, meet leading statesmen, confer, negotiate, and, for all we know, sign agreements. On trips abroad, they hold press conferences and organize rallies—often on strictly domestic American issues—and they incite their audiences to feelings of enmity against the U.S. government.

The *Program* frankly discloses that the current communist objective is to overcome "U.S. imperialism" by creating "increasing resistance abroad and mounting popular pressures at home." The communists believe this struggle "can be won." As usual, Americans find it difficult to believe that they are a target of attack; and they find it still more difficult to understand the hostile tactics. I recommend that the *New Program* be studied realistically.

NATALIE GRANT

Research Assistant

Hoover Institution on

War, Revolution, and Peace

Stanford University