

"SOVIET RUSSIA'S" OPINIONS

"AMERICAN COMMUNISTS don't know it yet, but their line has just taken another flipflop." Those may not be the exact words but, as near as we can remember, that's how CBS Radio the other day prefaced a report from Moscow that a Soviet Communist Party newspaper, "Soviet Russia," had condemned "rightwing" elements in the U.S. Communist Party, with a particular dig at Joseph Clark, foreign editor of this newspaper.

We can't, of course, speak for the Communist Party. But, as a newspaper with a Communist viewpoint, we have our opinions on both "Soviet Russia's" comments and CBS' belief that these are not only instructions to American Communists but instructions that will be unquestionably followed.

If that was "Soviet Russia's" intent it should have known better. Since the Communist Party holds its national convention this weekend, some have been quick to assert that the delegates will take the Soviet paper's views as their instructions.

We don't believe it. The editors of "Soviet Russia" are entitled, certainly, to express their opinions, just as American Communists are free to express theirs. And American Communists will make up their own minds.

The myth that Communists here take orders from abroad has never been so devastatingly shattered as in the year since the Khrushchev revelations. Even some of the most devout propagators of the myth have acknowledged the independent thinking and independent decisions of American Communists.

Of course the Communist Party's convention will consider the opinions of many people.

But we think that nobody, not "Soviet Russia" nor anybody else in Russia or anywhere outside of their convention, will make up the minds of the delegates.

As for this paper, while it welcomes all opinions, its independence has been proved in deeds. And this, we are confident, is how it will continue.