

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

The Flynn Campaign Needs Everyone's Help

To the Editor:

MEMBERS and friends of the Communist Party have been celebrating the completion of the signature campaign for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn. They have cause to celebrate. It was a fine achievement.

The campaign committee, so ably led by Evelyn Wiener and Albert Blumberg, the active workers, the East Side stalwarts and all who participated in the signature drive merit the warmest praise.

We can be sure that Elizabeth Gurley Flynn will give a typically spirited account of herself in presenting a Communist point of view to the people on all vital issues of the day in the course of the campaign. It will be a heart-warming experience to join with Elizabeth in her return to the hustlings as she speaks on the street corners, addresses mass audiences on radio and television and participates in customary elections forums. This is her native working class milieu and battleground, bless her.

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CERTAIN questions arose in the course of the signature campaign that call for critical comment. It was difficult to do this earlier since it might have diverted from the task at hand. Let me deal with one question.

In The Worker of Sept. 15, an article appeared by Phillip Bonosky entitled "They Knock on Every Door on the East Side." For the most part it is a lively description of the canvassing activity in the community. Toward the end of the article, however, Bonosky apparently felt it necessary to comment on the internal situation in the Communist Party. Thus:

"In time, they (the people) will learn what Communism is. Meanwhile, they are learning that this party, which has been attacked from without and within, is alive and at work.

"And those buzzards sitting on a dead tree, and those undertakers waiting in the parlor, and the crepe-hangers, and those thinking of jumping ship—don't gamble that this party will go down as long as there are people who are fighting like those fighting to put Gurley Flynn on the ballot.

"To them my advice is simple. Don't croak like the raven, Nevermore! Go down and get a signature to put Gurley Flynn, Communist and great fighter, on the ballot."

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APART from Bonosky's understandable emotion about the Communist Party and its work, his heavily loaded and sarcastic approach to those who may not

share his sentiments was hardly calculated to persuade people to join in the campaign, but rather the opposite. There is something here, however, infinitely more important than the negative effect of an article on a particular campaign.

Of whom is Bonosky speaking? Does he by any chance include among the "buzzards," "undertakers" and "crepe-hangers" those who have recently left the party? According to the national committee of the party, this would embrace about 45 percent of our recent membership. If he did not mean these, why did not the author specify to whom he was attaching these fanciful and vicious labels? Bonosky perhaps knows that there are many in our ranks who condemn all who left as deserters, renegades, etc. Lenin's statement made in an early period of the Bolshevik Party, "better smaller but better," is oftentimes misused to justify an attitude of good riddance and, if possible, a wholesale purge.

At any rate, it is clear that the reference to "buzzards" is not to the class enemy and not alone to those who are outside the party. In the previous paragraph he refers to those who attack the party from WITHIN as well as from without, and then he proceeds to link the "buzzards" to those who have not even left the party but may be considering such a move. He then concludes by giving the "buzzards" this comradely advice: "Don't croak like the raven. Go down and get a signature. . . ."

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NOW isn't all this a trifle arrogant? We look to talented writers like Bonosky to provide a deeper insight into people, especially Communists who have dedicated their lives to the class struggle and to the cause of humanity and the future. Is this how he would sum up the thousands of devoted people who with the rest of us have experienced and suffered profound personal, moral and political crisis in the past period? Forty-five percent left, thousands more require the collective wisdom of all of us to clarify the path ahead if they are to remain. Is "buzzards" the approach to save what exists, to save the party? Or might it not plunge it into a deeper crisis and perhaps destroy it?

- I grant Bonosky the customary liberty of writers to dramatize ideas. Granting this, it is impossible to justify what was said.

At the last meeting of the Communist Party's National Committee the main report was made by Sid Stein on the reconstruction of the party. It was a fine report, the first of its kind since the national convention that promised a forward and constructive implementation of the policies adopted there. A very important feature of this report was the approach outlined and overwhelmingly approved with respect to a positive, sympathetic attitude to people who have left the party or who are on the fence.

This question of attitude to such people is not an isolated segment of the party crisis. It is related to the problem of what kind of atmosphere exists in the party for the free discussion of ideas. It is related to the question of democracy within the or-

ADA Fin Absent

WASHINGTON —

"marked failure of leadership. The ADA made the

bers on key votes on liberal issues. ADA said the absence of leadership "is the Washington story 1957."

"The President, having won second term in November of 1957 withdrew more and more from active participation in national affairs," it added. "Congress, sharply divided into two partisan camps was the pawn of the personal ambitions of its leaders."

ADA said the "single positive accomplishment" of Congress in the

EDITORIAL PAGE TO CHILDREN

PITTSBURGH — The "Little Rock, Ark., school struggle" in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, colored, who have shown exemption.

"It is no small thing for a stoutest than their Sunday-go-to-mob as did nine Little Rock youth given troop escorts.

"Nor is it easy for a white subject to the taunts and reprisals on social tradition and accept town's adults refuse to countenance.

"But there are many of the School. These are considerations obscured or are overlooked altogether.

"Courage is not confined, or involved. It is also being shown in a position to influence public people, along with the bad ones.

"But it seems to us that they out. They are acquitting themselves. When their faith and courage in elders, reason and law will prevail.

PITTSBURGH TO LITTLE ROCK

PITTSBURGH — A group of citizens, who constitute the Lay C Herron Hill Junior High School students in the public schools to the student body of Little Rock,

These letters would inform the boys and girls there that integration does work to the advantage of both white and Negro pupils who find it possible to "work, play and study together."

The committee sought the cooperation of the principals of the five high schools here. Mrs. Margaret Lampkin, committee chairman, explained: "Teen-agers speak a language of their own. Maybe a few warm and friendly words from other students will be all that is needed to take the serious

organization and to our attitude to non-party Marxists and our readiness to work with others on everyday issues and for socialism. Is it possible to condemn Communists or former Communists as "buzzards" and at the same time give enthusiastic support to the effort to broaden our relationships? I don't think so.

Neither can it serve to rebuild party cannot be built with self-isolating concepts. In short, I believe the position reflected in Comrade Bonosky's article is harmful. It runs counter to the spirit and main direction of the national convention. I hope that Comrade Bonosky, with all his enthusiasm for the party, will consider whether his approach promotes the realization of the aims he so ardently seeks.

GEORGE BLAKE CHARNEY.

what's on

Sunday Manhattan

SOCIALIST UNITY Forum presents a public discussion—"Hungary in Retrospect," a discussion of the lessons of the uprising. Speakers: Herbert Aptheker, historian, lecturer and journalist. Sun. Oct. 6, 8 p.m. Great Northern Hotel, 118 West 57th St. Contr. \$1.

Coming

COCKTAIL PARTY for Fanny Golos, Sun. Oct. 27, Great Northern Hotel, 118 West 57th St.

Classified Ads