

SPEAK YOUR PIECE

What Price Free Speech?

Editor, Daily Worker:

As we scan the daily papers, we notice the headlines about the City Colleges of New York refusing to allow John Gates to speak during Academic Freedom Week. The latest report on this issue is that the directorates of the New York colleges will not grant "Campus Courtesies" to anyone convicted under the Smith Act. As we all know, John Gates is an exponent of American democracy in every sense of the word always championing the cause of the American worker, whether he be in the Youngstown steel mills, or in the Detroit auto factories.

To disallow Mr. Gates in giving his views on the current scene to the politically hungry students who have been awaiting eagerly to receive much needed enlightenment on progressive subjects, is a direct violation of human rights, liberty and freedom in America. Thought control must never be permitted to propagate or entrench itself in the American mind. Let us hope that our young and progressive college students will always cling to the tenets of freedom and continue in their quest for the truth.

As always,

B. B.

March 19, 1957

Need Discussion And Action

Editor, Daily Worker:

P.D.N., commenting on my letter of March 12, fears that if we don't expel from our ranks those who differ from the majority's interpretation of Marxism, we will degenerate into a "debating society."

Surely P.D.N. has participated in mass organizations where his Marxist views were in the minority. It is to be hoped that he attempted to win others over to his ideas. Did his arguing for his viewpoint prevent these organizations from performing any useful activities? If so, his experience was unique among

thousands of Communists whose participation in democratic organizations was not rendered valueless because they differed from the majority on many crucial issues.

The membership of any democratic organization, after all, soon learns how to handle disrupters and provocateurs. Usually it is sufficient to ignore them or laugh at them. But it is rare that a democratic union, NAACP chapter, or any other people's body has been prevented from carrying out the wishes of the majority because a minority tries to engage it in endless debate.

P.D.N. raises a different problem when he asks, "How long should we carry those who do nothing but sit back and criticize while claiming they are 'for socialism?'" One can have diver-

sity on monolithic views and still have plenty of members "sitting back and doing nothing." The test here is whether or not one demands reasonable minimum activity, not whether one demands slavish agreement to an "authorized Party line."

Such demands for minimum activity would make it possible to distinguish between the argumentative disrupter and the comrade with honest disagreements—who may, after all, be right. There is no reason that debate has to exclude action. On the contrary, it seems un-Marxist to me to speak of a "time for discussion" and a "time for action." Both ought to be never-ending processes. It is the only way to avoid commitment to error.

HANK

March 18, 1957

Negro-White Unity Aim of Mich. Groups

DETROIT. — From out of the gallant struggle of a Negro widow woman, Mrs. Ethel Watkins of 12356 Cherrylawn who stood off the white supremacist led mobs that paraded before her house, there has arisen a united front of 12 Negro and white organizations to fight such outbursts of hatred an attempted violence.

Led by another Negro woman, Mrs. Beulah Whithy, acting secretary of the Community Relations Commission, 11 other groups pledged to work for inter-racial unity in Detroit on a neighborhood basis.

The 12 groups which represent the broadest united front in this city's history working for Negro-white amity are: Detroit Round Table, Urban League, Jewish Community Council, Detroit PTA's, Anti-Defamation League, UAW FEPC, Detroit Council of Church-

out of her home on Cherrylawn, despite rocks, threats of bombs, abuse and crowds of several hundred before the home she bought Feb. 1.

This last week, Mrs. Watkins got a court order against some of the white supremacist elements in the neighborhood who said that after the police guards were eventually withdrawn, they would resume their terrorization campaign.

Meanwhile it's learned that leaders of the CIO-PAC in that area visited Mrs. Watkins, welcomed her to the neighborhood and pledged support to her right to stay in her own home. Also it's learned the labor movement has made a survey of its members in that area and stands ready to mobilize them to give aid if it's needed.

Democratic Party circles in the 15th Congressional District have been meeting on the "Cherrylawn situation" and also have put out the word that they will stand by Mrs. Watkins.