

COMMUNISTS, LIBERALS AND THE DETROIT NEWS. . . . By ALAN MAX

THE NEW YORK State Convention of Americans for Democratic Action was in its last day here when the papers appeared on the stands with a story on the Draft Resolution of the Communist Party. Someone quickly scribbled out a resolution, got it passed and into the hands of the press before the convention adjourned. According to the resolution, the state convention of ADA went on record to "redouble our efforts to prevent infiltration of ADA by the Communists or their party organization."



With one of those ironies which keep cropping up in political life, the Detroit News a

few days later also commented on the Communist Draft Resolution. After laying a premature wreath upon the party, the Detroit News went on to say that "the fate of the ADA in some sense is as sad as that of the Communists."

According to the Detroit paper, the ADA "ends as an all-out but impotent pressure group inside the Democratic Party." The News disclaims any belief that the ADA is Communist and says the only thing the ADA and the Communist Party "have in common is rigor mortis."

Then it delivers this final toot on its tin whistle:

"As the Communists stopped their thinking with Marx, the ADA stopped theirs with the New Deal. Intellectually they are both antiquarians."

In my opinion there is a very good chance that when the election returns are in from Michigan, the last thing the Detroit News will be able to do will be

to charge ADA with rigor mortis. As for the Communist Party, it is at this moment in the liveliest discussion you ever saw and with a good chance of coming back stronger than ever after what has admittedly been a bad siege.

ACTUALLY, the Communists face a much more difficult problem than does ADA, although the liberal organization has plenty of problems of its own. The Communist Party, unless it takes the needed steps, runs the danger of following in the wake of every other socialist movement in America and winding up as a small sect on the sidelines, watching a live and dynamic labor and people's movement pass it by. But unlike any of its predecessors, the Communist Party is facing up to this situation. While there are no pat answers to the problem, the fact that the problem is being recognized, with free discussion en-

couraged, is itself a healthy sign.

ADA, on the other hand, as a non-socialist political action organization, sets itself lower goals and therefore faces smaller obstacles than have the various socialist movements under the special conditions prevailing in America.

BUT THE FACT is the ADA itself has also been taking a second look at matters—particularly at the state of the world and of the significance for America of the existence of a whole zone of socialist states.

Although it is too big a subject to go into here, it seems to me that a program of sound reform for our country requires a sound approach to the possibilities of peaceful co-existence and of peaceful economic competition between the capitalist and socialist states to raise the living standards of the people.

The ADA has in fact gone considerably ahead of the Dem-

ocratic Party in this respect. But along with re-examining the state of the world, the ADA could well afford to take a second look at some of its policies here at home, particularly regarding relations with the Communists.

For it is just in the very field of co-existence and peaceful economic competition, that liberals can learn much from Communists (provided the Communists themselves continue on their present course of seeking a more realistic attitude toward and relationship with the countries of socialism).

There is, in fact, a wide area for mutual assistance and cooperation here among Marxists and liberals which would serve America better than hastily written resolutions against Communist "infiltration." It is just such mutual assistance which would bring the reactionary outlook of the Detroit News closer to the stage of rigor mortis.