

WE, THE PEOPLE

AMERICA CAN USE PROVED TALENTS OF ITS RADICALS

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Attack on Finland Provides Opportunity for
Unity Here

NY Post 12/16/39
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WASHINGTON, Dec. 6.—One reason for the sudden focusing of New Deal attention on the grim buffoonery of the Dies Committee on un-American Activities is the desire to take advantage of the opportunity for national unity created by the Soviet attack on Finland.

This attack leaves the American Communists and fellow travelers politically and emotionally orphaned. Hew to the party line as the payroll Communists may, their popular following is draining away like wheat from a slit sack, and this presents a golden opportunity to the New Dealers.

For the roster of American radicals contains many men and women who are generous, warm-hearted, hard-working, self-sacrificing, inspired by the desire to improve conditions for the common man. They have been led down a blind alley by the decisions of Moscow and now have nowhere to go, no cause to follow, no outlet for their demonstrated zeal. They have proved their capacity to work, to organize, to suffer for their fellow-men—qualities which should not be allowed to disappear from our public life. For in a democracy we do not try to destroy our critics but to win them over to our side.

The Country's Choice

The choice before the country is whether to receive back into our full national life those who tried to take short cuts with the Third International or to make martyrs of them. If we make martyrs of them, we shall perpetuate for another generation such episodes as the Mooney-Billings case or the Sacco-Vanzetti business. Martyrs are the last thing we want in this connection.

Hence the brave action of Mrs. Roosevelt in appearing at the Dies hearings and calling the committee's bluff on the American Youth Congress. Hence the quiet but determined purge of party lines going on throughout every liberal group in America. The case of Finland provides a test for discovering whether our radicals are acting under their own steam or are taking foreign orders as to what they shall say, believe and advocate.

Must Use Their Talents

The next step is to make bold and effective use of the organizing talents and social conscience of those many Americans who have now discovered that their human sympathies and honest indignation at injustice had made them cats paws of Soviet foreign policy. Here, too, the Dies formula must be abandoned. For the effort to represent every liberal as a Communist is directly opposed to the interest of national unity.

What is needed is not a psychological concentration camp for all dissenters from our faulty social order but a sign pointing to the nearest exit from Comrade Stalin's American branch-organization. But if those who leave the Communist Party find themselves beaten up on general principles by the 100 per cent boys they won't leave and we shall be committed as a nation to the perpetuation of a foreign political party in our national life.