

# 'BACK TO BROWDER'?

THE LENGTHY editorial in the New York Herald Tribune (Sept. 25) on the Draft Resolution of the Communist Party's National Committee carries the title Back to Browder. I hastily skimmed through the editorial in order to reach the part where I was certain the Tribune would call for an end to the Smith Act prosecutions.

After all, the original Smith Act indictments back in 1948 were based on the charge that after the removal of Earl Browder and the re-constitution of the Party, the Communist leaders reverted to a policy of "advocating the forcible overthrow" of the government of our country. This was the main burden of the trial, of the prosecutor's speeches and of the testimony of stoolpigeons, and was expounded in editorial



after editorial in the Herald Tribune and other papers.

If now the Communist Party is going "back to Browder," that means, of course, that the Smith Act indictments no longer hold good and the prosecutions must come to an end. But, curiously, no such thought seems even to enter the minds of the H-T's editors. In fact the Herald Tribune forgets all about the fact that the question of force and violence was supposed to be the issue in connection with Browder. (An easy thing to forget since it was never so!)

To avoid getting in the way of the Smith Act prosecutions, the H-T now finds a new issue which was supposed to have been the main bone of contention in Communist ranks back in 1945.

"The main charge against Earl Browder," the H-T editorial declares, "was that, in a speech on Jan. 10, 1944, he asserted that 'capitalism and socialism have begun to find a way to peaceful co-existence and collaboration in the same world.' Since the United States and the Soviet

Union were associated in war at the time, this was quite in line with the Soviet policy of 1944. It was not in line with Soviet policy when the war ended — and Browder had to go. Now co-existence is again much talked of in Moscow."

NOW, if the issue in Communist ranks in 1945 was co-existence and if that is the issue again in the current discussion, just where does the Herald Tribune stand? Shouldn't the H-T be welcoming what it considers the latest Communist conversion to peaceful co-existence? Or is the H-T against co-existence and, if so what does it really want to see happen in this thermo-nuclear world?

Furthermore, if the issue in 1945 was co-existence then once again what happens to the Smith Act prosecutions based as they were on the premise that the issue was force and violence?

Actually, the removal of Browder had nothing to do with the question of force and violence — the Communists did not ad-

vocate it before 1945 or after 1945. Nor was the removal over the issue of peaceful co-existence in the post-war, though it was connected with it. (A Communist slogan both before and after 1945 was "For Big-Power Unity!") Browder rightly saw the possibility of peaceful co-existence but he saw no need of struggle against the monopolists in our country in order to achieve it. On the contrary, he saw the possibility of labor and capital working hand in hand, with capital voluntarily raising the living standards of the workers and labor in return relinquishing its right to strike. ("The labor union movement must have confidence in its own strength and intellectual capacity in order to set itself the task of working out its problems in such a national unity, without a general recourse to the trial by battle to decide disputes."—Teheran and After, Page 90.)

THESE theories were rightly rejected by the Communists in 1945. In fact, life itself rejected

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them in the immediate post-war period. In rejecting what was wrong in Browder's theories, however, the Communists, according to the Draft Resolution, embarked on a course containing errors of a serious but different kind. The Communists never stopped working for peaceful co-existence either before or after 1945. In the post-war period they have at times seriously under-estimated its possibility, but never its desirability.

The H-T is barking up the wrong tree with its "back to Browder" analysis of the Draft Resolution. The only sense in which the resolution can be construed at all as "going back" is in its efforts—however incomplete—to go back to that situation in the late '30s and early '40s where the Communists had close and healthy relations with the labor and Negro people's movement—a relationship that was de-railed both by Browder's theory of post-war national unity, as well as by the new and serious mistakes made in correcting that particular error.