

SMITH ACT VICTIMS AMONG CP DELEGATES NUMBER 50

Fifty of the three hundred delegates to the 16th national convention of the Communist Party are past or present defendants under the Smith Act, it was announced from the convention platform. A total of 160 persons in the United States and Puerto Rico have been indicted under the Smith Act since 1948.

In the last 5 years thirty men and women have served or are serving Smith Act prison terms of from one to five years. Four of these are serving seven and eight year terms. Ten are still in prison today.

Seventy more have been convicted and their future freedom depends upon Appeals Court decisions. Twenty-one more are awaiting court trials.

A total of 35 cases under the Smith Act have taken place. One hundred and sixty people have been indicted, 114 have been convicted, 10 acquitted, 5 severed, 2 died, 11 in prison yet, and 18 have served their sentences.

Assistance to Smith Act prisoners who are still in jail and their wives and children is afforded by the Smith Act Families Committee, 575 Avenue of the Americas, Room 805, New York 11.

Speaking on the subject, former City Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, told the convention:

"One of the most heroic chapters of Party's life the way it stood, like an oak against the storms of McCarthyism, war hysteria and persecution:

"There are no greater symbols of this heroism than the list of our comrades who are Smith Act victims now in prison. The names of our Communist leaders who now have numbers are:

"Bob Thompson, Henry Winston, Gus Hall, Gil Green, Alex Bittelman, V. J. Jerome, Louis Weinstock, Pettis Perry, Elizabeth Gurnly Flynn, Irving Potash, Arnold Johnson.

"We greet their wives, their sons and daughters. We greet each and everyone of our comrades and co-workers through their loved ones.

"Let me extend this National Convention's deepest appreciation to each of the wives for their staunchness, their courage, their initiative and leadership. Let us congratulate them for serving as father and mother to their families, under great handicaps and despite painful suffering, frequently not basically understood by our Party and by the rest of us individually.

"Most of the wives have become leaders in their own right. They have worked imaginatively, broadly, effectively - bringing to the aid of their husbands forces and voices never before raised in behalf of so noble a cause. They have demonstrated that there is no fact of life and struggle that will not yield its mysteries to the advanced theory of Marxism-Leninism.

"The pity of it is that too often they have worked alone. How many of us can say that we have planned and fought for the freedom of our Smith Act comrades as Communists should! If we haven't, it can only mean that we have not basically

understood this question, and its far-reaching significance. In this respect, the wives have set our whole Party an example.

"We cannot heed their example until we wage a pitiless struggle against bureaucracy, until we restore to its rightful place in our Party that human warmth which is the essence of Marxism-Leninism and which is one of the finest traits of the American people.

"No Communist Party is worth its salt if it does not fight for its own leaders.

"The central challenge before us is the case of Bob Thompson. He first miraculously escaped death when his skull was broken by a fascist-minded criminal, whose mind was crazed by the war hysteria by the sanctimonious peace-lovers in Washington. Twice since, he has undergone operations, under prison conditions, either one of which could have meant his life. Despite everything, he is now recovering. Perhaps these Communists do have an extra life or so.

"We must free Bob Thompson. We can free Bob Thompson. With the know-how of our comrades, were our Party in its full fighting trim, we would do so almost by the snap of a finger. We can do so now if we cut through the fog of timidity, self-flagellation and downheartedness that tend to sap our self-confidence. We have played a major role in having freed frame-up victims where there was no world socialist system, when Asia and Africa were quiet. Can we not do so today when the growth of socialist ideas in the world is one of the main reasons that compels the capitalist press to hang on to every word of our convention?"

"We can. We need the understanding and the will. We are in this convention forging the policies and sharpening our skills.

"These men are Smith Act prisoners by the will of reaction and its Washington government. We shall hold the Government responsible - that means Eisenhower and his billion-dollar Cabinet - for their safety and welfare.

"To you the wives, you are American patriots, devoted mothers, and among the finest of American womanhood. In fighting for the freedom of your husbands and loved ones you are contributing to the peace and democratic progress of our nation. You are upholding the Bill of Rights. We love you and are proud of you. This convention stands solidly with you and pledges that we shall renew our determination to fight for their immediate freedom."

Daily Worker

Published daily except Saturday and Sunday by the Publishers New Press, Inc., 25 E. 12th St., New York 2, N. Y. Telephone ALgonquin 4-7854.

Registered as second class matter Oct. 22, 1947, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

3 mos. 6 mos. 1 year
Daily Worker only \$4.00 \$7.00 \$12.00

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(Except Foreign)
Daily Worker & Worker 6.75 12.00 20.00
The Worker 2.00 3.00 5.00