

The Seventh Convention

By WM. Z. FOSTER.

THE keynote of the coming Party convention will be the thorough-going mobilization of our Party for intensive mass work on all fronts. The favorable objective situation greatly facilitates and imperatively demands such work, and all the inner Party developments make for that direction.

On all sides the workers display increasing readiness to struggle. The economic crisis deepens, bringing with it still greater mass unemployment and worsening of the workers' conditions in every respect. That the workers will fight, that they increasingly tend to take the offensive against the capitalists, is demonstrated afresh by the great demonstrations on March 6th. This historic day was an evidence of the growing radicalization not only of the unemployed, but of the whole working class. Great class struggles stand immediately ahead of us.

Aggressive Mass Work.

The present situation of sharpening and broadening class struggle throws great tasks of organization and leadership upon us. These can be fulfilled only by our Party coming forward as never before as the mass leader of the workers. Intensive and aggressive mass work now becomes the Party's most vital and urgent necessity. Mass work, now more fruitful of results than ever, is the key to development of our Party into a mass organization. Failure to do real mass work in this period of growing struggle would lead us to the most serious isolation.

All factors now combine to project the Party more aggressively and efficiently into this mass work. These factors will climax at the coming convention and give that gathering the characteristic stamp of an intensive Party mobilization for its great mass tasks. The Party during the past year has, with the help of the Communist International, made tremendous progress in preparing itself for the mass work and in actually going into such work.

The political line of the Party has been corrected, the Party is unified, and the leadership strengthened. A death-blow has been struck at the opportunist, exceptionalist theories of Lovestone and Pepper; the Party now clearly sees the situation and the tasks before it. The paralyzing grip of these Right elements has been broken and their attempt to split the Party defeated. For the first time in the life of the Party a consistent fight is being conducted against the right and conciliatory elements, as well as against such leftist trends as show themselves. The old group walls have been broken down; the deadly factional fight is ended; the Party now knows a greater unity than ever before in its history. The new leadership consolidates itself and wins the support of the membership. For the first time a real start has been made in the practice of Communist self-criticism. The Party has travelled far towards becoming a real Bolshevik organization.

These developments lay the basis for effective mass work. Because of them the Party has already made real progress in strengthening itself among the masses. It has almost doubled its membership—especially important being its large increase of Negro members. The March 6th demonstration gave it enormous prestige among the workers and infused our members with great confidence in their ability to lead masses in struggle. The Party has not only been prepared to fight by its inner consolidation, but it is actually participating in the mass struggles on an unprecedented scale.

However, the picture is not entirely rosy. We still confront glaring weaknesses in our forces. Among these are the insufficient roots of our Party directly in the factories through shop nuclei. The weakness of the YCL and the crisis of growth in the Trade Union Unity League. There is also a serious shortage of trained leading forces. But these difficulties can and will be overcome in the militant advance of our Party.

The coming convention will give the Party a tremendous thrust forward into the mass work. It will be a totally different convention than the previous one. At the Sixth Convention our Party was still in the grip of Lovestone. The factional struggle was at its zenith. The Party was threatened with a split. No mass work was either done or planned—there was not even a report to the convention on the trade union question. But the coming convention, representing a united, healthy and growing Communist Party, will have as its very center the development of the mass work, which is the broad way to building our Party and winning it mass leadership.

Clear, Correct Policy.

The Party policy is clear and correct, the Party organization is in a thriving condition. It now remains to educate the Party membership fully to this line, to concretize the line still more definitely in action, and to unite completely the whole Party for the work among the masses. These will be the central tasks of the coming convention.

It must be the aim of the convention to mobilize the entire Party to further the big mass campaigns now beginning to develop. In first line there is the building of the Trade Union Unity League. This requires all power behind the realization of the TUUL drive for 50,000 new members. This means in turn that the whole Party organization must be rallied to build the coming TUUL national mass conventions in the next four months—miners, marines, steel, auto, lumber, shoe, food, needle, southern conference—and to carry on the organizing campaigns preceding and following these conventions. It means also full support for the mass campaign to select the R. I. L. U. 5th Congress delegates, the setting up of local TUUL committees, etc.

Forward to May 1 and July 4 Convention.

Then there is the big movement of the un-

placement of Colored People, Walter White. Their protests only help to venerate the capitalist class justice that increases its persecution of the toiling masses in the present period of growing economic depression with 7,000,000 of jobless demanding "Work or Wages!" They proclaim the integrity of the courts, of capitalism itself, while attacking the individual.

Norman Thomas, who has posed as the teacher of Tammany Hall rule in New York City in its bloody attacks on Communist demonstrations, now wants to instruct President Hoover on the best method for creating a "good" supreme court under capitalism. Thomas claims to have the recipe for purifying and sanctifying capitalism.

Seek to Weaken Real Protest.

This is, of course, the best possible service that can be rendered to the capitalist enemies of the working class. It can serve but one purpose, constituting an attempt to weaken the mass protest of the whole working class

employed, an organic part of the TUUL. This movement, with its campaign of organizing unemployed councils, wide mobilization for May First, great mass convention and demonstration in Chicago, July 4-5, and big program of action for the Fall elections, offers a splendid medium for the Party to establish mass contacts.

Finally, there are, the big drive to develop the Daily Worker into a powerful mass organ, the building of the national convention of the American Negro Labor Congress, the broad campaign of the Friends of the Soviet Union, the defense activities of the International Labor Defense, and last, but by no means the least of the major campaigns, the systematic Party membership recruitment.

This is a maze of mass activities, all going militantly forward at the present time. But they are not a too big job for our Party. With its correct line, its new unity, its added strength and growing enthusiasm, it can accomplish them all and more, and thus lay the basis for the still greater tasks that already loom up in the very near future. The coming convention will give an enormous stimulus to all this mass work.

A Historic Convention.

Our Party comes forward rapidly as the mass leader of the American working class. More and more effectively it challenges the misleadership of the fascist A. F. of L.; more and more it outstrips the social fascist S. P.; wider and wider it develops the circle of worker support behind its elementary slogans for the organization of the unorganized, for social insurance, the seven-hour day and five-day week, against imperialist war and for defense of the Soviet Union, etc. The convention just ahead of us will be historic in the life of our Party. It will be the summoning of all the healthy tendencies now enlivening the Party, the crystalization of our maximum forces for our vast mass work. Its record of solid achievement and healthy growth will be another crushing blow to the defeated renegade Cannon and Lovestone groups. The Seventh Convention will mark a tremendous step forward to the building of our organization into a mass Communist Party, a worthy American section of the Communist International.