

rty's Election Campaign

Setting Up the Election Machinery; Preparing for the Campaign

"This so-called 'two-party system' reigning in America . . . has been one of the most powerful methods of preventing the foundation of an independent labor, that is, a genuine Socialist Party."

Industrial States Hardest.

In a number of industrial states where the party has the best prospects, these legal restrictions are the worst.

For example, in Ohio, our Party must secure a petition for placing it on the ballot signed by about 25,000 citizens, before it can put up its candidates.

In New York, an even larger number of signatures is required.

In California, a minimum of 30,000 signatures must be secured in order to place the party on the ballot.

These endorsements of the party's being on the ballot by citizens are not valid unless they are from all sections of a particular state. A minimum number of signatures is required from each county of the state. It oftens occurs that in a number of rural counties our party organization is either very weak or non-existent. If one ineligible person signs such a petition, then the whole list is challenged and our party is denied the right to appear on the ballot.

Then in such states like Oklahoma and other Southern states, the Secretary of State who is in charge of such work often simply refuses to recognize the Communist Party's right to appear on the ballot and doesn't even consider petitions when presented.

Mobilizing the Party.

MOBILIZATION of the membership for participation in the election campaign began rather early this year. This was occasioned by the following facts:

First of all, we have a splendid opportunity, due to the economic depression and the rising readiness of the masses for struggle against the capitalist offensive to utilize the election campaign for Communist propaganda and mobilization of the working masses for struggle. Then, there is the need to overcome the lingering indifference and even hostility in our ranks towards Party participation in parliamentary campaigns. Third is the great number of barriers put up by American Democracy against Communist participation in election campaigns.

The presidential election takes place on November 6th. Simultaneously, there are elections for the United States Senate and highest state offices in a number of states.

In the February Plenum of the Central Committee of our party it was made clear to the party that the prospects for a National Labor Party or even a United Labor Ticket in 1928 were exceedingly slight. Great emphasis was placed on the need for mobilizing the party resources to get on the ballot. Various political letters were sent to the units to counteract the indifference and hostility still pervading the attitude of certain sections of our party towards Communist participation in election campaigns, as well as to warn against opportunist errors.

As early as February 29, the Political Committee instructed all districts to prepare for putting petitions into the field for Foster and Gitlow. Immediately, special machinery was set up to help the districts overcome the technical obstacles for the Party's getting on the ballot. On March 19, all districts were instructed to put full Workers Party tickets into the field. A National Election Campaign Committee was elected and similar committees were elected on a district scale.

On March 28, the political committee appointed additional field organizers for the election campaign and announced its decision to propose Comrades Foster and Gitlow who were our standard bearers in 1924.

Special organizers were sent into the South and Southwest.

Our mobilization for the election campaign began with the preparations of the party itself, then the mobilization of sympathetic masses and their organizations.

These preparations were ideological and organizational. The party units were given material preparing them for the issues and various phases of the election campaign.

(To Be Continued)

DEDUTSCHKA

By SOL AUERBACH.

A whirl of dust, chickens skid across the road, and the Soviet four-wheel "droshka" rolls undecidedly and stops before the Soviet House at Olschan. A burly peasant sits erect at the driver's seat and holds the two heavily shanked horses at bay. We bid goodby to our village friends and mount. There is a sense of importance in the driver's squared shoulders as he snaps the whip and the horses fly off at a gallop.

Across wide stretches of steppes skinned of their harvest and exposing the black raw meat of the Ukraine. The peasant driver picks his way unerringly over mazes of unplowed earth that serve for roads. A church spire over the brim of a hill promises a village. From the hill top we see the huts, painted white or green, clustered about the golden-domed church, which has lost its luster for lack of polish. The peasant signals S-S-S-S and the horses back on their haunches to flatten the slope. Past a pond, hitting up a cloud of dust thru the one street of the village. Again the peasant talks Br-r-r—and we come to a sudden halt before the Soviet House.

We spend most of the day talking to the peasants, while they are turning their plentiful wheat into grain thru the jaws of their new harvesting machine hitched to a Fordson tractor. They take great pains to explain to us the intricate working of their new machine which they own in common. When the novelty of our visit has worn off and the peasants are again seriously turning out their next year's food supply we return to the Soviet. Our peasant driver is on the seat of his droshka where we have left him. His shoulders are drooped and his back is a bowed accusation. He mutters one word.

"Chleb" (Bread).

We had forgotten to give him food! We ourselves had eaten at the village cooperative and we stop there now on our way out to repair our serious omission. Our driver returns and bounds on to his seat with two large white rolls under his arm and a whiff of "vodka" in his breath. We go off at a gallop.

"Dedutschka, what did you do before the revolution?"

Dedutschka turns catty-cornered to us and allows the horses to find their own way. He shrugs his shoulders and points to the land about us.

"I worked for the landowner here. All this land was his. He had six hundred dessiatyns. I took care of his horses and drove his family about. The landowner lived in a beautiful house. It had large rooms and wooden floors and many large windows. In one room there was gold on the walls and ceiling and large pictures of the czar and czarina. And the floor was as smooth as the pond when it is frozen. And the revolution came and took it away. And I became driver for the Soviet. And now the peasants walk over that beautiful floor with their dirty boots.

"But, Dedutschka, now even you can go into that room."

"Ah, but those were the good old bourgeois times! Near the house there was a large white tombstone. And what did the revolution do? It tore it up—that's what the revolution did. The revolution is at an end. That beautiful large white tombstone!"

A drop of vodka has loosened his tongue and we add fire to it. This old peasant speaks of "bourgeois times" and the "proletarians," and of the revolution and of the counter-revolution. The revolution has seeped thru to the very soil of the Soviet Union and old Dedutschka has had his fill. Thru the hazy mind of this peasant, memories and words filter—words created by the revolution of the masses.

He tells us of the time when Budiken was in the country and how his landowner had promised him, now that he thought that he could regain his power, that he would hang every peasant on the estate. But, Dedutschka added with a sense of mystery and premonition, the landowner himself was killed.

Dedutschka's tongue goes on finding its own words. In his village there lives an officer of the old czarist police. He has two dessiatyns of land and he is left alone to work it the best he can. One day this officer came to the village Soviet and said:

"Wait until my time comes. I will hang you all."

The blood of Dedutschka still boils at the memory of those words. He himself was present when the officer spoke.

"Why should he be allowed to say such a thing? The president of the Soviet allowed him to say that he would hang me. Do you call this taking care of the peasantry? Is this the "link"? I would kill him on the spot!"

Dedutschka is full of complaints against the Soviet. He thinks that we come from the city and he wants us to inform the people there of what is going on in his village. For example, his son is living in a house that is falling all about his ears. When it rains there are puddles on the floor. The windows are broken and the door cannot be locked. The Soviet promised that it would repair the house but all it does is say,

"Wait until we get the money."

"Well, Dedutschka, do you want the landowners to come back and fix it for you?" we ask.

"No, no, no, no. Let the Soviet do it. Let it find the money."

As night begins to fall and the steppes breathe a soft greyness Dedutschka tells us of the myths of his country-side. In the olden times, so long ago that no one can remember, a group of bandits harassed his village. The peasants say that their treasures, innumerable golden roubles and silk curtains and shirts and boots, were buried somewhere near the Black Sea under three oak trees. After the revolution some peasants from his village went on a pilgrimage to the Black Sea and hunted for the treasure. Under three large oak trees they dug up some old axes. They were sent to the museum in the city. There they said that they were thousands of years old.

Prisoners Transferred to Avoid Questions

SOFIA, July 27.—The seven political prisoners in the central prison of Sofia who have been on hunger strike because their sentence was increased by ten days, have been punished by additional sentence of one month. Besides they have been transferred to the military prison of Widin.

Other political prisoners were transfered from Schumen and Varna to Sliwen. The reason for the transfer is to separate them from their friends and relatives, so that they can be mistreated without anyone knowing of it. After that they can be announced as shot "while attempting to escape."