

**William Z.
Foster**

*Candidate for
President*

ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES

AND

**Benjamin
Gitlow**

Candidate for Vice-President

OF THE

Workers (Communist) Party



**NATIONAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE
WORKERS (COMMUNIST) PARTY**

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ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

and

BENJAMIN GITLOW

CANDIDATE FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

of the

WORKERS (Communist) PARTY



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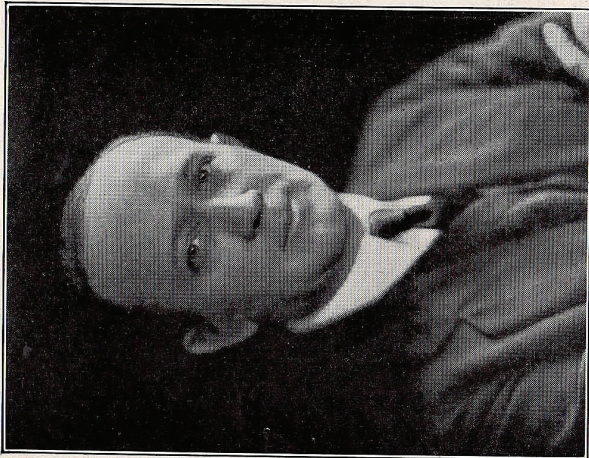
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WILLIAM Z. FOSTER
Candidate for President



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OF THE
WORKERS (COMMUNIST) PARTY

FOREWORD

The Acceptance Speeches were delivered at the National Nominating Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party of America held on May 25-27, 1928, in New York City. 296 regular delegates and 150 fraternal delegates, coming from 39 states and the District of Columbia, attended this important working-class gathering. The convention was a true cross-section of the exploited and oppressed masses of this country. Native-born and foreign-born white workers, representatives of the Negro race, exploited farmers, and working women, veterans of the class struggle, delegates of the youth, and representatives of the colonies and semi-colonies of American imperialism joined in a powerful demonstration against their common enemy—capitalism.

The National Convention nominated Comrade William Z. Foster for President and Comrade Benjamin Gitlow for Vice-President. Our nominees are fighters in the struggle for the liberation of the working class and are not servants of Wall Street as are the nominees of the Republican and Democratic parties. The advocates of capitalism—and foremost among them are the corrupt bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor and the renegade leadership of the Socialist Party—are spokesmen of class collaboration between the working class and the master class.

The National Convention adopted a platform which exposes the whole fraudulence of all the schemes of class collaboration, which serve only one purpose: to perpetuate the rule of capitalism, the wage slavery of the workers, the oppression of the Negro, the exploitation of the working farmers, and the subjugation of the colonial peoples. The keynote of our platform is struggle—relentless, uncompromising, determined class struggle against the capitalist world. The Workers (Communist) Party presents its platform as a rallying base for all the exploited and oppressed, as the organizing and mobilizing instrument for all struggles of the toiling masses.

We call upon all workers, exploited farmers, and Negroes to endorse our platform,—“The Platform of the Class Struggle” and our candidates! Vote for and join the Communist Party!

Report of the Committee on Nominations

By ROBERT MINOR, *Chairman*

COMRADES: Your committee on nominations has reached a unanimous recommendation. The committee is quite conscious of the fact that the nominations of candidates to bear the red flag of working-class revolution, the flag of Communism, in a national campaign, is a very serious one. The purpose of the Communist Party in making nominations is utterly different from the purpose of the Republican Party, the Democratic Party or the so-called Socialist Party in choosing standard-bearers. We are not choosing men or women for the purpose of administering in a smooth manner the machinery of the capitalist state. In choosing the representatives of our Party to go before the masses we are choosing men or women who will mobilize the working class against the capitalist state, against the ruling class, for the overthrow of the present form of society and for the establishment of a revolutionary state—purposes utterly antagonistic to the purposes for which the American democracy, so-called, was formed.

The men and women who go out as our representatives must go out as fighting men to mobilize the workers to support the strike of the miners, to support the strike of the textile workers, to carry on a vigorous drive against the labor bureaucracy and against the bosses, for the saving and for the building of our trade union movement in connection with our election campaign.

These who represent us as candidates must go out as organizers of the working class to struggle for all demands of the workers of today and tomorrow, and at the same time to hold before them the

aim of our revolutionary working-class movement, the ultimate emancipation of our class.

I recall, comrades, an incident of the time when we were about to found our Workers Party, when our Communist Party was illegalized by the capitalist state, suppressed into secret existence. A little group of us as delegates of our Party to the Communist International at the Third Congress in Moscow, went at midnight after a session of the congress to visit and discuss our plans with Comrade Lenin.

One of the comrades who was still somewhat afflicted with some extreme leftist views asked Comrade Lenin whether or not our Party should put into the field at an election campaign any candidates for executive and administrative offices. (The view of that comrade was that we should only put up candidates for legislative positions.)

Comrade Lenin replied to us that in his opinion the action of Eichorn in the revolutionary crisis in Germany, in taking the post of chief of police of the city of Berlin and utilizing that post to pass out arms to the workers of Berlin was the answer to our problem.

We are putting up candidates to mobilize the workers for the class struggle. In reality it is not individuals, but our Party itself, which is the candidate. At the same time we must choose standard bearers who are tried and true leaders of our class, men and women who symbolize the revolutionary traditions, who are tested and proven leaders of our revolutionary Communist Party, the Party without whose leadership success is impossible for the working class. Those candidates go into the field as marshals, but at the same time under the discipline of the Party and subject to the iron command to carry out the will and the program of our Party.

We of the committee, without any dissenting vote or dissenting thought, without the proposal of any other names, have been able to reach a conclusion, in favor of a candidate for president of the United States and another for vice-president.

We recommend for the presidential candidate a man whose name is associated first of all in the minds of the workers with that great struggle of the working class, the steel strike of some years ago. In this man we recommend, are embodied the best traditions of the old days of the Socialist Party when we all—the older ones among us here—were in it; embodies the best traditions of the Industrial Workers of the World when that too was a revolutionary organization. He embodies that great portion which used to be, more than it is now, inside of the American Federation of Labor, but which the bureaucrats are trying to crush out of it,—the revolutionary workers within the American Federation of Labor; the candidate we propose is a pioneer of the Communist movement who was himself in the old underground movement of our Communist Party in the days when we were illegalized; a man whom the capitalist class tried to imprison in Michigan, a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International; a man whose name strikes terror and fear and hatred into the hearts of the capitalist class.

For vice-president we have to recommend a veteran of the trade-union struggle in the largest city of the most brutal capitalism of the world. We have to recommend a fighter who fought for revolutionary principles in the Socialist Party, in the days when John Reed and Charles E. Ruthenberg and he led the revolutionary fight within that party; a man who represents our traditions; a man who was a founder of the left wing in the Socialist Party, a founder of the Communist Party, a founder of the American section of the Communist International, who has spent long years of prison and suffering in behalf of our class emancipation.

Your committee nominates for president and vice-president of the United States, William Z. Foster and Benjamin Gitlow.

(Tremendous Applause.)

Acceptance Speech of William Z. Foster

Candidate for President

COMRADES: It is a very great honor offered me, when the Workers (Communist) Party asks me to be one of its standard-bearers in the national presidential elections. In accepting the nomination for president, I do it with full appreciation of this honor. By the fact that it is deemed I can be of service to the Party in such a role, I feel that I am a thousand times repaid for such efforts as I may have put forth in the course of my experience in the struggles of the workers. All I can say is that it will be my best ambition in the coming campaign, and in the years of work before me in the class struggle, to be worthy of this great honor conferred upon me by our Party.

A Wonderful Convention.

Comrades, as we live through this wonderful convention, we must realize the great progress our Party has made. What wonderful enthusiasm, what a splendid fighting spirit! Here we have a fine delegation of militants in the class struggle, from almost all the states, from all the important industries. This shows the grip our Party is getting amongst the very best elements in the American proletariat. This convention marks a new stage in the growth of our Party.

In the recent elections in Germany, in France, and in Poland, the Communist Parties showed greatly increased strength, and I am certain that our Party in the coming elections will also register an important increase in strength over the showing we made in the national elections of 1924. (Applause.)

Party Plays Leading Role

Since 1924 our Party has had much mass experience. We have played a leading role in all the important struggles of the Ameri-

can working class, in the mining, shoe, needle, textile, and other industries. Every effort of the workers in the direction of a labor party has found us in the forefront. We have led the fight against imperialism. During these struggles, we have created around our Party a large body of sympathizers, and in the coming election period one of our principal tasks must be to mobilize these workers politically in favor of our platform, and behind our candidates. It is not enough that these workers follow us in strikes, and general wage movements. We must also teach them to actively accept the leadership of the Workers (Communist) Party in its broad political struggles. We must draw these workers into this general political campaign, and induce them to vote for our candidates. We must draw them into membership in the Workers (Communist) Party. These are among the basic tasks confronting us in the present election campaign.

Our Revolutionary Purpose.

We are not going into the national election campaign solely for the purpose of getting votes. It is of course important that we register the extent of our Party's support in the working class by mobilizing the maximum number to vote for our candidates. It is also important, should the possibility present itself in any of the state or local elections, to elect Communist candidates, so that they can utilize the legislative bodies as a forum wherefrom to acquaint the workers with the iniquities of capitalism and the necessity of the Communist program. But we also have other, bigger objectives in the national election campaign. Our aim must be to arouse the class-consciousness of the masses in a political sense and to mobilize them for struggle on all fronts. Vote-getting is only one aspect of this general mobilization of the workers.

Our Party, different from the Socialist Party, creates no illusions amongst the workers that they can vote their way to emancipation, that they can capture the ready-made machinery of the state and utilize it for the emancipation of the working class. On the contrary, we must utilize this campaign to carry on a widespread and

energetic propaganda to teach the workers that the capitalist class would never allow the working class peacefully to take control of the state. That is their strong right arm and they will fight violently to the end to retain it. The working class must shatter the capitalist state. It must build a new state, a new government, a workers' and farmers' government, the Soviet Government of the United States. (Applause.)

No Communist, no matter how many votes he should secure in a national election, could, even if he would, become president of the present government. When a Communist heads a government in the United States—and that day will come just as surely as the sun rises (Applause)—that government will not be a capitalistic government but a Soviet government, and behind this government will stand the Red Army to enforce the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. (Applause.)

As to Immediate Demands

Our convention has just adopted an election platform. This platform outlines a whole series of immediate measures, advocated by us to relieve unemployment, low wages, long hours, discrimination against the foreign-born, women, youth, Negroes, etc. I shall not, in the brief time at my disposal, review these demands. What I wish to say about them now is that we must lay great stress on these demands during the campaign. It is not enough that we simply put forward our revolutionary slogans. We must also organize and lead the workers in their everyday struggles against the most acute evils under capitalism. Our platform demands point the way to do this.

But on the other hand, we must not put forth our immediate demands in the sense that they of themselves make for the emancipation of the working class. In all our agitation around these demands we must emphasize the absolute necessity for the proletarian revolution. Our strategy is to utilize these immediate demands to educate and organize the masses in preparation for the final revolutionary struggle, which will abolish capitalism

altogether. Reliance upon immediate demands would lead us merely to reformism. Our Party is a revolutionary Party. It aims not simply to ease conditions a bit under capitalism for the workers but to abolish capitalism altogether. (Applause.)

Permanent improvement in the conditions of the workers under capitalism is impossible. The inevitable crises, born of the contradictions in the capitalist system of production and distribution, deepening and sharpening as world capitalism goes into its period of decline, and marked by chronic unemployment and organized attacks on the workers' living standards by the employers and the state, sweep away like chaff such reforms as may have been secured by the workers during the periods of capitalism's upward swing. The only way the workers can permanently better their conditions is by wiping out capitalism altogether and by laying the basis of a socialist system in which the capitalist principle of the exploitation of the great masses of producers for the benefit of a relatively few owners of the industries shall be unknown and where the workers will receive the full social value of what they produce. All this, and the whys and wherefores of it we must tell the workers in our election campaign.

Reformism Futile

The working class of the world has had a vast experience with reformism and it all goes to show the utter futility of such reformism. All the conquests, all the little improvements in wages, hours, and working conditions that were secured by the reformist policies and organizations in Germany, England, France, etc., during the upward period of development of capitalism in these countries, in the pre-war days, were swept away with one great sweep in the breakdown and decline of European capitalism in the post-war period. About all that is left now of that period is a reactionary leadership, which after betraying the workers in the world war and defeating their revolutionary efforts just following the war, remains fastened upon the organizations of the workers and which now stands as one of the principal obstacles in the way of the emancipation of the working class. Although we advocate

actively our immediate demands, we must always do it in this sense: that the workers should fight and struggle for these demands in the present period but that they must educate and organize themselves to put into effect eventually the full Communist program—the abolishment of the capitalist system itself and the establishment of a Workers' and Farmers' Government.

On the other hand—if limiting ourselves simply to a program of immediate demands would lose us in the swamp of reformism, failure to put forward such demands would condemn us to sectarianism. It would cut us off from the masses. It would make it impossible for us to participate in the actual everyday struggles of the workers and thus to educate, organize and lead them. The Workers (Communist) Party is a Leninist, Marxist Party. It knows how to participate in the daily struggles of the workers, even for the smallest demands, and it knows how to utilize all these struggles to develop class-consciousness, organization and revolutionary leadership among the masses and thus to begin their mobilization for the eventual overthrow of capitalism.

Our Many Tasks

The Workers (Communist) Party does not go into this campaign simply for the purpose of getting votes or merely to propagate our general Communist program. We enter the election campaign to further all our Party tasks, mobilizing the workers for struggle on every front. And in this period of militant American imperialism, of crisis in the labor movement, of widespread depression in industry, we have many and great tasks. History does not ask us whether we are a big party or a little party when it thrusts these tasks upon us. Small though our Party may be at the present time it must go forward bravely and energetically to the accomplishment of these tasks, however great they may be. I shall touch briefly upon some of the more important of these problems.

The War Danger

One of our principal tasks in the coming election campaign is to arouse the workers to the danger of a new world war. Never

was such a war more imminent. This danger manifests itself from various directions. The developing attack of the great imperialist powers upon the Soviet Union; the growing rivalries between the various imperialist powers for markets and world domination, especially between the United States and Great Britain; the attacks on the colonial and semi-colonial countries, as for instance, on China and Nicaragua at the present time (from the audience: "and Haiti"), yes, and Haiti too, and many other countries—all these tendencies, all these developments are pregnant with the danger of a fresh world war. A world war may start from any of these, and when it does come, the previous war will seem in comparison a pink tea affair.

Today we confront unprecedented preparations for war, armaments without parallel. Did you read in the papers, just a day or two ago, about the gas explosion in Hamburg, when a supply of gas was accidentally released, poisonous enough to have wiped out the entire people of Hamburg? Only a fortunate combination of circumstances prevented the gas from going, with frightful effects, into the most densely populated sections of the city. The militarist program that the world imperialists are developing provides for gases, armaments, instruments of war, more deadly and upon a more gigantic scale than ever before in the history of the world. And the whole thing is developing towards a climax in the sharpening antagonisms that I have just briefly indicated.

Imperialist Armaments

All this great massing of armaments, these gigantic preparations for war, are being carried out under a marvelous camouflage of peace. Since the Versailles Treaty was signed we have been treated to an almost constant series of "peace" conferences, "disarmament" conferences, "anti-war" conferences, a whole stream of them. Yet at the end of all these years the armaments are greater than ever before in history and the war danger grows more and more imminent. The latest pseudo-peace maneuver for covering up the preparations for war by the imperialists originates

nowhere else than in the United States. What I refer to is the so-called Kellogg proposal to outlaw war.

It is just a few months ago since the Soviet Union came forward with a proposition to abolish armaments all over the world. This created a great sensation. Among the masses of workers of the world the feeling grew that only the Soviet Union was serious in its proposals for world peace. With their militaristic program thus exposed in its nakedness, the capitalists had to do something to counteract the Soviet Union's proposition. The first attempted answer to the Soviet Union was that made by the British delegation at the conference where the disarmament proposal was made. And what did the British delegation say in substance? It was an answer of old-time diplomacy, an answer of the naked iron fist. That Great Britain does not agree with the Soviet Union's proposals for world peace; that she declares world peace to be a chimera, that the proposals for disarmament are impossible, and that she intends to maintain her armies and navies.

Race for Armaments

This was the answer of Great Britain. But the United States, the leading imperialist country in the world, has a much more skillful answer to the Soviet Union than that. What does America say? She says through the mouth of Kellogg, "Let us outlaw war; let us come together and agree that there shall be no more war." And the leading capitalist countries of the world are accepting this hypocritical proposal of America. What does it all mean? It means simply that under the slogan of "outlawing war," the world imperialists will continue their race for building up their armaments and preparations for world war. This deceitful, hypocritical slogan is thrown out to blind the eyes of the masses, to make them think that the capitalists are really trying to stop war. The United States, highly expert in fooling the masses, has put out some clever slogans for covering up its war aims. The Kellogg proposal to "outlaw war," which is being endorsed by reformists all over the world, including the socialist parties, is perhaps the most skillful scheme ever set afloat since the days of Wilson's

famous slogan: that the Allies were fighting the world war "to make the world safe for democracy."

To expose the real meaning of Kellogg's proposition, to fight against the vast war plans of the United States, to arouse the American working class against the militaristic program of American imperialism, to mobilize the workers against the war in Nicaragua, against the whole program of imperialist aggression in Latin America, in China, and the militarization of the workers in this country—these are basic tasks of our Workers (Communist) Party, and they must stand in the very forefront of our election campaign.

Defend the Soviet Union

Especially in this connection must we undertake to mobilize the masses of workers in defense of the Soviet Union. Today the Soviet Union advances with giant strides. It is making tremendous progress in building its industries, in establishing a socialist commonwealth in the face of the most tremendous difficulties. The very existence of the Soviet Union is a menace to the capitalist order the world over. It is an inspiration to the workers of the world, a living proof of the feasibility of the proletarian revolution. The capitalists of every country are determined to destroy the Soviet Union at all costs. They want to wreck its working-class government and seize its great natural resources. And now, under the leadership of Great Britain and with the most active participation by the United States, slowly, systematically they proceed with their mobilization of forces. They are awaiting the opportune time to strike at the Soviet Union with all their massed power.

Fundamental to the success of their attack on the Soviet Union will be to keep the world's workers demoralized and inactive while the counter-revolutionary struggles are being carried on. The capitalists depend on the social-democratic parties of the world, who identify the workers' interests with those of their respective capitalist classes, to help them cut the Soviet Union to pieces. In the revolutionary upheavals in the years following the

world war, it was the socialist parties that beat back the rising tide of proletarian revolt and preserved the capitalist system in Europe. The capitalists believe that the socialists will once more be able to deliver a master betrayal of the revolution, that they can hold back the working masses while the capitalists deliver their carefully prepared attack against the Soviet Union.

War on Capitalism

But this time the imperialists are reckoning without their host. No longer have the social-democratic parties their former undisputed leadership of the working class. In the last few years, in all the important countries, revolutionary Communist parties have been built up. They have sunk their roots deep among the masses. Under the leadership of the Communist International they are mobilizing their forces. The power of this great movement constantly grows. When the international capitalist class, when the imperialists of the world, assisted by their social-democratic lackeys, deem the time opportune and strike at the Soviet Union the blow they are now preparing, they will wake up to a crushing defeat. When that war begins, the Communist International and the millions of workers throughout Europe and other countries that follow its lead will not simply adopt a defensive policy, they will not merely seek to stop their governments from attacking the Soviet Union. On the contrary, they will put into effect the great Leninist strategy. They will turn the imperialist war against the Soviet Union into a civil war of the workers against capitalism. They will destroy the capitalist order and begin the building of the proletarian society. (Applause.)

Economic Depression—Employers' Offensive

Comrades, the United States is now in the midst of an industrial depression. American imperialism, embarrassed with the enormous masses of commodities produced by millions of super-speeded workers, is not able to dispose of these products. The workers, paid only a fraction of what they produce, cannot buy them back. The employers cannot sell them abroad. Many indus-

tries have been closed down. At least four million workers are unemployed at the present time. American capitalism, with all its power, and with all the boasts of its defenders that it has found the formula of continuous prosperity, shows that it, too, is possessed of the weaknesses, and contradictions of capitalism in other countries. It also is subject to crisis. Many signs indicate that we are on the eve of a serious industrial depression.

The employers, quick to take advantage of the situation, are making a great drive against the living and working standards and organizations of the workers. They aim at developing a working class, docile, speeded-up, and a tool in their schemes of world imperialism. Wage cuts have been widespread in the industries, especially among the armies of unorganized, unskilled workers. For the moment the organized skilled workers have mostly escaped the wage cuts, but their turn will come later. The employers forge ahead with their open-shop drive. Wherever the workers resist they are confronted with an unprecedented use of the government against them, injunctions, troops, gunmen, etc.

Labor in Fighting Mood

The workers are becoming increasingly in a fighting mood; especially is this true of the great masses of semi-skilled and unskilled workers in the basic industries who have suffered most from wage cuts, speed-up and unemployment.

The strike of New Bedford amongst the textile workers, the Haverhill shoe strike of a few months ago, the Oshawa strike among the automobile workers, indicate their growing militancy.

General Motors Strike

Perhaps most of you have not heard of the Oshawa strike of some four thousand workers of the General Motors Corporation in Canada. This strike, although a small one, was very significant and an indicator of conditions prevailing widespread in American industry at the present time. The automobile workers for years were among the best paid workers in the United States. But recently their wages have been repeatedly cut, they have been

speeded up enormously; unemployment has borne down upon them; in short, their former relatively favorable conditions have been taken from them to such an extent that a growing spirit of resistance is spreading among them, in Canada as well as in the United States. The strike of the Oshawa workers is a signal of the growing discontent among the great masses of automobile workers. The automobile industry has been held up, not only in this country but all over the world, as a most decisive achievement of American capitalism; as the industry in which American capitalism, with a formula of mass production and high wages, had laid the basis for a contented working class. Yet we see that under the weight of wage cuts, speed-up, unemployment and generally worsened conditions the privileged automobile workers are being forced down to such a position that sentiment for organization and struggle is rapidly developing among them.

And what is true of the automobile workers is becoming the case in the various other basic industries. There the workers have been confronting wage cuts and similar conditions. A fighting mood develops among them. Undoubtedly they will wage many important struggles in the near future.

The Crisis in the Labor Movement

In this situation the reactionary trade-union leaders have proved themselves absolutely incapable of organizing and leading the masses. They refuse to fight the bosses. Their aim is to become the industrial drivers of the bosses, to speed up the workers. Their aim is to company-unionize the trade unions of the United States, and to become the personnel managers of the employers. Under the leadership of this reactionary bureaucracy the trade-union movement of the United States, built by seventy years of bitter struggles by the workers, is being gradually destroyed.

Now it is not too much to say that under the combined efforts of the employers' offensive and the leaders' treachery, the American trade-union movement is in a death crisis. It is in danger of being either wiped out completely or so deeply degenerated in the direction of company unionism as to be of no value to the

workers. Loss of members, loss of militancy, loss of control in strategic industries, restriction of the unions to skilled workers—this is the experience of the American trade-union movement. With its antiquated structure, craft policies and reactionary leaders, the trade-union movement is unable to stand in the face of the great open-shop attack by trustified capital. The craft-union movement, hopelessly antiquated, is slated for destruction.

Reactionary Labor Leaders

As the trade-union movement goes more deeply into the crisis we find that the trade-union leaders turn more and more to the right. The latest example of this policy, fatal to the development of organization amongst the workers, fatal to a successful defense of the workers' standards of living, was the surrender of the Street Carmen's Union to the Mitten Plan of Philadelphia. Here was a direct amalgamation of trade unionism and company unionism. Such is the program of the American Federation of Labor and the conservative independent unions. It is the ideal of the misleaders of labor. This is their fondest desire—to bring about an agreement with the capitalists so that the trade-union leaders can turn the trade unions into company unions and use them as instruments for the exploitation of the workers. Then, although the interests of the workers would be sacrificed, the group interests of the labor bureaucracy would be conserved.

In the Coal Industry

Another example of policy which I may briefly cite to indicate the general tendency of the labor leaders to the right, is what is taking place in the coal industry. John L. Lewis had several points in his program. One was that instead of a militant campaign to organize the unorganized miners in West Virginia, he demanded the removal of the railroad rate discrimination in favor of the West Virginia mines against the mines in the Pittsburgh district. This, he declared, would win the strike and solve the union's problems. But now this rate discrimination has been abolished and who have been the gainers? The Pittsburgh Coal Company

and the other big coal companies in the Pittsburgh district who are fighting the miners. That first point of Lewis' was capitalist in character.

Lewis has a second point in his program, equally capitalistic. This is that the industry shall be monopolized, the "uneconomic" mines closed down and 250,000 surplus miners driven out of the industry. Now we seem to be on the way also to have this point accomplished. The recent announcement by the Rockefeller interests that they will close down many of their "uneconomic" mines and turn loose into the surfeited labor market the surplus miners from the shut-down mines, is the beginning of the acceptance of the second proposal of John L. Lewis. In fact, Rockefeller publicly thanks Lewis for his assistance to the capitalists in monopolizing the industry.

Who will profit by such a procedure? Will the miners gain by it or the coal operators? It does not require much analysis to show which. What will happen in the Rockefeller properties and in the other districts where similar plans may be put into effect? The operation of the "uneconomic" mines, so-called, constitutes a sort of division of work amongst the great body of miners. What work there is, is spread over most of the workers. But now the proposal to throw large numbers of these miners into unemployment altogether and to give the others relatively steady work. The displaced miners will be thrust into the great army of the unemployed, there to starve. They have that alternative. Or, they may try to stay in the industry and compete with the workers who have jobs and in this way serve as an industrial reserve army to break down the conditions of the miners as a whole.

Lewis Is Bosses' Man

Lewis, instead of organizing the unorganized miners and making a fight to establish the 6-hour day, 5-day week, and thus to reabsorb the unemployed miners and to protect their interests during the impending reorganization and trustification of the coal industry, acts as an efficiency expert of the operators by co-

operating with them to close down the "uneconomic" mines at the expense of the miners. His policy sacrifices the interests of the workers and protects those of the capitalists. The whole thing is an open-shop proposal. It means more economy in production, elimination of competitors, and hence more profits for the employers. It means starvation for hundreds of thousands of miners, the breakdown of wage and working standards, and the ruin of the United Mine Workers of America. It is such policies as this, with the union leaders acting as the agents of the bosses, that are liquidating the unions.

The socialist trade-union leaders are proving themselves as reactionary as the old A. F. of L. leadership. In fact they are often taking the lead in the movement to the right, of surrender to the employers. The standards of production of Sidney Hillman were among the first signs of real company unionism in the American labor movement. It was the socialist trade-union leaders in the needle trades who intensified the struggle against the left wing in the unions to the extent of splitting the organizations. In the needle trades they are the champions of piece work, of a "union management cooperative" and the whole employer program of devalitizing and company-unionizing the trade unions. The socialists are every bit as incapable of leading the workers in this crisis as the most reactionary fakers of the American labor movement.

The Struggle of the Coal Miners

The debacle now taking place in the United Mine Workers of America is a basic expression of the crisis in the labor movement, a conclusive example of the absolute incapacity of the present leadership of the trade unions to organize and lead the masses. The U. M. W. A., which just a few years ago controlled 80 per cent of production in the bituminous fields, has been reduced by the loss of district after district, to where it now controls not more than 20 per cent of the bituminous production. In the present strike the employers are destroying three of the key sections of the U. M. W. A. and thereby destroying the base of the whole union.

All the heroic struggles of these miners have not been able to avail them against the treachery of their leaders in the face of this great attack by the employers. The present miners' strike is the most important strike in the history of America. Bound up with this strike is the very life of the old trade-union movement. The breakdown of the miners' union in this struggle throws the whole trade-union movement of the country into jeopardy.

It is not my point here today to dwell upon the heroic struggle of these miners, as it has been very much discussed during this convention. The rank and file miners seem to realize the tremendous significance of the strike. They have fought for 14 months against the coal operators, against the government, with a heroism unparalleled. One of the things, comrades, that we must do with all our vigor when we return to our various districts, is to mobilize all our forces to gather every possible dollar of relief for the brave coal miners of the strike districts. This relief money we must not send to the American Federation of Labor or to the U. M. W. A. where it would be used for the shameful purpose of paying the huge salaries of John L. Lewis and his labor grafter friends (which run to \$12,000 a year) while the striking miners starve. Send it to the National Miners' Relief Committee in Pittsburgh which will use the money for actually feeding the impoverished miners who are out on strike. (Applause.)

The hope and promise of the coal industry is the growing revolt of the rank and file miners. More and more they are learning the futility of Lewis' policies, and realizing that such policies can only lead to the loss of their union conditions and the liquidation of all union organization. The Save-the-Union movement, with its historic slogans of "Lewis Must Go" and "Workers, Take Control of Your Union," is the greatest upheaval ever known in the American labor movement. From among the ruins of the U. M. W. A., wrecked by the treachery of the Lewis regime, the rank and file miners are building a new organization, one which, animated by a spirit of class struggle, will organize the great mass of miners and lead them victoriously against the operators. Our

Party may well be proud of the role played by it in the present great struggle of the miners. (Applause.)

The present great task of our Party is to organize the millions of unorganized workers and lead them in struggle against the employers and the state. With ever-larger numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled workers developing more militant moods, under the pressure of wage cuts, speed-up, etc., the possibilities for mass organization and mass struggles become brighter. In the strikes of the workers in the coal, textile, needle, shoe and other industries during the recent period, our Party has played a central role. No big strikes take place now in the United States without the Communists taking a decisive part. But in the still bigger struggles not far ahead, our Party will have to play an even more decisive role.

The organization of the unorganized, the unification of the great masses of unorganized exploited workers, is our basic task in the industrial work and we must further that task with all our forces. Some may ask why it is that during a political campaign we talk about organizing the unorganized. This is because our Party is not merely a party of vote-getters. It is a revolutionary party of struggle. It organizes the workers for the fight on every front. It is especially in the election campaign when we have the ear of many thousands of workers that we must drive home to them the fundamental necessity of building great mass organizations in the industries.

More than ever it becomes necessary for us to take the lead in the formation of new unions in the industries. The old unions have been wiped out of many industries and have become hopelessly decrepit in many more. The reactionary leaders will not organize the unorganized. This is the task of the left wing. We must not limit ourselves to the old unions. We must be the champions, the leaders in the formation of new unions among the unorganized industries. Here we must place the great emphasis of our efforts to organize the unorganized.

But does this mean that we shall desert the old trade unions?

By no means. The Communists will never surrender the control of 3,000,000 organized workers to the reactionary leadership of the A. F. of L. (Applause.) We will fight to save, to build up, and to revolutionize all those trade unions which possess a mass character and real vitality. We will give active support to the T. U. E. L. and to all kinds of left opposition movements in these organizations aiming to revolutionize them.

The present situation teaches us this: the old trade unionism is going. American imperialism with its monopolized, highly mechanized industry, mass production, speed-up system, company unionism, open-shop drive and ruthless use of state power, is too much for traditional craft unionism. The old unionism is being crushed and liquidated. A new and more revolutionary unionism is being born. It will be industrial in form and founded principally on the semi-skilled and unskilled in the trustified industries. It is a basic task of our Party to lead in the foundation of this new unionism.

Oppression of Negroes

Comrades, one of the planks in our Party platform deals with the question of the oppression of the Negro race. This plank I want to emphasize here. The Workers (Communist) Party appears in the United States as the sole champion, organizer, and defender of the Negro race. Our fight is for full social, political, and industrial rights for Negroes. In all our work we must keep this phase of our Party program squarely before our eyes. In the past we have been all too inactive in this respect. But we must make this campaign the beginning of fresh efforts to unite the Negroes in behalf of their race and class interests, so that the world can recognize that the Workers (Communist) Party is really the defender and leader of the oppressed Negroes in this country. (Applause.)

At this time I shall not deal with the whole Negro question. There is only one angle that I want to touch upon now. Our election campaign will take us into the southern states. (Applause.) We have a plank in our platform on the Negro question

that will arouse the most violent opposition in every element in the South that is determined to hold the Negro race in subjection. Nevertheless, we will go into the ultra-reactionary South and we will speak for the Negro. We will defend our platform. (Applause.) In the land of lynch law we will denounce lynching. (Applause.) In the home of Jim Crow, we will attack segregationism. (Applause.) The entry of the Workers (Communist) Party into the South, and the bold raising of the issue of the emancipation of the Negroes during the coming election campaign, will stand out as one of the historical events in the development of the class struggle in the United States. (Applause.)

The Political Parties

Comrades, let me give you just a brief characterization of the various political parties. The workers have nothing to look for from the Republican and Democratic Parties except a continuation and intensification of the hardships under which the workers suffer. Both are controlled by big capital. A list of the campaign fund donors to either party reads like a roster of trustified industry. Both represent the interests of big business. Their whole record is one of oppression of the workers for the benefit of the employers. In its policies the Democratic Party is as much the party of big capital, of big bankers and manufacturers, as the Republican Party itself. Smith is just as loyal a servant of capitalism as Hoover.

Between the two old parties there are no real issues. The issues that once divided them, the tariff, states' rights, etc., money question, etc., no longer play this role. Such differences as exist over farm relief, prohibition, religion, etc., are not differences between the old parties but of groups within each of them. The capitalists have made themselves masters of both big parties, with their miscellaneous following, and use them to further their own class interests.

The reactionary trade-union officials who call upon the masses of workers to vote for the candidates of these two old parties are

misleaders of labor. They betray the workers into the hands of their class enemies. They are the political lickspittles of the Republican and Democratic politicians, the agents of the exploiters of labor.

What is true for the workers regarding the two old parties is equally true for the poor farmers. All that the farmers can expect from the Republican and Democratic Parties is support of the railroads, banks, meat packers, elevator combines and various other capitalistic interests robbing the farmers. Coolidge's recent cold-blooded, sneering, sarcastic veto of the McNary-Haugen bill shows the contempt with which the Republican Party, controlled by the great financiers of the country, looks upon the demands of the farmers for relief in their present crisis.

The Socialist Party is equally a blank so far as the workers and poor farmers are concerned. The Socialist Party, which carried the revolutionary traditions in the United States when the left wing was a section of that party, now has nothing to offer to the toiling masses but sellouts. It is an ally of the corrupt trade-union bureaucracy. Its policy of betrayal expresses itself on both the political and industrial fields.

On the industrial field the Socialist Party makes no campaign for the organization of the unorganized masses, no struggle for amalgamation of the old trade unions, no fight against the widespread wage cuts and speed-up; on the contrary it accepts the craft-union, class collaboration policy of Green, Woll, etc., to company-unionize the trade unions. The socialist trade-union leaders, who are the mainstay of the Socialist Party, are part and parcel of the corrupt dominant union leadership. They make no fight against Green and Woll but war to the death against the left wing, against every Communist in the labor organizations, against every element trying to build the labor movement and make it a fighting weapon in the interest of the workers. The Socialist Party is hopelessly wedded to the trade-union bureaucracy and its corrupt practices.

On the political field the Socialist Party likewise makes no

attack on capitalism. The Socialist Party cultivates amongst the workers every illusion and practice tending to strengthen capitalism. It preaches pacifism, class collaboration, parliamentary opportunism, capitalist efficiency socialism. It makes no effective fight for the workers' interests now, it does nothing to educate and organize them for the eventual revolution. Its impossible programs of trying to reform capitalism amount in reality to a surrender to the present social system. Norman Thomas, the nominee of the Socialist Party for president, is in fact only a camouflaged defender of capitalism, a disguised supporter of the present system of exploiting the workers. The Socialist Party program tends to break up all real militancy amongst the workers. In a more revolutionary period it would express itself by the most flagrant betrayal of the revolution. This is amply proved by experiences in Germany, France, in every country in Europe. Had it not been for the flagrant sellout of the workers' cause by the social-democratic party, capitalism would have been destroyed in Europe in the great revolutionary struggles immediately following the world war.

The Proletarian Party and the Socialist Labor Party are but phrasemongering sects. They play no part in the struggles of the working class.

Only the Workers (Communist) Party offers a program capable of organizing the workers for their everyday struggles and to prepare them for the revolution. I have already given you some broad outlines of this program. I shall not repeat what I have already said. But I must emphasize one more phase of our program. We must advocate energetically and clearly in the present campaign the formation of a Labor Party based on trade unions and other labor organizations. So long as the great masses of workers affiliate themselves to follow the line of the two capitalist parties, so long will they be poisoned by capitalist propaganda and so long will they be a zero politically.

The Workers (Communist) Party is the real fighter for the Labor Party. The Socialist Party, the ally of Green, Woll & Co.,

sabotages on all fronts the fight for the Labor Party. The Workers (Communist) Party makes a militant struggle to establish the Labor Party. But our Party has no illusions that the Labor Party will lead the masses to their emancipation. It will not. That is the task of the Communist Party. Inevitably a mass Labor Party in the United States will be filled with reformist illusions. But in the present period, when we have to break the masses from the old parties, it is a step forward. On this basis the Workers (Communist) Party supports the Labor Party.

Build the Party

Now, comrades, let me emphasize a matter of basic importance for us in the present campaign. That is the building of the Workers (Communist) Party. Tremendous tasks confront our Party. I have already cited some of the most important of these. Our Party is small. Our Party is weak. But it must be made large and strong. Our Party must be built up vastly in order to carry on the great struggles confronting it. This party-building can be done if we but proceed energetically along the proper lines. Around our Party are thousands, tens of thousands, yes, I can say a couple of hundreds of thousands of workers who sympathize in a general way with our struggle. From this great mass of workers, just awakening to the class struggle, we must draw new elements in large amounts to fill up and build our Party. In this way it can be made strong to carry out the great tasks confronting it.

The presidential election campaign must be utilized definitely for the building of our Party, and its press. The campaign will be a failure if we do not succeed in doubling the membership of the Workers (Communist) Party. (Applause.) And all that I have said about the necessity of building the Workers (Communist) Party applies with equal force to the building of the Young Workers League. (Applause.) In every struggle in which our Party participates we find that the youth, the young workers, are playing an increasingly important role. In the industries they form a bridge between the native-born workers and

foreign workers. In the new unionism that is now beginning slowly to emerge the leaders will not be the old fossils and reactionary figures of the old trade unions, but new elements recruited from the youth of the country. We must build the Young Workers League. (Applause.)

Comrades, just a word in conclusion. Let us go into the election campaign in the sense that I have expressed our tasks. Let us not be discouraged by the magnitude of the problems confronting us, by the strength and arrogance of the enemy, by the weakness of our own forces. Today our Party is small and the parties of the capitalists are large and strong, but the day will surely come when the Communist Party will be the only political party in the United States. (Applause.) On that day it will be the Party of the victorious proletarian revolution. (Applause.)

In this period the American working class is relatively apathetic. But forces are at work, forces bred of the failures and contradictions of the capitalist system itself, forces that drive the workers into deeper oppression, that will one day, sooner perhaps than we realize, awaken them, radicalize them, revolutionize them and prepare them for a real attack against capitalism. Let us then build our Party in the daily struggles and in preparation for the revolution. Let us make our Party into a worthy brother of the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, Germany, France, England, Czecho-Slovakia, China, and other countries, which under the leadership of the Communist International, are gradually mobilizing the working masses of the world for the overthrow of world imperialism and the establishment of the International Socialist Republic. (Applause.)

Acceptance Speech of Benjamin Gitlow

Candidate for Vice-President

COMRADES: It is a great honor to be one of the standard-bearers of the only party of the exploited masses in the United States.

This convention throws out a challenge to the whole bloody capitalist ruling class of the United States.

The campaign which we are now entering is part of the war the exploited masses are waging against those who exploit them.

President Coolidge a couple of days ago declared that he was gratified at the action of the United States Congress when it passed the tax bill giving a fat present to the capitalists of the United States in the form of tax reductions amounting to over \$200,000,000. The particular reason for Coolidge's gratification was the fact that Congress eliminated from the tax bill the provision for publicity on income-tax returns. The bankers, the industrialists, the large stockholders in the United States do not want the workers and poor farmers of this country to know how much they steal and extract from the sweat and toil of the workers and farmers of the country. The Workers (Communist) Party on entering this campaign declares to the strikebreaker Coolidge, to the Ohio Gang that put Harding in power and made Teapot Dome famous, declares to the powers of Wall Street, declares to the pirates of Tammany Hall, and the plunderbund of the G. O. P. that in spite of the fact that the Republicans and Democrats combined in the last Congress to keep out of the press the record of capitalist robbery in the United States, the Communists will do everything to write down, in burning letters that will be understood, the whole bloody, crooked, contemptible and hypocritical record of the capitalist ruling class of the United States.

Record of Brutal Oppression

The record of the capitalist ruling class in the United States is indeed a record of brutality against the working class. We have present at this convention the wife of one of the workers who was murdered together with others because he championed the cause of the oppressed and the working class. We received only a few days ago the news that a loyal fighter of the working class died in Moscow. William D. Haywood was a memorable figure in the class war. For organizing the workers and fighting to improve their conditions he was persecuted, imprisoned and driven out of the country. Charles E. Ruthenberg, one of the founders of our Party and a determined fighter against imperialism and imperialist war, was thrown and kept in prison for many long years by the capitalist ruling class.

We can recall at this time the many memorable struggles that took place in the United States, struggles in which workers were shot down like dogs, struggles in which workers were hounded into bull pens, struggles in which workers were torn from their families and deported. These events cover pages in the history of the American class struggle. At this time when we enter the presidential campaign we must not forget that there are now behind prison bars in capitalist dungeons in America valiant fighters of the working class. Mooney and Billings are still in prison.

Remember Sacco and Vanzetti

We must not forget that in spite of the opposition of the workers of all countries, American capitalism sent Sacco and Vanzetti, two innocent workers, to the electric chair. We must not forget that while we are living in a country of tremendous wealth, in a country which boasts it is the richest in the world, that though billions in wealth are piled up there are millions of men and women who are walking the streets looking for an opportunity to work, looking for a chance to eat, for a chance to live. We must not forget that in this country which boasts of liberty, which boasts of democracy, workers are not allowed to organize,

workers are not allowed to strike, the injunction is used with effectiveness against the workers.

Oppression of Negroes

We must not forget that in this country which claims that all peoples, all races are equal, millions of toilers because their skin is of different color, because they are Negroes, are denied the franchise in the South, are persecuted, are treated worse than dogs and are lynched under conditions that are indescribable.

We must not forget that while on the one hand we have plenty, a tremendous display of arrogant wealth, on the other, millions of children toil in the mills, in the mines, and in the factories to pile up fortunes for the capitalist ruling class of this country.

In this campaign, we must declare that this capitalism and the ruling class that maintains it, and the government that supports it and defends it with all its might, all this must go! The toilers, the workers and poor farmers, must come into power.

This convention will be reported by the capitalist press as a red convention. We are not ashamed of the term red. This convention is a red convention. It is made up of men and women with red fighting blood in their veins.

At the present time we can point out that in one country in the world the reds are in power, the red flag flies as the flag of the country. That is the only country in which the workers and farmers have the power. In Russia, exploiters have been overcome. There a system of society is now being built that will give to the toilers all the advantages that their labor and ability can provide.

Recognition of the Soviet Government

The United States Government, the government of Wall Street, the government of bankers, trusts, mergers, robbers, pirates, grafters, the government of the oil gang, etc., declared in the name of humanity that it cannot recognize a government where the working class is in power. This campaign is only an incident in the struggles between the workers, the farmers and the exploited masses with the exploiters who are in power. This strug

gle will have many phases, election campaign, strikes, demonstrations, parades, mass meetings, etc. One of the most important phases of this campaign will be the demand for the recognition of the Soviet Union.

If the United States will persist in its refusal of the recognition of the Soviet government, we know that the time will come when the workers' government in the United States—a Soviet government—will recognize Soviet Russia. (Applause.)

U. S. Imperialism

American imperialism, drunk with the enormous profits that it won as a result of the world war is engaged in a very aggressive imperialist campaign. In South America, in Mexico, in Nicaragua, in Haiti and in the Philippines, the masses of toilers there are experiencing the bloody rule of American imperialism. In Asia the Chinese workers and peasants, who are engaged in a bitter struggle against the exploiters, feel the bloody hand of American imperialism.

All over the world the imperialists of the United States are fighting against the competition of imperialists of other countries. The policy of American imperialism is to drive the other imperialist powers out of the markets of the world. The result is a sharpening of the antagonisms between the imperialist powers. This aggressive imperialist policy of the United States is leading into a new world war.

The next world war will be on a more gigantic, on a more costly, and on a more deadly scale than the war we have just experienced. Linked up with the question of the breaking out of a new imperialist war is the formation of a bloc of imperialist nations against the Soviet Union. We enter this campaign fully aware of the great danger of war facing the working class of this country and every other country.

Our Party is an international party, our Party fights imperialist wars, our Party joins hands with the workers and toilers of all countries in defense of the exploited and toiling masses every-

where, and we declare that in the event of a war we will utilize the war to mobilize the workers, to mobilize the farmers, to mobilize the masses to make the war the burial-ground for capitalism not only in this country but also in every other country in the world. (Applause.)

War Against the Soviet Union

In connection with the subject of war against the Soviet Union, it is interesting to note that relative to the Kellogg proposal the French government declares with the British government that the proposals against wars must be considered as proposals not including the Soviet Union.

What does this mean? It means that the imperialists have in mind a war against the Soviet Union. This war has actually started. Encouraged by the hostile attitude of the imperialists against the Soviet Union, paid for by the imperialists, the counter-revolution has attempted to raise its head inside the Soviet Union.

Imperialist Conspiracy

The affair of the Donetz basin is only one initial step on the part of the imperialists to undermine the economic machine of the Soviet Union, so that the Soviet Union will not be able to supply its workers and farmers with the materials of war in order to withstand the attacks of the imperialists. Already it is to the credit of the Soviet Union that it nipped this conspiracy in the bud, that the counter-revolution is crushed. We, members of the international proletariat, members of the exploited masses of the world, of the Communist Party and the Communist International, declare in the event of an attack, of a war against the Soviet Union, we will defend the Soviet Union, which is our country—the country of the working class of the world. (Applause.) We will do everything in our power to rout the imperialist enemies and bring about the victory of the Red Army.

We of the Workers (Communist) Party, declare to the enemies of the working class and to the capitalist government, that the objective of the revolutionary party of the working class is the overthrow of the capitalist system of society.

Role of the Socialist Party

At the time when the capitalist reaction is growing, at a time when the intensification of exploitation is increasing, what is the role of the Socialist Party in the labor movement?

The role of the Socialist Party in the labor movement is the role it demonstrated it can play so well in Germany, Italy, Poland, etc.

It is the role of the hangman of the revolution.

It is no accident that the day after the *New Leader* carries an attack against textile workers in New Bedford, against the rank and file committees that are leading the strike, after it carries a vicious attack against the Communists, that Communists and the rank and file of the New Bedford textile strike are arrested and thrown into prison.

Who is the standard-bearer of the Socialist Party? The standard-bearer of the Socialist Party is a sky pilot, a minister, who believes that revolution is too costly for the workers.

Well, how costly to the working class is the rule of capitalism and imperialism?

Where has a revolution taken place on the face of the earth that was so bloody as the imperialist war?

The result of capitalism is wage cuts, unemployment, poverty, misery, frame-ups, white terror, Fascism and imperialist world war.

These fruits of capitalism Norman Thomas favors, but he does not favor revolution to end all this.

The extent to which the Socialist Party has degenerated, its complete abandonment of the class struggle and the best traditions of Eugene V. Debs is clearly indicated in the article written by Victor Berger in the June issue of *Current History*.

The Honorable Mr. Berger writes as follows:

"If democracy is to survive, if the republic is to endure, we must have a political realignment. . . . And since both old parties are ultra-conservative we must have an opposition party, striving and fighting for progress."

Berger wants a political realignment—a political party of all

classes. He does not want a working-class party. Berger has no use for a working-class revolutionary party that stands for the overthrow of capitalism. Berger is opposed also to a Labor Party. Berger only wants a reformist third party that fights for the vague thing "Progress." In other words Berger wants a "Progressive" capitalist party. It is logical for Berger to maintain that the Socialist Party is such a party.

That the capitalists have nothing to fear from the Socialist Party, Congressman Berger is convinced, because he writes: "All classes will be benefited by the change." If the Socialist Party comes into power the capitalists have nothing to worry, says Berger, they will be benefited by the change.

Berger further writes:

"Socialism can never take root in a commonwealth that is venal. A social-democracy can never be established in a nation that is rotten. More than any other citizen the socialist is interested in weeding out graft. More than any other party, the Socialist Party must make it its task to unearth corruption and prevent moral decay."

No appeal here to the workers as a class to overthrow the whole corrupt edifice of capitalism. Socialism can never be established unless the rotten capitalist nation is made "clean and honest." The main task of a Socialist Party according to Berger is to unearth corruption and prevent moral decay. Eugene V. Debs must turn in his grave when he hears Berger state that the main task of the Socialist Party is to make capitalism and its government honest and to prevent its decay. The class struggle doesn't exist for Congressman Berger.

In the article on the Socialist Party and the 1928 election campaign, Victor Berger also makes the following statement, I will read it:

"The prime essential factor, however, is the awakening of the social genius of American people. Without such awakening a real change in our public life is impossible. Without a change in American psychology even a successful revolution will mean only a change of masters."

He continues:

"A similar instance we see in Russia where after all neither political nor economic liberty was achieved."

For whom does Mr. Berger want economic and political liberty?

Have we got it in America?

Have you the right to strike? The right to vote? Do the Negroes have the right to vote? Quite the contrary. Who enjoys the economic and political liberties in the United States—Mr. Worker or Mr. Rockefeller?

The answer is very clear. Not the workers.

The Haymarkets, the Passaics, the coal strikes, the unemployment, the injunctions, the whole anti-labor strikebreaking activities of the capitalist government of the United States, its sham hypocritical class democracy, is positive proof of the dominance, rule and dictatorship of the capitalists over the country.

Comparison with Soviet Russia

In the Soviet Union it is different. In the Soviet Union the workers and peasants enjoy political and economic freedom.

Soviet Russia established the 7-hour day. Compared to wealthy United States, Soviet Russia is still a very poor country. Nevertheless it could afford to establish a 7-hour day. It was established without strikes, without pickets, without injunctions. Why, because Soviet Russia was established as the result of a successful revolution which crushed capitalism and set up a working-class government, with liberty and freedom, both political and economic, for the workers and not for the shirkers.

I was a member of the Socialist Party over a period of 12 years. I know what is left of the Socialist Party. I know that the revolutionary and militant elements have been driven out of the Socialist Party.

I remember how I was expelled from the Socialist Party. A detective was planted in the central committee. The police encircled the party headquarters so as not to let us in. Now what is left of the Socialist Party? Where are its 100,000 members? What is left? The Norman Thomases, the Victor Bergers, the Hillquits, the Oneals, the doctors, the lawyers, the dentists, the

shopkeepers, the prostitute intellectuals, all lickspittles of capitalism. That is what is left in the Socialist Party. (Applause.)

The Communist Party sends a clarion call out of this convention to the West, to the North, to the South, and to the East.

It sends a clarion call into every factory, into every mine, into every mill.

It sends a call to all workers, to all exploited, the farmers as well as the factory workers.

It sends a call to the blacks, to the yellow races, to the whites: Unite against the powerful enemy, crush capitalism, make the working class the ruling class, the Communist Party the ruling party. (Prolonged Applause.)

The National Nominating Convention

By JAY LOVESTONE

Executive Secretary, Workers (Communist) Party

NOTE—We print herewith the closing remarks delivered by Jay Lovestone at the conclusion of the National Nominating Convention of the Workers (Communist) Party. It is a summary and estimate of the Convention's deliberations and actions.

LET me try to sum up the last two eventful days to you delegates and workers, who have had the very good fortune to attend and participate in the deliberations of the greatest Communist convention ever held in the United States.

I have attended many conventions, Republican and Democratic, as a reporter for *The Daily Worker*, and Communist Party and Socialist Party conventions as a delegate. I have never yet witnessed so genuine, so stirring, so inspiring a scene as the one in which you comrades demonstrated your loyalty to the cause of the working class, demonstrated when the standard-bearers of Communism in America were chosen by you today.

Achievements of the Convention

Before the delegates depart, they should have a clear understanding of some of the achievements of this convention and of some of the questions this convention has answered, not only for the state and fraternal delegations, not only for our Party as a whole, but for the workers and the exploited farming masses of this country.

First of all, we have a good Communist platform—the best Communist platform that our Party has ever had, a Communist

platform on which we can appear with pride, with confidence, with great determination to go forward towards victory.

Second, this convention serves as a splendid basis, a splendid center, to inspire, to mobilize our Party and the workers in the coming election campaign months.

Third, we have chosen sterling, model revolutionists, sterling, model standard-bearers. What more can we ask from a gathering of our Party?

Some Questions Answered

This convention has been a tremendous Communist success from every viewpoint. This convention has cleared up certain questions, I believe, for all of us. I believe this convention has answered four main questions.

Can Communism grow in America? We do not have to answer that question for you comrades and delegates here. I think that the way this convention was conducted, the way you delegates participated—the enthusiasm, the spirit, the militancy, the vigor, the determination—this is the proof that Communism can grow and will grow in the United States. (Applause.)

Our Party represents the interests of the whole working class. Our Party has to date attracted to its banner, primarily the most exploited section of the working class. This happens to be largely the foreign-born workers. We are not ashamed of the foreign-born workers, we are proud of them, for it is they who have helped to build the railroads, build the ships, build the factories, which we will take back for the whole working class. (Applause.)

This convention disproves one of the lies, one of the slanders, of the bourgeoisie, who say that we are not able to attract native American workers. The native American workers gathered here in our Party convention are as native as there are in the whole country. We are all workers regardless of whether we were born by accident in America or came here by choice.

Our Party is not a party East of Chicago. Our Party is a national party from Maine to Texas, from California to Massachusetts. (Applause.)

Communism a Constructive Force

Communism is shown by this convention as the most constructive force in the working class, despite the calumnies of the Socialist Party and trade-union bureaucracy and other enemies of the working class. Any movement which starts as a movement of social progress, goes forward when it works hand in hand with the Communists. But when it deserts and attacks the Communists, and rejects the Communist leadership, it goes down.

Look at the ex-nationalist movement in China. Fifteen months ago the Chinese national movement swept terror into the hearts of the American, British, Japanese and other imperialists. Remember when our Chinese Party was the brains and heart of the leadership of the then advancing Nationalist forces. Eighteen months ago, the British imperial lion was shuddering and we did not know whether the tail was wagging the lion or vice-versa. Today the imperialists are able to insult, bully, cajole and smash at will the front of the betrayer Chiang Kai-shek. The Chinese National movement is down and out because it has deserted the Communist leadership and has become the home of the agents of the counter-revolution.* Keep in mind the different treatment accorded to the Chinese masses when the Hankow concession was redeemed from the British plunderers and the recent massacre by the Japanese imperialists at Tsinan-Fu.

Socialist "Victory"

All the reward that the German workers got from the social-democratic leadership was the Dawes plan—the Dawes chain. This is the bitter fruit of the socialist victory in Germany.

In Italy, where the Communists were defeated, we have bloody Fascism.

In the Soviet Union, where the Communists won, and where they kept the leadership and power, we have the only workers' and farmers' government in the world. (Applause.)

* The Nationalist Party has since taken Peking, and because of its avowed enmity to and slaughter of the working masses and its complete sell-out to the Imperialist allies, has received their temporary blessing.

We say to the capitalists of this country that this convention proves very definitely that we in this country have made a good start towards a national election campaign, towards pushing forward working-class victory in America. The lessons and experiences learned and lived through by the workers of China, Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union, are bound to hold true for the workers of the United States.

It is not an accident that we have with us here delegations of miners from Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio. Where were the miners' delegations at the Socialist Party convention? The only miner at the Republican convention will be John L. Lewis. The only miner at the Democratic convention will be William Green. The miners who are worth while are coming our way. (Applause.)

Let us look at the Negro masses. Where are the Negro masses insofar as the Republican convention is concerned? The paltry few that may be around this Wall Street gathering are misleaders of the Negro masses and even these are segregated because of their color. In the Democratic convention, the only welcome the Negro might get is the welcome of a lynching party. The Socialist Party? It had only one, and at that a misled Negro delegate.

The character of our Negro delegation is a tribute to the fact that the Communist Party is the only one that is ready to fight for the Negroes as well as for the other exploited and oppressed sections of the working class. (Applause.) The most significant step in the history of our Party since its inception is the determination to go South, and to begin the difficult and dangerous task of smashing the solid South. Our Party aims not only to stop lynching, but to punish effectively the lynchers and to destroy the whole lynch system. Our Party hails and welcomes the Negroes. We are with them and for them. (Applause.)

The farmers: we have here dirt farmers. Senator Capper, a multi-millionaire newspaper-owner among farmers, is the best farmer the Republican Party convention will have. There probably will be less wealthy farmers at the Democratic convention.

The agricultural workers, together with the exploited farming masses, will yet be aroused to a mass struggle against their enemies, who are also the enemies of the workers in the cities.

Nor is it an accident that the Haitians, the Chileans, the Peruvians—the colonial and semi-colonial masses—have sent delegates to this convention. We are their party.

Working-Class Traditions

And it is not an accident that our Party is the inheritor of the best traditions of the American working class. Our working class has splendid traditions—the traditions of Haymarket, the traditions of heroic strike struggles, the best of the traditions of every struggle and movement for the enhancement of social progress. We have inherited the best that was in anarchism, the best that was in syndicalism, the best that there was in the whole Socialist Party. The spirit of Ruthenberg and Debs and Haywood, the spirit of the Haymarket martyrs, the spirit of our dead leaders, and the spirit of vigorous youth coming forward, are ours today. Here is the best proof that our Party has inherited all that has been and that is most worth while in the American working class.

Last but not least, this convention has answered the question whether our Party will participate successfully in the election campaign. We, in splitting from the old Socialist Party, spurned and spat upon, reacted bitterly against the old parliamentary fakery and cretinism of the Hillquits and Bergers. In this wholesome reaction, we developed certain dangerously wrong syndicalist ideas and attitudes. This convention deals a mortal blow to these misconceptions. You delegates are going back to act as Leninists in this election campaign, without socialist illusions and without syndicalist fears—in the most brutal, the most powerful, capitalist country. (Applause.)

On to Work and Fight!

You must go back to work. Work, work and fight! We must get on the ballot. To our Party the campaign for getting on the

ballot must serve as a means of acquainting with Communism, of inspiring, of educating new thousands of working and farming masses. To Communists, getting on the ballot is an entirely different proposition from what we knew it to be and what it still is in the Socialist Party. The fight to get on the ballot should enable us to spread our ideas more widely, to distribute our literature more effectively, and to win new masses to our ranks.

We must do the small, the little things, the dirty, insignificant, menial work from the very bottom. Nothing is unimportant. Even the most minute matters—this detail here and another detail there—must be properly and promptly handled. You must become leaders in the Party work, in the coming campaign.

Destroy Lewis

Our election campaign is not a separate campaign from our mining campaign. If we want to help save the miners, we must destroy Lewis. If we want to destroy the corrupt Lewis machine, we must work overtime to help the miners. The same principles must guide us in the needle trades and textile campaigns. The election campaign is tied up with the fight against unemployment against the speed-up system, against company unionism, against the labor fakers, the Socialist Party bureaucracy, the imperialist war in Nicaragua, the fight for recognition of the Soviet Union. The election campaign is a unifying campaign. We count on you to carry it out in that way. We expect you to go back to your territory and to bring back enthusiasm. Nothing is more contagious than revolutionary enthusiasm. Spread the contagion of revolutionary enthusiasm, and our Party will move forward with gigantic strides.

The work of the convention speaks for itself. The election campaign affords us a fine opportunity to build the Party. Keep this in mind above all. Our Party is the only party, the only organization of the working class which is growing today. You have a fine start. We want you to keep up the good pace. This convention will help usher in a new and better day for our Party.

This convention is a symbol of the fact that our Party is not only a propaganda organization, not only a party of revolutionary agitation, but is the party of revolutionary organization of the American working class. Today our Party is the dynamic force in the American working class.

I will close with these remarks. You have something to be proud of. You have participated in one of the greatest conventions of this Party of ours. To be a Communist is the highest honor, the greatest and noblest mark of distinction that a worker can win—involving the most difficult task, the most arduous work. You are the front-line fighters, the most advanced battalions of the workers. Communists must be worthy of this highest honor. We want you to be proud of your Party. We want you to fight for your Party, to love your Party, to build a bigger and better Communist Party. We know that you can, that you will do it, that you will work, that you will fight, and that we will take many a step to bring us nearer to victory for the cause of the Communist International in the United States—for the cause of the whole American working class and its allies in the decisive revolutionary battle against the Wall Street imperialists. (Applause.)

VOTE COMMUNIST!

For President

For Vice-President

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER BENJAMIN GITLOW



X

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