

LA FOLLETTE SEEN AS SECOND CHOICE OF BROTHERHOOD CHIEFS SINCE MAC BROKE DOWN DONKEY

By JAY LOVESTONE.

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MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, New York, July 7.—I have just learned from unimpeachable authority that the last biennial convention of the Locomotive Engineers Brotherhood recently held at Cleveland went on record decisively for McAdoo.

This decision has been kept a secret by the Stone forces, because it meant a complete repudiation of the policies of the Grand Chief who has been the mainstay of the LaFollette movement.

In accordance with this decision, the convention, despite the determined opposition of President Warren S. Stone, chose Mr. Wills of the Brotherhood's Washington office to serve on the McAdoo committee now operating here.

Try to Hush It Up.

The adherents of Stone and LaFollette have done their level best to keep this matter a secret in order to save the prestige of the labor leader in the brotherhood.

But the feeling amongst many of the railway officials is running strong. They bitterly resent this attitude on the part of Stone.

One who has been highly instrumental in rounding up labor union officials for McAdoo and who has been materially helpful in launching the McAdoo boom has told me that there are many labor men who are aching to spill the beans against Stone, and that it is only their fear of the dangerous factional strife in the union that such a move might cause that has prevented them so far from making public the action of the last convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

It is this situation that accounts for the failure of the Cleveland conference leaders to take vigorous steps against the moves made in behalf of Doheny's counsel by some labor officials here.

There is no telling yet when a president will be nominated by the Democratic circus.

Plums Far Off.

But no matter who will be nominated, one fact is certain. The Democratic party has been seriously hurt, organizationally and in its election chances, by the way the convention has been going. The party stands much less chance of cleaning up in the coming election than it did before it got into the sickening sessions.

For one thing the Democratic party has been shown up to be very much less of a united party than even the most skeptical of its critics had thought it to be. The conflict of sectional interests is today more acute in the ranks of the Democratic party than it has been in a long time. It is

only the strong desire for grabbing off many political plums and the conviction that this year offers such an opportunity that has kept the delegates together.

Then, of course, the klan issue has not helped the party spirit an iota. The animosity aroused by this matter will not blow over for some time, if it ever will. There is no doubt that this question got out of the hands of the bosses: They never thought that the anti-klan forces could marshal so much strength. One of the leading wheels of the Smith machine told the writer, on the eve of the klan battle, that he expected to lose from 50 to 100 votes.

Had the leaders known that the vote would be so close, or had they realized that what was primarily a nomination fight would arouse so much feeling amongst the delegations they never would have allowed the fight to get to the floor.

This test of strength has weakened the Democratic party substantially. The number of klan delegate members is now estimated conservatively at 243. Some say it is even higher.

How deep the resentment over this matter is can best be seen from the fact that many southern delegates told me that if the anti-klan plank had carried they would be compelled to knife the Democratic ticket and in desperation vote for LaFollette. A good number of these delegates still say that if the almost impossible happens and Al Smith is nominated they will cut him in November and vote for LaFollette or stay away from the polls.

Jackass Getting Tame.

In conclusion, everywhere there is evident a feeling of listlessness in the ranks of the Democratic henchmen and officials here. They have lost their fighting spirit. They have lost their confidence. They seem to have lost much of their elans or esprit de corps, as one would put it in the terms of military strategy.

Whether this feeling of depression will stay with the Democrats thruout the campaign one cannot tell at this time with certainty. Yet its very appearance during a convention is a source of grave weakness that will play its part in the decisions and results of the coming months in politics.