

Why A Labor Party Today?

By JAY LOVESTONE.

THIS Fall marks the opening of the presidential campaign of 1928. It is an unusually early opening.

There are widening drifts in the Republican Party, and no end to the confusion in the Democratic Party. The reason for this condition within the two parties of big capital is to be found in the economic situation, particularly in the aggravated agrarian conditions.

State Elections Colorless.

Very few states have held elections this year. The states in which they were held, with the exception of New York, Kentucky, and Ohio, did not contribute anything fundamentally new or significant for the 1928 campaign.

The New York returns only confirmed Smith as the outstanding Democratic presidential possibility.

Kentucky lent further proof to the rising hopes of the dregs.

Ohio results were especially grievous for the Anti-Saloon League.

Returns Not Decisive.

Wherever the Workers Party participated, directly or indirectly, the returns were more favorable for us than in previous years.

The Socialist Party victory in Reading is largely a result of the union between the organized workers and petty-bourgeoisie. The latter gave their support to the Socialist Party primarily on the basis of ending the onerous tax regime. The claim of the Socialist Party to have elected the head of the Buffalo city government is ridiculous, because the one elected, Mr. Perkins, is an expelled Socialist and a full-fledged Republican.

In short, there is nothing basically important in the election results for either the Workers Party or the Socialist Party as far as the 1928 campaign goes.

Workers Being Pushed to the Wall
What is painfully clear for the workers is that the masses from the mines and mills, and the workers on the land, must get together immediately to look after their own interests in the 1928 elections.

An injunction mania has seized the ruling class. The most sweeping injunctions of the day — the injunction gotten out by the Interborough Rapid Transit Company of New York against the entire American Federation of Labor and the one handed down by Federal Judge Schoonmaker of Western Pennsylvania—are more vicious and more damaging in their application than any injunction hitherto issued.

"Good Men" Shoot Strikers.

In Colorado, Governor Adams, endorsed as a progressive and a "good man" by the local trade union bureaucracy and by the A. F. of L. in their non-partisan policy, is filling the jails with strikers, is using airplanes and troops to crush the striking miners.

In Pennsylvania and Ohio, scores of thousands of locked-out miners are prohibited even from whispering to each other about their inherent right to organize into a genuine union.

Sordid Condition.

The astounding revelations regarding the manipulations of William J. Burns, notorious strike-breaker, who was head of the bureau of investigation of the Department of Justice in the Harding-Coolidge cabinet, has indicated so sordid a condition in the very heart of the government that the most conscious of the bourgeoisie feel that some so-called corrective measures must be taken in order to preserve the illusions about democracy.

Farmers Victimized.

The farming masses are still subject to the manipulation of the big bankers and to the dictates of the big manufacturers. Simultaneously, the government is functioning more aggressively as the agent of the biggest capitalist interests both at home and abroad.

Plots are afoot to strengthen the defeated counter-revolutionary forces in Mexico.

The defenseless Nicaraguans are being murdered by the hundreds by the U. S. marines.

Huge military and naval forces are being maintained in China to crush the revolutionary nationalist aspirations of the Chinese people.

In Europe, American imperialist aggrandizement is meeting with increasing resistance. There is a mad naval race going on between the United States and Great Britain.

Time To Wake Up.

Obviously, the workers had better prepare to end their costly political slumber.

It is time to rouse the workers to take the next logical and most urgent step, to declare their independence from the capitalist parties. The times are overripe for the workers and exploited farmers to move forward politically—to establish a mass party of their own, a labor party, or at least to place their own class candidates on a national scale in the field in the 1928 elections under the banner of a united labor ticket.

"Non-Partisan" Policy Bankrupt.

The non-partisan political policy of the A. F. of L. is not only bankrupt, but thoroughly discredited. Hiram Johnson, who recommended the appointment of Wm. J. Burns, who defended him at the trial and impeachment of Daugherty, has been endorsed by the A. F. of L. on the "good man" basis.

Applying this non-partisan policy of the reactionary trade union bureaucracy of the A. F. of L., the Lewis machine is now making a deal with Pinchot, who not only did not end the vicious strike-breaking and Cossack system of Pennsylvania, but actually aided and abetted the state constabulary

in smashing the rights of labor.

In the same way, the railway unions, the Big Four, have endorsed such enemies of labor as Foss and Pomerene of Ohio.

Basic Factors for a Labor Party.

There are four basic factors for a mass labor party in the United States.

1. The development of a strongly centralized government. This is one of the outstanding facts today. According to the latest findings, there are at least ten million people in the government bureaucracy of the Federal, State and other divisions.

The government is interfering more and more in the relations between the workers and their employers. The primary task of all divisions of the government today is to defend the bosses against the workers, to break strikes and smash the efforts of the workers battling for better conditions.

2. The labor party corresponds with present political development of the American working class. In America alone, of all the highly developed industrial countries, do we have a labor movement which has not yet divorced itself en masse from the political parties of capital.

3. The slogan "for a labor party" is a unifying factor which serves to bind together the working masses who are in struggle in various parts of the country; the striking miners of Colorado with the miners of Western Pennsylvania and Ohio, the workers fighting in the needle trades in New York with the exploited farmers of the South and West; in short, from Maine to California, all the workers can get together for a labor party, for a united, common challenge to their common enemy.

4. The increasing recession in American industry and the intensified resistance to American imperialism, is lessening the economic gap between the skilled and the unskilled workers.

This development should again serve to increase the homogeneity of the working class, hasten its levelling process.

With a more homogeneous working class, there will be a more solid basis for a national labor party on a mass scale.

BUILD THE DAILY WORKER!

Dead President of Engineers Bankrupt.

THE death of William Prenter, former president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, who at the last convention had his "office removed" after the exposure of the mismanagement, graft and corruption resulting in the loss of over \$20,000,000 of the funds of the railroad workers, brings to a close the career of a super-class collaborator, similar to his predecessor Warren S. Stone.

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Stone's death, according to the records of the convention proceedings, occurred at a time when the corrupt leadership, led by Stone, and in charge of investments of over a hundred and fifty million dollars, in order to cover up the loss of about 6 million dollars, began the frenzied financial ventures in Florida which resulted in further loss of some 15,000,000. It was Stone who claimed it was "as easy to run a bank as it was to run a peanut stand," to which a delegate at the last convention answered: "and by God, men, that's how she was run!"

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Prenter, succeeding Stone, became president when the full results of the corruption brought about the greatest financial catastrophe in all labor history. The full record of this is strikingly presented by William Z. Foster in his new book *Wrecking The Labor Banks*, distributed thru the Workers' Library Publishers. Prenter, like Stone, was the loudest advocate of class collaboration policies that were slowly poisoning the ranks of the railroad workers.

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"We have demonstrated American labor's complete answer to the theories of Marx and Lenin," wrote Prenter. "In America there is no such thing as a working class as distinguished from a capitalist class. Men pass too readily from one group into the other to be tagged with class labels. It is the Brotherhood's aim in its financial enterprises to show its members and workers generally how they can become capitalists as well as workers."

This is the poison peddled by the reactionary leadership led by Prenter, while they were robbing the treasury, insurance funds and pension money, living like millionaires and placing every one of their sixty-seven cousins on the padded pay-roll.

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Pres. Prenter, Foster tells us in his book, purchased a \$250,000 estate in Cleveland. He presented jobs to relations and friends, paying as high as \$10,000 a year. He was in every way connected with the disaster that wrecked the various banks and investment companies of the Brotherhoods. The crash resulted in an assessment of \$5.00 per month on each member for the next two years, on a membership already paying as high as \$30 per month in dues and insurance fees. The 1927 convention held by the Engineers in Cleveland at which the full story was presented, lasted for six weeks from June 6 to July 21, and cost the railroad workers another half million dollars.