

"The Labor Party," Lovestone Continues Analysis in Report

FIFTH INSTALLMENT.

(Continued from yesterday.)

"As a movement the labor party has gained in recent months. This is due to the economic and political developments given above. There is considerable sentiment in certain sections of the country for the labor party, but we must at all times distinguish between sentiment and organization.

"The trade union bureaucracy is working overtime in trying to hinder the development of a labor party. For example, the resolutions adopted in Florida at the last meeting of the executive council of the A. F. of L. Today, the trade union bureaucracy politically is even far to the right of what it was when it half-heartedly pretended to support LaFollette.

"While we work energetically to push the labor party as the next forward step in the development of the American workers politically, we must keep in mind very distinctly the fact that the labor party is not a party of the advanced and most conscious workers. That it is not and cannot be an agency for seizing power for the workers. The Labor Party is only the next step in the political development of the American working class. It can and must be made to serve in some measure for advancing the immediate interests of the working class.

I refer you to a resolution unanimously adopted by the National Convention of the Party held in 1925, the 4th national convention, which the Central Committee reiterates insofar as the role of the Party in the labor party campaign is concerned. The comrades must keep this in mind in all our energetic activities in the labor party campaign. The convention then declared:

"1. We must never forget in all the phases of the labor party campaign that our fundamental task is to utilize this campaign for the building of the Workers (Communist) Party into a mass party.

"2. Our aims should be to affiliate the trade unions and other labor organizations with the labor party and to draw the individual militant workers into the Workers (Communist) Party.

"3. We must at all times maintain our organization independence, our freedom of criticism, our press and literature. We must initiate our own campaign in the name of the Workers (Communist) Party and endeavor to secure the indorsement of the labor party for these campaigns.

"4. We must carry on systematic agitation and propaganda campaigns amongst the members of the labor party and systematic recruiting campaigns to win the best elements as members of our Party."

"We say to the comrades in those districts where the labor party has some mass basis today, that they should never allow the Workers Party to be a recruiting ground for the labor party. In our campaign for the labor party we further continue to emphasize the fact that the Workers Party is the only revolutionary party of the proletariat. Only the Workers (Communist) Party can lead and organize the proletarian revolution. I believe we should be more critical in our attitude towards the British Labor Party in the press and agitation of our districts. We should always function as an independent force with our own platform, speakers, agitation and wherever possible our own candidates. It would be wrong to pursue a policy which would mean running Party candidates. Only in cases where we lack mass support, Direct Party candidates should be

nominated wherever we have sufficient support and especially where the trade unions are weak.

"In drawing up demands in the labor party campaign we must carefully avoid having such demands which can be realized only through the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship, only through a revolution. The Workers Party must always be in the labor campaign. But the Workers Party must be pointed at as the conscious and militant force of the working class. Our influence as such is far in excess of our numbers, and therefore we must appear in the 1928 elections, whether a labor party movement is developed or not, as that party most deserving of the support of the workers.

The Situation in the Labor Movement.

"Regarding the situation in the labor movement. Important changes have occurred in the position of the working class in recent years. There was a marked development towards homogeneity with the beginning of the World War. The gap between the skilled and unskilled declined.

The shutting off of immigration, the levelling wage process, the increasing strike-breaking role of the government, have served as forces for class consciousness on a national mass scale. Witness the big mass strikes in 1922. This basic tendency towards the homogeneity of the working class has continued and is continuing today through such manifestations as the completion of the proletarianization of the exploited farmers who were driven into industry. A new generation of native workers of foreign parentage is arising. The Americanization of the immigrant mass is proceeding. But while this basic trend continues there have appeared within the last five years certain counteracting forces which we must keep in mind. These are continued mass immigration not only legal so-called, but also so-called bootleg, mass migrations of

Negro workers, for a while an increasing gap between the wage scales of the skilled and unskilled workers particularly evidenced in the basic industries.

The mounting capitalist exports and the superprofits have enabled our bourgeoisie to resort to further corruption and have increased the importance and the influence of the labor aristocracy in this fashion. As a result, primarily of these counteracting forces which tend to hinder but do not change the basic line, we have had four significant changes take place in the labor movement within the last five years.

"These are: First, the leadership of the labor movement has gone to the right. Consequently, the official labor movement went to the right. The dominant trade union bureaucracy became integrated in the very imperialist apparatus. The sweep and variety of class collaboration, company unions, arbitration schemes, Watson-Parker laws, and the fight against the labor party, were the fruits of the labor movement going to the right.

"Secondly, the progressive leaders of yesterday and many of their followers swung to the right because of the vast flow of superprofits which enabled the bourgeoisie to widen the base of the labor aristocracy among the workers and to spread the poison of corruption.

The strikebreaking policy of the government defeated the national strikes of 1922 and discouraged the workers, and therefore increased the wavering of the progressives. The progressives in the working class tend to occupy a role similar to the petty bourgeoisie in class relations in capitalist society. The progressive masses are between the labor aristocracy in its purest form on the one hand and the basic unskilled proletariat on the other.

To occupy a position between

means wavering. The grand offensive of the capitalists, which drove nearly two million workers out of the trade union movement, was largely against the unskilled and the semi-skilled workers who had come into the unions in the war period and who were a basic source of strength in the left wing and became the leaders of the left wing in many instances.

The progressives of yesterday often became leaders of reaction. The B. & O. plan was welcomed by them enthusiastically. The Hillmans, the Nockels and others are such types today.

Third, the number of organized workers has decreased. American experience has indicated that during periods of prosperity trade union membership rises. Then, why is it that during the recent period of economic prosperity trade union membership declined sharply? There were causes for this decline in trade union strength. These are the following. First, the employers have resorted to new methods of struggle — company unionism, welfare schemes, stock ownership, etc. Second, there has developed a close bond between the employers and the trade union bureaucracy. Thirdly, the increasing strike-breaking role of the government. Finally, the sweeping consolidation movement, trusts, and mergers. Picture a struggle between the United States Steel corporation headed by J. P. Morgan on the one hand and Mike Tighe's organization, the archaic, backward Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel & Tin Workers.

"Fourth, the decline of the Labor Party Movement:—enabled the bourgeoisie to split the workers and to alleviate the agricultural crises.

Besides, the disruptive role of the petty bourgeoisie led by La Follette in

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14th
DR. PAUL RADIN
"The Humanistic Side of Primitive Culture."

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17th
Mr. EVERETT DEAN MARTIN
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The Psychology of the American Frontier. Davy Crockett as a Type."

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MANUEL GOMEZ

will discuss

"OUR WAR AGAINST NICARAGUA"

BRONX OPEN FORUM

2075 Clinton Ave. (near E. 180 St.)

NEXT SUNDAY: Leon Plott will speak on "Lindbergh, the Imperialist U. S. Ambassador."

Under the auspices of the
BRONX WORKERS' SCHOOL.

the 1924 elections made for the wiping out for some time of the labor party movement as a mass movement.

"It is only after understanding these four significant events for the working class that we can understand the basis of the present vicious sweeping offensive launched against the workers by the bourgeoisie.

(To be continued)