

National Nominating Convention

By JAY LOVESTONE

Editorial Note—We print here with the closing speech delivered by Comrade 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. It was delivered on May 27.

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 had. Our 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 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.)

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 hope 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.)

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. (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 of them and for them. (Applause.)

The farmers: We have here dirt farmers. Senator Capper, a multimillionaire newspaper owner among farmers, is the best farmer the Republican Party convention will have. There probably will be a little 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 the enemies of the workers in the cities, who are their enemies also.

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 some 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 mis-conceptions. 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 very 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 our 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.