

Results of Elections to Sixth Party Convention

By BERTRAM D. WOLFE

Out of 99 delegates to the forthcoming convention of the Workers (Communist) Party of America to be held in New York March 1, 93 are industrial proletarians in their origin. Sixty-eight of these come directly from the mines, mills and factories and twenty-five are Party functionaries who formerly were industrial proletarians. The Detroit district convention of the Party was made up of 98 per cent factory workers most of whom are working in automobile factories. This is the first convention of the Party where the majority of the delegates are workers in industry and not Party functionaries. It is part of the response of the Party to the proposals of the Sixth Congress that the Party should hasten the process of drawing proletarian elements into the leadership.

Twelve of the delegates to the forthcoming national convention are Negro workers, one is a Japanese and one a Filipino. There will be fraternal delegates from the Communist Party of Mexico, the Communist Party of Canada and from several other Latin American countries.

Voting in Industrial Centers.

The voting for convention delegates, after the most thorough discussion in the history of the Party, completely wiped out the Opposition as a political force in all industrial centers. The Opposition received no votes among the miners, steel work-

ers or textile workers. The vote on the iron range (metal mining region) was one hundred seven against one in favor of the Central Committee.

The vote on the copper range was one hundred and fifteen for the Central Committee, nothing for the Opposition. In the Ohio coal fields where the Party has led the Pennsylvania-Ohio coal strike, the vote was one hundred fifteen for the Central Committee, nothing for the Opposition. The anthracite coal region of Pennsylvania and the soft coal fields of Illinois (the latter a former Opposition stronghold) voted unanimously for the Central Committee.

All textile, shoe, packinghouse and rubber centers voted almost unanimously for the C. E. C. The Opposition received some support only in California (where only forty per cent of the membership are industrial workers), and in New York where the Opposition carried five units and the Central Committee seventy-two and in Chicago where the vote was about the same.

Causes of Defeat.

The reason for this overwhelming defeat of the Opposition is to be found in the following developments:

1. The Opposition campaigned for support on the basis of reservations to the decisions of the Sixth World Congress. This was overwhelmingly rejected by the membership of the Party.

2. The Opposition repeatedly rejected the proposals of the Central Committee for the unification of the Party on the basis of the acceptance of the Comintern Decisions, all other matters to be adjusted by mutual agreement. This the Opposition rejected. However, the membership insisted upon the unification of the Party.

3. In the midst of the discussion, part of the Opposition bloc went over to Trotskyism (Cannon and his followers) and were expelled from the Party by unanimous vote of the Central Committee (including the Minority members). After Cannon's attempt to split the Party, the Opposition continued to fight the Central Committee much harder than the renegades who were trying to split the Party. This was resented by the membership and scores even of Opposition leading figures broke with the Opposition on this account and announced their support of the Central Committee.

4. The most capable leader of the Party Opposition, Comrade Foster, was defeated for leadership of the Opposition by Comrade Bittelman, and his leadership caused the Opposition to lose support and to adopt the reckless line which called forth the rebuke of the membership.

The drift of former Opposition supporters to the Central Committee continued after the voting. Fourteen leading Opposition supporters in New York have just is-

sued a declaration renouncing their Opposition and calling upon former followers to do likewise. Ella Reeve Bloor, one of the oldest Opposition leaders, issued a similar statement.

The convention was postponed for one month till March to give time for the E. C. C. I. to send a letter to the Convention. The Central Committee is using the period of comparative calm after the election of delegates is completed to intensify the convention discussion still further, to develop self-criticism, discussion of Party tasks and issues, strengthening of the apparatus of the Party, especially the illegal apparatus, and to intensify the Party's anti-war activities.

The agenda of the Convention is as follows:

1. Report of the Central Executive Committee (Economic and Political Situation. Activities of the Party and Tasks before the Party).

2. Report of the National Executive Committee of the Young Communist League.

3. Report of the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern.

4. Report on the Right danger and Trotskyism.

5. Report on Trade Union Work.

6. Party Organization Problems.

7. Negro Work.

8. The War Danger and the Struggle against American Imperialism.

9. Election of the Central Executive Committee and the Central Control Commission.