

Conventions in All States Back Re-Constitution of CP

By JOSEPH STAROBIN

As delegates to the national convention of the Communist Political Association begin to arrive in New York, I talked to John Williamson, the national secretary, about the state conventions which were held over the past week-end throughout the country. Wil-

liamson—who himself attended the Ohio convention in Cleveland—was busy examining the credentials and reports which were coming in by wire and mail from all over the land.

As he put it, the state conventions show an overwhelming support for the resolution of the National Committee, rejecting the revisionist position associated with Earl Browder.

There is also overwhelming support in every state for the reconstitution of the Communist Party.

"At all conventions," said Williamson, "there was a very considerable and lively discussion. The tone was critical of weaknesses in the CPA, critical of the mistakes of the leadership and even as yet insufficient, concrete self-criticism from many leaders.

"In all state conventions," Williamson continued, "there was a real attention to strengthening our work among the Negro people, though not always with specific reference to the South, as was the case in the New York State Convention."

There will be 93 regular delegates to the National Convention which meets at the Fraternal Clubhouse at 100 West 48th St. in New York City this Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The meetings are in executive session, Williamson explained. The delegates have been limited by ODT regulations, which prevent

more than 50 delegates attending from outside the metropolitan area.

LEADERSHIP

There was also a universal emphasis on refreshing the present leadership of the CPA with workers from the shops and from the trade unions, although it was felt that a core of the present leadership ought to be maintained in the newly elected National Committee.

There was also a desire to strengthen Communist work among the youths, especially the working-class youth, though not necessarily with reference to a reconstitution of the Young Communist League, Williamson explained.

The majority of the delegates from the country outside New York to the National Convention are working people from the shops. The overwhelming majority are not at present functionaries of the organization.

About 20 percent of the delegates are Negroes, and about 10 percent are veterans of the present war. In the case of Missouri, its lone delegate is Ralph Shaw, a former steel union organizer who has seen three years' service in the armed forces. Prior to entering the Army forces Shaw was the Missouri state secretary.

HEALTHY MILITANCY

In almost every convention, Williamson said, there were small groups definitely in a leftist-secular mood; but the great majority of the state convention delegates demonstrated a healthy militancy and sober approach, without falling into "over-corrections" of the past political line. There was practically no support for Earl Browder's position at the state conventions.

Williamson gave me some typical examples of what the delegations are like from outside of New York.

California, for example, is sending 10 delegates, of whom six are trade unionists, among them women and Negroes. Two are Negro delegates and only three are members of the present national committee.

From Ohio, where the discussion was "spirited and determined, sharply critical but also confident in the future," there are two full-time functionaries, and the rest are workers from the shops.

Of course, the ODT regulations will keep down the number of delegates—though there will be guests and visitors from New York, in-

cluding certain non-Communist trade union leaders.

But the size of the state conventions give a good idea of how thoroughly the membership participated in the discussion and selection of its representatives.

THOUSANDS OF PROPOSALS

Incidentally, there were literally thousands of amendments to the National Committee's resolution from clubs and from each state, with thousands of specific proposals.

In California, there were two state conventions: 347 regular delegates in Southern California and 256 at San Francisco.

Maryland had 92 voting delegates: Massachusetts 91; Missouri 25; eastern Pennsylvania, 126; Illinois-Indiana 234.

The Minnesota convention which included delegates from South Dakota, had 86 delegates, while western Pennsylvania had 89, Utah some 32 with Colorado having 24.

The Seattle convention, embracing Washington, Idaho and Oregon, had 88 delegates, while Montana had a convention with 16, and Nebraska about 20. Milwaukee held a convention of about 60 delegates; Ohio 73, and Michigan 130. Maryland, including the capital, had 90 delegates.

Connecticut had about 65 delegates at its convention; New Jersey—211, with New York having a convention of about 1,000 voting delegates.

In all the above cases, figures refer to regular voting delegates elected from clubs in every state, and in judging them the ODT travel regulations must be kept in mind.

Williamson was unable to break these figures down any further in the hurried moment of our discussion, but he expressed great satisfaction with the representative character of the delegations in each state, and with the prospects for a historic session of the CPA's highest body which will have to make fundamental decisions on program, perspective and organization.

\$45,000 Stamp

The highest price ever paid for a single postage stamp was said to be more than \$45,000. The stamp was a one-cent British Gulana issue from the Arthur Hind collection.

Workers Send \$25, Support Daily

percentage of illiteracy remaining among our people. However, when we see our newsstands loaded with trashy papers and magazines, and when we realize that our young people buy and read these trashy papers and magazines, we realize literature does not mean much unless it is put to the proper use.

"We know that to build strong and healthy bodies, it is necessary to eat foods that contain minerals and vitamins. The same principle holds true for the mind. You must feed the mind with literature that has mental vitamins if you wish to develop thinking and mental power. Therefore, we support the Daily Worker and call upon the workers to do the same."