

U. S. COMMUNISTS DECIDE TO REMAIN A POLITICAL PARTY

Foster, Dennis, Gates Join in Convention Vote—End to Factionalism Sought

By PETER KHSS

The Communist party of the United States voted in national convention here yesterday to continue its name and party form. The vote opposed a change into a "political or education association," which had been held out as a better method of regaining influence for Communist ideas.

The convention's first major action, in its second day, sought to join the various factions that have split the party here in the last year. Simon W. Gerson, party spokesman, said that more than 300 delegates had voted in favor, with only three opposed and seventeen abstaining.

On continuing as a party, it thus went along with demands by William Z. Foster, its long-time chairman. Mr. Foster's views have received Soviet and other important foreign Communist support, which was indicated again in a letter to the party here by Jacques Duclos, French Communist leader.

Compromise Offered

But the resolution also offered a compromise to John Gates, editor of The Daily Worker, who has been a leading advocate of varying national roads to communism.

It provided for further discussion, "as may be organized by the incoming national committee," and said—despite Mr. Foster's charges—that ideas for change were not necessarily "revisionist."

Sixty members of the American - Hungarian Federation showed up in the afternoon to picket the convention, held at the Chateau Gardens public hall, 105 East Houston Street, near Second Avenue. They carried signs denouncing Soviet "mass murder" and deportations in Hungary, and somebody threw eggs at the glass door.

Reporters Still Barred

Reporters continued to be barred from convention sessions, with proceedings filtered through official briefings. Mr. Gates eventually met the newsmen in response to repeated requests, but refused comment even on Mr. Foster's attack on him in an opening speech Saturday. A gentlemen's agreement barred "private interviews" by leaders during the sessions, he said.

Asked to reconcile the barring of newsmen with Daily Worker editorials protesting State Department bans on American newsmen seeking to go to Communist China, Mr. Gates suggested that newspapers ought to seek the same constitutional rights for Communists that were enjoyed by other citizens.

He denied that the reporters had been kept out as a reprisal.

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The action, he said, was "a means of protecting job security of members" who might otherwise become publicly identified.

The official press briefing reported that Mr. Gates had joined Mr. Foster and Eugene Dennis, general secretary, in voting for the resolution. He did so, a spokesman quoted him, to subordinate his views to the need for party unity, but would continue to advocate the idea of a political association.

Further details were provided by Carl Rachlin and Lester Migdal, representatives of the New York Civil Liberties Union, who had been admitted as outside observers.

They said Mr. Gates had declared that the resolution would mean the party "will still be isolated." Time will show, they quoted him, that the correct line would be to turn into a political association.

It would then be possible, they quoted him, to take leadership in mass organizations and mass movements denied to the party in its present form.

A Negro identifying himself only as "Bill" interjected, the observers said, that Mr. Gates had been so much in control of the New York party machinery that he had refused to permit meetings to oppose his proposals.

"Bill" was officially reported as one of three "no" voters, opposing any further discussion on changing the party's form. The New York State convention — representing nearly half the party's strength — had closed ranks two weeks ago by similarly voting in favor of continuing as a party but permitting further discussion.

In other actions, the convention adopted amendments bringing up to date its draft policy resolution made public last September.

Soviet Peace Plans Praised

These asserted that Wall Street forces, "reflected in the Eisenhower wing of the G. O. P. and most of the Democratic leadership," were "attempting to exploit the events in Hungary to intensify the cold war." They also praised "continuing Soviet peace initiatives."

In a statement, Claude Lightfoot and Carl Winter, co-chairmen of the presiding committee, asserted the Hungarian picketing of the convention "seeks to rekindle and extend the cold war."

From Berlin, The United Press said yesterday that the East German Communist party had urged the American Communist party to maintain discipline and acknowledge Soviet leadership.

"In view of the adventurous policy of American imperialism," the East German message added, "the firm alliance of the United States Communist party with the international revolutionary workers' movement on the basis of proletarian internationalism is of special importance."

The Chinese Communist central committee, according to a United Press report from Tokyo, also sent greetings to the American party. The message said the United States group had been engaged in a "heroic struggle for peace, democracy and socialism in extremely difficult conditions."