

## Three Lessons—N

**BY JOHN PEPPER**

### The First Lesson

These three cities symbolize three stations of the Labor Party movement and show the application of three different tactics.

New York is the seat of the American Labor Party. This American Labor Party was founded by the Socialist Party and is called "American" most likely because it is not a national organization, not even a State organization, only a local one. The main reason for this remarkable "American" local organization, the Socialist Party was aided by the Farmer-Labor Party of New York and a few Jewish trade unions. The Farmer-Labor Party of New York is another marvelous creature which is not a party at all, but has no party in New York and it has a little in common with the national organization of the old Farmer-Labor Party. It did not even send delegates to the July 3rd Convention at Chicago. The role of the laboring masses is performed in this "Party" by De Hants, the journalist and the famous farmer, by Leif, the Jew, by the teacher,

The American Labor Party was created at the very outset as a private institution of the Socialist Party, and has never for a moment represented anyone but the Socialist Party and its voters. The Jewish trade unions belonging to it do not represent any addition but consist of the old stock of Socialist Party voters. When a part of the trade union movement of New York and the Workers Party tried to join the new organization they were greeted with sabotage and expulsion.

The American Labor Party has never for a moment been anything but a bogus party. It was a party that was created by the American Socialist Party felt that it was bankrupt and wished to give a new name to the old dubious firm. The Socialist Party felt that it is no longer a party and it should be dissolved under a mask. In Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream, Snug the joiner disguised himself in a lion's skin and the king and queen, the donkey and the king's head. The lion's skin of the Socialist Party was—Lefkowitz and its donkey's head—DeLoach. The frightened American people, who were at the American Labor Party and that no one fell in love with it, that no one has taken the American Labor Party seriously. The American Socialist Party itself. The Socialist Party decided recently that it would next election in New York it would run on the American Labor Party ticket, and would drop the sign of the American Labor Party.

The American Labor Party decided to run on the American Labor Party ticket. That is what it was. It was the Socialist Party was its bidwife and the Socialist Party was its baby-farmer. The fat Socialist Party was the American Labor Party.

## The Second Lesson

Albany was the headquarters of the New York State Convention of the Conference for Progressive Political Action. Three elements were present at this convention: 1—The Socialist Party; 2—Some representatives of the rank and file of the trade unions; 3—Railroad leaders who compose part of the Democratic Tammany Hall machine.

The railroad leaders did not want a Labor Party, but wanted immediate participation in the primaries of the old capitalist parties. Their aim was the very same as that of the official American Federation of Labor with its old Gompers slogan: "Punish the enemies and reward the friends." Their aim was that of Johnston, the leader of the Cleveland Conference for Progressive Political Action.

A part of the rank and file delegation was class-conscious and wanted the immediate formation of the Labor Party. Another part was not class-conscious, but represented the feelings of dissatisfied workers and wanted some kind of action without delay.

The Socialist Party went to Albany in order to represent "Independent Political Action"; but at the same time it was anxious not to lose the friendship of the railroad leaders. The Socialist Party leaders, as overslick politicians, wanted to squeeze the circle, with the only result that the railroad leaders beat the Socialist round-heads into the square.

The Socialist Party did not dare to fight in Albany for the idea of a Labor Party, trembling to lose the friendship of the labor leaders. It betrayed the Labor Party in Albany in order to gain the favor of the official railroad brotherhoods, in the same way that it betrayed the Labor Party in Cleveland so as to win the favor of Johnston and Keating, and as it betrayed the idea of amalgamation in order to be tolerated by Conservatives. The Socialist Party no longer strives to gain the support of the revolutionary rank and file, for the very reason that the rank and file is revolutionary. And its whole cast consists today of seeking an alliance with the reactionary labor leaders, just because they are reactionary.

Albany stands for the greatest defeat in the political career of the Socialist Party. In 1919 it lost the confidence of the rank and file. Since then it has not succeeded in striking

roots in the labor aristocracy. And in Albany its plan of alliance with the labor leaders went bankrupt.

The labor leaders in many of the formations, however, are not aware of the historical and political significance of the united front tactic within the old capitalist parties, only tactic which could have led to Socialist Party victory would have been: 1.—Struggle for immediate formation of the Labor Party; 2.—Appeal to the rank and file among the leaders. But the Socialist Party had the dogma, as formulated by Hillquit, that the rank and file and the leaders are the same and cannot be separated. The Socialist Party has the dogma that the Labor Party can be formed only by rank, not by rank and file alone is too bad, but the big international unions, in other words, the labor officials. The

cialist Party tactic was to send to the bankrupt in Albany, because the dogs are just as little true for the capitalist as the socialist, and the virgin birth by Mary is true for the natural science. Neither Gompers nor Johnson will ever bring about the creation of the Labor Party less than the political corpses of the \$250 a year labor leaders.

It is not the Labor Party that the Party is, in other words, the procedure of the separation of the rank and file from the influence of the high labor officials, but the Party is the Party that the pressure of the rank and file will win over a big part of the same high labor officials.

It is even possible that when the pressure from below is greater, some of the high officials will leave the Party and join the Party movement. But the high labor officials as a stratum will never be leaders in the Labor Party movement, and the Party will have to turn to their last breath as the Praetorian Guard of the capitalists. The great lesson of Albany is that the Party can win only through an appeal to the rank and file and only through the fight against reactionary labor leaders.

### The Third Lesson

The July 3rd Convention in Chicago presents the third tactical lesson. There were three outstanding groups present in Chicago: 1—The old Farmer-Labor Party officials; 2—A rank and file representation of over 600,000 workers, and farmers; 3—The Workers Party.

The Workers Party faced a difficult tactical dilemma at the July Convention. It knew that the Convention would be a pure rank-and-file convention and that none of the national and international unions would be represented. It knew that the whole officialdom of the labor movement is against the Labor Party. Gompers having been against

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What sort of tactic was the Workers Party compelled to employ in this situation?

In contrast to the Socialist Party and in contrast to all those cringing by skepticism who believe that the whole "social development in the United States is nothing but a vicious circle," the Workers Party holds the opinion that the recent development of three new facts: 1—Centralization of the government; 2—Elimination of the working class; 3—Integration of the old parties, has made the formation of a Labor Party not only possible, but imperative.

At the Cleveland Conference and the lessons of the amalgamation movement have proven conclusive to the Workers Party that the only difference Party in America is of a different direction than in Germany, and that it is not to be run above by the officials, but from below by the rank and file.

The Central Executive Committee of the Party decided before this first Convention that it would convene in New York City, and the first National Convention of the Communist Party in New York in formation of the American People's Party; that it would not force the issue of the merger with the only the old Farmer-Labor Party and the Workers Party should appear at the Chicago Convention, and that a new name for an old, at political groups, but must be based on trade unions and farmer organizations. The Party decided to appoint a committee after careful evaluation after their debate decided that representation of half of a million workers and farmers were a very significant broad base upon which to build the Workers Party. There are about 600,000 workers and farmers in the United States. The Workers Party therefore will be the most energetic fight for the most important groups in the country.

The officials of the Chicago Convention of Labor and the old Farmer-Labor Party were frightened by the Communist Party's new legislation and wanting their representatives to be elected to the

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We have three tactical lessons to learn from the lessons of New York, Albany and Chicago. **Defeat in New York** because a small political group without real support from the unions wanted to form a Labor Party. **Defeat in Albany** because a political group sacrificed the idea of a Labor Party for alliance—with reactionary labor leaders. **Victory in Chicago** because the Workers Party stood itself with the rank and file, fought the ideological battle and won. These tactical lessons must be understood by every Communist. We are convinced that every Communist who does not stand openly under the ideological influence of the old Farmer-Labor Party and the Socialist Party, will understand