

The State AFL Convention

By Rose Wortis

(Conclusion)

An examination of the composition of the leadership of the State Federation of Labor will prove that this leadership does not represent the thinking and spirit of the organized AFL workers in the state and that it is a dead weight of the AFL.

Let me cite a few examples: The Executive Council consists of 15. Six out of these 15 members come from the Building Trades, in many instances from insignificant locals upstate such as Frank W. Cummings from a small electrical local in Albany, William McGeory from the plumbers local in Westchester—this gentleman was recently convicted of extortion but still is serving as a member of the State Executive. Joseph A. Mullaney, the oldest member of

the Council, 80 years of age, long due for retirement is there. Four council members have lost all contact with the unions they originally represented. These are: C. F. Conroy from Buffalo who has been in office about twenty years and represents a paper local of Amalgamated Street Car with about seven members. The Buffalo delegation including the representatives of the Central Trades has strenuously objected to his election but the machine insists on retaining him on the board year after year. Mr. Michael J. Mungovan from Rochester holds no part in any local of his international or in the AFL in Rochester. He is supposed to represent the Stagehands. There is very little likelihood that any of these organizations would entrust him with responsibility.

Then there is Vincent Kane, the one time president of the Firemen's Association defeated in the election in his union last year. Kane has no office in the union today but still continues as a member of the State Executive Board. A. Goff from a two-by-four local in the food industry in Syracuse is supposed to represent the 50,000 organized workers in the food industry in the State. He is hardly the man who would be chosen by the hotel and restaurant workers to represent them at the State Federation of Labor. The fact that the New York delegation for reasons of internal politics allows him to continue on the board does not make him a better spokesman for the thousands of militant workers in this very important industry in

New York. Mrs. Betty H. Donnelly, the only woman member on the board originally came from the Teachers Union of Buffalo but has little contact with the organized teachers today. Mrs. Donnelly is supposed to represent not only the women but also the white collar workers. Only four members on the board can be said after a fashion to "represent" their unions. These include "King" Joe Ryan of the longshoremen, Isadore Nagler of the Ladies Garment Workers, E. W. Edwards who is now on Dewey's payroll as a member of the State FEPC.

The most vital forces in the AFL truly representative of the workers, machinists, metal trades, painters, hotel and restaurant workers and the more active leaders the Central Councils upstate

have no voice in the State Federation between conventions.

There is serious danger that under the influence of the reactionary drive against the progressive forces in the labor movement, the leadership of the AFL, especially Meany, will attempt to cover up their own bankruptcy by red-baiting and Soviet-baiting as was the case in the California State convention. The Social Democrats who represent quite a bloc at the convention can be counted upon to come to Meany's support.

The progressive forces who in the past have played a positive role in the state convention will therefore have the task of seeing to it that the convention is not diverted from its proper course. To guarantee that the burning problems of labor and the nation such as the struggle against inflation, higher wages, the needs of the veterans, the struggle against anti-Negro discrimination and anti-Semitism, the struggle for labor unity and unity among the United Nations receive the proper attention at this convention.

The underhand maneuvers of Dewey and some of the leaders which have a paralyzing effect on the AFL, must be brought out into the open. A bold stand for unity by the progressive forces in the 1946 elections should be taken.

It is high time that the progressive forces raise the question of revitalizing the leadership in the State Federation of Labor in tune with present day developments and needs and includes in the leadership representatives of the thousands of Negro and women workers from the important unions in the State.

Let's
Face It

Primaries and Socialism

By Max Gordon

WHEN a physical scientist wants to study some particular object or process, he isolates it from its environment and generally attempts to examine it under so-called "ideal" conditions.

But if he should forget that he has isolated it artificially, if he should fail to take into account the inter-connections between the thing he is studying and its environment, he is bound to make serious mistakes.

The same is true in political science. When we study a particular situation confronting us to develop



We did forget this during the war.

How does the current electoral position of the Communists, the building of the widest possible coalition against reaction, fit in with out anti-capitalist position?

American monopoly capital is today the chief foe of the forces of socialism and progress not only in America itself but on a world scale. Its chief aim is to check socialism and popular democracy internationally and to destroy labor and other popular movements at home.

Hence the central aim of the forces of socialism and progress in America is to check monopoly capital politically. They cannot do the job alone because they are as yet far too weak. They would be isolated, impotent and probably crushed if they tried to oppose powerfully-entrenched American big business

and the reactionary GOP state machine. They also have an ace-in-the-hole in Jim Farley and his reactionary crew within the Democratic Party.

The tactic of the forces of socialism and progress, therefore, is the widest possible unity against Dewey and the Farleyites in the Democratic Party on the basis of a program directed against the aims of big business.

Meanwhile, labor is advancing its independent strength in some 10 congressional and legislative primary contests in New York City Aug. 20, where it has entered labor candidates in major party primaries.

Labor's success in these primaries will be extremely important in deciding how broad a coalition will develop on a statewide scale, how effective it will be and what kind of a program it will have.