

Amter's Election Would Challenge Reaction, Strengthen People--Foster

The following is the text of the speech of William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist Party of the U. S. at the Party's New York County Convention, Saturday. The speech was broadcast over radio station WQXR:

It is with pleasure that I support the nomination of Israel Amter, the Communist candidate for Councilman from Manhattan in the November elections. He is a man I have known well for 20 years, one who had devoted his whole life to



ISRAEL AMTER

the people's cause and who is thoroughly qualified to defend it. If elected he will be a real asset to the people in the New York City Council.

This Fall's local elections in New York and elsewhere are of great importance. They will serve as rallying points for the workers and other democratic sections of the people in their growing struggle against the forces of reaction, which are trying to destroy the achievements of the New Deal and to force this country on the path towards fascism.

The reactionary Republicans and Tory Democrats, representatives of the union-busting Fords, Girdlers, Hoovers, Hearts, Coughlins, etc., especially since their partial successes in last Fall's congressional elections, have been making a big drive against everything progressive. Under the fake flag of economy they have been sabotaging industrial recovery by trying to cut the WPA to pieces and to slash farm relief. They have warred against President Roosevelt's foreign policy and sought to bog down the country in the treacherous swamp of isolationism. They have undertaken to disembowel the Wagner Labor Act. They have sought to shift the federal tax burden from their own shoulders on to those of the people. They have tried to destroy the CIO by splitting its major unions.

But this powerful reactionary offensive, inside and outside of Congress, has met with strong and successful resistance from the masses and their New Deal representatives in Congress. The masses' resistance compelled Congress to adopt the WPA and farm programs practically without cuts; they rallied overwhelmingly behind President Roosevelt's foreign policy of peace which has helped the world democracies, with the U.S.S.R. in the lead, towards putting a bridge on Hitler and Mussolini; their mass resistance has been so strong that the amendments designed to destroy the Wagner Act are still hopelessly tied up in com-

mittee; they have prevented any reactionary revision of the federal tax structure, and, most striking of all, the workers rallied so powerfully in support of the CIO in the automobile, textile and coal industries that they completely defeated the attempts of the employers, the A. F. of L. reactionary leaders and their Lovestone-Trotsky stooges to break up the CIO in these industries.

In repelling this big offensive of the reactionaries to sabotage the Administration's economic recovery program, to surrender to the Hitler war-makers, to free big business from taxes, and to break up the workers' trade unions, the people have won a real victory. But it is largely a defensive victory. In general they have only stood their ground, not advanced into new territory. Had there been more unity in Labor's ranks; had the New Deal forces carried on a more aggressive fight for their recovery program, especially for a great housing project, the victory would have been far more positive in results.

The anti-New Deal forces have been checked in their big offensive of the past several months, but they have been by no means decisively defeated. On the contrary, the real struggle is yet to come. Infuriated and embittered by the new strength acquired by the democratic masses of the people during the past few years, the combined Republican and Democratic reactionaries are decided upon developing the most fierce struggle during the next year. The coming national elections will be hardest fought and most fateful of any in the United States since 1860. The great issue to be determined is whether the country, under a progressive administration, will head towards prosperity and democracy along lines laid down by the New Deal, or whether, controlled by Republican reactionaries, it will turn toward the fascism and war that lies behind the Hoover-Coughlin-Hearst big banker program.

To defeat the reactionaries in 1940 it is necessary that there be built a great democratic front of workers, farmers, professionals and small business people who are the democratic backbone of the country and who constitute the great majority of the American nation. This basic lesson the Communist Party is now teaching the people with all the power at its command. The most serious danger to the people is lack of unity in their own ranks in the face of the well-organized opposition. This means that above all the present split in the labor movement must be healed. This split is a grave danger not only to the labor movement but to all American democracy. The responsibility for the split lies at the door of Green, Woll and Company, autocratic heads of the A. F. of L. These people by continuing the split are playing the game of reaction. Unless the A. F. of L. and CIO unionists insist that trade union unity be established, we may be certain that the reactionary A. F. of L. leaders will try more or less openly to force the workers into the Republican camp in 1940.

As I have already stated, the New York local elections will have great significance in the growing national struggle between the forces of peace and democracy and those of reaction and fascism. The only way the New York Elections can result advantageously for the people is through the creation of a solid

democratic front, including the trade unions generally, the American Labor Party, the New Deal Democrats and the progressives in the Republican Party. Such a great combination would surely be victorious against the common enemy, the reactionary Republicans and Tammany Hall Democrats, the tools of Wall Street.

The Communist Party, the Party of Socialism, fights for national and social security, for jobs, democracy



WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

and peace. It pledges its fullest support to a great front of all the local progressive forces. In season and out it advocates and works for this united action as the only effective way to defeat the malignant enemies of labor and of the great masses of the people. The Communist first choice candidate for Councilman in Manhattan, Israel Amter, may be depended upon to loyally advance the cause of such a great democratic front in New York.

During the past few months the forces of democracy have won a series of notable local election victories in a number of cities. Among the more important of these were in Chicago, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Minnesota, New Jersey, etc. These local successes show that the people are in a mood to defend what they have gained under the Roosevelt administration and to push on to more important democratic achievements. The same spirit exists in our huge metropolises.

New York City is a great progressive center. Its gigantic masses of workers and its powerfully organized trade unions form the strong democratic heart of the city. There is every reason why, therefore, that the local elections of 1939 should result in a slashing progressive victory, one which will hearten the forces of democracy all over the country. But to accomplish this end unity is necessary, especially unity of action between the A. F. of L. and CIO unions.

The Communist Party of New York enters into this crucial election confident of the success of the workers and their democratic allies. It puts up as its candidate in Manhattan one of its very best sons, Israel Amter, a life long veteran of the class struggle. It is certain that the victory of the progressive forces in the elections of 1939 in the great metropolis of New York, will be the prelude to a still more sweeping victory for the working class and the people as a whole in the crucial national elections of 1940.