
Convention May Name Debs Today for Presidency:

**Nomination Will Be Submitted to Referendum of Party Membership
Upon His Acceptance of Candidacy, Resolution Proposes.**

**Choice of Running Mate Will Probably Be Put Off:
Drastic Revisions Sure to Be Made in Constitution —
Special Bureau to Deal with Relations to Economic
Organizations Regarded Certain of Creation.**

by Herman Michelson
Staff Correspondent of *The Call*.

Published in the *New York Call*, v. 12, no. 246 (Sept. 3, 1919), pp. 1-2.

CHICAGO, Sept. 2 [1919].— Eugene Victor Debs will be nominated by the National Emergency Convention of the Socialist Party for President in the campaign of 1920. The action probably will be taken tomorrow. Debs will be given a copy of the platform, and, if he accepts, his nomination will be submitted to a referendum of the party membership.

Seymour Stedman brought up the nomination of Debs today. On the first day of the convention it had been ruled out of order by him, as chairman, on the ground that such action might antagonize the administration and keep Debs in prison longer, perhaps endangering his life.

“I know the threat has been made that they will nominate Debs downstairs [at the CLP Convention],” Stedman said, “but I am not inclined to play politics with a man’s life.”

As pointed out in these dispatches, there has been a strong feeling that Debs should be nominated by the convention.

Stedman read a telegram from the 6th Assembly District of New York strongly urging it. He also read telegrams exchanged between himself and Theodore Debs since the convention met. Debs’ brother agreed

that he should not be nominated if it would mean that his incarceration, now generally believed to be drawing to a close, would be lengthened by it.

Resolution Sponsored.

Stedman introduced his resolution:

Whereas, it is the desire of the Socialist Party of the United States and the delegates of this convention to nominate Eugene Victor Debs for Presidential candidate, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the National Executive Committee elected by this convention immediately communicate with Debs and tender him the nomination of the convention for President of the United States in 1920; that he be furnished with a copy of the platform, and, in case of his acceptance, it be immediately submitted to a referendum of the membership.

The matter was turned over to the Resolutions Committee, headed by William H. Henry of Indiana.

Committees Working Hard.

All committees are hard at work. The convention adjourned at noon until tomorrow morning, when

it is expected some of the committee work at least will be ready.

Committees as they stand now are:

Platform and Resolutions — Henry, Lee, Stedman, Cohen, Engdahl, Roewer, Plunkett, Hoehn, Niestadt, Berger, Moore, Block, Berenberg, Cohen (Wisconsin), and Kruse.

Propaganda and Organization — Bearak, Smith, Melms, Sheahan, Haydon, Cook, Peck, Brown, Martin, Braunstein, and Jones.

Constitution — Oliver C. Wilson, Milos C. Jones, Brandt, Belooof, Shadid, Gerber, Marcus, Edlin, Noonan, Mrs. E.S. Cohen, and Doerfler.

Finance — McCarthy, Annalla, Desombre, Sander, Robinson, Chase, Young, Howe, Wilson (Illinois), Stauber, and Mrs. Maily.

Economic Organizations — Shiplacoff, Sale, Beckerman, Holman, Stump, Jensen, Victerson, Quinlan, Malkiel, Friedman, and Bartoff.

Press — Wood, Ameringer, and Solomon.

The matter of a Vice-Presidential candidate probably will be laid over by the convention for the action of a national referendum. Thus far the only three names mentioned have been those of Kate Richards O'Hare, Seymour Stedman, and Scott Nearing.

Nearing is disqualified by reason of his recent entrance into the party. Stedman is not regarded as a "harmony" candidate, Mrs. O'Hare would probably get the convention's vote if the vote came on her. The Resolutions Committee probably will recommend, however, that the matter go over.

To Revise Constitution.

A few predictions are in order as to the stand the convention will take in the next two days. Drastic revisions are sure to be made in the constitution.

Creation of a special department, bureau, or standing committee of the national organization to deal exclusively with the relations of the party and economic organizations is regarded as certain.

A strong stand against coalition is regarded as necessary in view of the numerous parties springing up every month.

There will be a manifesto, applying the general principles of Socialism to the world situation today.

To Restate Principles.

There will be a restatement of party principles which is expected to cut the ground from under the feet of the former members and organizations of the party who have read themselves out and will remain suspended in midair between the newly formed and still more newly revised Communist Labor Party and the Communist Party.

The party will be called to another convention next spring or early summer.

On a roll call it was found that 31 accredited delegates had thrown in their lot with the Communist Socialist Party (Left Wing) or with the simon-pure Communists composed of the suspended language federations and the expelled Michigan organization.

This does not mean that 31 have bolted the convention. Besides the handful who left with Coldwell, about a half dozen have quietly withdrawn. The rest had no attention of sitting in the convention unless they could rule it, and never participated in a session.

Lore and Hold Refuse Seats.

In the cases of Ludwig Lore of New York, seated as a delegate of the German Federation, and N.F. Holm, seated for the Scandinavian Federations, who have refused to take their seats, their organizations will be notified of the fact.

Fred Harwood of New Jersey, seated last night with a reprimand, is going home today, through with the Socialist movement. He says it is too late for him to go into the Socialist Party convention, and he will not go with either of the others.

He is a very much disgusted man, with an immovable conviction that the police were called in by the party officials, and he won't have anything to do with the party on that account.

Morris Hillquit responded to the convention's telegram of greetings with a cordial wire this morning.

The complete official list of delegates present and taking part in the convention today, as sifted out by the roll call, follows:

Delegates Listed.

Arkansas — Mrs. Fannie Crowell, W. K. Tennyson.

Colorado — Fred Underhill, H. Ingerman.

Connecticut — Harry L. Edlin, John P. McCarthy, Martin F. Plunkett.

District of Columbia — Mrs. E.S. Cohen.

Illinois — Seymour Stedman, Oliver C. Wilson, J. Louis Engdahl, Andrew Lafin, Henry Askeli, Adolph Germer, William F. Kruse, F.W. Wenschhoff, W.G. Hammond, O.J. Brown.

Indiana — Ross D. Brown, William H. Henry, Lillith Martin.

Iowa — George J. Peck.

Kansas — Ida A. Beloof.

Maryland — Frederick Haller, Samuel M. Neistadt.

Massachusetts — George Makela, Harry S. Victerson, Jacob Goldberg, Lewis Victor, Peter Kastoff, Victor Annalla, Joseph Bearak, Abraham Boxer, Louis Marcus, George E. Roewer, Jr.

Michigan — C.G. Taylor, Lazarus Davidow, I. Finkelstein, A. Rubenstein, and Henry Lipscone.

Missouri — Jacob Kasener, G.A. Hoehn, and William Brandt.

Montana — A.H. Floaten.

New Hampshire — Francis T. Butler and Fred B. Chase.

New Jersey — Frederick Krafft, Valentine Bausch, Patrick L. Quinlan, Milo C. Jones, and Rose Weiss.

New York — Abraham Beckerman, David P. Berenberg, S. John Block, August Claessens, Walter M. Cook, J.W. Dennis, Max Ludlow, Julius Gerber, Benjamin Glassberg, Alexander Braunstein, Wilho Hedman, William Karlin, A. [Alexander] Trachtenberg, Algernon Lee, Bertha H. Mailly, Theresa Malkiel, Charles W. Noonan, James Oneal, Samuel Orr, Jacob Panken, Dr. Wilhelmus B. Robinson, A.G. Breckenridge, Charles H. Roth, J.B. Salutsky, Fred Sander, James C. Sheahan, A.I. Shiplacoff, Charles Solomon, James Battistoni, Louis Waldman, Eugene Wood, and H.D. Wilcox.

Oklahoma — J.E. Bartoe, E.L. Moore, P.S. Nagle, Clara Smith, and Olive Stauber.

Pennsylvania — J. Auerbach, Cora M. Bixler,

Joseph E. Cohen, Oliver Drawford, James Downs, William Euler, Edward W. Haydon, John G. Means, Henry W. Schlegel, Charles Sehl, Charles Selleman, J. Henry Stump, David Siegel, Burch Wilson, William Wright, Elmer H. Young.

Rhode Island — E. Horacek.

West Virginia — J.E. Snider.

Wisconsin — Oscar Ameringer, Victor L. Berger, William Coleman, John Doerfler, Jr., Daniel W. Hoan, John P. Jensen, Herman F. Marth, Edmund T. Melms, John H. Sims, K.L. Desombre.

Oregon — Lauri Moilanen.

Minnesota — Charles S. Wells, Andrew Hanson, George Hoffman, S. Friedman, J. Soltis, H.L. Kammerman. (This delegation has a voice but no vote.)

Italian Federation — John LaDuca.

Finnish Federation — Y.H. Halonen.

Bohemian Federation — Charles Kolarik.

Jewish Federation — J. Mill.

Slovak Federation — Charles Korenich.

Wire Sent Martens.

Three more telegrams have been sent by the convention to L.C.A.K. Martens, Russian Soviet representative in the United States, at New York; to Charles H. Matchett, Socialist candidate for President in 1896, now very ill in Boston; and to the Socialist Party of Italy.

The telegram to Martens read:

The Socialist Party of America, in national convention assembled, sends you fraternal greetings and wishes you success in your endeavors to establish friendly relations between the people of the United States and the Soviet Russia of which you are the accredited representative.

We may assure you that the Socialist Party will do all in its power to rally the support of the American workers to the aid of the proletarian republic which is an inspiration to the Socialist movement of the world.

Telegram Sent to Italy.

To Matchett were sent regrets at his illness and hopes for a return to good health. The telegram to the Socialists of Italy, who meet in convention on September 6 [1919] at Bologna, expressed appreciation of their stand against the world war and also against the junkerthum of Italy.

When the convention adjourned at 6 o'clock last night there was a fine unified spirit in it that wanted nothing better than to work in harmony for the rest of the sessions and get the work done.

Half an hour after it had met again in the evening a little unintelligent work on the part of several members had in a large measure destroyed this unified spirit, and the convention was in a turmoil.

The evening session was called to elect the half dozen standing committees which are to do the actual work of the convention at a caucus or conference. Saturday night [Aug. 29, 1919], when the news was all that the Left Wing and Communists would get into the convention and seek to control it, the organization delegates decided on a slate for the committees.

It was decided to give the Lefts some representation on each committee, but to concentrate the voting so that each would be safe for the party.

Situation Changed.

By last night the situation had changed completely. The convention was safe. The unanimous votes early in the day clearly showed that everybody in the convention then was there to work with it, and not against it.

If there were any others, they kept silent. Yet, in

view of this situation, the "slate" was produced, neatly mimeographed, and openly passed around.

Even then the thing might have passed off without comment had not J.B. Salutsky of New York called the convention's attention to it. Salutsky had been present at the Saturday night conference, when the "slate" was decided on, and the reason for his action was a puzzle to the other delegates.

Also, they frankly thought themselves double-crossed by Salutsky and said as much.

Row Precipitated.

The announcement of a "slate," of course, immediately precipitated a row. Twenty delegates were on their feet at once, demanding the floor, raising points of order, asking information, making motions, and attempting speeches. Sarcastic motions were heard, "elect the whole 11, they'll be elected anyway. They're on the slate."

All through the evening frequent references were heard to the "slate," although a statement by Lee greatly clarified the situation, especially when he told the rebellious ones that Salutsky himself had been in the conference which decided on the "slate."

Lack of foresight had allowed the handing out of the "slate" and brought about the unfortunate scene.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing, Corvallis, OR, 2007. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.