

U. S. COMMUNISTS TO CONVENE HERE

Party Awaits 225 Delegates
for Meeting This Week—
Press to Be Barred

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

The United States Communist party announced yesterday that its seventeenth national convention would open Thursday at the Theresa Hotel, 125th Street and Seventh Avenue.

A party spokesman said that about 225 regular and alternate delegates from thirty-five to forty states were expected for the meeting, which will last through Sunday. Delegates have already begun arriving, he said.

Reporters will be barred from the sessions, the spokesman said, and there will be no official non-Communist observers, such as attended the similarly closed sixteenth convention in February, 1957.

He added, however, that "a lot of Socialist-thinking people" had been invited to attend the convention as individuals, but he declined to reveal the number or names.

Membership Total Suppressed

The spokesman also declined to give the present membership of the party, saying, "I don't think it's a matter of great public interest." Recent published estimates have put the membership as low as 3,000. A sworn statement published in last week-end's issue of the Worker, the party's organ, gives that newspaper's average circulation this year as 14,627.

Eugene Dennis, secretary of the Communist party, will deliver the convention's keynote address on Thursday, the spokesman said. He added that the convention's main business would be the adoption of a resolution stating the party's position on such matters as peace, the labor movement, problems of party organization and the like.

The Communist party has had great difficulty finding a place to hold the convention, the spokesman said, adding that more than a dozen hotels and meeting halls had been approached before it became possible to rent the Theresa Hotel ballroom.

Circulation Rise Forecast

William Albertson, New York executive secretary of the party, asserted that a high percentage of party members had registered this year. He predicted the party's membership in the state would double by 1961.

Mr. Albertson also predicted that The Worker's circulation would increase 50 per cent next year.

Besides Mr. Davis and Mr.

Albertson, the only participants in the New York State convention identified by name were Evelyn Weiner of Manhattan, Miriam Friedlander of the Bronx, James Tormey of Brooklyn, Mort Scheer of Erie County, Mildred Meadory of Harlem, Milt Rosen, state labor secretary, and Esther Cantor, state legislative representative.

The near unanimity reported at the New York convention appeared to suggest there would be less public dissension at this week's convention than there was three years ago. Then the right wing forces headed by John Gates, at that time editor of the now defunct Daily Worker, battled the left wing forces under William Z. Foster and Mr. Davis. Mr. Gates and the great bulk of his supporters have since left the party.