

# U. S. REDS NAME HALL AS LEADER

## Midwest Chief in Top Post After Indicating Shift in Party to Rightist Trend

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

Gus Hall was named the new leader of the American Communist party early this morning at the first meeting of the party's newly elected sixty-member national committee. This occurred shortly after the Midnight adjournment to the seventeenth national convention of the party.

Mr. Hall was given the new title of general secretary of the party. His assumption of the leadership had been foreshadowed by his unexpected appearance last Thursday as the convention's keynote speaker, in place of Eugene Dennis.

The naming of Mr. Hall came as the party appeared to be making a sharp turn to the right, toward policies that were once favored by its former leader, Earl Browder.

The signal for this shift was given in the keynote speech by Mr. Hall, who is also Midwest party secretary. The text of the speech, released yesterday, showed that Mr. Hall had called for the reinstatement of some ideas that were banished from the party when Mr. Browder was expelled soon after World War II.

Mr. Browder, who led the party through much of the Nineteen Thirties and Nineteen Forties, sought to identify American communism as "Twentieth Century Americanism".

He stressed the importance of the national peculiarities of the United States in framing American Communist tactics and strategy.

To justify the shift to Browderism, Mr. Hall quoted the Chinese Communist leader, Mao Tse-tung. He quoted Mao's call on Chinese Communists to adapt Marxism to Chinese conditions and said the same thing must be done by American Communists.

It was believed that this was the first time the Communist line in this country had been set by reference to what a Chinese Communist had said, rather than by reference to the Soviet party line.

### Aims Are Outlined

Indicative of the shift by the American party was the adoption of a "Declaration of Aims and Tasks," which charts what it calls "The American Road to Socialism." The declaration declares:

"The Communist party advocates a democratic road to socialism through the political and economic struggles of the people within the developing and revitalized constitutional process."

It also says that "American Communists fight for conditions that will lead to a peaceful Socialist revolution \* \* \* because this is the preferable and the least painful method of basic change."

The rightist trend of the convention was indicated also in the emphasis on united front tactics in a resolution adopted regarding the 1960 election campaign. This resolution refers specifically to the need for giving "special attention to the Democratic party through which the major sections of labor function in the elections."

Typical of the trend also was the basic change announced in the party's theoretical position regarding American Negroes. A resolution concerning Negroes specifically discarded the former American Communist conception of that racial group in this country as a separate nation entitled to self-determination on whether they wished to remain part of the United States.

Instead the party has adopted a new line that regards the Negroes as a "component part of the whole American nation."

### Offices Are at Stake

A bitter fight over party offices appeared to be raging most of yesterday. By mid-evening elections for the national committee had not started.

Party officials announced only that a preliminary proposal to confine the national committee to fifty members had been rejected and a decision to enlarge the committee to sixty members, all to be elected at the convention, had been adopted instead.

Indications that a major purge of the party leadership might be in the offing appeared to be contained in the resolution on the Communist party organization, which declared: "Many of our leaders remain isolated from our party membership and the mass movement."

The nature of the disputes over leadership on the convention floor remained hidden because as usual reporters were barred from the convention itself. They received only incomplete briefings from the party spokesman, Arnold Johnson, who is national legislative director of the party.

Other officers elected early this morning included William Z. Foster as chairman emeritus, Eugene Dennis as chairman, Claude Lightfoot and Elizabeth Gurley Flynn as vice chairmen and Benjamin J. Davis as national secretary.

The party spokesman who disclosed that Mr. Hall was the new leader insisted, however, that Mr. Davis and Mr. Dennis would have a relationship of "equality" with respect to Mr. Hall. But the evidence seemed to indicate that Mr. Dennis, the former party leader, had been kicked upstairs.

The convention decided to start a Midwest edition of The Worker, the party's weekly organ, beginning May 1 next year. The resolution said that The Worker's circulation at present was between 13,000 and 14,000. An average circulation of 14,627 was reported in a sworn statement published last week.

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