

Victory Banquet Hails Appearance of Foster

Veteran Communist Leader Cites Growing Power of Whole Working Class—Sees Soviet Europe If New War Is Launched

Fifteen hundred New Yorkers sighed with repletion when the chicken, the cake and coffee was cleared away at the Daily Worker Victory Banquet in New Star Casino Sunday night and prepared to listen. Several old-timers who had been cynical enough to eat before the banquet sighed too, but also prepared to listen.

The microphone apparatus spoke up clearly and loudly and demanded, "Where's Carruthers of Pittsburgh? This is the tenth call. Carruthers wanted down here at the front table with the rest of the honored guests!"

Poor Carruthers, being a modest man, had sneaked in late and was being greeted by friends in the back of the hall. They shoved him brutally forward, and he had to march the length of the hall in a blaze of publicity.

Sensitive About Meal Hours

"You spent over an hour eating," accused the loud speaker, under the gentle persuasion of Clarence Hathaway, editor of the Daily Worker. Probably Clarence is sensitive to the length of meal times because he has to get work out of the Daily Worker staff, who, contrary to all experience of the past, also eat these days, thank you, on account of the magnificent support given the "Daily" in the campaign for funds.

"Since you wasted all this time eating," continued the loud speaker remorselessly, "the rest of the program will have to be rushed through. Just because the 'Daily's' campaign was oversubscribed doesn't mean the Party doesn't need funds. Lots of struggles are going on. Let's have the big contributions first. I think I see someone approaching from the I.W.O. Yes, it's Schaffer, and he comes forward very leisurely, and he says, that as a beginning he brings \$632. Did a chairman ever have such an easy job?"

After that everybody pitched in. The total was \$1,674.

Foster Hailed

But that, as useful as it is in the fight against incipient fascism here, wasn't the main point. The thing the meeting went wild over was the first public appearance, back to work again, of the veteran leader of the Communist Party, Wm. Z. Foster, now recovering from a long and dangerous and very painful spell of illness. Foster, in a voice that gained strength as he proceeded until at the end he was speaking with his old time vigor and forcefulness, said:

"It is a little difficult for me to speak tonight, but all that I can say is that I am a thousand times glad to be back with you again. I hope, in the near future, to be able to resume a measure of activity, at least; and let me hope full activity soon. On beginning to work again, it seems to me the situation is such as to encourage one to redouble his efforts.

"I have just returned from the Soviet Union. There we find the workers and farmers blazing along the path of Socialism. When we look at our own country here we are bound to be encouraged by a new wave of radicalization that is sweeping among the workers of this country expressed by a thousand different signs none the least of which is the growth in



WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

organization and influence by our Party.

"We may well be sure that we are traveling the right way and as the workers mobilize their forces all over the world we see that capitalism continues on its downward path. Capitalism now is manifestly unable to extricate itself from the general crisis in which it is more increasingly having recourse to the desperate measure of fascism and war.

Cites War Signs

"I am convinced that the war they are preparing—and I saw many signs of it in coming through the Mediterranean from the Soviet Union—if the capitalists try to launch it, the workers of the world will say the last word. When that word is spoken it will be at least a Soviet Europe!

"Comrades, as I said at the outset, it is not my purpose to make a speech. Let me begin a little bit easy. I will probably make other speeches in the future.

"Here I only want to say that I am very glad to be with you again. For many long, hard months I was a little skeptical, and others were, too. But here I am. You cannot kill a Bolshevik so easily."

There were various other speakers. First and foremost Earl Browder, weary from the strain of his recent arduous labors, but thrilled with the progress of the united front, which he described amidst the enthusiasm of the gathering. The greetings of the Communist Party of Canada, which just will not stay suppressed and has now finally burst out from under illegality brought more cheers. De Fazio, just back from the conference in Europe of the Italian anti-Fascists abroad, told something of what was being done to bring to an end the rule of Mussolini.

There was a fine orchestra and there was music, cheers and songs—an atmosphere of victory.