

# NEW STRAIN SEEN DIVIDING U.S. REDS

## Party Committee Embroiled After Convention Names Hall to Replace Dennis

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

New fissures appear to have opened in the American Communist party in the wake of the major change in leadership voted at its seventeenth national convention, which ended here early yesterday morning.

In a sharp dispute at a two-hour meeting at the Theresa Hotel after midnight yesterday, the newly elected sixty-member national committee chose Gus Hall as the party's leader in place of Eugene Dennis. The dispute was so intense and so long, that at 2:15 A. M. the national committee adjourned without electing the national executive committee as had been planned.

The new party hierarchy set up at the national committee meeting appeared to have been aimed at assuaging ruffled feelings as much as possible by giving the key factional leaders high-sounding titles while reserving actual power for Hall.

Those given what appear to be largely honorific titles include William Z. Foster, the aged party leader, who was re-elected chairman emeritus; Dennis, who was elected chairman; Claude Lightfoot, Illinois Communist leader, and Elizabeth Garley Flynn, who were named vice chairmen, and former New York City Councilman Benjamin J. Davis, who was elected national secretary.

Hall will rule the party from his new post of general secretary, the same title Joseph Stalin had when he exercised his dictatorship over the Soviet Union. The party spokesman



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**TOP COMMUNIST:** Gus Hall, new general secretary of the American Communist party, after his election here yesterday.

who announced Hall's assumption of power made no attempt to hide that Hall would be boss, and claimed only a "certain equality" for Davis and Dennis.

The replacement of Dennis had been foreshadowed by a resolution adopted Sunday. That resolution declared that "certain weaknesses in the party's work can be attributed to short-comings in the work of the national leadership." The Dennis regime was accused of having failed to end factionalism, lagging in solving ideological problems, not working hard enough for a united front and failing to criticize itself adequately.

Hall says he is 48 years old and was born in Iron, Minn., the son of a "blacklisted" iron miner. His father was a charter member of the Communist party, he said, and enlisted him

in the party in 1927 when he was 16.

Hall claims to have been a worker in the railroad, iron and steel and lumber industries, and to have finished his formal schooling with the eighth grade. He is said to have been trained in Moscow during the Thirties.

### Served 5½ Years in Jail

He was convicted under the Smith Act as one of eleven "first-string" Communists tried at the beginning of the Fifties for conspiracy to advocate violent overthrow of the Government. He fled to Mexico but was brought back and served five and a half years in jail before being released in 1957.

He is married and has two children, a daughter, Barbara, of college age, and a younger son, Arvo.

Hall was Midwest secretary of the party before getting his present post.