

Labor's Cold Warrior-I

Lovestone Once Told Off Stalin, Now Directs Vast Anti-Red Activity

First of a Series

By Dan Kurzman

Washington Post Staff Writer

One spring day in 1929, Josef Stalin, at a Kremlin meeting, glared at an insubordinate American Communist leader and rasped:

"There is plenty of room in the cemeteries of the Soviet Union for people like you."

The American, shaking with suppressed anger, stormed back:

"Such remarks show you are unfit to be the leader of the Russian working class, much less of the international working class!"

Stalin is dead, but his departure has not pacified the anger of the American — Jay Lovestone — either with him-

self or with the ghost of the man who was once his hero.

As Director of the AFL-CIO's Department of International Affairs since 1963, Lovestone, a founder and former Secretary General of the American Communist Party, is a barely known figure, even in diplomatic circles.

Yet, few men in Washington who are as little publicized yield as much power and influence.

Lovestone, a white-haired man with a large nose and easy smile; is the "gray eminence" behind AFL-CIO Pres-

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United Press International
JAY LOVESTONE

lent George Meany on all matters concerning foreign affairs.

Such matters are by no means a fringe aspect of the labor federation's activities: More than \$2 million, 20 per cent of its total annual budget — is devoted to overseas operations.

Meany's interest in these operations is enormous. His power in conducting them is virtually sovereign within the labor movement. And he almost invariably listens to Lovestone in determining how to use this power.

Lovestone's advice — and his methods of implementing it — are crucial in shaping the private foreign policy of the AFL-CIO.

In the late 1940s, he unified the international free labor movement and strongarmed the Communists away from sabotaging the Marshall Plan.

In 1964, he supported the refusal of longshoremen to load ships with American

wheat intended for Russia.

In 1965, he used the AFL-CIO's influence to get Latin American labor backing for the U.S. military intervention in the Dominican Republic.

Lovestone is, in fact, Meany's secretary of state, directing a worldwide operation that parallels, and often converges with, the U.S. diplomatic network. And he runs a vast intelligence system that appears to be informally, but tightly integrated with the operations of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Few Are Dispassionate

Few who know him can look at Lovestone dispassionately. His foes, mainly labor leaders from the old CIO, maintain that he has a totalitarian mentality that has simply been carried over from one world to the other.

They see him as a man who, disillusioned with the god he had once worshiped, evokes its image everywhere so that he might continue to curse and flog it in an endless psychological rite of expiation. He

views the world, they argue, as being divided into Communist and anti-Communist sectors that must inevitably clash in a great final battle.

His supporters, principally old AFL colleagues, say that his relentless effort to push a hard Cold War line is realistic and based on an intimate knowledge of the workings of the Communist mind. Lovestone, they maintain, is helping to save the Free World from communism through peaceful means.

Whether critic or advocate, those who know Lovestone are reluctant to speak about him. Lovestone himself, while graciously offering his views over a three-hour breakfast, would not speak on the record.

His critics are afraid to talk for fear of losing their jobs or being branded as "soft on communism."

"If Jay finds out I've spoken to you my career is dead," said one such source.

Often in Headlines

Lovestone's Communist past has occasionally plunged his name into the headlines. In 1954, former Rep. Kit Clardy (R-Mich.) charged that he headed "a gigantic world-wide network of Communists" in Government—an error in fact that stemmed, ironically, from the very anonymity Lovestone craves.

The mystery surrounding Lovestone reaches back to his Communist days, when even in the conspiratorial atmosphere of Bolshevik politics he was regarded as an enigma.

Benjamin Gitlow, a fellow disillusioned Party comrade (who, it should be noted, was personally hostile to Lovestone), writes in his book, "I Confess," that Lovestone "was unmarried (he still is), as far as anyone knew, but beyond that not a man in the Party knew anything more about him."

Lovestone has carried with him from his Communist days other notable characteristics. For one, his tremendous energy. Though 67, he arises each morning at 6 and works often until after midnight, maintaining an apartment in New York but spending much of his time here.

He devotes about 20 hours a day to the study of international affairs, particularly news from behind the Iron Curtain, and prepares an endless number of letters, articles,

and AFL-CIO resolutions.

Gitlow writes that Lovestone "was able to attach himself to a group or a leader in such a way as to make his services indispensable, his reward being inclusion in the top leadership of the movement."

He tells of one incident in which Lovestone, as an assistant to Party leader Charles Ruthenberg, was peeved when he had to move his desk from the partition of his boss's office so that Ruthenberg could enjoy privacy when his girl friend visited the office. On the death of the young lady, writes Gitlow, "Ruthenberg wept at the funeral . . . and Lovestone had his desk moved back to the strategic spot."

Born in Lithuania

Lovestone was born in Lithuania and came to the United States with his parents at the age of 10, living in New York where his father became a sexton in a synagogue. He graduated from the College of the City of New York, then studied law and accountancy and worked as an envelope-

maker, druggist, statistician, and social worker.

Joining the Socialist Party while in college, he helped to organize the Communist Party at a left-wing Socialist convention in 1919, and became a member of its executive committee. He then served as editor of the official Party newspaper "the Communist," and eventually became Secretary General of the Party.

"Lovestone," writes Gitlow, was "a veritable Tammany chieftain among us Communists. One of his most successful methods was to call a comrade into his office, tell him extremely confidential information, obtaining in return a solemn promise that the matter would not be disclosed to a soul. In that way he won the support of numerous Party members, who believed they were particularly favored by him . . . Lovestone was a high-pressure super-salesman of communism."

As a leader of the Comintern, Lovestone, at its congress in Moscow in 1923, supported Nikolai Bukharin in his struggle for power with Stalin. Bukharin, who was later exe-

cuted, wanted, unlike Stalin, to give Communist parties outside of Russia a relatively large degree of "party democracy," and to pursue within Russia a gradual approach to communization of the economy.

Lovestone felt that Stalin was wrong in his analysis that American capitalism was about to disintegrate, and he wanted to be free to gear American Communist policy to long-range struggle rather than to immediate revolution.

In early 1929, Lovestone went to Moscow to argue his case, but the Soviet leader angrily charged Lovestone with promoting factionalism.

Expulsion Ordered

Detained in Moscow, Lovestone managed to sneak out without the Comintern's knowledge. The American party, under Stalin's orders, immediately expelled him.

Lovestone then established a Communist opposition party in the United States. The few hundred of his followers who comprised it became known as Lovestonites. Their mission: To reform the Comintern and the Communist Party from without. In this effort, he sought, and failed again, to win over Stalin.

In 1936, he converted his group into the Independent Labor League of America, calling for a dictatorship of the proletariat, but one "free from the errors and terrors of Stalin," in the words of a pamphlet Lovestone published.

At this stage in his gradual political conversion, Lovestone entered the battle against Stalinism in the American trade union movement—specifically the United Auto Workers Union (IUGWU).

In 1940, while the Nazis, helped by an alliance with Russia, were overrunning Western Europe, Lovestone angrily disbanded his organization, gave up Marxism, and went to work mobilizing support for the Allies in coordination with underground groups in occupied Europe.

A parallel effort was being made by IUGWU President David Dubinsky, who got to know Lovestone well enough to peg him as the man to direct the post-war international relations department of his union.

The principal function of

this department was to prevent the Communists from grabbing control of the world free trade union movement.

At about the same time, Dubinsky, AFL President William Green, AFL Secretary Treasurer Meany, and other labor leaders set up a Free Trade Union Committee, largely with Dubinsky funds, to fight communism in and out of the labor sphere.

On Dubinsky's recommendation, Lovestone was appointed Executive Secretary, a position he held concurrently with his garment union job.

In this position, he worked

closely with Meany, a staunch anti-Communist who appreciated Lovestone's intimate knowledge of communist and his ability to express his anti-communist in Daily Worker semantics.

In domestic labor affairs, Meany had little chance to exert much influence in view of Green's powerful position. But as Green cared little about international affairs, Meany found that he could build a kingdom of his own in that sphere.

And Jay Lovestone was just the man to help him.

NEXT: Lovestone's international empire.