

PARTIES
ISSUES
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1948 ELECTIONS

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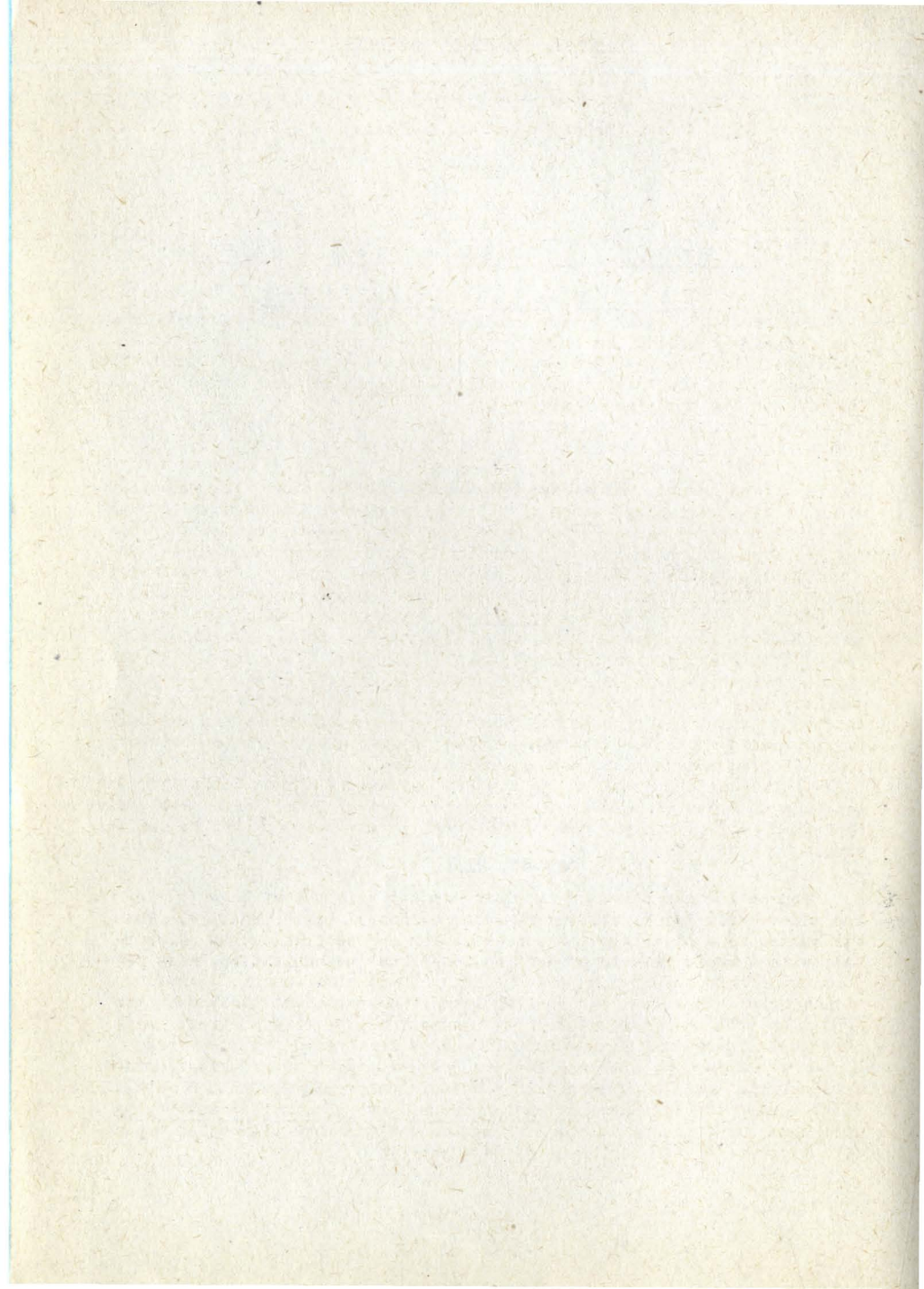
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IN THE 1948 ELECTIONS.

(Brief Review and Analysis)



By "AMERICUS"

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The perspectives of the United States Presidential elections of 1948 are unusually complex. In order to approach an analysis of these complexities with certain fixed points of orientation, we begin by re-stating in summary form the chief (main, central) economic problem of the United States with its historical background.

I.

American economy has always been geared closely into the capitalist world market. This dependence upon the world market is now operative to its highest degree. The character of this world market relationship has shifted from period to period. From the date of independence up to, approximately, the Civil War (1861-65), America was chiefly a raw-material and agrarian hinterland to European economy. In the last half of the XIX Century, America was in a process of rapid industrialization, serving as a field of investment for European capital, and still exporting mainly raw materials and agricultural products. With the XX Century the United States emerged as a major imperialist power; gigantic trusts arose to dominate American economy, export of capital began, commodity exports started to shift their center of gravity from raw materials and agricultural products to industrial commodities, and within the latter category to shift from consumption goods to capital goods. The First World War (1914-1918) was the occasion for the U.S. to make a sudden shift from the position of a debtor to that of a creditor country. The Second World War confirmed the U.S. in the position of virtual world-monopolist in capital export.

Source for the flood of American capital export that began during and after World War I, was the rapid expansion of basic industry. This was marked by a high tempo of concentration and centralization of capital, with a rapid rise in production technique (mechanization, mass production methods, electrical power, etc.). During World War I, America utilized her historical and geographical advantages, accentuated by her isolation from the field of military operations, to take a great leap forward in industrial production, to occupy first place in the world. During World War II, the same factors operated, with the added advantages arising from her already-achieved industrial supremacy, with the result that, during the last war, America increased her productive capacity by more than 50 per cent, an absolute sum many times more than total productive capacity at the beginning of World War I.

America's leap forward in the rank of world powers was an outstanding historical example of "the law of uneven development" (Lenin), with all its consequences. American productive capacity had already, after World War I, outstripped the expansion of available markets. The world economic crisis of 1929, therefore, found its origin and most acute expression in the United States. A partial and vacillating recovery began only in 1933, as a result of measures of governmental economic intervention initiated by Roosevelt. This economic crisis persisted until the outbreak of World War II, at which time American industrial capacity was employed only to about 65 per cent, and ten million workers were still unemployed.

After World War II, the same factors which brought about a world economic crisis within ten years after the previous war, are present in a greatly intensified form. Uneven development is further accentuated, with America holding an absolute preponderance of capitalist productive forces, while available markets are more disorganized and restricted than even before in peacetime. A rival economic system, socialism, which after World War I was young, weak, and untried, has today expanded its influence over a further large part of Europe, and exhibited during World War II the capacity to defeat the concentrated might of capitalist Europe on the field of battle. Three out of six world-imperialist powers have collapsed in ruins. The colonial and semi-colonial countries are in the deep ferment of struggle for independence. All the factors from which arose the economic crisis of 1929, with its accompanying political crises, operate today with double or triple force.

At the same time American economy's surplus productive capacity, which can be employed only for the world market, has also reached unparalleled volume. American economy can continue to operate only by securing new markets, far larger than any now available. Without such markets, a repetition of the economic crisis of 1929, of a multiplied explosiveness and depth, is inevitable.

This is the dominant problem which America faces. This is the underlying reality, upon the basis of which the 1948 election struggle will unfold its issues and alignments.

II.

America has three possible avenues of approach to the solution of this basic economic problem, three possible modes of adjustment of American economy to world economy. They may be summed up as follows:

(1) Immediate transition to socialism in America: This is doubtless, abstractly considered, the only radical and complete answer to the problem. It assumes that history has placed on the order-of-the-day for America, as well as for Europe, the immediate replacement of capitalism with a new socialism system, that the general crisis of capitalism has matured to such a degree that no solution, even of a provisional and temporary character, for a few decades, is any longer possible within the framework of capitalism.

(2) Restore world capitalism under American hegemony: This is the spontaneous, "natural", program of the big bourgeoisie, given its clearest ideological expression by Winston Churchill and its most powerful support by the "Truman Doctrine" and the Marshall Plan. It assumes the necessity to "contain" the Soviet Union within her 1939 borders (with a probable later effort to destroy her there), the return of the "new democracies" to capitalism under American auspices, restoration of the colonial empires under American control, and the forcible extension of markets for American surplus products and capital exports by military means, with a huge armament program supplying the necessary immediate market. Its logical conclusion is the immediate preparation for World War III.

(3) The "Roosevelt" Program: This recognizes the general crisis of world capitalism, the irresistible trend toward socialism in most of Europe, the necessity of independence of the colonies, and the fact that World War III will bring the destruction of capitalism as a whole, including that of America, and the laying waste of a large part of the world. It proposes a modus vivendi between capitalism and socialism, with their rivalry restrained within peaceful, non-military, channels. It proposes to maintain American capitalism, with that of Britain and a few other countries, by peaceful means, solving the problem of markets by (a) expanded consumption at home; (b) large credits abroad without political discrimination; (c) industrialization of economically-backward nations under control of the United Nations; (d) maximum economic intercourse between socialist and capitalist countries. This program does not go beyond the framework of bourgeois thought and motivation, i.e., it is also a mode of expression of American imperialist policy, but is limited by recognition of the realities of the post-war world.

The first (1) of the above-described policies has no effective expression today in American politics. Even the Communist Party disclaims it.

The electoral struggle in 1948 in the United States, therefore, occurs on the basis of the conflict between the second (2) and third (3), between the spontaneous ambition of American capitalists to rule the world, on the one hand, and the Roosevelt program for a lasting peace on the other hand.

In the economic sphere, the issue for America is to find a solution to the problem of markets. In the political sphere, it is the issue of war or peace. This is the decisive issue that shapes the whole development of the 1948 elections.

III.

The Democratic Party, the Republican Party, and the New (or Progressive) Party, are the three major centers of political alignment and struggle in the 1948 elections.

All three Parties proceed from a common basis. They all explicitly declare the essential desirability of the existing American social and economic system (capitalist-imperialism), they affirm its soundness, its superiority to any other conceivable system. In short, all three are Parties of American Imperialism.

Perhaps most of the active and vocal adherents of the New Party would indignantly deny that their's is a party of American Imperialism; they would even claim it to be anti-imperialist. If one seeks, however, to lay bare scientifically the actual realities of American politics, it is necessary to avoid entanglement in the emotional semantics of American politics, for which "imperialism" is a term of abuse applying only to the bald program for American conquest of the world, and applying not at all to the Roosevelt program. If imperialism is a stage of capitalism, however, its highest and last stage before socialism, and if between capitalist-imperialism and socialism there is no conceivable intermediate stage -- and upon this basic concept, established by Lenin, this present analysis is founded -- then it must follow that any program which does not go outside, and break, the framework of capitalism, is not an anti-imperialist program, and the Party which proposes to apply that program, and that program only, is not an anti-imperialist Party. (The "new democracies" in Eastern Europe do not represent a "new stage" of capitalism; they are, on the contrary, a form of transition to socialism, within which capitalist economic forms persist for a certain time).

This point must be established from the beginning, if the pitfall of Utopian illusions regarding the New Party is to be avoided.

All three Parties, therefore, have a programmatic basis in common. That basis is the maintenance of the existing social and economic system of America essentially unchanged.

That is not to say, however, that the differences between the three Parties are not of the most far-reaching importance. They certainly are. These differences play a decisive role in determining the role of America in the world, and thereby the immediate fate of the world itself.

It must be clear that we are evaluating programs and parties in America, and not in general or for some other country, for example Poland. The Roosevelt program, proposed for internal application in Poland (as distinguished from its application to Polish-American relations), would be reactionary because it is anti-socialist, and Poland has already entered decisively upon the path to socialism. For Poland, the Roosevelt program is valid and acceptable only as a system of relations between nations of differing and rival systems. For America its validity, at this particular historical moment, is both internal as well

as external, for national policy as well as for international relations. Within America, the Roosevelt program is the common platform of all progressive forces within the nation.

The Republican Party is the natural, historical, and inevitable champion of reactionary, aggressive American imperialism moving toward world conquest.

The Democratic Party was the original vehicle and instrument of the Roosevelt Policy; but it has become, under Truman's leadership, the prisoner of the Republican Party on the dominant issue, even though it exhibits wild fluctuations of position on separate partial issues in its efforts to maintain its mass support and its position as ruling party. As a consequence of becoming prisoner of the Republican Party on the issue of peace, the Democratic Party has split, to give birth to the New Party.

The New Party is the conscious expression of the Roosevelt program, for solving the problem of markets and for a modus vivendi between the capitalist and socialist sectors of the world, and thereby securing a lasting peace.

These are the decisive factors and issues of the 1948 Presidential elections. All other factors and issues are subordinate to these.

IV.

If this basic presentation of parties and issues is relatively simple, it must not, nevertheless, be expected that the course of the campaign, its unfolding in struggle, will follow straight and simple lines. On the contrary.

It must be expected, for example, that the Republican Party (the inner-circles of which are the core of the war party in America), will in the course of the campaign step forward as the sharpest critic of the Democratic Party precisely on the grounds that it has led America into the danger-zone of war. It will present itself, the Republican Party, as the sole possessor not only of the will to peace, but also the knowledge of how peace can be achieved. It will accuse Truman of responsibility for bad American-Soviet relations, and will declare that a Republican President, and only a Republican President, can "sit down with Stalin" and work out an acceptable compromise.

It is for the purpose of preserving the preconditions of this central point of election strategy, that the Republican Party maintains its unremitting pressure upon the Truman Administration to make not the slightest gesture toward rapprochement with the Soviet Union.

The Republican high command is determined not to permit the Democratic Administration to settle any outstanding issues between America and the Soviet Union -- until the elections are over and a Republican President has been named. Otherwise, it might lose the elections.

This strategic concept is the Republican "ace in the hole" with which it is confident it will be able to take the final trick of even the most hotly-contested "cardgame".

The Democratic Party, with Truman as its candidate, has no possible weapon for defeating this basic Republican campaign strategy. Truman has given so many commitments, delivered into Republican hands so many hostages, that he has lost all semblance of freedom to manoeuvre on the issue of international relations. The extreme clumsiness and embarrassment of Truman and Marshall, in dealing with the current exchange of notes with the Soviet Union and with Stalin's answer to Wallace, is only an expression of how completely they are the prisoners of the Republican Party.

This Republican strategy holds good even if, by some miracle, Truman should muster up courage to make some "reasonable" gesture toward Moscow. In that case, the Republicans would merely open up with two batteries of big guns instead of one -- they would thunder against his "appeasement" at the same time they would damn his failure to make peace.

There is only one way in which the Democratic Party can escape from this Republican prison, and thereby regain a fighting chance to win the elections. That way is to discard Truman and get another candidate.

It is for this reason that, at the time this is written (middle of May), the proposal of Eisenhower as Democratic Party candidate cannot be considered a closed question. The Democratic Party cannot possibly win with Truman; it would almost certainly win with Eisenhower. And with Eisenhower it could trump the Republican strategical ace.

The basis of the "boom" for Eisenhower is his truly astonishing popularity in the country. This popularity is a mass phenomenon without any apparent political explanation. The public knows nothing of what policies Eisenhower stands for or inclines toward, on any question whatever. It is even a mystery as to whether he is a Republican or a Democrat. The first "Eisenhower boom" arose within the Republican Party. Politically Eisenhower is a completely blank paper. Perhaps this fact in part explains his enormous popularity -- each person can fill in the blank for himself, according to his most ardent desires!

In any case, Eisenhower is a candidate "made to order" for the solution of the Democratic Party's problem of winning the election. He has decisively indicated he will not be a candidate on the Republican ticket. An overwhelming "national call to service" might still make him the Democratic candidate. Such a decision can come, of course, only from such "high" instances which are able to "persuade" Truman to resign the nomination at the last moment, and "persuade" Eisenhower that the nation really calls him. There are such authoritative voices which could work this "miracle", if the American bourgeoisie feels in time the urgent need to "clear the decks" and get a new start, without the encumbrance of the old personalities and commitments. As for the people, the masses, it is already known they would welcome General Ike as President with a deep sigh of relief.

Thus, although Truman is the only avowed candidate for the Democratic Party nomination, in fact we must consider that there are two, with Eisenhower's name playing the most significant role, up to the very moment when the Democratic Convention makes its choice.

V.

In its choice of candidate, the Republican Party has an embarrassment of riches.

Taft, Dewey, Stassen, Vandenberg, and a dozen lesser names are at the command of the Republican Party Convention. Any one of them could win, without great difficulty, against the only avowed candidate for the Democratic nomination, Truman.

It appears, on the surface, therefore, that a Republican victory is certain, and the only problem is whom will the Republican Convention prefer as its President.

But the Republican problem in choosing a candidate is not so easy as it looks. Experienced Party leaders are keenly aware that victory is by no means certain. The Republican Convention gathers two weeks before the Democratic Convention. The Republicans must choose their candidate first. Therefore they cannot choose under the assumption that their candidate is running against Truman; they must choose their candidate as though he must win against Eisenhower!

If they choose Taft (their natural choice), who is their weakest vote-getter, in the hope that, after all, it is only Truman whom he must defeat, they have no guarantee whatever that two weeks later the Democratic Convention will not unitedly, and with deep enthusiasm, have accepted Truman's declination "for the good of the party", and named the popular non-party "hero", Eisenhower.

In the Republican Convention, therefore, the various candidates must be measured against not Truman but Eisenhower.

This situation will, in all probability, result in the early elimination of Taft. Even against Truman, Taft would need to use more of the Republican heavy artillery in order to win than any other candidate. Against Eisenhower, Taft looks like a sure loser. And the Republicans cannot content themselves in 1948 with a sure loser.

The chances for Dewey's nomination are, however, improved by the looming menace of the Eisenhower boom. Dewey is in the paradoxical position that his hopes to win the nomination rise to the same degree that hopes for winning the final election grow dim. The threat of Eisenhower may win him the nomination -- and lose him the Presidency!

Until the Eisenhower boom arose in the Democratic Party, Dewey's stock on the political market was declining. His strongest claim for the nomination rested upon the claim that only he could be sure to win

New York's electoral vote, a key factor in all elections. The New Party split knocked the bottom out of this claim because, running against Truman and Wallace, any Republican candidate could win New York. Running against Eisenhower and Wallace, a popular Republican could win New York. But against Eisenhower, with Wallace withdrawn from the race, only Dewey could possibly win New York for the Republican Party.

Is there any likelihood that Wallace would withdraw from the campaign? Wallace denies it most emphatically. Probably he would not. But -- Wallace some months ago remarked that he would withdraw if the Democrats nominated a candidate "like Eisenhower". That was before the Eisenhower boom, and the remark was only rhetorical, as if that was an impossible supposition. There is, however, the further known fact, that Wallace's vote will be large against Truman, but will be small against Eisenhower -- which is, in political realities, almost the same as if Wallace should withdraw. All these considerations have served to boost Dewey's political stock back up to its previous high place in the nomination market.

Stassen is the fresh young outsider, the runner-up of the Republican pre-convention race. He has capitalized on popular disgust with old-time political figures, to become a serious contender for the nomination.

Stassen, however, has weakened his position for the final show-down by compromising himself in the struggle for delegates. When he began his campaign in 1947, he looked like the logical man to operate the Republican grand strategy against Truman on the peace issue; he ruined that potentiality, however, by a rivalry with Truman as to which is the most extreme Soviet-baiter. Last year Stassen wore "the liberal mantle of Wendell Willkie" -- the same Willkie who before the Supreme Court fought for and won the Communist Schneiderman's right to citizenship -- with more or less grace; but since then Stassen has become chief exponent for "outlawing" the Communists, so that even a Dewey is able to become a "flaming liberal" in debate against Stassen. Last year Stassen was an "independent", defying the "money power" and "machine politicians"; but since then his obvious deals with both money and machine, in the grab for delegates, has made a mockery of the old pose. Stassen has built himself up thereby into one of the three major candidates before the Convention, but has weakened his chance in the final showdown, particularly in face of the Eisenhower "specter".

Vandenberg is not an avowed candidate. With Taft, Dewey and Stassen dividing the majority, however, a deadlock seems quite probable, out of which Vandenberg seems most likely to emerge the winner. Or if, for personal reasons, he declines, he will be the power behind the throne to choose his substitute. He is the polished politician, who has carefully preserved the ability to manoeuvre on either side of any question, especially American-Soviet relations, peace, and civil liberties. He has avoided feuds, even with that incorrigible old feudist Colonel McCormick of the Chicago Tribune. He could "unite the party", and man its heaviest artillery. He could win easily against Truman, and make the strongest showing against Eisenhower. Vandenberg holds the best position to command the Republican nomination for President.

VI.

The New Party has Wallace, with no competition. The New Party was created as the vehicle for Wallace's candidacy. It is the closest approach to a "one-man party" that ever played a major role in American politics.

And without any doubt Wallace is playing a major role. His simple personal announcement that he would run for the Presidency resulted, overnight, in destroying Truman's hopes for re-election and plunged the Democratic Party into a deep crisis. Wallace's act in leading its left wing out of the Democratic Party touched off another split on the right wing in the South.

Wallace launched the New Party entirely upon the basis of a political idea, peace and the restoration of the Roosevelt inheritance. It showed itself the most powerful idea that ever operated without organization in American political life.

For the New Party was launched literally without any organization at all. It had to be constructed from the ground up. (It is true, of course, that Wallace commanded from the beginning the support of the Communist Party; but it is not an integral section of the New Party, it was never a mass party, and it has declined both organizationally and in political and moral authority since Roosevelt's death.)

The demonstrated depth and volume of support to Wallace and the New Party raises an interesting question, whether the response would not have been even greater to an equally bold effort to restore Roosevelt's policy within the Democratic Party, with Wallace contesting the Democratic Party primaries against Truman, fighting for delegates to the Convention, building his organization within, and finally splitting the Convention if the reactionaries defeated him. Such a possibility is now water under the bridge; but it points to an extremely important fact, namely, that the power of Wallace's idea goes far deeper than the number he can mobilize in the New Party.

Wallace's appeal is based, not on abstract promises, but in the living experience of the masses. It appeals to the majority of Americans who elected and re-elected Roosevelt four times; who saw America under Roosevelt's leadership pulled out of chaos and desperate economic crisis; who were lifted out of starvation by the social legislation Roosevelt sponsored; who participated, with Roosevelt's help, in building a mass trade union movement, raising wages, improving working conditions, shortening hours, raising living standards, extending civil rights, protecting minorities; who saw and approved Roosevelt's friendly relations with the Soviet Union, which culminated in the war alliance which crushed fascism, and promised an enduring peace. These things were realities, not promises; Americans lived through them and took part in them.

Wallace calls upon America to return to these realities of the Roosevelt period. He is the reincarnation of Roosevelt. That is his power and his appeal.

VII.

Can the New Party win the elections with this tremendous appeal it holds for a majority of Americans, and place Wallace in the White House?

The answer is, No.

According to the opinion of the writer, checked with the judgment of a number of others who have proved to be sound observers over many years, Wallace's vote against Truman and any Republican would run to a maximum of ten to eleven million, while against Eisenhower and any Republican it will fall to three or four million; that is, from six to 20 per cent of the total vote in the country.

Why this great gap between Roosevelt's popular vote, which ranged in four elections between 53 and 63 per cent, and Wallace's prospective vote?

Why cannot Wallace gain a vote in some degree approaching Roosevelt's, since Wallace was identified with Roosevelt, and stands for the same things?

There is no simple, single answer to this question. We can, however, indicate some of the most important partial answers. This will, at the same time, show at what points the Wallace campaign can, by appropriate measures, most surely be strengthened.

First: The split with the Democratic Party inevitably leaves behind many supporters, who will not go to the length of going into a new party. Thus Wallace automatically loses many of the advantages that Roosevelt had, of an established party with important bases of power in the country. Roosevelt offered his supporters the protection of a powerful organization, the participation in power, the expectation of immediate and continued victory. Wallace calls upon his supporters to risk everything in the building of a new organization, the sharing of sacrifice, and the expectation of electoral victory only in an undefined future. These disadvantages of the Wallace campaign, compared with Roosevelt's, cannot be overcome.

Second: Roosevelt, from the beginning, had organized labor in his support; under his encouragement the trade unions grew in membership from three to 14 million, and extended to cover all the main, basic, mass-production industries, and were the very foundation of Roosevelt's popular power. Wallace, in contrast, begins his campaign with the expressed hostility of the majority of organized labor and the support of only that minority identified as "the left", where Communist influence is still dominant. This factor of organized labor, the trade unions, is so supremely important that it is given a separate detailed examination below.

Third: Roosevelt was able to impose upon his extremely heterogeneous following a certain minimum of team-work, of discipline to a common plan of campaign. Wallace has as yet been unable to impose such team-work upon his two chief groups of organizational forces, the Communists and their close sympathizers, on one hand, and the non-Communist middle-class groupings on the other. Instead of team-work between these two groups there

is being revealed a rather sharp polarization. For example, the Wallace organization in Massachusetts is dominated by non-Communist middle-class intellectuals, the leaders of whom quite frankly express a policy of "freezing out" the Communists from all leading posts. On the other hand, the New York State organization is obviously dominated by the Communists, while the non-Communists are either joining the C.P. or quietly dropping out of activity. There is almost no free working together of the two groups. Interestingly, the Massachusetts organization grows much faster than that of New York (it's state convention was four times as big), despite the fact that Wallace's potential voting strength is many times greater in the latter State. In both cases it is clear that growth of the New Party is severely hampered by this lack of team-work, and the ground is being prepared for future internal difficulties.

Fourth: Roosevelt, in all four election campaigns, found it necessary to cross party lines, to supplement the Democratic Party, old and established as it was, by alliances reaching to the right into the Republican ranks, and to the left to include the state Farmer-Labor parties, the American Labor Party and Liberal Party in New York, absorbing the mass following of the Socialist Party, and even maintaining a de facto, unofficial, alliance with the Communist Party. Wallace is able to preserve only one of these Roosevelt extensions of his campaign organization, namely the unofficial alliance with the Communists. This leaves a large part of his potential vote untouched by organization.

Fifth: Roosevelt, following his flexible policy of alliances, never hesitated to endorse for Congress an outstanding progressive on another ticket, when the candidate of his own party was either less progressive or with little prospects of victory. Wallace is prevented from following this course by the organizational jealousy of his local followers, who demand full concentration upon New Party candidates for Congress regardless of their chances of winning. The best Wallace has been able to secure is a limited application of the tactic of "cross filing" (entering the same candidate on both Democratic and New Party tickets), and this only in California. Thus most Congress candidates, hopeful of winning on a major ticket, are driven away, rather than being attracted to, the Wallace campaign. And with the candidates, of course, goes a large part of their local followers.

Sixth: Roosevelt always won New York State, through the expedient of presenting his name on several different tickets. For example, in 1944 the voters could cast their ballot for Roosevelt on four different lines on the voting-machines — Democratic, American-Labor, Liberal, and Independent. The Democratic Party vote was a distinct minority, but added to the additional three tickets it became a majority. Wallace wishes to do the same, but the American-Labor Party leaders insist on being the sole vehicle for the Wallace vote in New York. This is a narrow party advantage for the A. L. P., but it loses for Wallace at least several hundred thousand votes.

Some of the above-listed difficulties of the Wallace movement, which cut deeply into its ability to register the votes of its potential supporters, are inherent in the split of the Democratic Party and the build-

ing; of the new Party; they can hardly be overcome to any large degree in 1948. Others, however, could be solved to a great extent with a plan of campaign directed to that end, and imposed upon all participants by persuasion or discipline. The "discipline" in the Wallace movement is, however, divided and conflicting, and tending to cancel itself out, while the methods of persuasion are still undeveloped. As a result these problems are not being solved, the differences around them increase, and group-relations are embittered.

The sum of these obstacles and difficulties is, that the Wallace candidacy can be expected to register a vote in November which is only a minor fraction of the old Roosevelt coalition strength.

VIII.

Relations with organized labor, the trade unions, was noted in the preceding section of this analysis as a major problem of the Wallace movement. It is now necessary to deal with this matter in more detail.

Organized labor was Roosevelt's most solid and dependable support. It is quite obvious, therefore, that there is no obstacle to the transfer of that support to Wallace in the political program that Wallace presents to the nation, since that program is Roosevelt's. The cause of the trouble between organized labor and Wallace must be sought elsewhere.

The basic obstacle between Wallace and the majority of the unions is this, that the Wallace candidacy is brought to them for approval not through their established channels, but from outside; it is brought in such form and manner that approval of Wallace signifies at the same time disapproval of their own present trade union leadership, and the rise of a new leadership -- that is, the Wallace campaign is made the instrument of struggle of the left faction for power within the unions.

With Wallace so identified with the pro-Communist left that his endorsement automatically weakens the position of the center, the inevitable response of the center group is to join hands with the right to resist the Wallace campaign with all resources. They are so resisting, and with considerable success; it is not the left which is being strengthened in the struggle, but the extreme right.

The fact is that the stage of development of the trade unions is not favorable to the success of the present strategy of the Wallace forces. The trade unions are prepared to accept and support the Wallace program, but they are not prepared to reshuffle and reorganize their leadership in the direction of the pro-Communist left; when these two things are presented to them in one package, they reject the whole package.

This strategy could be justified if it had any prospect of success, if the trade union masses were being separated from their present leaders, and were moving politically closer to the pro-Communist group. In that case, the Wallace issue might conceivably be properly and success-

fully used as the occasion for precipitating a change that was already maturing, and only awaiting the moment to pass into action. But a large accumulation of facts goes to show that this is not a period in which the left faction or group is advancing its power and influence in the trade unions; on the contrary, in the past three years, and quite independently of any issue of Wallace or the Wallace program, the left grouping has lost a series of most important positions in the labor movement, in union after union. Having lost these positions for causes having nothing to do with Wallace, the left is now trying to regain them by use of the Wallace issue. (A tabulation of the facts demonstrating this decline of the trade union left group is given in an appendix).

Thus the left faction's strategy is not one of throwing their own growing strength into support of Wallace, but on the contrary it is to use the Wallace strength in order to stop their own decline and, if possible, to regain some of their lost positions. It is unsound strategy, for it is not improving the position of the left faction, while it is seriously hampering the Wallace campaign.

The Wallace campaign will not begin to recruit its potential strength in the trade unions until it overcomes this abnormal relation of forces, until it creates the possibility for the center group to strengthen, not weaken, itself by joining hands with Wallace. Since the center group cannot be overthrown, it must be brought into the Wallace camp as a major ally. It is inadvisable from every point of view to throw the center into the arms of the right.

IX.

How unnecessary and avoidable is the head-on collision between the Wallace campaign and the main body of organized labor, is demonstrated by the fact that among all the declared Presidential candidates the big majority of the trade unions cannot find a single name they dare support as an alternative to Wallace.

If Eisenhower replaces Truman as the Democratic candidate he will receive the big majority of trade union endorsements and support, including a part of the left which now goes along with the Wallace campaign. But if the Democratic candidate is Truman, the largest part of organized labor will take no active part at all in the Presidential choice, but will concentrate their political action in support of pro-labor and progressive candidates for Congress (and these with few exceptions on the Democratic ticket.)

The fact that this head-on collision, so sharp that it even threatens a permanent organizational split in the CIO, was avoidable (and even at this late date can be softened and perhaps dissolved) is clear to every person familiar with the American labor movement.

The form and manner in which the organizational split of the CIO is taking place, on the issue of the Wallace campaign, when ex-

amined in detail will show that the split was avoidable by steps which would not weaken the Wallace campaign, but on the contrary would strengthen it in every way.

The CIO operates under a Constitution and By-Laws designed not only for the technical regulation of the affairs of the organization but to maintain the unity of the basic political trends represented in the constituent unions, right, center and left. The Constitution is the basic pact of organized relations between these trends. Among other things, it provides that in relation to all major political questions, subordinate CIO Councils (city and state councils) shall not take a position in conflict with that established by the majority decisions of the National Council -- in short, that the name of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) shall not be used by the lower councils to combat a policy decided upon by the highest Council.

The left unions have repudiated this rule in relation to the Wallace movement, and in those Councils where they hold a majority they proceeded to endorse Wallace in the name of the CIO. The National Council, on Murray's initiative, is proceeding, one by one, to dissolve those Councils which thus violate the rule, and to reorganize them to include only such unions that agree to observe it. Thus, the left unions are in fact being excluded from the CIO Councils.

It is very difficult to see any advantage to be gained out of this conflict for the left unions, for the labor movement as a whole or for the Wallace campaign.

There is no obstacle whatever in the way of those unions which support Wallace, to prevent them from proceeding with their activities and uniting these unions in any sort of campaign committees and councils they see fit -- so long as they do not act in the name of the CIO. There is nothing gained from attempting to use the name of the CIO, against the decision of its National Council, except the most dubious "gain" of a split of the organization as a whole. All the work of the Wallace campaign is hindered, not helped, by this split and by the struggle which causes it.

The issue is not a new one. It arose in 1943, when the movement for re-election of Roosevelt to a fourth term began. At that time Murray, supported by a majority of the National Council, opposed the endorsement of Roosevelt. Murray's position was scrupulously respected, and the endorsement was kept out of controversy in all CIO Councils, until the time came when it could be adopted by a majority in the National Council; but that did not prevent a most effective campaign for Roosevelt being organized at once in the local unions, in special committees, and in public meetings, and swinging the entire CIO into the campaign a few months later. Just as there was no special value in 1943 and early 1944, in trying to use the name of the CIO for Roosevelt before the National Council was prepared to endorse him, so today there is certainly no value in trying to use the name of the CIO, at the price of splitting that body as a whole.

The Wallace campaign is being harmed, not helped, by the struggle in the CIO over the use of its name to endorse Wallace.

X.

The Wallace campaign will perform its valuable and necessary political tasks, raising and keeping the issue of peace before the country, reminding the masses of the Roosevelt heritage and rousing them in struggle to realize it again, forcing the major parties to answer to the dominant issue, and giving all this the strongest possible organizational center -- on condition that it is not dragged down into a multitude of struggles over lesser matters, like the struggle in the CIO over the interpretation of its Constitution.

These true and supremely important tasks will be better performed if certain illusions and speculations about the Wallace movement are reduced to a minimum. These are:

(a) The illusion that the Wallace movement can elect its candidate to the Presidency, with a majority of Congress to support him. The inevitable deflation of such hopes in the November voting will do much more harm than any possible stimulus they might give to individual campaign workers could do good. They create an atmosphere of unreality around Wallace.

(b) The immature and childish conception that the Wallace movement is "anti-imperialist" in the same sense as the peoples' movements of Europe. This is not only theoretical confusion, but it also gives rise to false ideas as to what tasks can be set realistically for this movement to accomplish.

(c) The schematic plans that the Wallace organization should be built as "the future Labor Party". This can only result in the immediate narrowing down of the movement, reduce its volume and striking power, and generally give it a sectarian trend, while it will contribute nothing significant to the eventual formation of the mass Labor Party in the U.S.A. of an organizational character.

All the potentialities of the Wallace New Party to influence the future of America and the world, are concentrated in realizing its maximum mobilization today, in 1948, of the supporters of Roosevelt, to make Roosevelt's vision of a durable peace, and how this can be achieved, a living force that dominates the nation's mind throughout the election campaign.

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A P P E N D I X

DECLINE OF THE LEFT WING IN THE AMERICAN

TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, 1946-1948.

The left wing of American organized labor, with its main forces in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), gained and held a position of initiative in the historic rise of the trade unions that took place in the decade 1936-45, in which trade union membership rose more than 300 per cent, to reach the number of about 15 million, and embraced the main mass-production industries.

Fully utilizing its position of initiative, and following a flexible policy of alliance with all progressive forces for partial aims, the left wing rose from comparative insignificance to become a major power in the labor movement and in the country.

During the years 1946, 1947, and the first half of 1948, however, this left wing suffered a series of defeats and setbacks which resulted in loss of the initiative and a considerable part of its strength.

Following are the main facts characterizing this historic set-back of the left wing:

A) Changes in the composition and political character of the national leadership of the CIO: Until 1946, the eleven top officials of the CIO (president, secretary-treasurer, and nine vice-presidents) were grouped so that five of the center and four of the left wing were in a close working alliance, while two of the right wing were relatively isolated and powerless. This relationship gave the CIO its pronounced militancy and progressive character.

By 1948 this has fundamentally changed, with the left wing declining to two, isolated in the powerless situation formerly occupied by the right wing, while the right and center are now in a close working alliance against the left.

B) Left wing defeats in key unions, cause of the change in national leadership of the CIO: The shift in national leadership from its former left-center character to that of right-center, took place as the result of changes in separate key unions. The most important of these were the following:

(1) United Auto & Aircraft Workers (UAW): For years the leadership of this union was a left-center coalition, and it furnished one of the main pillars of

strength to the similar coalition leading the National CIO. In 1946, the right wing opposition gained strength to elect its leader, Walter Reuther, as president, although the left-center coalition retained control of the Executive Board. But within a year, in the elections to the 1947 Convention, a big swing of the membership to support of the right wing in a majority of key plants, resulted in wiping out completely the left-center leadership at the top and a large part of it on a plant level. The inner-union struggle had descended to the depths of unprincipled factionalism, and there the right wing proved to be the masters. The strength of this great union, with close to a million members, swung overnight from left to right.

(2) National Maritime Union (NMU): From its origin until 1945 this union was solidly left, with a heavy majority of pro-Communists in its leadership. A split began in 1945, when some of the pro-Communists began to move for replacement of the president, Curran, by a "more reliable man". The pro-Communists themselves split, a part supporting Curran, and the Union began to divide into two camps, which rapidly became pro-Communist and anti-Communist. The Curran camp won a slight majority in the National Convention of 1947. The fight continued into the membership referendum now going on to elect new officers, with two rival slates of candidates, conducted with fierce factionalism resulting in physical combats and even deaths. Whichever way goes the majority, the margin will be slight, with the probability that the losing side will refuse to accept the verdict, both claiming victory and splitting the Union. The logic of struggle has carried the Curran camp far to the right. The N.M.U. has thus been seriously weakened, and its political influence has been largely cancelled by its inner division.

(3) Transport Workers Union (TWU): This union is similar to the NMU in that from its origin until recently it was solidly in the left camp, with a majority of pro-Communists in its leadership. Unlike the NMU, however, its membership is homogeneous and solidly united behind its president, Quill. Therefore, when in 1947 some pro-Communists began a movement against Quill, this did not create the danger of a split. Quill broke with the pro-Communist group over the issue of the maturing split of the left wing from the CIO, with which he refused to go along, and on which issue he aligned himself with Murray. This objectively places the TWU in the center camp, al-

though Quill has not changed his stand on general national and international issues. Successful settlement of the Union's wage movement on New York subways and bus lines has further consolidated Quill's leadership and his influence in the general labor movement. The pro-Communist movement against Quill collapsed. The left made it appear that it split from Quill over the fare-raise issue in connection with the wage movement, but this is a relatively minor issue, used for camouflage; the pro-Communists found no difficulty in supporting a fare-raise in other cities when necessary in order to increase wages; they did not choose to do that in this case, because Quill had already refused to go along with the preparations to split from the CIO. Thus another powerful union shifted from left to center, without any valid political reason.

(4) In a series of other unions there have been less spectacular shifts from left to center, and from center to right, following much the same pattern. The Marine & Shipbuilding Workers and the American Newspaper Guild, for several years in the center with strong left wings, have broken the local centers of left power, and are now more properly classed with the right wing. The Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers faces the imminent secession of a powerful section, the Die Casters, in protest against the prospective split with CIO. The Packinghouse Workers has just lost a long strike, initiated by the left wing against the advice of the center, and is seriously weakened. The United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers (UE) is the only large union (more than a half million members) still definitely with the left; but this union will also face a major inner crisis if and when the threatening split from the CIO comes to a showdown; at that point it is not certain that the Union will remain unitedly with the left wing.

C) In terms of volume of membership involved in the above-described shifts, it appears that the left wing has lost about 35 per cent of its strength, the right wing has about doubled, and the center is somewhat strengthened. But the biggest change is in the alignment of groups. Where formerly the left wing determined the main direction in which the CIO moved, under the restraint of its center allies, it is now the center in alliance with the right wing which makes these decisions.

The above facts, and many more pointing in the same direction, establish conclusively that the left wing of the American labor movement has suffered a historical set-back, and is today in danger of an isolation which can only damage the whole labor movement. The left wing leadership has not yet faced this fact, does not understand its causes, and has learned none of its lessons.

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