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WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE ALP An Analysis of the '49 Elections

I-The Election Results

The chief significance for progressives of the 1949 elections lies not in whether a Dulles or a Lehman, an O'Dwyer or a Morris was elected to office. Essentially, the elections reveal the political development and direction of movement of the American people, particularly the working people, and their reaction to the whipped-up red-baiting hysteria, the drive to destroy civil liberties and the increased tempo of the cold war. The election figures are important to progressives further because this knowledge of the development and movement of the masses permits us to judge the success or failure of the tactics and policies pursued in the American Labor and Progressive Parties, and to demand their revision accordingly.

On a nation-wide scale the continued trend to the Democratic party shows the befuddlement of the workers. Despite the utter failure of the Truman administration to put up a fight for even its paper program of peace, civil liberties, housing, rent-control, and Taft-Hartley repeal, for which it received a clear mandate in 1948, the majority of workers (in their frustration) saw no alternative to Dulles-Hoover reaction but to continue their support of the Democratic promise-breakers. Most workers simply do not yet understand that the betrayal of the workers is the normal function of the capitalist parties, and the two-party system a cynical device to perpetuate that betrayal and drain off the worker's anger harmlessly by offering them the "lesser evil" choice between two anti-working class candidates. Obviously, the answer to

these tactics is a real party of the workers and poor farmers, entirely separate from the capitalist parties, which will submit its own candidates--a party which will deserve and gain the confidence and support of the working class and its allies. That the ALP-PP fails to constitute such a party--in many respects and for reasons which we will discuss--is a chief explanation for its failure so far to engender that confidence and receive that support.

There is also another reason. Red-baiting is the most insidious weapon in the arsenal of the Wall Street imperialists and their political lackeys, by means of which they attempt--not without success--first to split the working class forces away from their allies and then to drive a wedge into their main body. First it is the Communists who are labeled subversive, un-American, and traitors, shorn of prestige, deprived of their jobs, their friends and relatives suspect. Next come the liberal anti-fascists, "peace-mongers", members of the Jewish Workers Fraternal Order, the Book Find Club or a trade union, or merely white people with Negro friends or vice versa. Still later, advocates of public housing, civil liberties, or a national health program, former supporters of FDR, (hence all New Dealers), people suspected of attending foreign movies, advocates of Taft-Hartley repeal, etc. Each group and individual seeking frantically to save itself at the expense of others, either by joining in the hue and cry against the accused or by publicly disassociating itself from them, only whets the appetite of the fascist-minded hate mongers and prepares to become itself their next victim. Red-baiting inspires fear,--thrives on fear. When its victims seek safety by throwing their principles overboard, it is having its intended effect. Unfortunately the CP leadership of the ALP-PP has frequently been guilty of this form of self-destruction. Changing the main slogan of the Yankee Stadium meeting of the Wallace campaign from "All Out For Peace" and wrapping themselves in the safely patriotic folds of "Yankee Doodle Rally" was a glaring example. Failure of ALP candidates in the recent campaign to follow the good example set by Wallace and let the voters know that the ALP is basically opposed to the bi-partisan cold war policy of its opponents is another.

Red-baiting is always a cover-up for the enemies of the working class. Capitalist parties and candidates paint all progressives as horrendous crimson-hued jabberwocky birds to distract the attention of the masses from their own poisonous records and programs. The way to fight and defeat the red-baiters is to hammer away at the very issues on which they are red-baiting us, since these are almost invariably the ones on which they are themselves most vulnerable. Sometimes, Wallace instinctively understands this, but the CP leaders, obsessed with their impractical "practicality", continue to run for cover (with disastrous results).

The election results in New York showed the same general characteristics as elsewhere. With his spittle in repudiation of his five-cent fare, anti-discrimination, pro-labor, rent-control and better schools and hospital promises still wet upon their faces, the voters re-elected O'Dwyer by a heavy Democratic vote. In the face of a steady stream of red-baiting and Roman Catholic fanaticism (from which the ALP retreated by throwing its policies of peace and Soviet-American friendship out

the window while trying to crawl under the clerical cloak) this record of dishonored pledges appeared little handicap.

A notable feature of the election was the sharp increase in the vote of the Liberal Party, which more than doubled its 1948 showing, and for the first time since it split away from the American Labor Party five years ago, showed a city-wide total slightly in excess of the ALP's. The Liberal Party thus becomes for the time-being a "balance of power" party, a role for which its fake "middle way" ideology in the service of capitalism ideally fits it. By supporting selected candidates of each of the major parties as a "lesser evil", the Liberal Party will continue to help elect those anti-working class candidates who are the most skillful in dissimulating their bourgeois class interest by demagogic promises, and are for that reason the most dangerous enemies of the workers.

In the recent election, the Liberal Party offered the bargain basement ticket of Lehman and Morris for lesser-evil dupes, thus giving voters the option of the less openly reactionary cold-war candidates of the Republicans and Democrats on a single slate. With ALP candidates seeking safety from red-baiting by burying the vital peace issue, this looked like a good deal to many misguided workers. The unprincipled nature of the Liberal Party campaign may be judged by the fact that it made the easier mechanics of pulling levers on the same line its chief argument for voting "Liberal". It goes without saying that a party which bases its claim for support on such casual and cynically opportunist considerations can only be regarded as a decoy to trick confused workers into supporting the candidates of their class enemy.

Meanwhile top-level leaders of the major capitalist party machines were playing the other side of the street with their own "lesser evil" ticket. There is convincing evidence of a back-room deal to trade Republican votes for O'Dwyer for Democratic votes for Dulles, hoping thus to insure the election of the most pro-fascist candidates on both tickets at the expense of less extreme reactionaries. In some sections of the City, both Republican and Democratic election captains canvassed the voters for the Dulles-O'Dwyer axis. As a result of these machinations, Dulles received a cool 225,000 more Republican votes than his ticketmate Morris in New York City. Such incidents should point up for the most fatuous strategists the futility of attempting to serve working-class interests by arranging top-level "coalitions" with these same capitalist-front leaders.

The ALP city-wide total of 356,423 or 13.8% of the votes cast was percentage-wise a slight increase over Wallace's 13.2% a year ago. Since 1945, the ALP has been treading water around the 13% mark. While the over-all figure has remained static, there have been wide shifts in the composition of the ALP vote and the areas of its greatest concentration. Wallace polled 17% of the total Bronx vote in '48, while Marcantonio's vote was off more than a third at 11%. Brooklyn gave Wallace 163,896 votes, but only 113,496 to Marcantonio, a loss of 50 thousand. In Manhattan, on the other hand, the ALP vote increased from 14.2% in '48 to 17.0% this year, with most of the gains in Harlem (especially in Ben Davis' Senatorial district), and in Marcantonio's Congressional

district,--these together with the Italian language districts being the main concentration areas. Results in the Italian language areas were, however, below expectations, and other city-wide candidates polled less than 70% of the Marcantonio vote in such Italian-American districts as the 2nd A.D. Manhattan, and the 3rd and 8th A.D.'s Brooklyn. Longhi, running for Council in a district composed of the 3rd, 7th and 8th A.D.'s (Kings) got only 5,473 votes, the lowest for any ALP Council candidate in Brooklyn, despite an energetic campaign and several joint appearances with Marcantonio, in his working-class district. Ben Davis, despite his defeat, made a good showing against the gang-up whereby Republicans, Democrats, and Liberals supported a single opponent. Running on ALP and Communist tickets, he polled nearly 22,000 votes, one-third of the total, of which only 1,090 were on the CP line. The real significance of the Davis defeat is that it underlines the severity of the set-back suffered by progressive forces and all minorities two years ago in the repeal of proportional representation. Opposition to the Tammany machine has been virtually liquidated in the new city council, which will seat 24 Democrats and one Republican.

II-Evaluation of the ALP's Campaign

With these voting results in mind, let us look at the campaign conducted by the American Labor Party in New York City. First of all it should be said that Marcantonio, despite grave shortcomings common to the ALP campaign as a whole, conducted his campaign with great energy and forcefulness. He posed sharply and persistently the questions of police terror, Stuyvesant Town discrimination, and such pork chop issues as the five-cent fare, rent control, housing, etc. In contrast to the Daily Worker and the CP hacks, he was forthright in his condemnation of both Dulles and Lehman, and made it clear that he would vote for neither.

Another positive factor, demonstrated anew by the election, is the existence in New York City of a solid core of 250,000 or more class-conscious voters who consistently defy the hysteria-mongers to register and vote ALP. Together with equally tough-minded workers outside New York, they remain the great hope that the designs of American imperialists to fascisize America are doomed to fail. It is nevertheless true that the events of Peekskill and Foley Square, the loyalty oaths, the suppression of civil liberties and above all, the increased tempo of the cold war represent a rapid maturing of the crisis, which demands a tremendous quickening of the tempo of the anti-fascist struggle for peace, a tremendous strengthening of the progressive forces, a tremendous growth and maturing integration of the people's coalition. That at this late hour no more than 350 thousand odd voters, out of 2,700,000, in New York City could be marshalled in this fight must be regarded as a stern warning that the fight against fascism and an atomic war is in grave danger of being lost in America.

What then are the shortcomings of the ALP-PP, which, despite a program which TP believes to be basically correct, have thus far prevented it from becoming a mass party of the workers, poor farmers, and their allies, a party able to call a halt to the war program of the bourgeoisie? But before attempting a diagnosis, what are the symptoms of these shortcomings uncovered by the campaign and election results?

As we have seen, beneath the over-all static level of ALP strength in New York in recent years, there have been violent fluctuations in the support it has received, from various working-class areas and population groups, depending on their national origin or religious background. Negro voters are rallied to the support of Negro candidates and the issue of police brutality; Jewish voters to Isacson and support for Israel; Italian voters to Marcantonio, etc. At the following election with new candidates and new issues, many of these voters drift back to their traditional affiliations because we have failed to convince them (have indeed carefully avoided the subject) of the basic difference between the ALP as a working-class party and the capitalist parties.

The instability and high turnover of the ALP vote is thus almost certainly due to the fact that the ALP has been conducting its campaigns largely on a vulgar catch-vote level. Leaders of the ALP show only contempt for the workers when they appeal for votes on the basis of racial and religious prejudices, when they limit their fight for civil liberties to an attack on police brutality, the Foley Square frame-up, and the Feinberg Law, while endorsing candidates for district attorney and judgeships who fully support the basic factor in the reactionary assault on the worker's liberties,--the cold war. Especially they show their underestimation of the workers when they excuse failure to project the fight for peace into the N. Y. City campaign on the ground that it is not a municipal issue, and anyhow the workers are not yet ready for the peace issue. Therefore, we must not be premature, we must not isolate ourselves from the workers. Who says the workers of New York (inevitable target in an atomic war) aren't interested in the fight for peace? And what kind of "vanguard" leadership is it that refuses to prepare them and lead them in that fight for fear of being red-baited? (Naturally we will be red-baited, for there is nothing,--absolutely nothing--that can so completely upset the imperialists' plans for world domination as a militant, powerful, highly-organized peace movement among the American workers and masses.)

So we conducted our campaign for the five-cent fare, rent-control, housing, an end to police brutality, etc. in an atmosphere of unreality. Just as police terrorization of minorities is part of the cold war, so is the ten cent fare, and the broken promises on rent-control, housing, schools and hospitals, etc. The cold war means the ruthless suppression of workers' rights and worsening of their conditions. It also means no money for any program of social advance on any level. Unless halted by the workers' protests, the cold war can only lead to a hot war for which the workers will pay with their lives. Yet, this basic issue to which all the minor issues are subsidiary, the ALP leadership (with Wallace the chief and honorable exception) refused to take to the voters. Our job is to convince the workers and the masses that the ALP-PP is the only party whose platform and program conform to the basic needs of the working-class and poor farmers for peace, civil liberties, and economic security, thus making permanent recruits and broadening the party's base. The ALP leadership has chosen instead to campaign on the ephemeral basis of candidates' personalities, nationality, and (so-help-us) their religion, with a pot-pourri of subsidiary issues which are merely the less red-baitable outgrowths of the cold war issue that they are afraid to touch with a ten-foot pole.

In 1948, Marcantonio won reelection in the 18th C.D. in a campaign in which he, rather than the PP's platform, was the issue. TP pointed out at that time that a strong, permanent PP cannot be built solely or chiefly on the prestige of individual candidates, but only on the basis of a fight for the PP's correct program for peace and the worker's immediate demands. The fact that Wallace got only half as many votes as Marcantonio in his district proved the point. This year, the logic of the stepped-up red hysteria demanded still greater divorcement of the ALP's basic peace program from the campaign--so Marcantonio and the CP leaders thought. So, he campaigned as an Italian-American and as a "practicing Roman Catholic". He set up eleven or more Marcantonio Clubs in Italian neighborhoods. ALP functionaries received mimeographed instructions that "these clubs are not ALP clubs" (orig. emphasis). In line with this "strategy", it was necessary to bury all unrespectable issues, i.e. issues opposed by the Catholic hierarchy, which means that the entire basic program of the ALP was buried. It was no accident that Marcantonio failed to support the Barden Bill, the only mayoralty candidate not to take a position. His Roman Catholic pose made it impossible for him to oppose the growing menace of clerical fascism in American politics.

Reactionary Italians and Jews, and especially the Catholic hierarchy, exploit racial and religious differences in order to keep the workers chained to the reactionary political machines. They need to confuse and obscure the real issues lest the masses take their future into their own hands. Yet, Marcantonio, who should dare to take the issues to the people, apes the appeals of the bigots to nationalist and religious prejudices and superstitions in the mistaken belief that it is politically expedient to do so. "Vote for me because I am an Italian like you." "Vote for me because I'm a good Catholic". "Vote for me because I'm a good friend of Ben Davis; see he's on the platform with me." These are patently the tactics of the demagogue who tries to be all things to all people. Unfortunately, many of the Jews and Protestants, who together probably make up a majority of progressive-minded New Yorkers, are apt to take a dim view of a candidate who unctuously parades his Catholicism as vote-bait. In any case, the capitalist party machines can always beat us at that game. They have the huge and powerful apparatus of the Catholic Church already in their service to whip the Catholic vote into line. Their tentacles are deep in the Italian-American and waterfront underworlds. Generoso Pope, with his influential Il Progresso is their man. It is therefore not surprising that this type of campaign failed to pay expected dividends in Italian-American districts, neither is it surprising that voters of other national and religious groups reacted unfavorably to a campaign which emphasized their differences from other progressives rather than common aspirations and demands.

The Daily Worker typically concerned with concealing its defeats rather than learning from them; tried hysterically to find crumbs of comfort in the Red Hook results. "ALP gains", consoled Michael Singer (Nov. 10, '49), "were evident in the Italian-American communities of Brooklyn,--Red Hook and South Brooklyn (3rd A.D., Kings County--Editors) where Marcantonio received 4,971 votes as against the ALP vote of 1960 last year. In other Italian-American working-class districts, the ALP

held its position." A little research shows that 1960 was in fact the 3rd A.D. Kings vote for Wallace in '48, but that Michael had discreetly lifted the Marcantonio figure of 4,971 from the 3rd A.D. Bronx County, substituting it for the more modest figure, less by half, of 2,453, certified by the Board of Elections for the 3rd A.D. Kings. The Red Hook district also illustrates the fact that a campaign build-up, based on nationality and religion cannot build the ALP. Although Marcantonio polled 25% more votes than Wallace got in '48, his non-Italian, non-Catholic running-mates fell sharply behind the corresponding vote a year ago.

In 1946, Jim Longhi, with Republican endorsement, ran for Congress in the 12th C.D., which includes Red Hook. As part of the deal, the ALP endorsed Corey Mills (R.) for State Senate in a district coextensive with the 12th C.D. ALP election workers were instructed to tell voters that Longhi was a Republican. Nevertheless, he was knifed by the Republicans, and on the Sunday before election, every parish priest in the district warned that Longhi was the anti-Christ. So deceit was met with perfidy, and although Mills won handily, with ALP votes, Longhi was beaten by 5,000 votes, a result which the Republican leadership had no doubt neatly calculated when they made the deal. Less than a year later, the Kings County ALP was bitterly denouncing Mills' anti-labor activities in Albany. In 1946, Longhi polled 7,267 votes on the ALP line; this year running for City Council in the same district, he got only 5,473, the poorest showing of any ALP Council candidate in Brooklyn. The decline of the ALP vote from 10.8% to 8.3% of the total in an overwhelmingly working class area is a measure of the disillusion of class conscious voters with the ALP's tactics.

The logic of Isacson's two campaigns in the 24th C.D. (Bronx) points to the same conclusion. In the February special election, he campaigned on the issue of support for Israel and (even though timidly) on the PP's basic foreign policy, and polled 57% of the total vote in an upset victory. But by November, the PP had endorsed Celler, Klein, Pfeifer, Holofield, Helen Gahagan Douglas, etc; Marshall-Planners all, and was campaigning for their election. So Isacson's opposition to the Marshall Plan died down to a whisper. Opposed now by a cold-war Democrat, who could embrace Zionism as warmly as Isacson, the voters saw little choice on principle; and Isacson was returned the loser, with 35% of the vote. Wallace polled 17% of the total Bronx vote in '48, when Isacson's campaigns had convinced a good many voters that the PP was the strongest supporter of the new Jewish State. This year, the main interest of many of these voters was centered on the election of Lehman, and Marcantonio's Bronx vote fell more than one-third to a feeble 11%.

The ALP's policy of concentration on certain candidates and certain districts has frequently come in for severe criticism. Turning Point does not criticize the idea of concentration. We believe it was important and necessary to concentrate on the Ben Davis campaign in view of the gang-up of all the capitalist parties, and also on the Marcantonio campaign, although we consider that the methods used in this instance were positively ruinous. Our main criticism of the policy is that available forces and funds are diverted from the general campaign to

such a degree that no campaign whatsoever is conducted in most of the non-concentration areas and for non-concentration candidates. We consider it positively outrageous for instance that such a shoddy campaign was conducted in behalf of Isacson, who trailed in 4th place in the Bronx Borough President race. Many ALP enrollees throughout the City never saw a single piece of campaign literature. The concentration policy can be carried out correctly only within the frame work of our primary task, which is to build the ALP-PP by telling all the workers (and not merely ALP enrollees, and not only in certain areas) our basic program as forcefully and as often as we are able.

We believe the ALP should have nominated a candidate for the U.S. Senate in opposition to the Lehman-Dulles cold war twins. His campaign could and should have been the main focus of the people's fight against the cold war. By failing to do so, the ALP offered no alternative to the bi-partisan war-mongers, and frustrated the tremendous desire of class-conscious voters to register their will for peace. Most important, it failed to grasp the chance to conduct a broad peace offensive by educating and convincing the masses that the capitalist parties need and plan war, that the ALP's peace policy is their only safeguard against national disaster. Such a campaign would naturally be greeted with frenzied red-baiting (proving of course only the imperialists fear of an aroused peace sentiment among the masses), so the ALP decided to sit this one out. Lastly, it was wrong because it amounted to a back-handed endorsement of Lehman, thus helped to elect a cold war advocate, and gave a further fillup to the fatal preoccupation of the petit-bourgeoisie (including the CP leadership) with the lesser evil theory.

The Daily Worker was desperately afraid ALP voters wouldn't get the drift. It ran editorials and news articles denouncing Dulles as the greater evil, hoping its readers would see the light and vote for Lehman without the DW having to come right out and tell them to. (See DW editorials, Nov. 2, 3, and 4) The election over, the DW, having little else to be jubilant over, was not bashful about claiming the Lehman victory for the ALP. "The ALP's decision," it editorialized on Nov. 10th, "not to place a candidate in the field for Senator undoubtedly played an important part in the defeat of the pro-fascist Dulles." And in the same issue, Arnold Sroog* had lamented, "In supporting Lehman, the voters...revealed that proper understanding of the former Governor's stand on foreign policy was lacking. The voters did not see clearly that Lehman stood for the cold war..." Judging from this doubletalk, the ALP achieved a notable victory because it did not permit the voters who look to it for guidance to see the issue clearly or with proper understanding, and therefore they correctly elected a cold war candidate. (Prolonged cheers?)

In addition to this first shame-faced, finally bare-faced support of Lehman, the ALP endorsed six other candidates of capitalist parties in New York City. These were Giaccone (R) for Supreme Court, Boccia (R. and Lib.), Reinlieb (R.) and Rosenthal (R.) for Municipal Court Judge, Caddy (R.) for District Attorney of Kings County, and Boylan (R., D., and Lib.) for Surrogate of Staten Island. All these aspirants for judgeships or the office of district attorney subscribe to the cold war. Otherwise they wouldn't belong to or be designated official ~~*OMITTED~~: boasted, "It was the ALP which seized upon Dulles record...and made that the issue of the statewide contest." But a paragraph before, he

candidates of the Republican and Democratic parties, which are the joint architects of the pro-war foreign policy. Police brutality a la McDonald and Hogan, and court frame-ups a la Medina and Foley Square are as much a part of the plan to launch an atomic war as bases in Iceland or "aid" to Greece. It is utterly insane for a working-class party to give its endorsement and its vote to these class enemies. Can't we ever learn?

We endorsed and campaigned for Dewey for District Attorney in 1937; we endorsed and helped elect ^{former} District Attorney O'Dwyer mayor in 1945; the same year, we helped vote into the DA's office the Miles McDonald whose police brutality we now denounce as fascist. How can a party which depends upon the workers for support hope to gain and hold that support in the face of such a continuing record of betrayals? Wouldn't it seem that we have had enough experience with building up and electing smart, unscrupulous young lawyers only to have them turn on the workers, with whose support they have climbed to power? Yet Edmund H. Caddy was endorsed by the Kings County ALP, with no questions asked, no promises given other than that he would oppose police brutality.

A member of the ALP committee told a TP editor, who inquired as to Caddy's position on the Smith Act: "We do not know, we did not ask him. Police brutality is the only issue in the Brooklyn elections. Caddy made no other commitments, nor was he asked to." But Caddy is a Republican; he was the official candidate of that cold war party for a key office in the drive to intimidate and beat down the working masses, and especially the Negroes and other minorities. We believe it incredibly naive under the circumstances to expect him, if elected, to resist the enormous pressures of class and personal interest any better than his predecessors, O'Dwyer and McDonald, who also made a few promises, --remember?

If only six cold-war candidates got the ALP's nod in '49, this is no sign of ALP repentance or even caution. By now, most leaders and candidates of the capitalist parties are afraid that a deal with the ALP will scare away more conservative votes than the ALP can deliver. As with an ageing prostitute, seeming virtue may be no more than a dearth of customers.

So far as the CP leadership is concerned, this is demonstrably the case. A DW editorial (6-22-'49) quotes with approval from an ALP policy statement: "The ALP believes that the people earnestly seek and will welcome candidates, regardless of political affiliation, who will serve to unify the forces of good government in our city, so that the next four years, unlike the last four, will be an era of progressive achievement in our city government." (Our emphasis - Editors) By August 8th, the strain of chastity had become unbearable as the cold-war politics continued to look the other way, so Michael Singer hitched his skirt a little higher and added a new wiggle to his routine. "The ALP" he pleaded, "consistently with its policy of coalition on principle (another McDonald or perhaps an O'Dwyer, Michael?-Editors TP) has shown a readiness to discuss joint struggles for candidates whose records and campaigns on district levels prove them to be reliable proponents of progressive policies." By the phrase "on district levels",

brother Michael gives the show away. The CP was prepared, and even anxious to jettison the ALP's whole principled program for a few face-saving, vote-catching concessions, on the local or district level. It will be recalled that these same "Marxist leaders" also junked the PP's correct foreign policy program in the '48 elections by their insistence on endorsing Marshall-Planners from New York to California, in return for what? For lip service to Taft-Hartley repeal, which was promptly canceled out by the necessities of the cold war, the most advanced thrust of which, at that time, was precisely the Marshall Plan. Yes indeed, it really is "the same old merry-go-round."

III-The Internal Fight

In any evaluation of the ALP's campaign, some mention must be made of the bitter Connolly-Guinier Manhattan Borough President primary fight. This conflict, involving both political and personal differences, goes back for several years, and came out into the open as a split between the Marcantonio forces and those of Gene Connolly. Evidence of inner-party differences was also seen in Brooklyn and the Bronx in the extreme lethargy of certain key leaders.

The political dispute raged chiefly over Marcantonio's contentions, (1) that Connolly, by remaining a candidate after Marcantonio had designated a then undetermined Negro for the borough president post, proved Connolly's anti-Negro bias, and (2) that no ALP member has the right to precipitate a primary contest when dissatisfied with the proposals of the designating committee, and that to do so was a deliberate attempt to destroy the Party's unity. Connolly's adherents claimed that the ALP is being run bureaucratically, without consultation with the membership, by Marcantonio and a tight clique of associates. Connolly contended further that the attempt to shelve him by top-level dictation after many years of devoted service to the working class and especially to the Negro people, is not only an example of this bureaucracy and lack of inner-democracy which is preventing the growth of the ALP, but a vulgar misuse of the Negro issue which is an insult to the Negro people themselves.

It is true of course that Connolly declared for borough president several weeks before Marcantonio came up with Guinier as his candidate, and threatened Connolly, "If you run, I'll beat you with a Negro". Any tool to beat his enemy; a Negro was to be his tool--any Negro. Negro progressives can take little pride in the honor done Guinier. Certainly this does not prove Connolly anti-Negro, or opposed to Negro candidates for high office. In 1946, he proposed at a meeting of the N.Y. State Committee that instead of endorsing an O'Dwyer sponsored Tammany candidate for Supreme Court, as advocated by Marcantonio, a Negro be nominated. According to the New York Times (9-6-'46), "Mr. Connolly argued that the ALP was getting tired of endorsing Democrats for the bench, saying that many afterward handed down anti-labor decisions, and also that it was time that a Negro be named. Mr. Marcantonio followed with a bitter 45 minute castigation of Mr. Connolly and his followers for raising the issue. He declared that they simply were seeking to put up a Negro to make a hopeless race as an independent, for the sake of the issue, and that his own friendship for the Negroes could not be

questioned, but he refused to let them be used as foils." But that was in 1946. Again in 1949, Connolly urged that qualified Negroes be nominated for Manhattan District Attorney and Municipal Court Judge.

Connolly claimed, with what we consider convincing evidence, that he was the choice of the majority of the regularly elected members of the New York County Committee, registered with the Board of Elections. In any case, it seems clear to us that a candidate does have the right, upon submitting a petition with the required signatures, to run in a primary contest without being accused of "betraying" his party, or "disrupting its unity"--the terms applied to Connolly in the D.W. The entrenched party machine has a powerful advantage in a primary, but it does not include the right to rule the candidate, who invoked the primary, out of the party because he invoked it. The right to engage in a primary contest is a democratic right. It is indeed the most important safeguard provided to the rank and file of political parties by our election laws against entrenched bureaucracy and bossism.

A primary contest may be a sign of disunity, but it does not create that disunity, and it does not disrupt the party unless one or another of the parties to the contest refuses to accept his party's discipline and pledge himself and his followers loyally to support his party's ticket, including the primary winner, in the general election. Connolly stated from the outset, in public releases and in talks to his supporters, that he would forthrightly support the official ALP ticket in the general election. All his post-primary literature called for a straight ALP vote. Marcantonio on the other hand openly stated before the primary that under no circumstances would he run on the same ticket with Connolly. Who then has been the splitter? Who is responsible for destroying the unity of the ALP?

Naturally the bureaucrats dislike primary contests because they challenge their authority. Unlike the CP, the ALP is not, cannot, and must not be, a monolithic party. It is (or should be) a coalition of workers, poor farmers, shopkeepers, professionals, and intellectuals, with different ideologies and different class interests, having in common only their opposition to fascism, war, and the grosser abuses of capitalism. It is of the utmost importance for the health and growth of such a party that the right of members to engage in primary elections be safeguarded. Yet, for asserting this right, Connolly has been accused of renegacy. Since the election, he and many of his followers have been summarily expelled from the ALP without charges or hearings. Actually the election figures show that the districts where Connolly has a considerable following, (i.e. Manhattan, exclusive of Harlem and Marcantonio's C.D.) gave Marcantonio a bigger vote in comparison to Wallace's vote in the 1948 presidential campaign than did the City as a whole. Thus A.D.'s 1,2,3,4,5,6,7, and 15 gave Marcantonio 85.5% of the Wallace vote as against 34.5% for the city-at-large, and 72.3% for Brooklyn and the Bronx. Scant evidence of the "betrayal of the ALP's campaign" charged to Connolly.

A disgraceful feature of this internecine fight has been the irresponsible abuse heaped on Connolly by Marcantonio, Schutzer, Guinier, and of course, the D.W. without any pretense of documenting their

charges. Guinier, as reported in the D.W. (7-14-59), called Connolly an "anti-Negro, anti-Marcantonio, anti-Wallace renegade from the ALP policies." Marcantonio and the D.W. have repeatedly accused Connolly of red-baiting, without specifications or proof. Indeed, Arthur Schutzer, State Secretary of the ALP specifically and repetitiously denied (DW, 8-2-49) any need to prove the smears against Connolly. Tacitly admitting Connolly's 20 years unblemished record as a champion of the workers, Schutzer declaims, "Past records will never alibi a present betrayal". True, but a man with such a record is entitled to as much consideration as criminals; to be deemed innocent until proven guilty instead of being smeared by wild undocumented allegations. Schutzer apparently realized the total inadequacy of his case and the political immorality of his method for he repeated over and over, four times in a brief release that "We have more important work to do...", "We are too busy...much too busy;" to answer Connolly's denials or to offer proof. Those who embark on a program of character assassination should not offer the pressure of other business as an excuse, and besides, the election is past now.

Even since the election, the frenzied campaign against all who have dared to disagree with the top leadership goes on. Connolly has been expelled from his local ALP club without a hearing. Most of those who joined him in his fight have been removed from leading positions, expelled or "frozen out" of clubs. The D.W. cannot conceal its venom for those of the left who fail to dot every 'i' and cross every 't' of the CP's opportunist course. It obviously regards the ALP not as a real coalition party but as a CP in disguise; a substitute party and hideout for CP bureaucrats when the heat is on. When Connolly single-handedly blocked the first effort to oust Davis from the City Council, the D.W. tried to deny him that credit. When Connolly was out of town, due to the sudden death of his brother at the time, Davis was finally expelled. The D.W., without bothering to learn the facts, spoke of his "politically significant absence." This is an accurate index of the low opportunist level to which CPUSA morality has fallen.

When to the D.W.'s dismay, Connolly resigned from the City Council in protest against Davis' ouster, the CP leadership still had the gall to fashion the following headline: "Connolly Resigns Over Davis Ouster But Absolves Council of Jimcrowism." The CP leadership may not worry about its class enemies, but it certainly grows frantic when one of its progressive critics defends its rights.

A Committee for Democracy and Unity in the ALP has been formed around Connolly and announces that it will continue the fight to purge the party of the abuses which led to the primary contest. We believe that if this committee continues to follow a principled course, it can greatly strengthen the forces seeking to build a real People's Coalition in America as a bar to the war aims of the imperialists.

IV - Basic Cause of ALP Weaknesses and Their Cure

Turning point believes that most or all of the grave short-comings of the ALP which we have reviewed, whether in the character and tactics of its election campaigns or in the bureaucratic conduct of inner-party affairs, may be traced to one underlying cause--namely, opportunism. Opportunism, mind you, not primarily on the part of the non-Communist elements of the coalition (although it is increasingly evident there too), but on the part of that Communist so-called "vanguard" sector, and especially of its leadership whose greatest responsibility should be to fight opportunism.

Opportunism is the timidity induced by fear of loss of job, prestige, friends, or respectability. It is the retreat before the red-baiters which frequently ends in joining the red-baiters. The CPUSA-sponsored red-baiting resolution at the CIO Atlantic City Convention was a particularly horrible example of this type of opportunism. As pointed out earlier, it is primarily the CP leadership which has timidly forced the ALP-PP to water down its correct program.

Opportunism is the triumph of expediency over principle, of eagerness to achieve cheap and temporary successes rather than to undertake the more arduous tasks of building a firm foundation for a people's coalition. Hence, the ALP leadership's obsession with top-level deals and the virtually total neglect of the basic task of educating and convincing the overwhelming majority of the working class, who mistakenly continue to support the capitalist parties, that the ALP's program differs fundamentally from those of the other parties, and that only its program really works for permanent peace and economic security for all. Yet, until that laborious, undramatic task is being regularly carried out by countless Jimmy Higginases in tens of thousands of factories, houses, and shops, using the immediate economic issues and the fight for peace and civil liberties to clinch their arguments, there can be no mass ALP-PP. Conversely, there can be no serious weakening of the stranglehold of the parties of the capitalist minority on the majority, --the working masses and their allies. Meanwhile, there can be no real electoral gains for the workers, but only that mirage of victory, regularly acclaimed by the D.W. and ALP leaders when working-class enemies are elected with workers' votes, and as regularly dissipated, to the disgust and mounting anger of class conscious workers, once these same working-class enemies take office.

The lesser evil theory is a "possibilist" one, which is based on the parliamentary concept of politics, according to which the number of candidates elected, who give lip-service to certain of the workers' demands, e.g. repeal of Taft-Hartley (never mind that they are red-baiters and cold war advocates), is regarded as a reliable yardstick of the election achievements of the workers' organizations. This is quite different from the Leninist concept and also diametrically opposed to the decisions of the 7th World Congress (to which Foster and the CPUSA leadership now declare their undying allegiance). According to Lenin, an election campaign is merely an electoral interlude, an especially favorable opportunity in a continuous campaign conducted also by propaganda, agitation, demonstrations, political strikes, and other mass

means to educate the workers, enforce their demands and raise their political understanding and militancy. From this it is clear that an election campaign may achieve great gains if the key issues are correctly and successfully brought to the masses even though the workers' candidates are defeated.

A very basic shortcoming of the ALP-PP leadership is that they tend to plan and estimate the election campaigns chiefly in terms of the election of candidates, rather than in terms of the opportunity offered for educational and agitational promotion of the Party's program. Thus, instead of building its clubs into real people's centers, by year-long campaigns in every field of mass interest, the ALP has been content to accept the traditional election tempo and schedules of the paunchy club-house politicians. It should be the responsibility of every ALP or PP club to mobilize the peace sentiment of its community, first in street corner meetings, in the unions, in the churches; later, on a city-wide and national scale. Each club must become the focal point for agitation and action on immediate demands--rent control, no evictions, low cost housing, support of strikes, civil liberties, the fight against discrimination and police terror. We must help the masses learn by their own experience that their party is prepared to mobilize instantly to defend them against the arrogance of authority, the employer's greed, or the imperialists' drive to war. Once we do that, once we earn the confidence of the working masses and in turn learn to have confidence in their correct instincts for peace and economic struggle, we won't need deals with the capitalist parties to achieve, not the illusory victories of phony deals, but real victories that will set the imperialists back on their heels.

The eagerness of the CP leadership to tone down the workers' militancy, to place their main reliance on electoral victories, to refrain from leading mass agitation and mass actions, is reflected in the revisionism of Foster's new painless route to Socialism. Everything must be very respectable and above all legal, and of course, non-violent; we must avoid mention of the class struggle and be very careful not to offend the bourgeoisie. For the workers, the election of cold war candidates with ALP support is a double defeat. Not only will the successful candidate inevitably betray the workers' interests, but the workers, instead of being educated and clarified on the really important issues, become confused (as when the P.P., protesting opposition to the MP as the core of its foreign policy, endorsed and helped elect various Marshall planners).

It would be a mistake to conclude that these constant betrayals occur because Celler, O'Dwyer, Lehman, etc. are vicious or even bad-intentioned individuals, and that the ALP's strategy might have succeeded if only it had made more fortunate choices. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We have got to understand that the state in America, (as elsewhere) is the mechanism by which the ruling class, American imperialism, polices the working masses and conducts its struggle for world supremacy in order to secure and increase its profits. The capitalist parties are the pseudo-democratic machinery by which the capitalists try to maintain the illusion of popular control of the government while grasping the reins ever more firmly in their own hands.

Just as a real CP has no other purpose or reason for existence than to serve the interests of the workers, poor farmers, and masses, to educate and lead them in the revolutionary struggle for Socialism, so the Republican and Democratic parties have no purpose or reason for being except to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie and particularly to divide and checkmate the militancy of the working class. The Republican Party carries the club, the Democratic Party a carrot; or at times (to confuse matters) vice versa. Their tactics are diverse and often well dissimulated, but they serve a common purpose,--more profits for capital, and worsened conditions for the workers. Despite double-talk, the differences between candidates of parties which are driving toward war and fascism, are illusory. The so-called lesser-evil applied to such candidates is a mirage; the continued use of this policy by ALP strategists is a gross betrayal. Capitalist candidates cannot and will not be weaned away from bourgeois interests (which are also their own interests or they wouldn't belong to those parties). Their cynical attitude toward ALP endorsements is well expressed by Tom O'Hara, political reporter of the Herald Tribune (9-21-'49) commenting on the Brooklyn ALP endorsements:--"Practical politicians in the (Republican) party said that both men felt forced to obtain some aid to buck the strong Democratic machine in Brooklyn, figuring to win an additional 80,000 or 100,000 votes on the ALP line without compromising their Republicanism."

Despite all disasters, CPUSA hacks continue to elevate this fallacy to the level of a principle to excuse their inexcusable insistence on supporting anti-working class candidates. The Balance of Power idea is the corollary of the "lesser evil" theory. For many years the ALP's great ambition (frequently achieved) was to assert a balance-of-power position between the major parties. This was accomplished under the guise of supporting the lesser-evil candidate. From the tactical standpoint of "I-scratch-your-back-you-scratch-mine", such a policy is understandable. Part of the deal is that the party of the successful candidate pays off in patronage. This is the only way a minority party can get a patronage cut. This then is the low level of ward-heel politics to which the CPUSA leadership has dragged the ALP.

Balance of power deals can only be made if the minor party is ready to relinquish any plank of its platform which would offend the major parties' capitalist masters. (This makes life very simple for the Liberal Party.) Any party which attempts to play the balance of power game must of necessity seek no more than the crumbs which the bourgeoisie is willing to concede to the workers. If it demands more, the deal will fall through, or as in the Red Hook campaign of '46, be welched on. Once the capitalist parties find their differences with the workers' party are greater than their own minor differences, they quickly combine on a single candidate if necessary to defeat it.

Just in case some readers feel that TP over-emphasizes the consistency with which the ALP's capitalist party endorsees have betrayed the cause of the workers who elected them, we submit the following very incomplete list of such candidates who have had the ALP's blessing in the post-war period, and in parenthesis the office for which it supported them:--

Hugo Rogers, (D.) graduate of the Tammany school of

of politics, formerly its chief, intimate of gangsters (Manhattan Borough President, 1945)

James M. Mead, (D.), former U.S. Senator, Soviet-baiter and darling of the fascist London Polish Committee (Governor, 1946)

Herbert Lehman, (D.), partner in American imperialism's third largest banking house, red-baiter, outspoken supporter of Dulles cold-war policies. (U.S. Senate, 1946, also undercover support this year.)

William (dime-a-ride) O'Dwyer, (D.), (Mayor, 1945, after having opposed him in 1941 as a Christian Fronter.)

Miles McDonald, (D.), author of Brooklyn's reign of police terror against Negroes (D.A., Kings County, 1945)

Frank S. Hogan, McDonald's counter-part in Harlem (D.A., New York County, 1945 and previously)

Corey Mills (R.), anti-labor voting record. (State Senate, '46)

Justice Samuel Dickstein, gave anti-Soviet ruling in Kasenkina case, making it occasion for vicious attack on S.U. (Supreme Court)

Justice Lombard, defeated despite ALP support (1947), later appointed by Dewey. Ruled for Roman Catholic custody of Chalookian children to prevent their "Godless bolshevization" by Armenian parents who returned to Soviet Union. (Supreme Court)

Justice Henry C. Greenberg, anti-labor injunction (Supreme Ct. '47)

John J. Delaney, (D.), supporter of all cold-war measures (Congress '46, '48 and previously)

Emanuel Celler, (D.), Marshall-Planner who urged Marshall for Vice-Pres., warmly applauded jailing of C.P. leaders (Congress, '46, '48, and previously)

Congressman Joseph L. Pfeifer, (D.), cold-war advocate, currently in Madrid acting as Franco's broker in arranging terms of U.S. loan (Congress '48)

Arthur Klein, (D. and Lib.) endorsed by ADA after giving written assurance of Marshall Plan support and opposition to Wallace's candidacy. (Congress '48)

Paul O'Dwyer, (D.) cold war advocate, but split his pants straddling on MP issue. (Congress '48)

Rosoff, campaigned for Dewey for president, while himself running as straight ALP candidate after defeat in Republican primary. (Congress '48)

In addition there are of course the Caddy's et al of the '49 campaign as well as the Helen Gahagan Douglasses, Hollifields, Paul Douglasses, etc. elsewhere in the U.S. Not a very pretty list. To the Marcantonio's and CP hacks' hackneyed, "Of course, we are bound to make mistakes", we offer this challenge: Show us, gentlemen, a comparable list of capitalist party candidates elected with ALP or PP support in the post-war period who have repaid the workers' confidence by their official actions. And when such a task (as it must) proves impossible to fulfill, we again challenge you to name just one such candidate. No there is none, not a single one. The whole tactical program of supporting the "lesser evil" of capitalist party candidates is utterly and absurdly bankrupt. It is causing widespread disillusion and cynicism in working class ranks, as shown by the fact that in the aftermath of Peekskill and Foley Square, a third fewer voters voted ALP in its Bronx and Brooklyn strongholds than a year ago. A continuation of such a suicidal policy can only spell complete demoralization

and disaster. Yet, incredibly, suicide is the basic lesson drawn by the CP from this campaign. The official New York Communist Party analysis (D.W., 11-14-49) states: "The progressive coalition could have been more successful in this campaign also by fighting even more consistently and skillfully for achieving more electoral alliances with candidates of other political affiliations around a minimum progressive program."

The bossism and anti-democratic trends in the ALP are the outcroppings of opportunism on the organizational level. To what extent this opportunism is personal and to what extent political is unimportant since personal opportunism invariably flourishes in such a climate of political opportunism. Given the tremendous miscalculations and defeats of its lesser evil and balance of power misadventures, it is obvious that the leadership dare not risk repudiation by giving its membership an honest accounting of its stewardship. These leaders would be hard put to give satisfactory reasons for their deals to back McDonald and O'Dwyer but it would be hopeless for them even to attempt to explain away the unbroken succession of such disasters. Better to rely on poor memories and what they hope is the political stupidity of the workers. So, there has never been an accounting, and new defeats continue to be hailed as victories.

When, nevertheless, "upstarts" question policies, they are quickly silenced. To criticize the leadership becomes "lack of respect", then disloyalty; if continued the next step is the "freeze-out" or expulsion. Democracy is on its way out; bureaucracy entrenches itself. In this way, tactical opportunism unchecked, inevitably breeds organizational opportunism, bossism, and bureaucracy, which cannot and will not brook the slightest criticism. Hence, the explosive reaction of the ALP's top leadership to the Connolly challenge.

Granted its faults, should real Communists work in and try to build the ALP-PP? We believe that, by all means, they should. Some expelled Communists, though proclaiming their belief in a people's coalition party, nevertheless want to ditch the ALP-PP because, they say, it is a capitalist party. Let us, then, define what we believe to be the correct People's Front position for American Communists. We accept fully the advice of the 7th World Congress of the Comintern (1935) that: "It is perfectly obvious that the interests of the American proletariat demand that all its forces dissociate themselves from the capitalist parties without delay...Under American conditions, the creation of a mass party of toilers, a Farmer-Labor Party, might serve as such a suitable form...Such a party, of course, will be neither Socialist nor Communist. But it must be an anti-fascist party, and must not be an anti-Communist party...It goes without saying that such a party will fight for the election of its own candidates to local offices, to the state legislatures, to the House of Representatives and the Senate." (TP emphasis)

The ALP-PP is not a capitalist party. It includes a few capitalists and many of the petit-bourgeoisie. But these elements, including such men as Wallace and Rogge, have joined it in order to fight against war and fascism and against the more rapacious abuses of capitalism. The ALP-PP is not an anti-Communist party. Aside from certain red-baiting overtones from a few individuals, the only real obstacle to the correct building of the PP is the consistent opportunism of the CPUSA itself. But--the ALP-PP is also not a real people's coalition or Farmer-Labor Party. It contains few workers and fewer farmers. It is essentially a petit-bourgeois party. Furthermore, the present CP leadership has for 14 years refused to implement the decisions

of the 7th C.I. Congress--that all the forces of the American proletariat should "dis-associate themselves from the capitalist parties without delay." At the imminent risk of wrecking the ALP-PP, it continues in word and action to forge new bonds with these parties, to depend more and not less upon the support of those class enemy organizations.

Here are indeed grave weaknesses, yet as Communists we cannot reject the PP for faults so largely the responsibility of a social-democratic CP. It would indeed be suicidal for Communists to cut themselves adrift from a mass-type organization which contains a majority of the most stalwart and reliable anti-fascist fighters. At the same time, we must strive with all our strength to build a real CP, free of opportunists and purged of opportunists. Such a CP must as its first task, along with restoring and rebuilding the wreckage of the trade union movement, lead the workers in forging a real people's coalition consistent with the C.I. decisions. There is basically nothing wrong with the PP-ALP that such a real CP cannot set right.

To attack the CPUSA leadership because it is Communist is red-baiting. Many would-be critics of CP misleadership in the PP-ALP have muted their guns because they fear exactly this charge of red-baiting. But the glaring tactical and organizational faults for which these leaders are responsible are not Communist, but demonstrably anti-Communist errors. To attack these "Communist" leaders because they are not Communist is not red-baiting and cannot be construed as such. Non-Communists in the Progressive Party want peace, democracy and a better life for all Americans. Communists want and fight for the same things, but with a further goal of Socialism as the only way they believe they can attain these objectives. The fight against fascism and war can only be won if all of us who are going that way stick together. But non-Communists in the ALP-PP have the right to expect of Communists that they practice what they lipserve--namely, the attitude of the 7th C.I. towards the problems of the People's Front. Any other form of attack is bound to result in red-baiting, further confusion among the rank and file CP'ers in the PP, and in attracting the support of the vultures who want to destroy both the CP and PP.

In conclusion, a careful look at the election results in the context of the heightened cold war tempo shows that there has been no corresponding increase in the tempo of the anti-fascist struggle. This dangerous slackening of the workers' advance on the electoral level (paralleled by serious defects on the trade union level) is due to political confusion and uncertainty of the masses rather than to their lack of militancy (as widespread strike actions and the splendid fighting spirit of Peckskill show). This confusion has been caused by the vacillation and double-talk of their leaders, by the refusal to pose basic issues for fear of red-baiting, and by the defeatist tactics of voting class enemies into office.

The responsibility for these shocking betrayals in the PP-ALP rests primarily with the CP leadership which has brazenly betrayed Marxism-Leninism in its mad scramble for jobs and respectability. It therefore becomes the prime responsibility of ALP-PP members, Communists and non-Communists, who are determined to build a mass party that can stop fascism and war, to expose these fake leaders to their membership as the anti-Communists their actions prove them to be.

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