

Peace As an Election Issue

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

AS THINGS look now, the Democrats seem to be building up towards a victory in the fall elections. Never since the unlamented Hoover Administration of a generation ago has a Government so

swiftly discredited itself as that of Eisenhower. With his slashing of farm price supports, the President has antagonized large sections of the farmers; with his failure to shield the masses against the economic crisis and his attacks upon the trade unions, he has further alienated the workers; with his refusal to protect the civil rights of the Negro people, he has undercut the latter's support of his Administration; with his cultivation of McCarthyism, he has repelled the liberal and progressive forces of the country, and with his brandishing of the H-bomb and his super-aggressive policies regarding Indochina, he has thoroughly war-frightened the American people.



The uncertain element in this election situation is the question of peace. The Democratic Party is a party of Wall Street and its leadership agrees with the basic program of American imperialism in the field of foreign policy. For their own partisan advantage, they will make a certain use of such issues as the economic crisis and McCarthyism. But the weakness in their set-up is a possible failing to defend the issue of world peace. Such a failure could cost them the elections.

Since Eisenhower has been at the helm of state, the principal complaint of the Demo-

cratic leadership regarding foreign policy is that the administration is not energetic enough in its fight against the USSR, People's China, and the European Peoples' Democracies. Thus there was their violent shouting against the recent cut in the budget of the Air Force, and now they are bemoaning the fact that Dulles' bull-in-the-China shop policies are costing this country many of its hoped-for war allies.

SUCH A PRO-WAR-LINE, if continued, could hand the fall elections over to the Eisenhower-McCarthy forces. The latter are demagogues enough, especially since they settled (sic) the Korean war, to put themselves before the country as the party of peace. They did this successfully in 1952, and it is not out of the question for them to do so again in 1954. In this respect nothing could be more helpful to them than the Truman-Stevenson Democratic pro-war policy.

The American people ardently want peace. The great masses are not only demanding relief from the developing economic crisis and from the dangerous activities of the wild man from Wisconsin, but they also want definite guarantees established against atomic war. They want peaceful co-existence with the USSR. Any candidate who tries to ignore this elementary fact will do so at his political peril.

The Washington correspondent of the New York Daily News, John O'Donnell, a thorough reactionary, says in his paper of May 6:

"The mail of every Congressman and every Senator, be he Republican or Democrat, or from the East, South, Midwest, or Pacific Coast, is of today overwhelmingly and violently op-

posed to any Administration move which might put American soldiers on an Asiatic battlefield."

TO GRASP fully the significance of this mass peace sentiment and its political potentialities, is of decisive importance to those liberal elements, most of whom are in the Democratic Party, who will put up labor, farmer, Negro, and other candidates in the coming elections. These candidates generally will campaign for some kind of an anti-depression program and also against the menace of McCarthyism. Their greatest weakness, however, will be on the peace question and here, too, will be their greatest danger. Any progressive candidate — Democratic, ALP, or independent — who fails to fight for peace will court disaster.

The surest road to election defeat would be to hearken to such Social-Democrats and near-Social-Democrats as Senators Douglas and Humphries, and president George Meany and Walter Reuther of the AFL and CIO, with their shouts for more militarization and more aggressive war policies on the part of the Government.

The deep spirit of resentment and protest now alive among the workers and other democratic strata — against the enveloping hard times, against the sinister threat of McCarthyism, against the menace of a new world war — emphasizes enormously the necessity for the working class and its allies to develop strong political action in the fall elections. This will be the time to deliver a crashing blow against the exploiters, McCarthyites, and warmongers. The Communist Party Draft Program explains graphically how this can be done. Now is the time to organize and act.