

# Miss Flynn Answers El Diario Articles

The campaign committee for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn yesterday made public a reply to statements in El Dario, New York Puerto Rican daily, in connection with the signature campaign to place Miss Flynn on the ballot.

The reply was signed by Miss Flynn, campaign manager Arnold Johnson, and the co-chairman of the campaign committee Evelyn Wiener and Albert Blumberg. The reply follows:

To the Editor

of El Diario De Nueva York

In the issue of "El Diario" of Sept. 19th and 20th, two articles appeared signed by Jose Lumen Roman on the campaign of the veteran Communist, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, independent candidate for the City Council under the designation of the People's Rights Party in the 24th Senatorial District of the "Lower East Side."

We consider the articles extremely unfortunate and untimely, apart from their misleading character, in that they seek to stir up strife and anti-Communist prejudice in a period when the political atmosphere is changing for the better, when men and their ideas can be judged more calmly, free of the hysteria engendered by the "cold war."

In these articles Mr. Roman, himself a candidate of a minority Party for the City Council in the lower Harlem-Yorkville area undertakes to "warn" the Puerto Rican people against alleged fraud and deception perpetrated against them by supporters of Miss Flynn. These views of Mr. Roman was apparently sanctioned in an editorial which appeared in "El Diario" on Friday, Sept. 20th.

Mr. Roman could utilize his time and energy on behalf of the Puerto Rican people and other groups more effectively in his own district where living conditions are extremely bad rather than raise divisive issues in another district. Be that as it may, we consider it necessary to answer the statements in the articles. We trust that you will publish our answer, in the interest of truth and fair play. The charges, let it be said, are completely false.

1.—To begin with, Mr. Roman states that signatures had to be collected prior to the date set for primary elections. With respect to independent candidates such as Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Mr. Roman is grossly misinformed. The law specifically provides for the collection of signatures from August 12th to Sept. 23rd. Furthermore, Mr. Roman compounds this error when he states that those who sign the nominating petitions of independent candidates, thereby register their affiliation with the party of such a candidate. This is categorically false. Democrats, Republicans and Liberals can sign such petitions without, in any way affecting their party affiliations.

2. The main charge is that canvassers for Miss Flynn have concealed the fact that she is a member of the Communist Party. The articles go further and state that canvassers pretend to be social workers or members of the Democratic Party for this purpose. This is not true. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn is, herself, a prominent long term leader of the Commu-

nist Party. The Campaign Committee from the very outset prepared material in English, Spanish and Italian for distribution by canvassers and made it perfectly clear that Elizabeth Gurley Flynn is a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party. The editor of "El Diario" knows or should know that citizens who sign the nomination petition of an independent candidate, follow a time-honored democratic custom of supporting the right of an individual to be a candidate without necessarily endorsing that individual's full program.

Furthermore, Communists have run as candidates under the designation of the People's Rights Party in a number of previous elections, in 1952, 1953 and 1954. The list includes Miss Flynn, who ran previously as a candidate for Congress in 1954. George Charney, present state secretary of the Communist Party, ran as candidate for district attorney in New York County in 1953.

Some 9,500 signatures were collected and many thousands

(Continued on Page 7)

## Flynn Workers Meet Monday

Campaign workers for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn will meet Monday evening at campaign headquarters, 15 Second Avenue, to map activity in support of the Brown-Isaacs-Sharkey bill to end bias in housing. Miss Flynn, veteran Communist leader, is seeking election to the City Council from the East Side on the People's Rights Party ticket. The Monday meeting will also plan distribution in the district of Miss Flynn's platform, campaign officials announced yesterday.

Flynn campaign workers will today step up last-minute efforts in behalf of registration by completing distribution of 10,000 leaflets on the subject, and with sound-trucks touring the East Side.

The Brown-Isaacs-Sharkey bill and what it can mean to the East Side will be the major theme of two open air rallies next Wednesday in behalf of Miss Flynn's candidacy.

The first rally, at 7 P.M., will be held at Avenue A and East 6th Street, and the second, from 8:30 P.M. to 10 P.M., at Norfolk and Delancey Streets.

Speakers will include Ben Davis and George Charney, co-chairmen of the New York State Communist Party; Elizabeth Gurley Flynn; Arnold Johnson, Miss Flynn's campaign manager, and other campaign workers.

# Gurley Flynn

(Continued from Page 2)

among Puerto Rican people in Lower Harlem alone. At no time in this or any other campaign has anyone ever alleged, no less proved such a charge of misrepresentation. In all these elections the candidates were duly qualified by the Board of Elections. How under the circumstances can "El Diario" make such charges? We believe it would better serve the interests of the Puerto Rican community and of democracy in general if "El Diario" would lend its considerable authority to help ease restrictions presently imposed on minority parties and independent candidates rather than spearhead ill-founded attacks against them.

3.—In his article Mr. Roman warns that residents of housing projects who sign petitions for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn can be evicted. This is a statement of the gravest import, even assuming that it is a warning honestly intended and not a provocation. What Mr. Roman states, however, is not true.

Attempts were made in the past in Congress to place political restrictions on such residents through the form of a loyalty oath. The courts have since declared that these restrictions are unconstitutional.

Residents of public housing projects have the same political rights as any other citizen.

Here, too, we may ask whether it was proper for "El Diario" to attack the candidacy of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and its supporters because misguided and vindictive officials may attempt illegally to intimidate a tenant of a housing project for signing the petition. Would it not have been more in the spirit of democracy to uphold the right of such tenants to vote as they please and to sign such petitions as they please?

What would "El Diario" say if petitions were circulated in a housing project by some civic group for integrated schools, for better schools, for an increase in the number of Puerto Rican teachers, for this or that reasonable demand, and as a result some public official partisan to special interests would threaten tenants with eviction? Would "El Diario" warn Puerto Ricans not to sign, or would it condemn such acts of intimidation? Is our situation so much different?

4.—Finally, "El Diario" raises the old cry that Communism is illegal that its supporters advocate the violent overthrow of the government. This, too, is false. The fact is that recent rulings of the U. S. Supreme Court have made it quite clear that Communists were improperly convicted of this charge in the past. Only last month the second U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals found proof of force and violence completely lacking and directed the acquittal of all five Communist defendants. In Pittsburgh the U. S. Attorney on his motion asked for the indictment to be dismissed in that case. More and more the nation is beginning to see that the political trials of the past period were the products of cold war hysteria and do not serve the cause of peace and democracy.

For the reasons stated above, we believe that the articles are misleading and harmful. We be-

# 11 Pacifists Picket AEC

Eleven pacifists, including four associated with the Catholic Worker, yesterday began a series of monthly picket tours before offices of the Atomic Energy Commission in protest against continued bomb tests.

One picket sign showed drops of blood in red, and the words "Our Shame: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Nevada Tests and Eniwetok."

Another read, "We Started Atomic War. We Should Be the First to Stop."

Still another, which also bore the imprint of the Catholic Worker, quoted the famous sentence from the Scriptures, "They That Take the Sword Shall Perish by the Sword."

"Stop Atomic Tests. We Picket the Atomic Energy Commission the Second Thursday of Each Month," said another sign.

One hundred and fifty copies of the Catholic Worker of June, with a Page One headline, "Stop Atomic Tests," were given out by the pickets between 11:45 A.M. and 1:45 P.M.

"We could have given out more if we'd had them," said Ammon Hennacy, associate editor of The Catholic Worker, who distributed the same issue when he picketed the AEC in Las Vegas in June.

lieve they divert the people from the imperative need for unity. The effect of these articles, whatever their original purpose, is to weaken and undermine the conditions that exist: the open shops and the victimization of Puerto Rican workers by boss and racketeer, the appalling housing situation, the rat-infested high rent slums, discrimination in every walk of life, the lack of a decent future for young people—can the life and death fight against these evils be advanced by an attack against an independent candidate for public office?

Many of us Puerto Ricans and non-Puerto Rican Communists have been active in the affairs of the community for 20 and 30 years. We have made, we believe, important contributions in this period to the welfare of the Puerto Rican and all the working people and minority groups. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn is one of these Communists. Even this is not the issue. The immediate issue is the readiness of all to work together whatever their party affiliation to defend the rights of the Puerto Rican people in New York—to promote their just economic, political and social interests on the basis of equality—to bring an end to all discrimination against all peoples.

The author of the articles is himself a candidate for public office. The principle of political representation for the Puerto Rican people deserves the support of all progressive-minded citizens. But it is, indeed, questionable whether his article contributes to the achievement of this worthy aim.

It is because of these reasons that we urge you to reconsider the position taken in the article of Mr. Roman and the editorial. In fact, we must insist on an immediate retraction of statements which are demonstrably misleading.