

THE END OF AN ERA FOR AMERICAN LABOR

(See Page 2)

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The Millstone About His Neck



NEGRO VOTE WAS OVERWHELMINGLY DEMOCRATIC; NEW PROGRAM NEEDED

By George Lavan

Election returns have borne out what was apparent in the course of the campaign — the Negro people overwhelmingly supported the Democratic Party.

SWP Election News

Campaigning for Socialism

By George Clarke

Information on the number of votes received by Farrell Dobbs and Myra Tanner Weiss has not yet been made available by the election boards in the seven states where the Socialist Workers Party was on the ballot.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People reports that the ratio was about three-to-one for Stevenson.

What were the principal reasons for this sentiment on the part of the Negro people? First and foremost was the knowledge that their most open enemies — the Dixiecrats — were pro-Eisenhower.

EFFECT ON FEPC

Then, too, the Negro people felt that of all the politicians on the national stage, Truman — even with his purely verbal support of civil rights — was most prominently identified with an FEPC program.

ent; to have his party — even with a weaker civil-rights plank — repudiated at the polls would be even worse.

Another element in the overwhelming support given by Negro voters to Stevenson was the now-recognized alliance between oppressed minorities and the labor movement.

ARGUMENTS FAIL

Although the Republicans made great efforts to win the Negro vote and although they had strong arguments such as the contrast in promises and performance of Truman on civil rights and the

WORKERS VOTED IN LINE WITH POLICY OF UNIONS

The election returns were still coming in on Nov. 5 when the capitalist press started a concerted campaign to make it appear that there was a decisive shift of union members from the Democratic to the Republican column.

The editors of the N. Y. Times gleefully declared on Nov. 6 that "great numbers of trade union workers" voted for Eisenhower.

The conclusions presented by these and many other papers were that the labor leaders had failed to "deliver" and that the workers "voted as they pleased."

But their joy was premature. As further information became available, it was shown that The Militant was correct last week when it wrote: "By and large the workers in the big cities and the Negroes stuck to the Demo-

cratic Party in about the same numbers as in 1948, with minor exceptions."

NATIONAL VOTE

It is true that nationally the Democrats got a minority of the vote and that their majorities in the big cities were reduced. But that does not mean that the Democrats lost any of the votes they had in 1948, either nationally or in the main working class centers.

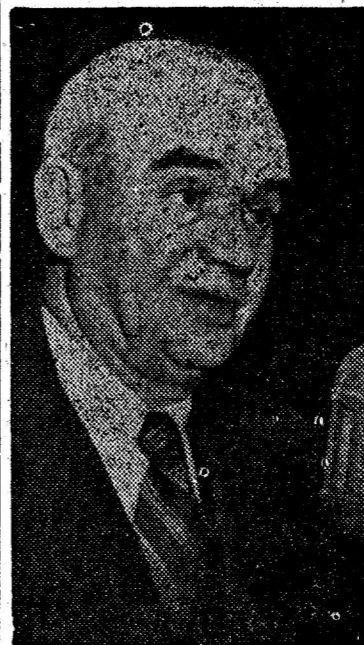
In other words, contrary to the impression the capitalist press tried to give, the Democrats lost the election not because of any important shift among the workers but because there was an unusually big turnout of "new voters" among the middle classes, and most of them went to Eisenhower.

INDUSTRIAL COUNTIES

This fact became so obvious after a few days that the Times had to print an article that flatly contradicted the claims of its editors and Krock. On Nov. 9, Elie Abel, reporting from Detroit on what happened in seven Ohio and six Michigan industrial counties, showed that in each and every case Stevenson's vote was higher than Truman's in 1948.

The picture of workers "regimented by labor bosses" and voting under "orders" — presumption (Continued on Page 2)

Late CIO Chief



PHILIP MURRAY

Leadership Issue Faces CIO with Murray's Death

The sudden death of CIO President Philip Murray has led to the postponement of the national CIO convention, originally scheduled to begin on Nov. 17 in Los Angeles, to Dec. 1 in Atlantic City.

In addition to the problems raised by the Republican victory and the defeat of the Democratic-labor coalition, the CIO is now confronted by Murray's death with a possible crisis of leadership.

The issue of successor to Murray appears to lie between CIO Executive Vice President Allan S. Haywood and United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther, who represents a more ambitious and politically aggressive tendency.

Ford Union Resolution Proposes New Political Road to CIO and PAC

By Art Preis

It is too early to assess the full effect on the American labor movement of the shock of the Republican landslide. But it is evident that among both the union ranks and leadership the impact of the defeat of the Democratic-labor coalition has induced considerable thought on the future political policy of organized labor.

Some among the ranks and local leaders, like those of Ford Local 600, CIO United Automobile Workers, have already drawn the conclusion that reaction cannot be halted by dependence on the Democratic Party and that labor must build its own party.

An encouraging sign is that union workers are not apathetically accepting the election results and are trying to figure out their meaning and what to do next. The Nov. 8 Ford Facts of Local 600 notes that "at the change of shift Wednesday morning (Nov. 5) workers had long faces and worried looks. Little groups formed. Everywhere — questions, opinions, analysis, discussion."

"POST MORTEM" Among the union bureaucrats, however, there has been a reluctance to discuss the elections and to analyze the causes for failure of the Democratic-labor coalition to contain reaction after 20 years of alleged "progress" under Democratic rule.

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The labor bureaucrats fear an objective and scientific post-mortem of the election because it might expose their responsibility for the present disastrous political position of labor and the continued advance of reaction in the form of a Republican victory.

War Leader



GEN. EISENHOWER

LABOR'S SOLIDITY The AFL leaders, many of whom are now seeking an unoccupied corner for themselves on the Republican bandwagon, try to blame the GOP victory on the workers.

That's false. The organized workers responded as they have in the past, and in even greater numbers, to the appeal of their union leaders to support the Democrats. This explains why (Continued on page 2)

Trucks Act Moves To Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court announced on Nov. 10 that it will rule on the constitutionality of Michigan's state-state Trucks Law on an appeal brought by the Communist Party.

The Trucks Law is one of the most flagrantly unconstitutional laws passed during the current witch-hunt hysteria. Not only does it violate free speech and free assembly but it has provisions that can be used against strikers and unions. The law requires members and sympathizers of proscribed organizations to register with the state police and answer any questions the police might desire to ask them.

(Continued on page 2)

BOLIVIAN TIN DECREE SCORES BRUTAL FOREIGN OWNERSHIP

On October 31, the government of Bolivia nationalized the tin mines of the foreign-owned Big Three companies, Patino, Hochschild and Aramayo. The decree was proclaimed at ceremonies in Catavi, chief center of the Patino Company, which is principally owned by U.S. capital.

Catavi has special meaning for the people of Bolivia. Here in 1942 the mine owners met the demand for a wage increase by massacring over 1,000 miners. Catavi's soil was red with blood again in 1949 when for days miners fought company police and army troops sent to smash their union.

The nationalization decree consists of two major sections. First, a series of preambles explaining and justifying to the world the government's action in taking over the Big Three mines. Then, the actual provisions of the nationalization.

PLUNDERED BOLIVIA

The preamble explains how the tin millionaires exploited the whole Bolivian people and prevented other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, cattle raising and industry from developing.

The Big Three companies controlled the government by bribery, corruption and intimidation of officials. They controlled the

'Now Is Not the Time' -- A Moth-Eaten Alibi

By Joseph Keller

When John L. Lewis landed the punch "heard round the world" on the jaw of "Big Bill" Hutcheson at the October 1935 AFL convention, industrial unionism was not the only issue before that historic gathering. It also debated a resolution calling for a labor party. This resolution, which won substantial support, was finally defeated by the AFL leaders who argued that they agreed "in principle" with the idea of a labor party but "now is not the time."

Since then, at every critical juncture for labor, the question of a labor party has been placed on the agenda. And each time, union leaders agree with the need, but side-track building a labor party with the plea used by the AFL moss-backs 17 years ago: "Now is not the time."

RANKS RESTIVE

Dissatisfaction with Roosevelt's meager first-term concessions created such demand for a labor party that the top union officials, particularly of the new CIO, had to take extraordinary measures in 1936 to divert this sentiment into support of Roosevelt for a second term.

At the May 1936 convention of the United Automobile Workers, a resolution calling for a labor party was adopted overwhelmingly. John L. Lewis, then the most powerful figure in American labor, rushed to the UAW convention to get it to pass a rider to the labor party resolution to endorse Roosevelt once more.

Active movements for formation of a labor party sprang up in key industrial states like Michigan and New Jersey. The Wayne County (Detroit) LNPL in June 1943 called on the state

ing Rooseveltian politics, the Social-Democratic and Stalinist leaders fought each other for control of the ALP. In 1944, Dubinsky of the AFL International Ladies Garment Workers and his Social-Democrat associates split the ALP and formed the Liberal Party. In 1948, all but the few Stalinist-led unions quit the ALP when the Stalinists shoved through an endorsement of Wallace. With no labor base, the ALP was reduced by 1952 to a shell.

Each election after 1936 found the workers less enthusiastic for the Democratic Party and Roosevelt. In the Nov. 1942 elections, the Republicans got 50.6% of the popular vote to the Democrats' 47.4% and the GOP came near to capturing Congress. Labor party sentiment was widespread and vocal. At a Philadelphia meeting in March 1943 of representatives of 40 labor organizations in Pennsylvania, James McDevitt, President of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor, admitted that many workers in that state waited the day of a labor party. But he added, "The day is not yet."

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By 1948, however, so great was the antipathy in labor's ranks to Truman, that union leaders were muttering threats publicly about forming a third party. UAW-CIO President Reuther in April called

CIO to form an independent labor party. At the Michigan CIO convention a few weeks later, one resolution for a labor party was defeated only by the substitution of another which said that "support of Roosevelt in Michigan can best be served by an independent labor party."

To counteract this movement for a labor party, CIO leaders Hillman, Philip Murray, Walter Reuther and the Stalinists with whom they then played ball, set up the CIO Political Action Committee on the lines of the old LNPL. As the result of PAC activity, Hillman was later able to boast with a sigh of relief that "third party moves in Michigan, New Jersey and Pennsylvania have died out."

But not for long. In March 1944, some 415 delegates from 85 CIO and AFL unions in Michigan, representing a quarter of a million members, launched a labor party which they called the Michigan Commonwealth Federation. But it was turned into an electioneering machine for Roosevelt and Truman. It dwindled away because of the opposition and sabotage of top union leaders.

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Truman "hopelessly inadequate" and in August proposed "a new political alignment" — after elections.

At the UAW convention in April 1951 overwhelming sentiment was voiced for a labor party. Only an impassioned plea by Reuther that "this sentiment is fine... but the timing is bad" was able to hold back the labor party tide.

As the 1952 campaign got under way, there was not a labor leader who opposed a labor party "in principle." Rather, they spoke like Joseph Curran, President of the CIO National Maritime Union, who said in the May 1, 1952, Pilot, that if only there were "one labor movement and labor unity" it would "be possible to think in terms of a third party." But alas, "any effort to talk" third party this year, would, without doubt, split the progressive forces and throw the election to the reactionary Republicans.

But there was "labor unity" — behind the Democrats. The "progressive forces" were not "split" by a "third party." Yet, this did not prevent the reactionary Republicans from winning. If labor over the past 16 years had built its own powerful party, with a program to attract all the oppressed and disaffected, there might have been a government of labor, farmers and the minorities in Washington today.





