

LABOR ACTION

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FIVE CENTS

Myth of Party-Machine Invincibility Smashed—

Halley N.Y. Victory Shows A Labor Party Can Win!

By MARY BELL

NEW YORK, Nov. 12—The election of Rudolph Halley as president of the City Council last week was a victory of startling proportions for the Liberal Party and a stunning blow to the Democratic machine.

In spite of a low registration of voters (1,909,016 or 453,732 less than four years ago) which was supposed to favor the machine candidates, in spite of the fact that it was an off-year election, in spite of the absence of a genuine fusion campaign, sought but not won by the Liberal Party heads when Halley's candidacy was first announced, in spite of the combined opposition of Republicans and Democrats and in spite of the injection of religious bias into the campaign, the Liberal Party candidate won by a margin anticipated nowhere, least of all by the boys in the backrooms.

The voters gave 657,158 to Halley, 493,366 to Tammany's Joseph T. Sharkey, and 435,744 to Republican Henry Latham. The American Labor Party (Stalinist) candidate, Clifford T. McAvoy, got 104,166, while the Socialist Workers Party candidate, Michael Bartell, received 3,700.

NO REAL FUSION

The most outstanding fact in the election is Halley's 163,492 plurality over Sharkey. The Liberal Party candidate polled nearly 100,000 more votes on the Liberal line alone than Sharkey received on the Democratic line.

Halley received only 54,737 votes on the Independent Party line and 21,392 on the City Fusion Party line. Thus the fusion was not real and certainly neither decisive nor necessary to the victory. The successive elections of the Fusion candidate La Guardia, to which the present instance is being compared, always assured the late mayor of the Republican support. It was not required in this campaign. The voters were not afraid of the Liberal Party label.

With the Republican candidate, Latham, carrying Queens and Staten Island, the Liberal Party candidate beat out the Democratic machine in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Man-

hattan. Tammany did not carry a single borough.

As a result of this first timid and reluctant sortie of the Liberal Party into independent politics—this is the first time they have run an important candidate independently—the Liberal Party emerged in this election as the first party in the city. Halley is now being groomed for the 1952 mayoralty campaign. It could not be otherwise, given the results of the elections.

The importance of the Liberal Party vote in shattering the myth of the invincibility of the machines is the most significant thing that happened in this election. Typical of the reaction is

the following comment by Warren Moscow, N. Y. Times political writer:

"The victory of Rudolph Halley in last Tuesday's election buried, probably for all time, the myth of party-organization strength in New York City. When both major parties go gunning for a minor-party nominee under conditions technically tailored to their advantage and wind up floundering in his wake, no further proof is needed."

WHAT IT MEANS

There is no doubt that the Halley campaign reflected the disgust of the electorate with both the Democratic and Republican parties and the desire for a change. While the lamentable Mayor Impellitteri, who was elected last year, had bolted Tammany, he ran as an independent Democrat. The candidacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt Jr. had been given Liberal Party backing as the result of a schism within the Democratic Party; Roosevelt remained an independent Democratic candidate. Halley's candidacy differs from these; he ran initially and primarily as a Liberal Party candidate, independent Democrat though he proclaimed himself.

There are undoubtedly other important factors that caused Halley to be elected: the glamor of television and the sensation of the Kefauver hearings which shocked the public conscience and incriminated both the old machines. But it cannot be controverted that it was a third, minor-

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CIO War on Pay Freeze Strains Truman Alliance

By WALTER JASON

NEW YORK, Nov. 10—The main value of the 13th annual convention of the CIO was to serve as a preview of the coming turbulent days ahead for the industrial union movement, in which it bids fair to be engaged in an intense fight with its closest political ally, the Truman administration, over the wage freeze.

The heart of the CIO position was expressed candidly by President Philip Murray in his remarks on the wage policy resolution. He said:

"You can't stabilize prices and you cannot stabilize wages unless the government of the United States attempts an all-out control. And that evidently is not in the offing."

"Mr. Johnston, in the course of his address to the convention yesterday, stated quite frankly that what he intended to do was freeze wages. Wages cannot be frozen without controlling profits and absolutely freezing prices."

Although the printed daily

proceedings do not show it, Murray also declared, "There is no free collective bargaining in America today." He also accused the government of "holding a bludgeon over the heads of labor."

ANOTHER PRICE BOOST

He warned: "The working population of the United States is in no mood to accept a one-sided discriminatory system of regulation that operates only against those who work and work hard for a living."

A dispatch in the New York Herald Tribune on Friday, November 9, served to emphasize this point, by listing all the wildcat strikes that have already taken place in recent months in the steel industry.

The announcement by Michael DiSalle on November 9 that price increases for nearly one fourth of all manufactured products were allowed that day also points up the crisis for the union movement in terms of its declining standard of living under the present wage freeze.

The brief report of Emil Rieve, CIO member of the Wage Stabilization Board, on the attitude of the so-called public members as well as the industry members of the board against the CIO demands, likewise illustrated the increasing difficulties which the CIO is having with its present po-

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CIO Blasts Smith Act and CP Arrests

On the rights of political minorities, the CIO convention finally took up the matter of the conviction and imprisonment of the Stalinists under the Smith law. To be sure, the action comes a little late, but nevertheless it is a very significant step forward for the CIO, and it does place a major segment of the American union movement against the "legal" witchhunt of recent times.

The key section of the resolution reads:

"The Supreme Court's decision upholding the conviction of the Communist leaders was a grave blow to America's precious heritage of freedom of speech. We detest the men who were convicted under the Smith Act and we despise the ideas they spew forth, but the conviction and imprisonment not for conspiring or attempting to overthrow the government by violence, but solely for conspiring to 'teach and advocate' the 'propriety' of such overthrow, is a threat to the free speech of all men. We urge the vigorous prosecution of acts of espionage and sabotage, but insist that the prosecution of men for advocacy of ideas, however repulsive, does not benefit the cause of freedom. Communist ideas never win out in the market place of thought in a vigorous democracy."

The resolution also blasted McCarthyism and the MacCarran committee, and it urged the review and revision of both the Smith Act and the Subversive Activities Control Act. It called for the expulsion of Senator McCarthy from the Senate.

This resolution is the first official occasion on which the CIO has protested the imprisonment of the Stalinists. It ends a period, of silence on civil liberties which was not the least factor in the unbridled witchhunting in Washington and the nation.

It ends the alibi of those CIO unionists who said privately, if not publicly: "Why should we bother with the Stalinists? The court's found them guilty. That settles it." At least in the UAW-CIO, this line may not be used as frequently.

In other important issues, vital to the union movement, the CIO adopted resolutions which clearly stand far superior to those emanating from the recent AFL convention.

On the Negro question, the CIO called for an immediate proclamation by President Harry S. Truman, issuing an executive order for the establishment of an FEPC Commission with enforcement powers.

The third important resolution was a blast at racketeering and a constitutional provision for eliminating racketeers who take over in local unions or elsewhere in the CIO. This stands in the sharpest contrast to the AFL convention, whose leadership for years has tolerated and ignored the racketeer problem in some AFL unions.

HOLD THAT DATE!

It's November 24 and the ISL is holding its Thanksgiving Social—see ad on page 2

