

# A Concluding Word On N. Y. Elections

By BENJAMIN J. DAVIS and  
GEORGE B. CHARNEY

ONLY A FEW DAYS remain before Election Day. It has been a singular campaign for such a bustling, politically active city like ours. For the most part the people have evinced little interest compared to previous years.

Back in August, Albert E. Blumberg writing in behalf of the Communist Party state committee predicted that the GOP choice of Robert Christenberry virtually assured the election of Wagner. The article analyzed the contrast manifested even then, between the apathy of the people in the campaign and the great popular interest in the issues. Important movements of considerable breadth were taking shape around such issues as the Sharkey-Isaacs-Brown Bill, school integration, housing and relocation, the special exploitation of Puerto Rican workers by employers and racketeers, youth programs, etc.

WHAT WAS URGED then was the need for Communists and progressives to participate actively in the movements around these issues, and seek out every opportunity thereby to influence the course of the campaign, as well as to stimulate the fight for independent political action by labor and its allies.

The extent to which the struggle on the issues has had impact on the campaign was the result not of the contest between Christenberry and Wagner, but of the pressure of the people's movement operating mainly within the framework of the Democratic Party. This movement was severely limited by the one-sided character of the election; also by the failure of the labor movement to take an active and independent part in the elections.

As a result voter apathy has continued up to the eve of the elections. The struggle on the issues did not fully penetrate the campaign or achieve success. Thus the biggest issue, the anti-bias housing bill, has been shelved.

IT IS NOT all negative. Activities on the issues have not been in vain. The movement in support of the Sharkey-Isaacs-Brown Bill is stronger, not weaker and will continue to press for its passage after the elections. A breakthrough was achieved for Negro representation on the City Council from Brooklyn. Important independent movements emerged in the course of the primaries within the Democratic Party that are far from casual or transitory.

The Liberal Party, though it endorsed the full mayoralty ticket, has conducted a campaign on the issues, and has given some expression to the sentiment for independent action by naming its own candidates for the City Council in all but five districts.

The campaign for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn has provided an effective voice for the Communist Party and other progressives in clarifying many of the issues of the campaign. The street meetings, forums, canvassing, radio broadcasts have evoked a warm response among many in the East Side community and elsewhere and gained prestige for the Party and its candidate.

WHAT TO DO on Election Day itself? Opinions vary. The alternatives in the mayoralty campaign include: 1) support for the candidate of the Socialist Labor Party, 2) the candidate of the Socialist Workers Party (Trotskyite) 3) Christenberry, 4) Wagner on the Democratic Party line, 5) Wagner on the Liberal Party line, 6) abstention.

The SLP candidate offers nothing. This party still perseveres in its position that activity by Socialists on the day-to-day issues is a betrayal of the class struggle. It is the position of a hopeless and impotent sect.

The situation with respect to the SWP is somewhat different. We

must take into account the position of a number of socialist-minded individuals including the editors of the "National Guardian" that the SWP provides the only socialist alternative in the elections, and thus merits our support.

WE DO NOT AGREE. We believe it is incompatible for people to oppose the concept of peaceful co-existence and yet profess to speak for socialism. Peace is the paramount issue of our times. The test of a true socialist is how he and his party contribute to the fight for peace and democracy today.

The rejection by the SWP of the idea that it is possible to achieve a lasting peace in the present world with imperialism, is not only based on a wrong and pessimistic estimate of the relationship of forces; it carries with it the logic of inevitable war. We believe it is possible to achieve a lasting peace as it is necessary to bend every effort in this direction.

SWPers argue that the fight for peaceful co-existence is an abandonment of the fight against imperialism. The opposite is true. The fight for peace has in fact weakened imperialism. Moreover this is the only approach that can win the masses to advance toward socialism. The position of the SWP because it claims to be socialist is disorienting and dangerous. We believe therefore that a vote for the SWP does not advance the cause of socialism, and actually weakens the struggle for peace. It is a vote against peaceful co-existence.

THE SAME IS TRUE on the anti-monopoly coalition which the SWP opposes because of its negative attitude to the labor movement, and its diehard opposition to a broad coalition policy led by labor. The SWP position had its test in the struggle against fascism in the 30's and proved extremely harmful and divisive.

The SWP views events in the Soviet Union in much the same hostile way as in the past. They advocate overthrow of the regime. How can any honest socialist, concerned about questions of democracy in the USSR, reconcile such a position with his socialist faith? Whose interests are served by such a position? A vote for the SWP is a vote that objectively gives some measure of support to counter-revolutions. Many good progressives do not take this sufficiently into account.

ON CHRISTENBERRY and Wagner. There is no doubt where the main fire should be directed. We have many sharp criticisms of Wagner. His administration has some positive accomplishments which we do not desire to minimize. It has the support of labor.

It has however lagged badly on many issues, above all the anti-bias housing issue. Wagner favors the bill but nevertheless yielded to the pressure of the real estate operators and the conservatives in his own party. The crucial importance of the nation-wide fight for civil rights called for a strong moral and political stand by the Mayor in our city. In this he was lacking.

The time has come for the administration and all popular forces to estimate more sensitively the acute ramifications of the civil rights issue in our own city. We are at the crossroads in this fight for democracy. What is necessary is a well organized and far reaching program to combat discrimination in all its forms against our Negro citizens, the Puerto Rican community and all minorities.

AT THE SAME TIME we do not subscribe to the view that because of these criticisms progressives should abstain. Christenberry, the GOP choice, represents the most reactionary, anti-labor forces in our city. He has stated his opposition to the housing bill.

# Soviets Map Bigger Sput, Atom Ship

LONDON—The Daily Worker reported in a dispatch from Moscow that the Russians would launch their second Sputnik on Nov. 7, the anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, if weather permitted.

The newspaper's Moscow correspondent Sam Russell said it has not been announced officially yet but the second will be bigger than the first.

He said the plans call for the launching to be part of a "grand fireworks display" showing Soviet technical advance of the last 40 years.

He said the anniversary celebration also will include the launching of an atomic ice-breaker, the "Lenin," and the unveiling of a new 180-passenger turbo-prop plane capable of flying 600 miles an hour and able to go from Moscow to New York non-stop.

Christenberry and the GOP ticket would abandon even the limited welfare measures of the Wagner administration. He is a candidate of the Daily News crowd and the McCarthyite elements in New York.

UNDER the circumstances, Communists should identify themselves with the main trends in the labor and peoples' movements and their most progressive elements, which are critical of the Democrats but view the GOP as its main enemy.

The argument for abstention in our ranks undoubtedly reflects a certain current among the masses. Nevertheless it is a negativist position that in effect will only retard the development of a new political alignment. Because this movement is developing slowly and unevenly, all the more necessary is it for progressives to work IN the movement, WITH the movement and NOT APART from it. Neither is abstention justified by the situation.

THE Liberal Party. We have serious differences with the position of the Liberal Party; and some questions about its future course with respect to a new political coalition in the city. We neither endorse nor take responsibility for any candidate or party in the mayoralty election.

However the Liberal Party despite its uncritical endorsement of the Wagner ticket is striving to establish some independent position on program. This is not unimportant. It is a good program.

The Liberal Party, with all its limitations, does represent in this election a third party force with substantial backing in some unions, including the ILGWU, the largest in our city, and among working people generally.

The position of many that a large vote for the Liberal Party will exert independent pressure on the incoming administration is sound. We believe such a vote will contribute to the movement for independent political action.

We reassert our pride in the energetic and fruitful campaign waged by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and her supporters on the East Side. We strongly urge all our members and friends to give the campaign active support up to and including Election Day and help achieve a maximum vote.

WHATEVER the results of the election on Tuesday, no time should be lost immediately thereafter to press for action on the issues that arose in the campaign. The coming session of the State Legislature and Congress will confront us with many problems: foreign policy and peace, the con-

# Radio and Feature F Campaign

ELIZABETH GURLEY candidate, is winding up the City Council with a schedule of open air meetings in the garment district and three rallies in the heart of the East Side.

The campaign will be climaxed by all-out canvassing for votes on the weekend and Monday. On Monday night the canvassers and other campaign workers will map their activities as watchers at the polls.

Election returns will be received on Tuesday at campaign headquarters, 15 Second Ave., Alhambra Hall, from 7 p.m.

A total of 25,000 tabloid-size folders to voters of the district are in the mails.

MISS FLYNN was barred from speaking at a City College students campus forum last week by college president Dr. Buell Gallagher. Max Gordon, Daily Worker staff member, substituted for her.

The ban against Miss Flynn aroused the protest of the City College newspaper, "The Observation Post," and the New York Civil Liberties Union.

Gallagher ordered the Board of Higher Education excluding as speakers persons who have been convicted or are under indictment. Miss Flynn served a 28-month sentence under the Smith Act.

The college paper urged that Miss Flynn be permitted to speak and that the board's ruling be rescinded. It asked the board to

# A Charred In Williams

By HARRY RAYMOND

THE death of a young Puerto Rican couple and three children last Wednesday in the flash fire which consumed a candle-lighted, kerosene-heated frame house, 107 Ellery St., Brooklyn, has tragically spotlighted one little corner of the terrible death-breeding slums of our city.

A glance at the charred ruins of the ramshackled Williamsburg structure where the five died, and an inspection of neighboring Tobacco Road dwellings in the rear of Ellery, McKieben, Varet and Wallabout Sts., offer striking evidence of woeful failure of the city administration's housing and fire prevention program in the low-income areas.

The Williamsburg disaster followed by days a raging conflagration in a down-at-the-heels lower East Side tenement, making homeless 22 families, many of them poverty stricken. The East Side house had 31 housing violations against it.

Victims of the Williamsburg fire were Michael Gutierrez, 26, former merchant seaman and part-time worker in a neighborhood movie house; his wife Augustine, 28; their children Evelyn, 9, and Antonio, 6, and a four-year-old niece Soladad Rio Gutierrez.

The house, which adjoined a rag-picking warehouse operated by the landlord Seymour Horowitz,

continuation of civil rights struggles, threatened anti-labor legislation and the ominous economic situation.

Whatever differences arose in progressive circles in the course of the campaign must not stand in the way of working to achieve the broadest unity on the problems that face us in the immediate future. For our part we will do all we can to achieve this unity.