

## ELECTION ISSUES

LIKE MOST New Yorkers, we have been unable to work up a vast enthusiasm for New York City's mayoralty election this year. Not that highly important issues are lacking. What has been lacking, however, are the instruments for effective mass expression of popular discontent with the Wagner Administration, or of pressures to compel improvement.

Certainly, the GOP ticket, headed by Robert K. Christenberry, can be no such instrument.

The very weakness of the opposition ticket, by failure to offer a positive challenge to Wagner capable of enlisting popular support, has made it tougher for the electorate to force Wagner to make greater concessions to its needs and desires. We say this even though we're aware that Wagner has the endorsement of AFL-CIO, Liberal Party and other liberal elements in the city, and that there are positive things to be said for his record.

But his disgraceful maneuverings on the Brown-Isaacs-Sharkey Bill, especially in the light of the national crisis around Little Rock; his Administration's continuing witchhunt against city employees and teachers (perhaps the worst in the country); its callous attitude toward tenant relocation problems; its lack of vigor in the fields of public housing and education; its failure to tackle the shameful exploitation of the Puerto Rican people—all these have caused much dissatisfaction even among groups that have endorsed him. This dissatisfaction has had little means of making itself felt.

The highly sectarian minor parties on the city-wide ballot are hardly such an expression of useful protest even if their programs were an acceptable alternative, which they are not. Their vote will not, and cannot, have any impact on the future direction of the Wagner Administration.

Before the Liberal Party gave its endorsement to the Wagner slate, many in that party urged that it place an independent ticket in the field to give voice to the discontent with Wagner. It failed to do this. But it did offer oblique criticism by naming 20 independent Liberal candidates for City Council, and by trying in the course of the campaign to develop a formula for criticising Wagner within the framework of its endorsement. It would appear that about the nearest thing the progressive voter can do effectively tomorrow toward voicing his discontent with the Wagner Administration is to help record a large vote for the Liberal Party.

There are several City Council contests of concern to the people of the city. It would appear, for example, that the two foremost proponents of the Brown-Isaacs-Sharkey bill—Councilmen Earl Brown and Stanley Isaacs—deserve election by thumping majorities. In East Harlem, election of the Liberal Party nominee for Council, Jose Lumen Roman, would give that body its first Puerto Rican. While added Negro representation in the Council is assured from Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant area, there are Negro candidates in the Bronx and Queens who merit backing from the electorate.

We believe, too, that a large vote for Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, People's Rights Party candidate on Manhattan's East Side, will help a great deal to compel the Wagner Administration to sit up and take notice. She has developed a fighting program on the major issues confronting the city, and her supporters have made it clear they intend to continue to rouse the people in support of that program.

As regards the question on the state constitutional convention and the six amendments to the constitution which will appear on the machine, we repeat our editorial position of last week: Vote YES on the Question, and YES on Amendments One, Two and Four.