

THE COMMUNIST PARTY ON THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS

STATEMENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COMMUNIST PARTY

THE American people gave a hard blow to the reactionary forces in last Tuesday's election. Despite the return to power of Roosevelt and his middle-of-the-way policy, and the presence within the Democratic Party of powerful reactionary groups, the forces advocating democracy scored a victory which is a setback to the Hearst-Liberty League-Wall Street drive toward fascism and to all extreme reactionaries. The main task confronting the toiling masses of the country is to take advantage of the favorable outcome of elections by pressing forward aggressively for the satisfaction of their immediate economic and political demands.

The campaign and the election results clearly show the sharpening of class lines in the United States. On the one side stood the great mass of the voting population. On the other stood an unprecedented concentration of organized wealth and reaction. Never before was the political struggle so much a question of the poor and downtrodden against the rich and the oppressors. The election struggle sharpened class alignments, and the check to reaction administered by the forces of democracy will speed up the differentiation of the population along class lines.

The masses of the people still expressed their discontent and their fear of fascism, their demands for constructive social legislative measures, and for a higher standard of living within the framework of the two-party system. The results reflected a determination on the part of the people to defeat the Landon-Knox forces at all costs. They reflected a preference for the Roosevelt ticket with the belief that through its victory the people could secure those essential things which they today desire.

THE overwhelming vote for Roosevelt was primarily due to the extraordinary activities of new forces, of new movement, representing the broad masses of the people—workers, farmers, middle-class groups. On a national scale this was expressed by the increased activities of the trade unions, particularly of the C.I.O. and Labor's Non-Partisan League, by the farm organizations and by the bolt of progressives from the Republican Party. On a state scale it was expressed by such movements as the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the Wisconsin Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation, the American Labor Party in New York, the Commonwealth Federation in Washington, the California Epic movement, and many others—movements that in no sense were identical with the Democratic machine, but which set as their objective the defeat of the Hearst-Liberty League combination backing Landon and Knox.

The defeat of Landon was due to a growing political and class awareness on the part of the workers and farmers and large sections of the middle class. They saw through and rejected the red-baiting campaign of Hearst and the Republican Party. They did not succumb to the unbridled demagoguery of the Republicans and their stooges, Coughlin, Townsend and Lemke. They saw that the issue was progress or reaction, and they voted in overwhelming numbers against reaction, against Wall Street, for progress and for a better life for the people.

The awakening of the masses of the people, the role they are playing in the destiny of the nation, their fight for better economic conditions and more democratic rights, show that the tradition of Farmer-Labor democracy in the United States is being reborn. This people's democracy which backed

Jefferson, Jackson and the Populist movements of the 90's is being revived. It is coming to life in a different setting and in a more advanced form to protect the American people, their liberties and their standards of living from the rule of decaying, reactionary capitalism and its worst products—fascism and war. The union of farmers and workers is coming to life today not as a silent partner of the capitalist politicians, which was its role in the past. It is emerging now as an independent force, led by labor and increasingly conscious of its role as a barrier to reaction, fascism and war.

THE people expressed in their vote last Tuesday not primarily their satisfaction with the things Roosevelt had accomplished, but a fear of the consequences of a reactionary victory and a determination to realize their aims in a very real sense. They gave Roosevelt a people's mandate to achieve very definite objectives in the course of the next four years.

In striving for the defeat of the Landon-Knox ticket, huge masses accepted at face value those promises, both direct and implied, made by Roosevelt. They took the words of Roosevelt, in his last Madison Square Garden meeting, as a pledge. In that speech he said:

"Of course we will continue to seek to improve working conditions for the workers of America—to reduce hours over long, to increase wages that spell starvation, to end the labor of children, to wipe out sweat shops. Of course we will continue every effort to end monopoly of business, to support collective bargaining. . . . For all these we have only just begun to fight."

From this and other declarations made by President Roosevelt during

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his campaign, the people will expect to realize the following main aims:

HIGHER wages, shorter hours, the right to organize and real collective bargaining.

Real social security with full protection, or jobs for the unemployed.

Protection for the farmers from evictions and foreclosures, with prices for farm products sufficient to meet the cost of production, with a satisfactory margin of profit for the farmers.

Complete equality for the Negro people, with the elimination of persecution, segregation, jim-crowism and lynching—the enforcement of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments of the United States Constitution.

A system of taxation which will take the burdens off the mass of the people, particularly the elimination of sales taxes and the like, and the placing of the tax burden on those able to pay—the rich.

Protection of the people from the assault of the monopolies on their living standards.

Legislation beneficial to the women and youth of the country, giving them those guarantees of economic security and equality which for them are burning issues.

The adoption by the United States Government of such policies in the international arena as will make it an active, aggressive force for peace, cooperating with the Soviet Union and other nations striving for the maintenance of peace, against the war moves of the aggressor nations—Germany, Italy and Japan.

Definite measures to curb the powers of the Supreme Court, once and for all preventing it from nullifying or hampering the execution of social legislation beneficial to the people.

THESE are the needs and hopes that the people voted for.

But these hopes cannot be realized without mass demands upon the government and independent struggles for these demands.

This must now be done without delay. Now is the time for the people to press forward and strike decisive blows at the forces of reaction.

But although the reactionaries are checked, they are by no means decisively defeated. They will exert a tremendous pressure on Roosevelt and on Congress to block measures beneficial to the people. They will use every means of terror and repression to prevent the forward movement of the masses. The Liberty Leaguers, the Hearsts, the big bankers and industrialists will do everything within their power to realize, *through the Roosevelt regime*, those policies which they sought to realize through a Landon-Knox victory. Within the Democratic Party itself, through the reactionary forces constituting its basis in the South, through the corrupt reactionary Democratic machine in the industrial centers (Tammany in New York, the Hague machine in New Jersey, the Kelly-Nash machine in Chicago, etc.) they will strive to defeat the people's will.

THE only guarantee that the mandate of the people will be realized in life is through the independent organization of the people; through the building of more powerful trade unions, particularly in the mass production industries; and through the organization of labor's forces politically in an all-inclusive farmer-labor party. Only thus will the people be able to carry forward the struggle for their aims.

In fact, unless the greatest haste is shown in building the farmer-labor movement, uniting all progressive forces, the way will be left open for the building of a reactionary, a fascist movement of the type of the Coughlin-Lemke Union Party movement which served as a cloak for Landon in this last campaign.

The organization of the people independently is the thing that at the moment will alone assure the realization of those demands expressed in the people's mandate last Tuesday. The workers must carry forward the most intensive organizing drive to build the trade unions, to establish them in the mass production industries, to carry forward the fight for their economic demands. The workers, the farmers, and progressive middle class groups must clearly formulate their legislative proposals to be submitted to the new Congress in January, to be fought for there, as well as in the various State legislatures. The fight for the needs and desires of the people must go forward through the trade unions, through the political struggle for legislative demands.

THE election results are a mandate by the working class and the people as a whole to the American Federation of Labor soon to meet in national convention at Tampa

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to the C.I.O., to Labor's Non-Partisan League, to the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, to the Wisconsin Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation, to the California Epic movement, to the Washington Commonwealth Federation, to the American Labor Party, to all farm, unemployed and progressive organizations, to the Socialist and Communist parties.

The mandate is to build the independent power of the people, to take advantage of the opportunity which lies ahead to consolidate the progressive forces and to move forward decisively to a people's front, to the national Farmer-Labor Party. Reaction has been checked but the people now must take advantage of the setback they have given to Wall Street to build their forces, to consolidate their ranks and to organize the Farmer-Labor Party.

In the elections, labor was in the main united against the menace of reaction. The unity and strength of labor are necessary for the future progress of the American people.

THE workers must use their election unity to press forward on all fronts and in the first place, to organize the unorganized in the mass production industries. They must rally to the support of the steel drive, whose success will strengthen the entire American people and the Farmer-Labor movement. They must take advantage of the decisive defeat of Hutcheson and the other Liberty League agents in the ranks of labor to work for a united and powerful American Federation of Labor, based on industrial unionism and the widest trade union democracy.

In the elections, the movement for a Farmer-Labor Party, as distinct from the left forces within the Democratic Party, became more clear. On a national scale, Labor's Non-Partisan League already gave a certain independent character to the political activities of the labor movement. In New York this expressed itself through the American Labor Party as a movement separate from that of the old parties. In other states (California, Washington, etc.) though working through the old parties, the progressive forces, labor, farmers and middle class groups, already gave to their movement an independent character.

In several states (Minnesota, Wisconsin) the forces of the people, already organized themselves into completely independent political movement, Farmer-Labor in character, and more clearly expressing the people's demands. These movements already represent the unity of the trade unions, farmers' organizations and middle class groups in a federation of Farmer-Labor political forces. In these cases the Communist Party gave its support to the building of these movement and to the Farmer-Labor candidates.

THE overwhelming and unprecedented victory of the movements in Minnesota and Wisconsin are living proof of the value of the people's front. They show that an all-inclusive Farmer-Labor movement is the road to victory. These movements were subjected to the most vicious attacks from the right. The reactionaries tried to frighten the masses with their red-baiting, pointing to the support given by the Communist Party to these movements. The victories won in Wisconsin and Minnesota are proof that large sections of the American people favor a united, all-inclusive people's movement of trade unionists, of farmers, of middle class progressives, of Communists and Socialists, in the fight against reaction and for the needs of the people.

The overwhelming sweep against reaction creates favorable conditions for the advance of the forces of progress and peace, against the forces of fascism and war. Now is the time to build a genuine people's movement for peace. Now is the time to build a broad, American National Peace Congress, of all genuine peace forces. Now is the time to work for collaboration with the peace policies of the Soviet Union and the forces of peace throughout the world.

The defeat of Landon and Hearst showed that the American people are uncompromisingly opposed to the forces of reaction and fascism both here and abroad. They hate the Hitlers and Mussolinis as much as they hate the Hearsts and the Coughlins. That is why it was necessary for the Republicans to cloak their reactionary plans with the wildest demagoguery. That is why the forces of reaction in the election campaign fought under the banner of "democracy" in a battle in which the democratic forces were all in the other camp. But the American people saw through these fascist tactics. They defeated the red-baiters. They administered a defeat to those who would take

America on the bloody road of fascism. The overwhelming vote against reaction was a rebuke to Hearst, Coughlin, and the other reactionaries who support the Spanish fascists. It showed that large sections of the American people are in sympathy with the struggle of the Spanish people to maintain their democracy. It showed that the American people will respond to a positive approach on the part of the Administration to cooperate with the forces of democracy throughout the world, and assist the friendly democratic Spanish government. The international significance of the election lies in the rebuke given by the American people to Hearst and the other reactionaries who try to throw the United States on the side of fascism and the war-makers. This beginning of the crystallization towards the People's Front is an expression of the world-wide movement against reaction and fascism, and will strengthen the progressive and peace forces of the world.

THE Communist Party gave all its energy to the defeat of the forces of reaction, to the building of the Farmer-Labor Party, toward the strengthening of its own position as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class movement. In each state and locality it concretely faced the problem of the unity of the progressive forces against reaction. In those states where the movement was already taking on a definitely Farmer-Labor character, it gave support to these movements. In other states it gave support, with various qualifications, to the crystallization of progressive forces within the old parties, placing always in the forefront the central objective of defeating reaction, and the building of the Farmer-Labor Party.

It realized that in the present situation, the possibilities existed for the crystallization of a new anti-fascist people's movement that would soon find its expression in a national Farmer-Labor Party. Everywhere we furthered those measures and those movements that would help in the formation of such a Farmer-Labor Party. Therefore, the increasing influence and strength of the Communist Party cannot primarily be measured by the vote for its presidential candidates, in view of the determination of the masses to defeat Hearst-Landon reaction by concentrating upon President Roosevelt's re-election. The growing influence of the Party was unmistakably seen during the campaign in the increased vote for local candidates in a number of states, in the support and successes for local Farmer-Labor Party candidates, by the many huge election meetings and in the response of large sections of the population to the appeal of the Party, after Tampa and Terre Haute, in defense of civil liberties.

In this respect the position of the Communist Party is to be sharply contrasted with that of the Socialist Party.

IN CONTRAST to the Communist Party which recognized that the fight for Socialism was inseparably connected with the fight against reaction in the 1936 elections and therefore concentrated on the defeat of the Hearst-Landon reactionaries, the Socialist Party incorrectly declared that the immediate issue in the campaign was that of Socialism versus Capitalism, thereby playing directly into the hands of the Hearst-Liberty League-Landon forces. Norman Thomas said that "the immediate demand of the Socialists is Socialism." The Socialist Party enthroned within its own party the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites and in its policies accepted to an increasing degree those disruptive, wrecking policies which are harmful to the whole labor movement, as well as to the Socialist Party itself.

The Socialist Party, by adopting a reformist and sectarian policy, failed to contribute toward the re-alignment of progressive forces and suffered disastrously as a result, as seen in the catastrophic drop in its vote. The Socialist Party weakened its relationship with the labor movement and with all of the progressive forces of the country.

The crisis now existing in the Socialist Party following the elections can only be ended when the Socialist Party rids itself of the Trotskyite disrupters, makes a united front with the Communist Party, and aids in the furthering of the people's movement against reaction, fascism and war, and in the movement for an all-inclusive Farmer-Labor Party.

AS A RESULT of its election policies, the influence of the Communist Party in the trade unions, in the ranks of the progressives, among the Farmer-Laborites is greater than ever before. We have been and will continue to be an active and growing force furthering the differentiation among the masses, advancing the movement toward a Farmer-Labor Party!

Large sections of the people realize that we have contributed in the way of unity of the broad masses of the workers, farmers and progressive groups.

After the elections the Communist Party, all its members, all its sympathizers have the task of pushing forward on every front with the objective of realizing those aims listed above. It is our task to promote the organization of all progressive forces independently, the building of the Farmer-Labor Party as a coalition of the trade unions, the farmers, the Negro people, the Communists, the Socialists and of all progressive groups.

On the trade union front it is the task of our Party to help in the organization of the unorganized, to win their demands for higher wages, for shorter hours, for the recognition of their unions, for the right of collective bargaining, and to work for a united powerful American Federation of Labor.

IT IS our task to aid in the unification of all of the best forces of the country, including the trade unions, the religious and pacifist groups, of opponents of war, in a mighty movement that will cooperate on a world scale with all of the forces of peace. A movement that will press the government toward a course of cooperation with the Soviet Union and those other nations advocating and working for peace, to pursue such policies in the creation of this peace movement as will make realizable the correct slogan of our Party: "Keep America Out of War by Keeping War Out of the World."

Our influence has been increased, our membership has grown. It is our task to build our Party, to draw into its ranks all of those honest, working class and revolutionary forces who see in our Party the most powerful force in rallying the people for their immediate needs, and in carrying them forward in the struggle for Socialism. The present economic upturn cannot and will not do away with the general crisis of capitalism. More and more the masses will come to realize that only a new social order—Socialism—can bring a full and lasting solution of their problem.

The Communist Party fully recognizes its obligations to the American working class and to the people as a whole. It will continue to fight with all its power for the progress, happiness, freedom and prosperity of the American people. It will continue with redoubled energy and strength, derived from the increased confidence of the masses, directed for the people's front, for the Farmer-Labor Party, for progress and peace, for the speeding up of the day when the American people will abolish capitalism and take the road to Socialism.

The ranks of our Party are growing. Greater numbers will now be recruited. We will carry forward the banner of Communism, the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin with increased strength, with the knowledge that we have the growing confidence of the masses.

Forward under the banner of the Communist Party! Into the Farmer-Labor Party, the consolidated forces of progress against reaction! Forward under the banner of Communism—the Americanism of the Twentieth Century!

COMMUNIST PARTY, U. S. A.
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