Shrewd Machine Management Plus G.O.P. Blunders Aided Democrats

By JAY LOVESTONE

NOW to a brief examination of the fortunes of the various parties in the election campaign. First, the Democratic Party. It had plenty of cash—far more than usual. Being in control of the government machinery, it had countless resources. Besides, the Democratic Party was blessed with the best campaigner, President Roosevelt. So inveterate an opponent of the President as Bruce Barton could not but characterize the Democratic leader in the following manner: "The present occupant of the White House is preeminent among all men in public life in his ability to think in selling terms and to speak advertising language."

Nor can anyone exaggerate the weight of the improvement in the economic situation as a factor boosting Roosevelt's results in the campaign. However, it is not only this favorable situation which played its part. In general, the Democratic general staff pursued sound strategy thruout the election period. We need but cite two outstanding cases in evidence of this. We have in mind the deal consumated under Farley's orders with the Farmer Labor Party of Minnesota. It dealt a death blow to Lemke's aspirations after this Coughlin blotter got off to a flying start and threatened to disturb Roosevelt's chances in this state.

Then, let no one underestimate the role played by the American Labor Party in the New York landslide. Here the value of the Labor Party must be reckoned not only in the term of the 300,000 votes it polled for Roosevelt, but also in its lending still further impetus to the pro-Roosevelt movement in the ranks of labor unorganized as well as organized. It was a clever move on the part of the national Democratic machine to have seven A.L.P. electors chosen for the college. This was a very profitable gesture to all labor thruout the nation. In this sense, Roosevelt's letter to the ALP, the first one to be written by an American president to a political organization of labor, was a master stroke.

Except on one occasion, the Democratic Party maintained initiative thruout the campaign and waged an offensive fight at all times. The one occasion in which it did not have the initiative was towards the close of the campaign when the Landon outfit raised the Social Security issue. But even this turned out to be a boomerang for the Republicans.

Farley's motto has for years been the following: An ounce of organization is worth a ton of propaganda. However, Farley, because of the Democratic Party's being in power, because of the vast resources at its command, was able in this campaign to have tons of propaganda as well as organization.

G.O.P. Not Yet Dead

We cannot repeat too frequently that it would be fatal folly for anyone to write off the Republican Party because of the poor showing Landon made in the electoral College. Despite a weak organization, in spite of its having no accepted body of principles or plan of projects, the Republican Party managed to attract approximately 40 out of every 100 voters last November. A party having such vitality is far from dead. This becomes all the more evident when one recognizes that behind the Republican banner there marched advocates of a so-called high protective tariff in arm with proponents of low tariff, extreme agrarians alongside of urban "consumers" who are really anti-agrarians. In the Republican fold there were even progressives further to the "left" of the New Deal having limited arrangements with ultra conservatives.

No doubt a major weakness of the Republican Party in the campaign was its being a heterogeous opposition, without even a sufficiently strong negative factor, without its negative factor being as strong as was that of the Democratic Party in 1932 when Roosevelt challenged Hoover. The Republican Party's being united on nothing, not even as to its attitude towards the New Deal, was reflected in the caution of its candidates, was revealed in the very personality of Landon himself. In short, it was an opposition seeking a least common denominator and getting nowhere for immediate practical purposes. This confusion within could only spell defeat without. Alf Landon was a synthetic candidate and a genuinely great liability. Here, much thanks is due to Hearst for his having discovered an independent oil operator who represents the interests of the great combines.

Realists in the Republican camp, like Vandenberg, long ago saw that the Republican Party had no chance this year. Here we must register the basic error of Hamilton's strategy: he developed amongst Republican campaigners and supporters the notion that the G.O.P. could really win the presidency this time. The Republican Party would have done infinitely better, particularly in the electoral college, had it, instead, waged the campaign with the idea of utilizing this struggle for building an organization to score successes in 1938 and achieve victory in 1940. On a par with this stupidity was the overestimation by the Republican brain-trust of the role that Lemke, Coughlin, Townsend and their like could play in the campaign. This was a costly but barren investment. No one can estimate or even overestimate, the funds poured into the coffers of this trio by the financial moguls backing the Republican Party.

In line with this futile strategy was the game played by Hamilton's wire-pullers with Nazis, Fascist outfits and anti-Semitic battalions. I am sure that, before many months shall have passed a good deal of light will be shed on the filthy antics performed by Hamilton and his colleagues in this respect during the summer months. All of this, of course, fitted in perfectly well with the Hearst alliance.

The "red herring" drawn across the trail of the campaign likewise proved suicidal. The Social Security issue proved a dud and served merely to hammer more firmly the nails into the coffin of Republican possibilities during the campaign. The payroll tax argument raised by the Republican general staff will not be so soon forgotten by Labor. This is already clear from the American Federation of Labor's Executive Council report advocating the abolition of the contributory phase of the Social Security Act.

Labor in the Campaign

In a subsequent article we will discuss more fully the role played by Labor in this campaign. For the moment, it will suffice to say that no one can exaggerate the powerful forces in behalf of Roosevelt operating thru the Labor Non-Partisan League. In the same fashion one must approach the contribution made by the American Labor Party of New York. So overwhelming became the sentiment for Roosevelt in the ranks of Labor organized and unorganized, that Mr. Hutcheson, the lone member of the A. F. of L. Executive Council championing Landon, found it very "convenient" to resign from this body. We underscore this despite the fact that in contrast with the C.I.O. leadership, the A. F. of L. Council was not very active as a body in behalf of Roosevelt during the campaign.

The huge vote rolled up for Roosevelt by Labor in key places of the country is evident to all. One need but look at the decisive part played by John L. Lewis in insuring a crushing victory for Roosevelt in Pennsylvania. To a lesser but nevertheless significant extent, Dubinsky and Hillman were valuable Roosevelt allies in New York. Here we must not forget that for sundry reasons organized labor's fight for Roosevelt during the campaign suffered from a number of serious errors. We cite but one painful occasion when a branch of the A.L.P. of N.Y. turned to distributing an address by the Rt. Rev. John A. Ryan, entitled "Roosevelt Safeguards America." This piece of literature of Father Ryan propagated the following: "However, let me say frankly that if I had to choose between Russian Communism and Italian Fascism, I should without hesitation take the latter because its despotism is less comprehensive. Italian Fascism exhibits less disregard for individual rights than Russian Communism, and it shows more consideration for humanity's dearest possession: that is, religion."

". . . The devastating success of communistic and anarchistic doctrines in Catholic Spain presents a lesson and a warning to the people of America."

S.P. Much Weaker

The Socialist Party ended this campaign with a weaker organization than it has had in years. Its ranks were sharply divided and and it was buried in a process of disintegration which is still far from completed. Its attempt to play left in order to capitalize on the ultra-right course of the Communist Party brought it only Dead Sea fruit. This attempt, inspired primarily by Trotskyist sectarianism, led it to stupid and criminal extremes. Thus, the S. P. generated sour and embittered hostility to the A.L.P. as such thruout the campaign. Fortunately, this hostility did not pass beyond its own thinning ranks. On a par with this suicidal error was Thomas' strategy towards Landon. The Socialist standard-bearer here pulled boner after boner. No sooner had Lan-

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INDIVIDUAL GREETINGS

MEMBERS OF LOCAL 22

Hymie Kimmel	**Pearl Halpern**
Harry Slavin	**A. Di Nasi**
Max Leifer	**Nathan Stelnik**
Caroline Juliano	**Sam Horowitz**
B. Goldberg	**A Friend**
Abe Altman	**A. Windfield**
Kreiter	**Muckim**

MISCELLANEOUS GREETINGS

Ann Ramsay	**E. Lind**
Nora Grey	**G. Wilen**
Sylvia Baumann	**C. Jacobson**
Rose Milner	**S. Mesnil**
Anne Laurier	**A. Skolnik**
J. H. Fels	

SHREWD MACHINE HANDLING PLUS GOP BLUNDERS AIDED DEMOCRATS

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don made his acceptance speech in which he endorsed the open shopper's formula on labor organization, than Norman Thomas wrote him a sweet letter. The objective result of this letter, regardless of the motives animating it, was to show a way out for Landon. Thomas was, thru his letter, put in a position of helping Landon in his efforts to undo the damage accruing to him in the eyes of labor as a result of his acceptance speech.

In the same category must be placed another letter of Thomas in which he sought to counteract the idea that there were serious differences between Landon and Roosevelt. Desperately seeking to stem the tide of desertion of Socialist voters towards Roosevelt, Thomas turned to emphasizing that the strikebreaking role played by the National Guard in the Democratic state of Oklahoma was worse than that played by the strikebreakers in uniform in the Republican state of Kansas. In the eyes of the average worker, Norman Thomas here appeared to be arguing that Landon was better than Roosevelt and that therefore Roosevelt should not get his vote. As the results showed, such arguments not only did not effectively weaken the equally fallacious position of the C.P. but even hurt fatally the S.P. campaign outcome. It is this strategy which almost completely cut off the S.P. from the unions, tho here we can say, in parenthesis, that the S.P.'s new Trotskyist trade union policies were decisive.

In summary, while emphasizing his loyalty to bourgeois democracy and fuming at all "dictatorship" in general, in the abstract, Thomas put the S.P. in the position of being all things to all men. When it came to counting votes, this policy meant nothing to anybody. It meant the S.P.'s polling the lowest proportion of the total vote it has been able to pick up in decades.

The character of the campaign waged by the Communist Party and the pathetic results it registered in this most significant election struggle will be examined in a subsequent article.

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This is the third article in a series by Jay Lovestone, on "THE *1936* PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN."

ARKANSAN PLANTER FOUND GUILTY ON SLAVERY CHARGE

Paul Peacher, plantation owner of Arkansas, and town-marshal of Earle, was convicted by a Federal Jury on charges of violating an anti-slavery statute. Peacher had developed the following system of working his plantation. As marshal he would arrest for "vagrancy" poverty-stricken Negroes of the township. He would then bring them before the judge, his personal friend, who would fine them exorbitant sums. Being unable to pay, the Negroes would then be "allowed" to work out the fine in labor on Peacher's plantation!

It was thru the pressure and agitation of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union that trial was finally forced. Backed by this movement, five of the Negroes who had been so exploited, came forward to testify, marking a new day in the struggle of Southern labor.

TEACHERS AID SPAIN

The Teachers Union announced to-day that it had collected $2,000 for the purchase of food, clothing and medicines for the Spanish Loyalists, and that it expects to continue its collections indefinitely.

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