

CHAPTER 3

The Wallace-Taylor Team

WITH A new party thus launched by Henry A. Wallace's decision to run for the Presidency so that the American people might "have a choice," the immediate problem became that of selecting his running mate. The Progressive forces found themselves severely limited in the ranks from which to choose—in the numbers of the politically prominent willing to stake their futures on the same principle—the all-important Wallace principle of opposing the bipartisan foreign policy endorsed by the Republican opposition as well as by the Truman administration.

Senator Claude Pepper of Florida, prominent New Dealer and firm supporter of the Roosevelt foreign policy throughout both prewar and World War II periods, had already indicated his decision not to bolt. Although a severe critic of the Truman doctrine of military aid to Greece and Turkey and the sponsor of an unsuccessful Senate amendment for routing economic aid to Europe through the United Nations, Senator Pepper had finally voted for passage of the administration's Marshall plan. He now promised to continue to press for policy modifications from within the ranks of the Democratic Party.

Professor Rexford Guy Tugwell, former Wallace aide in the Department of Agriculture and more recently Governor

of Puerto Rico, was a possible nominee. But although Professor Tugwell was later to serve on the party's Platform Committee, he apparently received little serious consideration as the Wallace running mate.

Then there was O. John Rogge, an avowed candidate for the nomination. A lawyer who had served as Assistant Attorney of the United States, Rogge was not well known outside the New York-Washington area. Moreover, like Wallace, he was a resident of New York State, thus posing the theoretical if unlikely constitutional problem of electors from a single state being unable to vote for two candidates from that state in a presidential election. Should the Progressives carry the Empire State, their electors would be unable to vote for their vice-presidential candidate.

✓ From the very beginning, however, the leading contender for the second position was Democratic Senator Glen H. Taylor of Idaho. Elected without strong state organizational support, Taylor felt free of party obligation. A consistent supporter of President Roosevelt's policies—both foreign and domestic—the Senator had indicated during 1947 his growing unrest with President Truman's shifts.

.. In late 1947 Taylor had made the front pages with a blatant publicity stunt—an attempted coast-to-coast horseback ride. According to the Senator, he had undertaken this jaunt with a dual purpose in mind: publicizing what he termed the "drift towards war" with the Soviet Union and at the same time attempting to discover public opinion on this vital matter. Taylor sensed that by employing this device he was making it impossible for even the most hostile newspapers to ignore his tour completely. This ambitious plan, however, had been cut short by a special session of Congress in November. Back in the Capital, Senator Taylor had been in close contact with both Senator Pepper and Wallace. The three were of a like mind about the need for altering the ad-

ministration foreign policy, lest it lead the nation into World War III.

Publicly sympathetic to the Wallace views, Senator Taylor had been prominent in much of the third-party speculation that preceded the ultimate decision. Shortly thereafter he was informally offered the candidacy. Considerable self-searching ensued. The Senator's administrative assistant, J. Albert Keefer, was dispatched on a sounding expedition to Idaho. He returned with the advice not to run, suggesting that Taylor would be committing political suicide if he accepted the offer. Still, a principle in which Taylor believed was at stake.

For more than a month the Senator stayed on the fence. Finally, however, at the behest of friends, advisers, and family, he decided to decline the offer. In his own words:

I wrote out a letter of refusal, put it in my pocket and went down to the office next morning, intending to release it to the press. But when I reached my desk, the first thing I saw in the morning paper was that President Truman had fired another good man—another leading New Dealer—Jim Landis, from the Administration. When I saw that, and started to think of all the other recent Truman dismissals and appointments, I got so disgusted I changed my mind, tore up the letter I had written, and decided to run with Henry Wallace.¹

Plans were laid for a radio declaration of formal candidacy some weeks later. Referring to a 1940 speech of

¹ On the eve of the expiration of Mr. Landis' term of office, President Truman had announced that he would not reappoint him. Although the President failed to announce any reasons for his action, some circles felt that he had been influenced by air-line operators who had reportedly been angered by Mr. Landis' "overstrict" enforcement of safety rules. See *New York Times*, January 1, 3, 4, 1948.

Roosevelt's warning the Democratic Party against political suicide if it should "nominate conservative candidates . . . on a straddlebug platform," Senator Taylor said in his acceptance speech:

I am not leaving the Democratic party, it left me.

I, no more than Roosevelt, could remain in the party which has betrayed the principles in which I believe

I am going to cast my lot with Henry Wallace in his brave and gallant fight for peace.

I received a mandate from the people of Idaho to carry out the policies of President Roosevelt in the Senate. I pledged myself to support a world organization to promote peace. Our foreign policy of supporting reaction all over the world on a unilateral basis has weakened and undermined and almost destroyed the United Nations. I would be untrue to the people who elected me if I took any action other than the one I have chosen.

I believe the American people will rise to the heights of faith and sacrifice demanded at this most demanding moment of all time We dare not falter because a few steps farther down the road we are presently traveling lurks oblivion. Not just another war—atomic and bacteriological oblivion.²

Thus was formed the team to spearhead the "fight for peace"—the team of Henry A. Wallace and Glen H. Taylor. Behind one a long career of governmental service, behind the other a background as a cowboy minstrel; behind one a family fortune augmented by personal discoveries in scientific agriculture, behind the other a history of early want and one-night stands; this was a team to behold, even on the

² Text of Senator Taylor's Address, *PM*, February 24, 1948. (*PM* was a short-lived, liberal-viewed daily newspaper which was published in New York City from June, 1940 to June, 1948.)

American scene—a team whose members warrant more careful scrutiny than that afforded them by the contemporary press.

I believe in God.

I believe in progressive capitalism.

Thus Henry A. Wallace prefaced his remarks on the occasion of his “only meeting with known Communists” in the course of the campaign. Completely comprehended, they portray graphically this man who had been Secretary of Agriculture, thirty-fourth Vice President of the United States, and Secretary of Commerce and was now the presidential candidate of a new party of foreign policy dissent.

So frequently stereotyped as paradoxical by press and quasi-biographers alike, Wallace himself has provided the most important clue to his actions—the primacy of his emphasis upon religion, upon spiritual and moral values.

An incident which happened while Wallace was Secretary of Agriculture is illustrative of both his rectitude and the difficulty of many in understanding one who practices daily his religious tenets. In a departmental conference, the Secretary had terminated the arguments of a special interest pleader by informing him that “unless we learn to treat each other fairly, this country is going to smash.” Paul Porter, a Wallace aide at the time, turned to a colleague and remarked in tones of both amazement and revelation, “Don’t it beat hell? He’s a Christian.”³

Accepting this one basic fact—the fact of thoroughgoing Christianity, the myth surrounding Wallace tends to vanish, the paradox to clear. Henry A. Wallace’s political philosophy was rooted firmly in the precepts of the Sermon on the

³ As related by Russell Lord, “MacDonald’s Wallace and the One I Know,” *New Republic*, 118 (March 1, 1948).

Mount—the fundamental dignity of the individual and the inherent value of human life. Equally basic in Wallace's concepts was the corollary that all possible should be done to improve the individual's brief stay on earth. As he phrased this belief:

We must invent, build and put to work new social machinery . . . that will carry out the Sermon on the Mount as well as the present social machinery carries out and intensifies the law of the jungle.⁴

What were the Wallace policies stemming from this belief? First, peace was an absolute essential. Without lasting peace, an overwhelming percentage of the world's raw materials, its man power, and its precious time would go into weapons of destruction. As Wallace put it, "A quart of milk is cheaper than a quart of blood." With lasting peace, the world could turn to constructive activities, creating a better place in which to live and assuring everyone—even the most common of men—of an adequate share in the fruits of their own labor. "Peace," Wallace said, "must mean a better standard of living for the common man not merely in the U.S. and England but also in India, Russia, China, and Latin America—not merely in the United Nations, but also in Germany and Italy and Japan."

Second, Wallace persistently exhibited a concern for the common man—the man of whatever race, whatever religion, who has found himself, through no fault of his own, unable to achieve all the goals of a fuller life. As Wallace defined him:

. . . The common man is the forgotten man—the man who is as good as anybody else but who never had a break

⁴Henry A. Wallace, *New Frontiers* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1934), p. 11.

because of being born in the wrong locality and having little education, poor food and no money—landless, jobless and working for \$30 a year in the Orient This is the man whom Jesus put at the very heart of his gospel—blessed are the meek and poor in spirit. Now as Jesus and the prophet Amos foresaw so long ago, those who have been rejected are striving to come into their . . . [own].⁵

These barriers, these road blocks, Wallace felt, must be removed or at least smoothed out, with the welfare state providing a means to such an end, as could a “progressive capitalism.”

. . . Ever since 1929 the western world has been totally unable to bring about full employment except by war or getting ready for war. Old fashioned capitalism has been replaced by the welfare state for the simple reason that private capital was too timid to flow in sufficient volume. The welfare state is not socialism But it does involve planning to serve human beings both in the U.S. and in the world as a whole.⁶

Thus to reconcile the Wallace combination of vision and realism—a man independently wealthy through his own efforts and discoveries in agricultural experimentation and yet a man advocating “a quart of milk for every Hottentot”—it is necessary to look only into underlying religious concepts which were his—the practice of long-lived though seldom used ethical principles.

In addition to these moral feelings expressed so frequently

⁵ From speech “Where I Stand,” delivered at Brooklyn Jewish Center, January 2, 1951 (supplied by Mr. Wallace).

⁶ From speech “A Century of Blood or Milk,” delivered by Mr. Wallace at the Community Forum, New York, N.Y., November 12, 1950. (Mimeographed.)

with a complete lack of self-consciousness, there were other traits to be observed—traits stemming in part from Wallace's early environment in Iowa, traits to be kept in mind if the former Vice President is to be more clearly understood.

Henry A. Wallace was raised in a typical midwestern Protestant environment—God-fearing, xenophobic, and not too tolerant of dissent. This upbringing affected his social outlook vitally, bringing this “Man of Good Will” perilously close to the brink of intolerance. Wallace stated bluntly his view that Americans “don't want communism, Catholicism, capitalism or colonialism to conduct themselves in ways which provoke war.” At the same time he noted that “those who profess the old-fashioned, common sense American religion . . . are increasingly suspicious of the efforts of the four C's to dominate the world.”⁷ Another facet of this outlook may be found in Wallace's remark that the common man “has been marching fast ever since America was discovered and the Protestants insisted on going to God direct instead of through priestly intermediaries.”

This same background emerges in the overtones of isolation found in many of Wallace's comments on the British. The Anglophobia common to much of the Middle West had its impact, even though Wallace channeled his public protests primarily against “British imperialism.”

Along with Protestantism and anti-imperialism, the ties to the land of Wallace's Iowa days instilled in him an innate conservatism quite contrary to the radicalism regularly attributed to him. Along with certain religious and international attitudes, Henry A. Wallace also acquired an abhorrence of both waste and radical change. The way to cure an ill, to correct an evil, was not by destroying and building anew, but rather by improving the old and tested. Thus capitalism was not to be discarded completely, with all its proven

⁷ Address to the Community Church of New York, reported in the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, December 5, 1949.

merit, but rather to be improved upon—to be made “progressive” to serve more effectively the common man.

An understanding of some of the seemingly contradictory Wallace policies of New Deal days—the “plowing under of the little pigs”—is aided by a reference to those same traits of frugality and conservatism. Wallace’s writings demonstrate unchanging principles despite such apparent inconsistencies of policy. To him the slaughter program was essentially an emergency measure necessitated by earlier failures to solve farm problems.

. . . To have to destroy a growing crop is a shocking commentary on our civilization. I could tolerate it only as a cleaning up of the wreckage from the old days of unbalanced production.

The paradox of want in the midst of plenty was constantly in our minds as we proceeded with schemes like the emergency hog slaughter To many of us the only thing that made the hog slaughter acceptable was the realization that the meat and lard salvaged would go to the unemployed.⁸

Nor were these temporary expedients ever accepted as long-range policies. For Wallace’s earlier experiments with hybrid corn and his later ones with poultry were both directed toward the goal of increasing low-cost production for the hungry and impoverished areas of the globe—but not at the cost of the American farmer’s living standards.

Yet despite his conservatism, Wallace understood the preservation of the old order to be dependent upon a willingness to make concessions, to adjust time-honored patterns to fit current needs. He foresaw that a continued stubborn resistance to change can lead to but one result—the use of violence either to defend or overthrow the system. As Wallace noted on one occasion:

⁸ Wallace, *New Frontiers*, pp. 174–75, 183.

The trouble with most reactionaries is not that they are evil men, but that they are so stiff minded that they do not adapt their actions to a changing world. Therefore they rely on force⁹

With his basic belief in capitalism as a system potentially offering much more to the common man both in freedom of action and in superior incentives, Wallace's fight was for the improvements that would enable a "progressive capitalism" to endure. His was an approach best interpreted as enlightened conservatism—making the necessary adjustments in the established system rather than making communism or socialism inevitable by a stubborn refusal to reform.

Since laboratory experiments and controlled social systems were out of the question as long as people—common and uncommon—were involved, it would be necessary to be constantly willing to tinker, for only from life-size experiments would come the necessary innovations. Wallace's pleas were for flexibility, for open-mindedness. As he pointed out in 1934:

. . . It is important to remember that the supremely important development [toward a new world] is not any particular plan, but the willingness, from a social point of view, to modify the plan as often as necessary.¹⁰

Out of his Iowa background came Wallace's conviction that in this experimentation the common man himself must bear the brunt of the burden. He must be assisted, it is true, but his self-reliance must be both depended upon and strengthened in the process. Thus to Henry A. Wallace it was

⁹ "March of the Common Man: Constructive or Destructive?" Speech to the Community Church of Boston, Mass., January 21, 1951. (Mimeographed.)

¹⁰ Wallace, *New Frontiers*, p. 201.

the task of government to do no more than to remove those obstacles large enough to be unyielding to the earnest efforts of even the most self-reliant.

These, then, were some of the principles and policies upon which Henry A. Wallace hoped to found a new American political party—a party which would become a broad party of the people and which would in time supplant the Democratic Party as the standard-bearer of the common man in a more meaningful two-party system of the future.

But Wallace also brought to the new party—for better or for worse—his own special leadership attributes. One of his chief characteristics—a strength as well as a weakness—was his willingness to take a stand that might prove unpopular. Wallace's position was never characterized by the apocryphal remark: "There go my people. I must follow them, for I am their leader." With Wallace it was, in fact, nearly always the reverse. Quite consistently, he moved so far ahead of his followers that he left them completely behind. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, possessed of considerably more political caution and acumen, made good use of Wallace's trait. Throughout the New Deal period, the Secretary of Agriculture was regularly assigned to exposed positions—number one target for press attacks on "radical" proposals. Notwithstanding the venom of the assaults on him, Wallace's willingness to take a positive stand on new, untried proposals brought him a considerable measure of acclaim, both among the general public and privately—even among the most vitriolic of his Washington assailants.

And yet, by comparison with the great political leaders of American history, Henry A. Wallace's qualities did not place him in their forefront. Indeed, he admitted both his own shortcomings and the fact that he "never felt at home in a political atmosphere." He laughingly referred to the last-minute attempts to build him up as a political operator at the 1940 Chicago Convention, when, he related, he was conducted on

a table-to-table tour of the Democratic big city bosses by the late Harry Hopkins. The most lasting result, Wallace noted wryly, was a series of photographs intended to convince party faithfuls that he was really one of the boys.

The contrast between Wallace's outstanding success as an administrator in the largest peacetime department of the government as Secretary of Agriculture—a success acknowledged even by anti-Wallace Washington observers—and his failure to oversee adequately the organization of his New Party seem explicable only in terms of this lack of interest. Wallace himself admitted to being “just not interested in political organization.”

Coupled with this general lack of interest in party maneuvering was a tendency to leave his own fortunes in the hands of chance, of friends, or even of strangers. These traits proved fatal to his vice-presidential hopes and led to the delegation of the party organization tasks to a campaign manager, the personal choice of the candidate, who was to prove almost equally deficient. And this became a handicap from which the party was never to recover fully.

Wallace's qualities were to emerge in the campaign as those of a religious rather than a political leader. As Dorothy Thompson once observed, long before the 1948 campaign, “There is a hard clear streak of biblical righteousness in Henry Wallace With it goes humaneness and mercy.” The concept which Wallace entertained of himself as a crusader was not far amiss. While his designation of his band of followers as a “Gideon's Army” was contradicted by his expressed hopes that the new party would rapidly become a mass people's movement, the religious overtones remained evident throughout his campaign addresses. The “fight for peace” was to become a crusade—a quixotic crusade—with Henry A. Wallace in the role of Crusader for the Common Man.

In addition to this major defect, several other traits that undoubtedly cost him votes were to emerge in the course of the campaign. Despite his years of political activity, Henry A. Wallace remained a man *for* the people, rather than *of* the people—with a liking for them in the abstract rather than as individuals.

Reticent by nature, Wallace was far from the cold person portrayed by so many journalists; rather he was almost completely lacking in both the ability and the desire to engage in small talk. Moreover, he seemed little aware of, and even less concerned with, the lack of this trait which is so helpful to a candidate in almost constant campaign contact with the reporters covering his activities. Making few attempts to conceal his boredom with things he considered trivial, Wallace could become almost eloquent when the conversation turned to those subjects near his heart. Still another handicap was the Wallace tendency to think in spurts, with periods of intense concentration followed by times of near-lassitude and resting, coasting, or wandering attention. Such characteristics did not endear him to an already antagonistic press corps.

Then, too, Wallace had at one time or another been interested in a broad range of experiments from plants and poultry breeding to dietary tests, from his more publicized corn and chicken work to vegetarian and fat-tailed sheep diets. Couple with this the streak of mysticism underlying Wallace's basic Christianity, and some light may be cast upon the former Vice President's reported excursions into areas of strange and exotic religious beliefs. Wallace may indeed have written, as Westbrook Pegler alleged, the so-called "Guru letters"—notes in which, it was claimed, Wallace had sought the advice of a Hindu mystic. True or not, these claims of "deviant behavior" were seized upon and set forth in great detail by the press.

Moreover, a lack of caution cropped out in many of Wallace's press conferences, where he displayed a frequent tendency to go off the deep end in off-the-cuff responses to unexpected questions. This behavior of the former Vice President was not unlike that of his Democratic adversary President Harry S. Truman.

Wallace's press relations were made even worse by his transparent impatience with those unable or unwilling to get his views straight. Numerous jousts with reporters ensued as a result of their insistence that Wallace repeatedly answer the same old questions, such as his stand on acceptance of Communist support. He finally resigned himself by carrying in his wallet a prepared statement which pointed out that he "was not, had never been, and did not expect to ever become" a Communist, but that he was willing to accept the support of anyone who did not advocate violent overthrow of the Constitution of the United States.

The sophisticated distinctions between Liberal and Radical, or indeed between Conservative and Liberal, are seldom to be found in the hurried stories of a political campaign from harried reporters. And from his early days in Agriculture, the Secretary, as New Deal philosopher-advocate, had been considered fair game by opposition forces far more concerned with destruction than accurate portrayal. Wallace was much less concerned with press reaction than with the response of future generations, an outlook not particularly helpful to a political candidate.

Perhaps the best expression of Wallace's long-range philosophy—of this concern for the future—is to be found in *New Frontiers*, written long before he was to become a candidate. Therein he had noted:

For those who see now that the men who led us into chaos have nothing to give except another selfish fling and

more chaos, new frontiers beckon with meaningful adventure.

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To build new social machinery requires economic engineers . . . to subdue the social wilderness . . . today [a new world] has to be discovered, and when it is discovered it must be held onto. The problem is largely one of spirit, but it is also one of hard facts and definite action continually accompanying the unfolding of the spirit.

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What we approach is not a new continent but a new state of heart and mind resulting in new standards of accomplishment. We must invent, build and put to work new social machinery.¹¹

Or, as Wallace put it so succinctly a year after the campaign, "I am not greatly concerned with the history of the past. What I am interested in is that which still lies ahead."

In summary, Henry A. Wallace's shortcomings as a political leader stemmed from those same traits that lent him strength as an ideological leader—the moral note of religious faith and even the quixotic willingness to tackle the impossible. These were things that made up this self-appointed Crusader for the Common Man.

But what of his prospective running mate, Senator Glen H. Taylor? Like Wallace, Taylor had been subjected to harsh treatment at the hands of a conformist American press. Whereas Wallace had been portrayed as the fuzzy-minded, idealistic, impractical visionary, Taylor was depicted as the simple-minded buffoon, a sort of "Pappy O'Daniel on horseback," an uneducated and hence ignorant cowboy singer, a "Left Wing Minstrel." However, the power of the press had

¹¹ Wallace, *New Frontiers*, pp. 11, 281, 283.

failed to keep Taylor from election in Idaho, and he had adopted the showman's attitude that "any publicity is good publicity; it's only when the newspapers ignore me that I begin to worry."

Glen H. Taylor was, for the mid-twentieth century, a unique member of the Senate in that his formal education had extended only to the age of fifteen and in that he had come to that august body from the world of entertainment—from show business. Without the confining doctrines of either professor or machine politician, Taylor had come up with a working philosophy of politics and life both homespun and penetrating, as well as distinctively his own—something of a throwback to pioneer days in the West.

Born and raised in Idaho as the son of an itinerant evangelist, the Reverend Pleasant John Taylor, the Senator, like his running mate, had been exposed in early years to a combination of self-reliance, religion, and the realities of life. On his own at an early age, Taylor found himself during the depression days of the late 1920's and early 1930's at the head of a small touring cowboy troupe. Frequently unable to obtain bookings in even the most humble theaters, they often found themselves miles from the nearest hamlet with only their truck for a home and a jack-rabbit stew for supper. "In fact," remarked Senator Taylor, "had it not been for those jack rabbits, we might well have starved to death. But we sure did get sick and tired of them as a steady diet."

Throughout all the traveling, this itinerant minstrel was constantly reading—working on his own to make up for the deficiencies of his abbreviated formal schooling. Covering a broad range from Plato and Aristotle to John M. Keynes and Stuart Chase, he found himself attracted to economic matters in general and the works of the latter in particular. Out of his studies and his own depression experiences, Taylor ultimately arrived at a confirmed point of view.

Moreover, in the course of his reading, the Senator came

upon a phrase that stayed with him: "The ultimate object of all knowledge is action." As he toured the mountain ranges singing for his supper, he began casting about for some practical use for his self-acquired learning. Finally, one night, standing in the rear of a small theater where he was to appear the next day, he found this same thought running through his mind as he watched the performance of another touring troupe whose goal was the election of a state governor. Observing the politicians with a professionally critical eye, Taylor concluded that the arts of acting and stagecraft played no small part in their appeal to the audience. He reasoned, "They're little more than amateurs who spend only part of their time before audiences. Why shouldn't I, a full-time professional performer, be able to do as good or better a job?"

The thought was father to the action. With no little trepidation, the Senator has admitted, he entered his name as candidate for the Democratic congressional nomination in his home district in Idaho. In the ensuing campaign Taylor introduced the idea of rounding up votes with a cowboy band. "Give the people a little entertainment," he reasoned, "and the political pill goes down a lot easier."

But for Taylor the hour of victory was still in the future. In this baptism of political fire (this was 1938), he ran fourth in a field of nine for the congressional nomination. "But at least," he consoled himself, "I had found out that some people would actually vote for me. And that was a big step forward."

Two years later, undaunted by the first failure, the Taylor caravan again took to the road, this time in pursuit of the senatorial nomination. "And this time," the Senator relates, "we really went back into the hills. Not only the one-horse towns, but the places where the people were too poor to have even a horse. We got into places where no candidate for any office, let alone for the U.S. Senate, had set foot in the last fifty years. And this paid off on the primary election day.

When the first city returns came in, I was trailing. I picked up a little in the smaller villages, but it was only when the returns from the 'backwoods' came in that I finally pulled up even and was eventually nominated by a few hundred votes."

But because he had won the Democratic nomination over the machine candidate, the party State Central Committee proceeded to drag its feet, reasoning that the easiest way to get rid of this "maverick" was to let him go down to defeat at Republican hands in the general election.

But the defeat, not long in coming, failed of this purpose. For so close had he come that Taylor was irretrievably bitten by the political bug. Two years later he entered the 1942 campaign. Again his tactics gained for him the Democratic senatorial nomination without machine endorsement, and again he was defeated in the general election. Undaunted, he returned a third time, again triumphing over the machine candidate in the primary. This year—1944—aided by Roosevelt's presence on the ballot, the erstwhile cowboy singer was not to be denied—even by a reluctant state leadership. Glen Taylor triumphed with the same 5,000 vote margin by which Roosevelt carried the state. Again the hill people had responded to the Taylor appeal, and their votes—with an assist from F.D.R.—had proved decisive.

Thus the newly elected Junior Senator from Idaho arrived in Washington with the feeling that he was under "obligations to no one, least of all to the Democratic state committee" or to the professional politicians who had never given him better than halfhearted support. The target of every newspaper and every important industrial interest group in the state of Idaho, he owed no debts there. Instead, he claimed, the only people to whom he was beholden were those whose votes had elected him—above all, the people back in the hills.

Senator Taylor's voting record in the subsequent six-year period became one of the best measures of his independ-

ence. His mission, as he interpreted it, was to carry out the mandate given him to support the policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal in both domestic and foreign affairs. In the early years of his term, Taylor's record of support of Democratic administration measures was one of the highest in the Senate—an over-all average of 92 per cent from 1945 to 1947. It was only with the Truman foreign policy shift that the Cowboy Senator began to vote against the administration in these areas, feeling that the Roosevelt policies were being abandoned. His votes on domestic matters continued to be strongly Fair Deal–New Deal and apparently free from special interest pressures. Only one measure of significance throughout his career indicated any unusual response to local groups. In his last Congress, Senator Taylor veered away from the official Democratic position to join a “potatoes for soy beans” coalition on a farm bill vote.

This, then, was the political background and ideological orientation of the third party's vice-presidential nominee. As far as personal characteristics, Glen Taylor presented a marked contrast to the more reserved Wallace. Unlike the presidential nominee, the Senator had gone hungry; he had earned his living by the sweat of his brow—first in show business and later as a welder in a California airplane factory. Such experiences, coupled with his warmer personality, gave Taylor a closer and more direct link to the common man. Unlike Wallace, Taylor was a man *of* the people, as well as *for* the people.

Also unlike Wallace, a philosopher first and only secondarily a politician, Taylor was aware at every step of political actuality, reality, and the need for organization; his thinking processes tended to be incisive rather than philosophical. One of his striking abilities was that of putting complicated ideas across to the average citizen in personal terms—as in the lucid, simple phrase: “I just don't want my

sons dying on some Siberian steppe in any war that I can do anything to prevent.”

Coupled with an innate warmth and a liking for people as individuals as well as abstract concepts, Senator Taylor's stage presence allowed him to capitalize on his assets to the utmost. Nonetheless, Taylor, like Wallace, often exhibited the same overwhelming concern with broad problems of world affairs that on occasion made it difficult for him to engage in small talk.

Perhaps one of the most unusual demonstrations by Taylor in Washington—more spectacular, even, than his horseback ride up the steps of the Senate Office Building—was his willingness to admit quite frequently that he just “didn't know.” Indeed this may have been a deliberate device to capitalize on his self-professed ignorance. “I'm all confused by this complex issue,” he would tell his Idaho constituents, “I just don't know what to do. I need *your* advice, I want *your* decision. What do *you* want me to do?”

In short, the Senator claimed to base his representative theory on an advocacy of the people's wishes rather than on his own views. “I was elected from Idaho as a Democrat,” said Taylor after the 1948 election, “and I sit in the Senate as one.” And yet, when the chips were down in early 1948, the Senator struck out on his own. In spite of clear indications that the people of his state were “not interested” in the peace issue, faced with the imminent danger of losing the “best job he ever had,” Glen H. Taylor cast his lot with Henry A. Wallace. To him it was a matter of conscience; it was his duty to warn the American people, to do everything within his power to halt the “increasing drift towards a disastrous war and domestic fascism”—the inevitable result, he feared, of administration policies at home and toward Russia.

In spite of tremendous pressure, he remained steadfast in his conviction that a third world war was simply “un-

necessary” and that American as well as Russian policies were dangerous to world peace. Even after his reconciliation with the Democrats had been effected in September, 1949, with a visit to the White House, Taylor remarked publicly, “I wish I could go along with the President [on his foreign policy]. It would be much more pleasant.”

And on the eve of his departure from Washington following his defeat in the 1950 primary, Glen Taylor remained convinced that his and Wallace’s position had been correct, even if the public had failed to rally to their support. As the Senator put it, he had “done everything [he] possibly could to avert the drive to war.” And, despite the “slowness of public opinion to react,” despite the “misinformation of the press,” he still retained his “basic faith in the ultimate good judgment of the [American] people.” Despite the fact that his reliance on the courage of his convictions had, at least in the short run, proved disastrous, Taylor retained his faith in the ultimate common sense of the common man.

Given their backgrounds, philosophies, and fundamental beliefs, what were the views shared by the Wallace-Taylor team with respect to the specific problems facing the United States in 1948? What were their hopes for their New Party?

First, and most important, was the view that the best interests of the common man, throughout the world as in the United States, could be furthered only by a lasting peace between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Both men were convinced that the drive to war would deprive the people of most of their recent social advancements and would slow up or halt future improvements. As Taylor put it, “We stand at the most terrifying and cataclysmic instant in all history.”

In line with this, both Wallace and Taylor felt that everything possible should be done to strengthen the United Nations, which they both viewed as the world’s best—and per-

haps its last—hope for peace. Both felt that the Truman administration was betraying, if unwittingly, the U.N., the doctrines of Franklin Roosevelt, and the American people by its get-tough-with-Russia policy.

As for the party, unlike those Communist participants who viewed the movement as beginning the breakdown of the two-party tradition—the beginning of a multi-party system in which they might possess the balance of power—both Wallace and Taylor thought of it as an organization which would attain major status, supplanting an old party which had failed to serve the interests of the American people. As Wallace observed, the third party was a “long range venture. Neither old party stood for anything definite.” He felt that “both stood for an unrealistic foreign policy. There was a need for the people to have choices on the basis of issues, not personalities. Both old parties were composed of elements that couldn’t act.” A new party based on issues and composed of elements that *could* act would provide the answer.

Senator Taylor was in wholehearted accord with Wallace’s views on the need for party realignment. Although he differed in feeling that this change was bound to come eventually, if not through a new party, then through a realignment of the existing parties, he agreed that a completely new organization offered the best opportunity to be free of the dual millstones so long around the neck of the Democrats—the big city machines and the reactionary southerners.

Thus it was that these two persons, so divergent in their personalities, found themselves linked in their basic principles and policies—in their sympathy for the common man, in their advocacy of a reform program, and in their belief in the necessity of peace for the attainment of a true welfare state. They were joined in their visions of a better world and in their concept of a new party that could present a positive program “for a better world right now.”