By the close of June, 1948, it began to appear that the Wallace Progressive Party had been waging a losing battle in the spring campaign of its “fight for peace.” Despite an occasional skirmish victory, it had been greeted with a discouraging lack of support on the part of an increasingly hostile public, as well as an inexorable flow of world events, draining the vitality from its major thesis—peaceful coexistence. And now with evidences of a renewed liberalism in the Democratic Party, it was faced with the imminent loss of many of its own supporters and workers. Some had already departed, and early in July many more were wavering.

In the light of these trends, and in view of the fact that the third-party candidates and platforms were already decided, party strategists were faced on the eve of their Philadelphia Convention with a set of circumstances unusual to such party assemblages—major or minor. The chief problem was that of attempting to regain lost ground—of renewing public interest, of reviving the failing spirits of party workers, and of countering the press attacks that had proved so damaging during the spring. It should come as no surprise, then, that the Philadelphia Convention ultimately became a propaganda battleground more than anything else. The opposition—both
party and press—recognized the situation and unleashed their strongest broadsides against the faltering crusaders.

With the Progressive seemingly accepting Professor Dayton D. McKean's thesis that a national convention is rightfully "a device of propaganda rather than a deliberative assembly," what would they do to sharpen this image, to make more effective the publicity value of their assemblage? Long before July they had evidenced an awareness that propaganda, to be effective, must be well done, both convincing and, if possible, entertaining. They had made good use of their adherents from Broadway to revise drastically the traditional party rally. They had added the professional touch in their staging, lighting, and timing. And they had demonstrated the power of the dollar—the dollar exacted in paid admissions and voluntary contributions—to cement support, to inject religious fervor into their political crusade.

When Beanie Baldwin announced that this would be a "new, streamlined people's convention," it seemed that the Wallace-ites were planning procedural changes in the traditional structure to make their Philadelphia meeting a professionally produced spectacle. The hackneyed form would yield, it was expected, to their dramatic touch and become a more effective instrument.

But, in addition to the publicity value of a national convention, party strategists also hoped to acquire "morale value" from their convention. As E. Pendleton Herring had so cogently outlined this aspect in *The Politics of Democracy*:

The value of the convention lies in permitting the rank and file of the party to participate physically and emotionally in a common enterprise. Here are the men who must carry the brunt of the campaign. Here they have a chance to meet, to shout together, to act together, to feel together. The excitement and the turmoil of the convenion fulfill a useful purpose. The relationship of follower and leader is
seldom an intellectual bond. A common bond of sympathy, 
a common symbol, is easily grasped and equally binding.

For a party in the process of formation, with little patron-
age at its disposal, these factors seemed doubly important in 
the decision to meet at Philadelphia in July.

Who were these crusaders there assembled? How had they 
been selected? The chief characteristic of the selection system 
employed by the Progressives seems to have been an almost 
complete lack of system. Party affiliates included only one 
well-established organization, New York’s American Labor 
Party, and only a few relatively well-developed groups such 
as California’s Independent Progressive Party and Illinois, 
Pennsylvania, and Connecticut groups. For the most part, 
even as late as July, the vast majority of state organizations 
and Wallace committees were still in a rudimentary form.

In April a “Call to the National Founding Convention of 
the New Political Party” had gone out from the Chicago com-
mittee meeting to all “state parties supporting the Wallace-
Taylor candidacy” and to all “state Wallace-for-President 
committees.” It specified that each party or committee was en-
titled to send two delegates for each state presidential elector 
and might send additional delegates not exceeding four plus 
one alternate for each elector. Later this provision had been 
modified so that each state might send two more delegates per 
elector—a total of eight plus one alternate for each presiden-
tial elector. According to Campaign Manager Beanie Bald-
win, this enlargement was made to accommodate a greater 
number of party workers in the populous states, such as New 
York, who were anxious to attend the convention as delegates.

With such a large number of delegates provided for each 
elector, it was not surprising that a total of some 3,240 at-
tended the Philadelphia Convention.
State delegations were limited to a total vote equal to twice the number of their state electors, regardless of the actual number of delegates sent, thus providing for fractional voting.

Unlike the major parties in recent years, the Wallace-ites made no direct attempt to curtail delegations from areas of weak party support or to increase representation from areas of greater strength. However, this purpose was indirectly served by a provision that members of the National Wallace-for-President Committee (a total of some seven hundred) should be seated as delegates by virtue of their office, although they would not be entitled to cast a ballot in any roll-call vote. Since this committee consisted in part of "functional division" officers from such groups as women, labor, nationalities, and veterans, its membership provided a degree of functional representation new to American politics.

In the selective process itself there was no mandatory provision for rank-and-file participation. These decisions were left to the state parties and committees—a delegation no more democratic than that of the major parties in a state like New York, where selective power rests primarily with the county chairmen.

What of the products of this selective process? Gallery observers at Convention Hall had no difficulty in distinguishing them from their major-party predecessors. The most cursory glance revealed, as Helen Fuller noted in the New Republic, that "the average delegate was about 20 years younger and 30 pounds lighter than his Democratic or GOP counterpart."

In fact, the average age of the Wallace delegates was not much more than thirty, and only 40 per cent were over forty, according to party questionnaires filled out by 1,247 of those attending. Furthermore, nearly one third of the total number of delegates present at the convention were women, in marked contrast with the sparse female representation at major-party conventions. In addition, there was a much broader variety of professions represented. More than one
third were union members; one fifth were veterans—mostly of World War II. Professional people—doctors, lawyers, artists, actors, writers, and teachers—constituted one fifth, while 9 per cent were businessmen, and only 4 per cent were farmers. Although no racial figures were gathered, the easily noted presence of large numbers of Negro delegates also set the Progressives apart from major-party conventions. Instead of the professional politicians—predominantly lawyers—making up the major-party conclaves, these were amateurs from all walks of life.

There was a sprinkling of familiar political names—Representatives Vito Marcantonio and Leo Isaacson, Rexford Tugwell, Paul Ross, and others—but the preponderance of party wheel horses usually so evident at Democratic and Republican gatherings was conspicuously missing. This fact, combined with the youth of the delegates, led Luther Huston to remark in the New York Times that the dominant atmosphere was that of the "soda fountain" rather than the "smoke-filled room." Moreover, the delegates to this convention behaved with a spontaneity markedly absent from the funereal Democratic assemblage a fortnight earlier. Staid Philadelphia received an introduction to party songs as youthful delegates joyously sang their way on buses and streetcars to and from Convention Hall. For, despite their slim hopes of victory—at least in 1948—these Progressives seemed possessed of a sense of mission and filled with the joy of "spreading the word."

But while most correspondents viewed these attributes of the delegates with equanimity and even approval, at least one, Rebecca West, attacked what she viewed as "attempts to sentimentalize the character of the convention by pointing out that it consisted largely of young people." To her, it was "as unappetizing an assembly as I have ever seen in America."

... There were quite a number of young people who were very horrid indeed. They were the ones who were embryo
Babbitts, having their fling before they settled down to safe and narrow lives, stupid young people, too stupid to understand . . . .

. . . I never saw so many boys with the sullen eyes and the dropped chins which mean a brain just good enough to grasp the complexities of life and to realize that it would never be able to master them.¹

Another distinguishing mark setting the New Party delegates apart from their major-party counterparts was their relative sobriety—in the alcoholic sense—in comparison with the earlier Republican and Democratic conventions. While not generally the subject of public discussion, many observers have pointed out, as has party analyst V. O. Key, Jr., that major parties often attempt to launch their candidates upon a tide of liquid cheer. There may have been several reasons for the Progressives’ restraint—a sense of fulfillment in the work of the convention needing no further outlet or perhaps the simple economic fact that the majority could not afford to indulge excessively, for the affluence of the major parties was also conspicuous by its absence.

But at the same time that this “soda fountain” atmosphere, this youthful exuberance, provided a whiff of freshness after Republican and Democratic “smoke-filled rooms,” it also demonstrated that the New Party was markedly deficient in political skill and experience. Practical know-how—acquired only through long years in actual campaigning—was possessed by very few. Most significantly, these delegates who had abandoned major parties were only vaguely aware of the important role of compromise in politics—even third-party politics.

¹ *Baltimore Evening Sun*, July 27, 1948. Progressive Party sources reported that her columns appearing in British journals were even more venomous.
With the delegates assembled, the "new, streamlined people's convention" opened Friday evening, July 24, 1948, in a profusion of traditional speechmaking. The keynote address was delivered by Charles Howard, former Republican Negro leader from Des Moines, Iowa. Following this, the Progressive label was officially pinned on the New Party in response to the urgings of Secretary C. B. Baldwin:

Thirty-one New Party organizations have already named themselves the Progressive Party . . . . It has a tradition of independence. It expresses the fundamental spirit of America. I propose that we adopt that name.

The following morning witnessed the election of the permanent convention chairman, Albert J. Fitzgerald, president of the CIO United Electrical Workers. Following his address, the Committee on Credentials reported, as did the Committee on Rules.

The report from the latter resulted in a significant floor fight over proposed representation on the National Committee. Once the rules had been adopted, the Progressives followed the time-honored roll call of the states for nominations. Despite the fact that everyone in the hall already knew the candidate, the usual parade of nominating and seconding speeches followed, with every state present getting in at least one address. Finally, Henry A. Wallace was accepted as the presidential candidate by acclamation. The same routine started once more for the selection of the vice-presidential candidate. But, when California was reached in the call of the states, Paul Taylor, the Senator's brother and a delegate from that state, rose with a welcome motion. Inasmuch as the hour was late and the candidates were waiting to make a brief personal appearance, he urged that the nonsense (though his phrasing was not so blunt) be dispensed with and Senator Taylor's nomination proclaimed without further speeches. The
weary delegates were all too happy to accept this revolutionary suggestion, and, for once at least, tradition went by the boards in the New Party Convention.

The candidates, Henry A. Wallace and Senator Glen H. Taylor, appeared briefly on the platform to be greeted by a tremendous ovation. For spontaneity, this demonstration seemed to those in attendance far more convincing than the obviously staged affairs of the earlier Republican and Democratic assemblages. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm was interpreted as sinister by at least some of the reporters present. To Joseph and Stewart Alsop, writing in the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, it was a “macabre spectacle” that had not even been entertaining, simply because the well-oiled party machine allowed for no real surprises. The “demonstrations” have had that quality of loudly spurious enthusiasm which prevails in eastern Europe.

However, the high light of the convention—an open-air rally at Shibe Park—was still ahead. This event alone, of all the Philadelphia proceedings, exhibited the professional touch expected but so conspicuously absent in Convention Hall. Moreover, this rally at which the candidates formally accepted the nominations tendered them (despite the fact that they had already been campaigning for several months) marked several innovations for a national nominating convention.

Following their successful practice of charging admission for political gatherings, the Progressives attracted a near-capacity audience of more than 30,000 at prices ranging from $.65 to $2.60. And once they had paid their way in, the spectators were tapped for additional voluntary contributions. In this manner a total of some $60,000 was realized from the Shibe Park rally. In return for their donations, the audience was treated to a well-staged spectacle—designed to entertain as well as convert or further indoctrinate. First a few brief
speeches by such party stalwarts as Vito Marcantonio and Paul Robeson. The Negro baritone, as befitting his professional stature, delivered one of the most moving addresses of the entire convention, then wound up his stint with vocal selections called for by the audience. Hand cupped to ear, his rich voice poured out his most famous songs—"The House I Live In," "Los Cuatros Generales" (of Spanish Civil War fame), and, finally, "Old Man River." Then came the inevitable pitch, delivered by William Gaimor, with contributions commencing at the $1,000 level and gradually working down through the loose change. Their participation nailed down financially, the audience was now ready to hear from its candidates.

Senator Taylor, speaking briefly and to the point, told the gathering that he was "proud to be associated with Henry Wallace in the founding of this new party" and "proud to be his running mate on the Progressive Party ticket." He promised a fight against the "forces that would bankrupt America by spending billions in a futile effort to bribe whole nations into becoming our mercenaries in a senseless struggle for world domination." Concluding, he was joined by Mrs. Taylor and their sons in a touching family rendition of "When You Were Sweet Sixteen."

The stage was now set for Henry Wallace's dramatic entrance. Spotlights followed him as, to an accompanying ovation, his car circled the park and stopped before the rostrum. The thunderous applause continued as he strode to the stand and began the feature address of the entire convention. Calling liberally upon the memory of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Wallace detailed his views on the desertion of the Roosevelt position that had necessitated the formation of a new party:

The party Jefferson founded 150 years ago was buried here in Philadelphia last week. It could not survive the
Pawleys, the Hagues, the Crumps, the racists and bigots, the generals, the admirals, the Wall Street alumni. A party founded by a Jefferson died in the arms of a Truman.

But the spirit which animated that party in the days of Jefferson has been captured anew. It has been captured by those who have met here this weekend with a firm resolve to keep our tradition of freedom that we may fulfill the promises of an abundant peaceful life for all men.²

Accepting the nomination of the Progressive Party "with pride," he went on to acknowledge the commitments made in obtaining the nomination—commitments to the people of America in hundreds of speeches across the land. These commitments he repeated—pledges of working for the common man, of seeking peace, and of making capitalism "progressive."

Thus concluded the high point of the Philadelphia Convention of the Progressive Party. But before moving on to its closing platform deliberations, a few comments should be made on other aspects of the staging employed by the New Party, as well as the atmosphere surrounding its deliberations.

Above all, there was the use of music. For this was a singing convention—songs of the people, not only of a few star performers, songs of the delegates, songs of the spectators, and even songs of the reporters. Old folk and popular tunes were decked out in new lyrics extolling both party and candidates and promising defeat to the old parties. "Great Day" for instance was reworked to predict: "One of these mornings bright and fair, Harry Truman won’t be there." But the popular favorites were a catchy pair composed especially for the Wallace-ites— "The Same Old Merry-Go-Round" and "Ev-

everyone Wants Wallace—Friendly Henry Wallace—Everyone Wants Wallace in the White House.” The latter had a second chorus which, casting logic aside, wanted Taylor in the White House, too.

Nor did the delegates need any urging to join in the singing. The spontaneity exhibited in Convention Hall and at Shibe Park bubbled over into the streets and into the buses and streetcars of old Philadelphia. In fact, the singing was so contagious that even the minions of a conservative press were observed joining the tuneful proclamation:

It's the same, same merry-go-round.  
Which one will you ride this year?  
The donkey and elephant bob up and down,  
On the same merry-go-round.  
The elephant comes from the North,  
The donkey may come from the South,  
But don't let them fool you,  
Divide and rule you  
Cause they've got the same bit in their mouth.  
If you want to ride safe and sound,  
Get off-a the merry-go-round.  
To be a real smarty,  
Just join the New Party,  
And get your two feet on the ground.

Then there was the atmosphere of the convention. The reporter who described it as that of the “soda fountain” rather than of the “smoke-filled room” captured one aspect—that of youth. But coupled with this freshness, this spirit of optimism and hopefulness, there was a second and more serious note—a sense of mission—to be observed in the delegates. Like the La Follette Progressives of an earlier day, they, too, felt themselves “born to set it right.” In terms of lifted morale, the convention was clearly a success, with the dele-
gates publicly enjoying a sense of participation hardly equaled at major-party assemblages.

But from the propaganda phase reflected in other aspects of the convention, the Wallace-ites were far less successful. They were consistently represented (or misrepresented) by a hostile press in such fashion as to convince the average voter that Union Square headquarters of the Communist Party in the United States had been temporarily transferred to Convention Hall in the City of Brotherly Love—that the Reds and the fellow travelers were completely running the show. As the Alsops interpreted it:

The Wallace party convention here has not, of course, been a convention at all. It has been, rather, a dreary and sometimes nauseating spectacle, carefully and quite obviously stage managed by the American Communist Party in the interests of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.³

And with network television coverage still in the future, most Americans had to rely upon similar biased reports for their understanding of the crusade.

Primary target of many newspaper attacks was the platform adopted by the newly titled Progressive Party. Formal work on this policy statement had begun with Wallace's declaration of candidacy. His December speech had designated the main goals to be pursued. First was a secure peace, based upon real understanding between the American and Russian peoples. This involved American repudiation of universal military training and removal of "the Wall Street–military team . . . leading us toward war." Second, prosperity was to be attained by curbing the "growing power and profits of monopoly" and

by taking steps to preserve American living standards by providing housing and lowering food prices. Third, progress was to be sought in curing some of American democracy's ills, such as racial segregation and curtailment of civil rights.4

With this declaration as a basis, the New York City headquarters staff had begun work under Lee Pressman, former CIO general counsel. At the April Chicago meeting, the presidential candidate had further outlined his views, and a platform committee had been established to work along these lines in preparation for the Philadelphia Convention. Professor Rexford Guy Tugwell of the University of Chicago was named chairman and pressman secretary of this committee. The New York group continued to work on its platform, while in Chicago a second draft was entrusted to Professor Richard Watt in consultation with Tugwell.5

The week before the convention, an advisory group of some sixteen members met in New York to resolve the differences between the New York and Chicago drafts. In addition to these two documents, the group also had under consideration two preambles, one composed by Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman, the other by Scott Buchanan. From all these sources, the advisory committee was to arrive at a single document to put before the full platform committee in Philadelphia.

The New York draft emphasized the "anti-monopoly" and "drive to war" planks in terms that one observer, Professor John Cotton Brown, thought "doctrinaire." It was relatively brief—aimed at the man in the street, or, more specifically, the man at the factory gate. On the other hand, the Chicago

4 Text of Wallace's Address, PM, December 30, 1947.
draft was much more detailed, lengthy with economic analysis, its tone more moderate and scholarly.

The Sweezy-Huberman preamble was concerned chiefly with the “growing concentration of economic power,” but its language varied considerably from that of the New York draft. The Buchanan preamble, patterned on the Declaration of Independence, used eighteenth-century terminology to attack a “20th Century tyranny of government” which failed to heed the needs of the American people and infringed upon their civil rights.

Inasmuch as all four of these documents were based on the Wallace position, there was relatively little substantive difference among them. Nevertheless, the difference of phraseology, of shading, and of intonation became the subject of dispute in the Advisory Committee. Eventually, however, the first three were compromised into a basic draft submission. Buchanan’s preamble received little support, but was filed as a “minority report.”

The following week, still in advance of the opening convention session, the full platform committee met in Philadelphia to ready a final draft for the convention. There was now essential agreement between the extreme leftists and the moderates on all major points. Regardless of press insinuations and interpretations, firsthand accounts of the closed committee deliberations agreed that there was no “Communist domination” observable.\(^6\) Rather there was virtual agreement on the issues to be presented to the voters, as was to be expected with the earlier defection of those not in substantial agreement with Wallace’s pronouncements.

Public hearings were held but seem to have had little im-

\(^6\) The sole written account—that of Brown—is in full agreement with the recollections of “non-leftist” committee members interviewed by the author, including Professor Thomas I. Emerson and J. A. Keefer, administrative assistant to Senator Taylor.
pact on the platform, despite Dr. Tugwell's statement that the third party wanted the "ordinary American" to aid in its drafting. The sole modification was a more conciliatory plank regarding old-age pensions, resulting from the virtual ultimatum served by Dr. Francis Townsend: "If they'll [the Progressives] accept our whole program, then I'll be for them. Otherwise I'll be indifferent toward them just as I am toward the Republicans and Democrats."

On the other hand, those groups irreconcilably opposed to the Wallace foreign policy position—the policy which was, after all, the reason for existence of a third party—seized upon these hearings to express their view that any opposition to the Truman doctrine and Marshall plan must be Communist inspired. And since this opposition testimony was played up by the press, the propaganda value of the public hearings backfired against the third party.

Headlines heralded the "platform suggestions" of Americans for Democratic Action official James Loeb that "Mr. Wallace's candidacy does not obscure the fact that the Communists and their collaborators guide the major policies and word the major pronouncements of this party." Loeb's proposal that the party get rid of its "Communist grip" and support the European recovery program became front-page copy—even in the Washington Post-Times-Herald. In all, some seventy-five different organizations and individuals offered testimony, with fifteen representatives of labor groups and another fifteen from pacifist, world federalist, and related organizations.

Ultimately, however, the most significant platform deviation from the Wallace program came about as the result of pressure outside the hearings—from the National Independent Businessmen's Committee for Wallace. Whereas Wallace had advocated a program of "progressive capitalism," this group favored nationalization of basic American enterprises such as railroads, merchant marine, power utilities, and banks.
Earlier, the candidate had offered mild opposition to their proposal, telling them that he was a "little more timid." He had, however, agreed that there was no question of the need to nationalize "all enterprises that depend for their profits on large Government contracts for arming the country," such as the aircraft and munitions industries.

Nevertheless, Wallace exercised no pressure during committee considerations to gain conformance with his own ideas. Professor Frederick L. Schuman brought up the matter of "progressive capitalism" only in the closing hours of deliberation. The committee members had gone without supper; the convention was already opening; and, in the words of Professor Brown, "the great majority of the tired committee members [were] apparently ready to nationalize as a sort of panacea and anxious to get through with the platform as soon as possible." No mention of "progressive capitalism" went into the platform.

In contrast, there were two instances in which the presidential candidate actively intervened in the formulation of the party platform. The first came when Dr. Tugwell and Representative Marcantonio reached an impasse over whether the platform should declare for independence or self-determination for Puerto Rico. This obscure dispute finally reached the stage where Tugwell was reported to feel "so keenly about it that if the present wording [independence] remains he will not present the platform to the Convention." The quarrel was resolved only at Wallace's urging of compromise language employing both words.

The second intervention came on behalf of a proposed world government plank. Professor Schuman, accompanied by Scott Buchanan and two other delegates, pressed his own views in a personal visit to Wallace's hotel room on Sunday morning immediately prior to convention consideration of the platform. He was able to secure the endorsement of the presidential candidate, who then asked Campaign Manager Bald-
win to talk to Lee Pressman as "the only one likely to object." As a result, this Wallace-backed plank was accepted by the Platform Committee and adopted by vote of the convention that afternoon.

Once the committee had agreed on a final draft representing a compromise in tone and language between the militant and respectable approaches of the New York and Chicago drafts, it presented its findings to the convention for consideration and amendment. The ensuing session was both lengthy and tedious—remarkable both for the number of minute points brought up and for the fact that debate was unlimited on all of them. Far from being railroaded through, the Progressive Party platform was subjected to a much more democratic, searching, exhaustive—and exhausting—floor scrutiny than is customary for any similar major-party pronouncement. Chairman Fitzgerald seemed determined that everyone should have his say, even at the sacrifice of the dispatch with which skilled gavel wielder Sam Rayburn had handled the earlier Democratic delegates.

With the platform representing an already narrow viewpoint, most of the points at issue were too trivial to warrant repetition. There were, however, two amendments of significance offered from the floor, only one of which received press attention. This was the so-called Vermont Resolution that the Progressives declare in their platform that it was "not [their] intention to give blanket endorsement to the foreign policy of any nation." The Platform Committee had no advance warning that this proposal was to be brought forward. Its presentation caught committee chairman Rexford Tugwell, presiding at the time, by complete surprise. Following a hurried conference on the rostrum with Lee Pressman, Tugwell reached a spur-of-the-moment decision to oppose the resolution. Several pro and con speeches ensued, with the main criticism being that this simple statement might be construed as Red-baiting. Eventually, the proposal was rejected on a very close
voice vote. The press, however, reporting the vote as "overwhelming," seized upon the incident to "prove" that the "Communist-dominated leadership" refused to permit any criticism, no matter how indirect, of the Soviet Union. Actually, the Communist fellow travelers were not the ones to rise in opposition to the Vermont Resolution, according to Ralph Shikes, since this group thought the resolution harmless.

But, once again, it was the press interpretation rather than the observed facts that caught the public eye. Professor Tugwell's snap judgment to oppose the Vermont Resolution was clearly ill-advised rather than "Communist-dictated," but its effect on the party was just as damaging.

The second floor amendment demonstrating significant disagreement in party ranks was that offered by the Pennsylvania delegation. Unlike Wallace, they felt the party plank on industrial socialization was too timid and offered a motion to include steel and coal in the list of industries to be nationalized. Their proposal generated little support among the delegates, however. After a brief discussion, it was decisively defeated.

Eventually, at the end of a marathon meeting some seven and one-half hours long, the platform was accepted by a weary group of delegates. From the staging viewpoint, this was the deadliest session of the entire convention. With Chairman Fitzgerald's reluctance to cut short any delegate wishing to comment at any length on any subject, this was free speech to the point of exhaustion.

What was the net effect of convention consideration upon the earlier announced program of Henry A. Wallace? A point-by-point comparison reveals few alterations. "Peace, Progress and Prosperity" became "Peace, Freedom and Abundance." But except for the spelling out of every point in fullest detail and the inclusion of the nationalization plank, there were few points which had not been specifically stated or clearly implied earlier by the candidate.
The American press, however, pounced upon the platform as something new and radical. The *New York Times* headlined it as containing "Planks Like Those Foster Group Seeks" that had been adopted "With Communists in Control." It devoted some four columns to an itemized comparison of the Progressive platform with that of the Communists adopted May 30, 1948 in the attempt to press home this point.

More objectively, as Susan W. and Murray S. Stedman pointed out later in *Discontent at the Polls*:

> With the exception of their foreign policy planks, Wallace and his colleagues stressed the familiar farmer-labor demands: curbing of alleged monopolies, changes in those portions of the law dealing with labor relations, public ownership of various types of utilities, raising the income of the "common man," extension of social security and welfare legislation.

Virtually all of these "abundance" planks of the Progressive Party antedated Wallace and Taylor—as well as the United States Communist Party—by many years. The foreign policy planks of the party represented the views of all those, including the Communists of course, who had found it necessary to form a new party for their expression. As Helen Fuller commented in *New Republic*, "As an issue in [the] convention, 'peace' drew strength from pacifism, isolationism and religion as well as from pro-Sovietism."

A more objective appraisal than that of the contemporary press would conclude that at this particular time there was no serious disagreement over substantive matters between the fellow travelers and non-Communist liberals within the Progressive Party. Once the quibbling over details was concluded, both groups willingly accepted the basic tenets laid down by Wallace some seven months previously. Nevertheless, the press continued to portray the platform of the Wallace Progressive Party as the latest word straight from the Kremlin.
Still another "evidence" of "Communist domination" was uncovered by reporters in a different aspect of the Philadelphia Convention—the adoption of the rules for permanent organization of the New Party. The comments of H. L. Mencken in the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, while more acid than most, were all too typical.

After lurking in the catacombs and sewers of the hall for three days, the Communists sneaked into the main arena . . . this morning, and put the innocent delegates to the Wallace convention over the barrel.

Tonight the rules of the New Party are precisely what they wanted them to be, and their trusted stooges are sitting on almost every salient stool in the party organization.

The Communists are old hands at such tricks, and get many with them almost infallibly. First they horn into places on the important committees, then they frame the reports thereof after the members have fallen asleep or gone home, and then they come in and bull the reports through in a din of words.

But what was the truth of such charges? The groundwork for the third-party structure had already been laid at Chicago in April. Most of the plan had been generally accepted and occasioned little dispute at Philadelphia in July. The rules battle that erupted involved a proposed alteration in the manner of distributing representation on the National Committee. Unlike their major adversaries who have customarily assigned two national committeemen for each state, the Progressives suggested that the larger states be entitled to an additional member for every five electors in excess of the first ten possessed by the state. There was little disagreement over this suggestion. But the report of the Rules Committee embodied a proposal to establish a sort of corporative representation on the National Committee for the several func-
tional divisions of the party—Women-for-Wallace, labor, professional, veterans, nationalities, and youth groups. There were to be an additional forty members-at-large chosen from these groups by the geographically apportioned members of the committee.

The purpose of this proposal was to encourage greater participation on the part of the specified groups. It was reported by Helen Fuller that “top party strategists [were] aware that their real problem, if the Progressives [were] to survive . . . [was] to reinforce the shaky labor base.” Then, too, there were well-known members of the arts, sciences, and professions whose names would lend prestige to the committee.

Far from being Communist-inspired, as the New York Times claimed, the proposal for functional representation, according to firsthand observer Brown, was not favored by the fellow travelers.

The rule establishing this arrangement was originally opposed in the Rules Committee . . . by key left-wingers like John Abt . . . and Congressman Marcantonio, Chairman of the Rules Committee.

The real pressure for the rule came from the labor people who were concerned over the weak participation of labor in building the party.

Marcantonio’s reason for opposing the measure was obvious—it would weaken the state parties, including his own American Labor Party in New York—making ward and precinct work unnecessary for a voice in policy councils.

Finally accepted by the Rules Committee, the proposal ran into substantial opposition when it reached the floor. A recommittal motion was so closely contested on voice vote that a show of hands was called for. On his count, the chairman ruled that the proposal had been defeated, ignoring a delegate who persisted in the attempt to secure recognition for a roll-
call vote. Toward the close of a turbulent session, with innumerable requests for minor modifications defeated, the convention, faced by its nominating session deadline, finally accepted the rules proposed by the committee.

The chief distinctions in the permanent party organization were two. First, there was the provision that a national convention be held every year rather than every four. This body was to constitute "the highest governing authority of the party." In this the Progressives adopted a plan similar to that of the Labor Party in Great Britain for annual policy discussions by an all-powerful national convention. Second, the rules provided for a large, cumbersome national committee which was to choose a national executive committee, meeting at least once a month. In this manner, it was hoped that a small operating group would constantly guide party policy. Finally, there was to be a slate of party officers with full-time administrative duties chosen by the national convention.

Numerous charges were leveled that this system must inevitably lead to leftwing control of the Progressive Party—under the assumption that the party-line followers would be able to dictate the choice of the strategically located executive committee. On the other hand, the plan was also open to interpretation as an attempt to improve the haphazard national organization methods employed by the major parties in the years between presidential elections. Democratic and Republican national committees, consisting of only one hundred members, have found it necessary to delegate most of their power to officers who have generally been hand-picked choices of presidential candidates rather than popularly selected representatives. In short, while the Progressives' structure was open to valid complaints of lending itself to potential domination by a single group, this risk is inherent in virtually all representative democratic institutions. Where reliance is placed upon popular participation, organized minorities are often able to defeat apathetic majorities. Had the Wallace
Progressive Party ever acquired the hoped-for numbers of active non-Communist supporters, it could never have been subjected on the basis of its structure to extremist control. Rather, it would have been possible for a non-Communist majority to have completely excluded the left-wingers from party councils, had they felt such action necessary to solidify their control.

Nevertheless, to the average newspaper reader, the third party had accepted "Marcantonio Rules"—a "Communist Follower's Code." Its very organization offered proof positive that the Wallace venture was "Communist-dominated."

To firsthand witnesses, other press distortions were glaringly apparent. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported the convention was distinguished by "apathy," "empty seats in the galleries," and "an audience that walked out while Mr. Wallace talked at Shibe Park"—"facts" observed by neither those in attendance nor television viewers. For the average citizen, relying on his daily newspaper, the Philadelphia Convention became confirmation of the fact that the whole crusade was only a Communist-inspired plot.

Consequently, from the propaganda view, the proceedings actually had a markedly adverse effect. Instead of gaining new converts, many previously inclined toward the Progressives were alienated by the convention image of the party. Exact measurement of the effect is difficult, since there were no polls taken on a before-and-after basis. However, the downward trend earlier detected by the polls continued unabated. By mid-August the Gallup Survey showed only 5 per cent of the electorate favorable to Wallace and Taylor.

Moreover, the Progressives failed to adopt a salable platform—one lending itself to publicity purposes. Instead of a brief, hard-hitting exposition, they wound up with a lengthy, detailed document far exceeding major-party pronouncements in verbiage. Failing to realize the lack of any necessary conflict between brevity and specificity, they nailed down every
loose end in a document immediately relegated to the limbo of other party platforms.

In terms of building party morale, the convention was more successful. With few exceptions (the most notable professor Tugwell), the party delegates departed from Philadelphia in high spirits, confident of their party and candidates and of their own roles in a worthy venture.

On the other hand, the convention failed to reveal Progressive improvements in the national nominating procedure. With the exception of the Shibe Park rally, staging and timing were lost from sight. Party orators, as in major-party conventions, were both repetitious and long-winded. An archaic nominating procedure was adhered to rigidly, despite the fact that the New Party already had its candidates. And "democratic" discussion of a platform already settled upon deteriorated into extended wrangling over minutiae with too little time for major points. Possibly the most significant staging contribution of the Progressives was their use of music—the songs composed for them, the mass singing by delegates and spectators alike.

On the whole, while the Progressives attracted a new, young, enthusiastic, singing group of riders, they took them onto the traditional carrousel of their older adversaries. Instead of blazing a trail to the promised "new, streamlined people's convention," the New Party, too, wound up on "The Same Old Merry-Go-Round."