CHAPTER 9

"The Fight for Peace"—
Fall Campaign

In a sense, the fall campaign waged by the Wallace Progressive Party in 1948 was but a second act—a continuation of their "fight for peace" of which the spring campaign has already been described. And yet, by comparison with that earlier phase of the battle, this climactic drive exhibited markedly different characteristics. Whereas the spring campaign had varied considerably from the customary major-party pre-convention maneuvering, the fall campaign was much more closely akin to the usual pre-election concentration on the publicizing of issues and the attempt to gain votes for party candidates.

Perhaps the chief distinction between the two phases of the "fight for peace" lay in the fact that by the fall of 1948 the Progressive Party was a going concern. Its organization had been established, its ballot drives for the most part concluded, and its workers already recruited. Thus its candidates were free to concentrate on their campaign tours and the issues they wished to emphasize. Save for the problem of finances—the paid-admission, voluntary-contribution rally remained part of the third-party tours to the end—the fall campaign was, on the surface at least, almost an orthodox American political venture, not too dissimilar to those of the past conducted by major and minor parties alike.
Yet many difficulties encountered by the Progressives remained unique to this party. Events beyond their control—events that bore the stamp of an intolerant America or a "made in Moscow" label—continued to have a marked impact on their success, as much as their own efforts and those of their adversaries. But first their campaign tours held the center of the stage.

On the whole, the pattern of the fall tours of Henry A. Wallace and Glen H. Taylor was quite similar to that of their earlier junkets. In both instances a constant attempt was made to link the over-all program of the Progressive Party to the more immediate issues of local significance.

This aspect was brought into clear focus in the very first speech of the fall campaign delivered by Wallace at Bridgeport, Connecticut on August 21. Speaking to a predominantly urban labor audience, the presidential nominee opened with an attack on the "misleaders of labor [who] have found red-baiting and Russia-baiting just as useful as the reactionary politicians have found it useful in covering their own failures."

Pointing up some of the unsolved problems found in the Bridgeport area, Wallace remarked:

The old parties promise to build houses—and erect barracks; to curb inflation—and arm you; to expand social security—and draft you; to extend civil rights—and put you in a war economy where all civil rights disappear.

From here he found it but a short and logical step to an exposition of the need for the third-party peace platform.

I am sure that . . . the common people of America will reject the treacherous hypocrisy of the Democrats as they will reject the more open reaction of the Republicans.
They will see that the bipartisan foreign policy is matched by an equally sinister bipartisan domestic policy.

The two old parties are, after all, the same. Given a foreign policy directed against the common man all over the world, they must combine on a bipartisan domestic policy directed against the common man in the U.S.A.¹

Peace, then, was the underlying dominant note of the fall campaign, as it had been of the entire spring campaign—peace coupled with the attempt to link lofty and rather remote international theories to the practical bread-and-butter interests of diverse audiences all across the land.

In a series of four major campaign tours, the presidential candidate blanketed the nation, while at the same time his running mate was engaged on an equally extensive scale. In the course of Wallace's tours, the South, New York and New England, the Midwest, Southwest, and Far West, and finally the metropolitan New York–New Jersey–Philadelphia areas were covered by plane, by car, and by train—some 25,000 miles in all.

The first of these tours, through the South during August and September, was in many ways the most significant. Declaring his intention of following his and Senator Taylor's earlier precedent of addressing only unsegregated audiences and of refusing to stay in hotels enforcing discrimination, Henry A. Wallace embarked on August 24 on a tour that took him into seven southern states and twenty different cities in a single week. In Virginia, the first stop southward, all went peacefully, despite a state law banning racially mixed public assemblies. Audiences in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Richmond were not only unsegregated but quietly and courteously attentive.

But with the candidate's entrance into "liberal" North

¹ See the New York Times, August 22, 1948, for the text of Wallace's Address.
Carolina, where no legal barrier existed, the fireworks exploded. A near-riot preceded the candidate's Durham armory speech. In the course of the scuffle, a Wallace supporter, James D. Harris of Charlotte, was stabbed twice in the arm and six times in the back. With order restored some time later, the half-Negro audience of 1,500 witnessed the most dramatic entrance of the presidential candidate's career—far more sensational than any conceived by his Broadway staging team. While officials waited at the main entrance, a seldom-used door on the opposite side was thrust open and in strode a uniformed National Guardsman, pistol in hand, followed by an unruffled Wallace surrounded by four plain-clothes men. Admitting to the crowd that this was "the most unique introduction I ever experienced," he proceeded with a speech, interrupted by the intermittent explosion of firecrackers and almost constant heckling. In this speech the third-party nominee outlined for the first time a "real states' rights program" for the South, entailing a billion-dollar development to end the area's "economic bondage to Wall Street."

The next day's tour of the Piedmont area in the same state witnessed an end to the bloodshed but saw the beginning of barrages ranging from eggs and tomatoes to peach stones and ice-cream cones, as Wallace attempted to address crowds in Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Burlington. While his physical courage proved equal to the abuse, the candidate found a crowd of some 500 so completely out of "police 'control' " that he had to forsake his speech in the latter city.

It was only the following day, in Asheville, North Carolina, that adequate police protection was eventually furnished by the authorities. For the first time in the Tarheel State the third-party nominee was able to deliver a speech audible in its entirety. In it Wallace referred once more to the needs of the South—needs for improved health, education, and housing—which were attainable, he claimed, only with a peace program such as his.
But at Hickory, North Carolina, the same day, the egg and tomato barrage was so intense that Wallace once more had to give up entirely, remarking, "As Jesus Christ told his disciples, when you enter a town that will not hear you willingly, then shake the dust of that town from your feet and go elsewhere."

While President Truman and Governors Cherry (North Carolina) and Wright (Mississippi) issued public statements deploring the violence against the third party and its candidate, local police officials often took a different view. Not only did some refuse to furnish protection or prosecution (reportedly declining to arrest the Durham assailants of the party worker), but they instead accused the Progressives of deliberately provoking the incidents. The Salem, North Carolina, chief of police alleged, according to the Americans for Democratic Action, that it was "Commie John Hunt [publicity director of the CIO Food and Tobacco Workers] who started the 'down with Wallace' cries."

This same suggestion, that the Wallace-ites wanted to incite violence, was played up by the Washington Star, whose reporter Neubold Noyes, Jr., quoted party official Clark Foreman as saying, "If we'd had the same kind of quiet reaction here [in Greensboro, North Carolina] as we had in Virginia earlier in the day, then I wouldn't have liked it at all. This is what we wanted." Confirmation of such views is lacking from other sources, however, and while there undoubtedly were elements in the Wallace Progressive Party willing to resort to such measures and methods, most of the party's workers and officials opposed them. The vast majority felt that the prejudices and practices challenged in this southern trip were such as to require no artificial stimulation.

Moving on into Alabama, the Wallace party was courteously received in rural areas by farm groups, but from Gadsden's mayor came a wire that Wallace was not welcome and that segregation would be enforced if he persisted in plans to
speak there. Accordingly, the third-party candidate refused to deliver his prepared address and moved on to Birmingham. There awaited another brush with Police Commissioner “Bull” Connor, the central figure in Senator Taylor’s earlier encounter. Connor now took action to insure that Wallace, if he spoke, would address a segregated gathering. Retorting that he would not participate in an unconstitutional meeting because “we believe in free speech and free assembly without police restriction or police intimidation,” Wallace and his crusaders once more shook the dust from their feet and went elsewhere.

In Mississippi, Governor (and States’ Rights vice-presidential candidate) Fielding Wright acted in accordance with his earlier protest against Wallace’s North Carolina treatment. Throughout the state police protection was the finest of the tour; Wallace’s reception was a “combination of official courtesy and studied public indifference,” according to John N. Popham of the New York Times. As will be recalled, it was in Mississippi that the state convention of the Progressive Party—a highly informal luncheon gathering at Edwards—was combined with the visit of the campaign party.

Following this, the caravan moved on to Shreveport, Louisiana. Here, on the advice of officials who reported the situation in their city “out of hand,” Henry A. Wallace found it necessary to cancel a scheduled public address and speak instead by radio. From Louisiana, the party moved westward into Arkansas.

After another peaceful trip through that state—no public addresses were delivered, but ballot petitions were presented at the state capital—the tour moved on into Tennessee. Here, in the heart of the Tennessee Valley Authority country, Wallace received the first southern welcome that could be described as both warm and friendly. In both Nashville and Knoxville, according to the New York Times, the candidate was applauded as he laughingly told audiences:
I am expecting to see the day when every year, chickens, bred by the new methods originated by my son and myself, will return to the South 10,000,000 eggs for every one we have received. I hope they will be used exclusively for food—not politics.

Then, in more serious vein, he remarked that he had been deeply affected by the hatred and violence exhibited, but rather than losing his faith in the South, he had had it "renewed by the great, glorious and God-loving people of the South." Concluding his southern tour in the Volunteer State, the nominee returned by plane to New York to prepare for his next jaunt.

But what of the significance of this trip through the South? Brief though it had been, it had evoked the most violent response of the entire campaign. While Henry Wallace had challenged, successfully in most instances, those violations of the "freedom" plank of his platform—practices dealing with racial segregation and discrimination—he had also brought forth showers of hatred, abuse, and vilification seldom heaped upon a presidential candidate—third-party or not.

But once again the most enduring damage was not to the egg-bespattered candidate or to his party but to American political tradition. The personal indignities were quickly forgotten. The damage to "freedom" was much more lasting. The most devastated target of the southern egg-hurlers was democracy itself, which to endure must be based on the accepted right of all to a full, free, and peaceful expression of opinion—even when that opinion conflicts with the majority.

Senator Taylor personalized the issue, claiming that President Truman "started the whole thing with his remark 'Why doesn't Wallace go back to Russia?'" And while the President's tactics in getting out from under the Communist issue by shifting the onus to Wallace may have seemed sound party strategy for the immediate campaign, they were to prove ulti-
mately disastrous to the Democrats themselves. For the intolerant wind sown in remarks such as these ascribing foreign policy differences to a lack of patriotism was to be reaped later in the whirlwind of emotion, prejudice, and violence of a McCarthyism directed against the administration.

Wallace, reviewing his southern experiences before a Madison Square Garden audience, pointed also to "the economic basis of hate and segregation . . . in the steel towns where it is profitable to keep labor divided." According to him, it was "the owners of mines and mills, the great plantations and newspapers who incite violence." As partial solution he called for enforcement of the second section of the Fourteenth Amendment—reducing congressional representation in states where the right to vote was abridged.

The effectiveness of the southern tour in attracting any great number of votes to the Progressive Party remained highly problematical, but the courageous battle of the candidates to make themselves heard attracted widespread attention. Outside the Deep South, even the bitterest opponents found it difficult to take issue with the party stand on the racial issue. The Americans for Democratic Action had to admit that

In his escape to the South, Wallace made a visible effort to bring conversation around to the non-controversial topic of Jim Crow. Liberals applauded his precedent-shattering journey and denounced the attacks on his person and liberties, but . . . .²

Following the southern tour, there came a brief trip to Baltimore and Chicago, then through upstate New York and New England, with the emphasis on the "fight for peace" and

its relationship to local issues. In Buffalo and Rochester, New York, there were attacks on “spending for war” as well as upon the war scares and crises allegedly whipped up by the administration “to help the industrialists.” Taking his cue from the title of his earlier book, Wallace told a Buffalo assembly:

They have brought us 60,000,000 jobs, but their 60,-000,000 jobs do not bring homes to returning veterans. Their 60,000,000 jobs do not reassure our continuing prosperity. They do not even create the illusion of security. For their 60,000,000 jobs are not 60,000,000 jobs for peace.

In Boston, the Wallace attack on the vested interests continued, this time linked to New England’s need for low-cost electric power—a need that must, according to the candidate, go unsatisfied as long as administration spending was for “military aid to a Chinese dictator and a Greek king,” and not for the development of America’s resources for America’s people.

This brief northeastern tour was prelude to the most exhausting part of the fall campaign—a “grand swing” around the nation, covering some 10,000 miles in the next thirty days. By plane, train, and auto, the crusaders wended their way across the Midwest—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. Wallace was simultaneously on the attack and the defensive.

Supporting his party against President Truman’s allegations— “The fact that the Communists are guiding and using the third party shows that this party does not represent American ideals”—the former Vice President retorted, “The Communists don’t run the Progressive Party and they didn’t run the convention.” Taking the offensive, he assailed Truman as a “verbal liberal” who had only recently “grabbed at the coat-tails of the New Deal he did so much to kill.” Furthermore, he added, the major parties “as constituted” were “merely
wings of the same party, representing the same interests”—big business and Wall Street.

From the Midwest, the caravan dipped once more into the South, this time into Texas. Once more Wallace became the target for eggs and tomatoes as he spoke in Houston. Nevertheless, he continued his attack on segregation and “recurrent war scares.” Receiving courteous, if less than exuberant, receptions during the rest of its four-day Lone Star visit, the party then moved on to a nine-day swing of the West Coast.

High light of the Southern California tour was a major address in Los Angeles. Speaking at the same stadium visited a week earlier by President Truman, former Vice President Wallace attracted a paying audience of at least 4,000 persons more than were present at the President’s free one, according to Gladwin Hill in the New York Times. Here Wallace outlined in detail a numerically reminiscent fourteen-point plan for peace.

1. Eliminate from policy-making power all men who have a personal financial stake in the policy decisions they help effect.
2. Take private profit out of the war industry business.
3. Make an international agreement for armaments reduction, in order to strengthen confidence in peace and produce for human needs and not for human destruction.
4. Stop the exporting of weapons by any nation to any other nation.
5. Resume unrestricted trade between nations except in goods related to war.
6. Reaffirm the free exchange of scientific information and scientific material between nations.
7. Re-establish in a vigorous form the United Nations Rehabilitation and Relief Administration or some other international agency for the impartial distribution of relief.
8. Put an end to the exploitation of colonial empires.
9. Reinforce in all possible ways the prestige and authority of the United Nations.
10. Remove occupation forces of all nations from Germany, Japan, Greece, Korea and other countries as soon as possible.
11. Announce a policy of refusing to use economic or financial pressure in order to wield undue power in the internal affairs of other countries.
12. End the peacetime draft and plans for the establishment of universal military training.
13. Work for a United Nations rule prohibiting any nation from terrorizing or intimidating member states by naval demonstrations, the massing of land forces or establishment of bomber bases within easy range of those states. This rule should apply both to the United States and Russia.
14. End the increasing dominance of the military in American foreign policy, thus invoking the wise policy of Clemenceau who said war is too important a matter to be left up to the generals.³

Many of these points were similar to those contained in the spring open letter to Stalin. Taken together, they indicated both the approach to and the pre-eminence of the "fight for peace" in the third-party position.

Another major West Coast address, this time in San Francisco, was devoted almost exclusively to American foreign policy—this time in Asiatic affairs. Attacking administration dealings with China since the failure of the Marshall mission, which he referred to as "the last gasp of American liberal foreign policy," Wallace warned:

Great social changes are abroad in the world, all of us know that.

We cannot stop them, not even by raising the cry of

“communism” and pouring money, guns and bombing planes into the arsenals of Chiang Kai-Shek.

... our position in China at the present time is morally bankrupt and indefensible even from the standpoint of practical power politics.

In Indonesia and Southeast Asia our support of the colonial system in opposition to native peoples struggling to free themselves of it seems strange in view of our own beginnings as a colonial people who had to struggle to free ourselves from tyranny.

From Siberia to Siam there are more than a billion people out there in Eastern Asia, just across the Pacific. We and our children and our children's children need them as our friends—and heaven help us if through hysteria and stupidity we turn them into implacable enemies.4

These two West Coast statements, constituting the third party's indictment of and alternative to administration foreign policy, climaxed the presentation of issues in the fall campaign. And the Los Angeles and San Francisco rallies marked the high point in the candidate's air-stop tour of the nation. While the "grand swing" continued, through the Pacific Northwest, back across the Midwest, and on into Chicago, the decision had been reached by party strategists that this approach was falling short of the mark and that an increasing use of radio speeches was urgent.

While Wallace had embarked upon a radio campaign in mid-August and had continued a series of weekly talks since mid-September, he had placed supplementary rather than primary emphasis on this medium. However, in mid-October a $100,000 project was launched to bring the candidate's voice to the air twelve times in the brief weeks before election day. While the grand tour continued eastward from Chicago into Pennsylvania, it was no longer the leading device for

attracting attention to the Progressives’ candidate and issues.

With personal appearances de-emphasized, the final pre-election days witnessed an abbreviated fourth tour to Philadelphia, New Haven, New Jersey, and New York City—a whirlwind trip with thirty-three speeches, many to street-corner audiences, in four days. Winding up the numerous rallies, Henry A. Wallace concluded the fall campaign of his “fight for peace” at Vito Marcantonio’s traditional “lucky corner”—116th Street and Lexington Avenue in New York’s Eighteenth District. In these last appearances, he was already looking beyond the election returns and to the continuation of the party, as well as backward over its accomplishments of the past year.

We have proved that the source of every American trouble is the drive for war, that from this drive stems scarcity and high prices and shrinking wages and assaults on ancient American liberties.

Already we have accomplished much and we have just begun. This campaign is but a single battle in a long war. Until the great issues facing us—peace instead of war, abundance instead of scarcity, health before wealth, men before profit, are solved in favor of the American people, the Progressive Party will remain the great triumphant fact of American life.

And to this continuing fight, to the Progressive Party now and in the future, I pledge all my effort, all my counsel and all my life.\(^5\)

So ended the strenuous series of campaign tours, in the course of which the presidential candidate had traveled more than 55,000 miles—25,000 in the fall campaign alone—and visited nearly every state in the Union. To the utmost of his

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ability, Henry A. Wallace had carried the "fight for peace" directly to the people of America.

Meanwhile, vice-presidential nominee Glen H. Taylor had also been engaged in a nation-wide tour of his own. Little noted by press and radio and studiedly ignored by national news services and metropolitan dailies, the Senator, too, had taken to the road. Like Wallace, he soon found himself the target of abuse—both vocal and vegetable. Only the menu varied—in Florida it was eggs, in his native Idaho eggs and peaches.

And just as his receptions paralleled those accorded his presidential running mate, so the issues he presented were similar in all respects. To Wallace's somewhat remote and lofty idealism, however, Senator Taylor added a much warmer appeal—a folksier approach. As much at home on the platform as on the stage, Taylor delivered seemingly homespun performances as professional and polished as the Progressives' staging that accompanied them. And to Wallace's 25,000 miles, the Senator added a roughly equal amount as his contribution to the fall campaign of the "fight for peace."

With its basic emphasis upon rallies and tours, did the third-party campaign differ to any great extent from traditional American counterparts? The chief difference in the rallies lay in the fact that the Progressives charged admission to their events, took up collections, and were able to get away with this unorthodox method of fundraising. A second distinction was that the third party brought to its functions a measure of the professional Broadway touch—in staging, lighting, and planning—in the attempt to make good politics into good entertainment as well. And while the presidential candidate rolled up a new record for mileage covered in a campaign, he confined himself to the more conventional means of conveyance—air liner, special train, and auto cara-
van. There were no dog sleds or helicopters, and Glen Taylor had abandoned his horse a year earlier.

In addition to this primary campaign emphasis on tours, there was the increasing use of radio in the closing weeks of the campaign. It may well have been that the Progressives delayed too long and thus failed to reach a large potential audience, the undecided who stayed at home listening to candidates Dewey and Truman on the radio, while they were attracting to their rallies only those already convinced.

Perhaps the most distinctive aspect of the third-party techniques was the emphasis upon doorbell ringing both to persuade and to get out the vote. As Ralph Shikes, national publicity director, put it, "Because 99% of the press and radio is against us, the best means we have of reaching the voters with the real issues is through house-to-house canvassing." In this work the Wallace-ites employed the same techniques developed earlier by Shikes and by Lewis Frank for the CIO Political Action School in Washington. Compiled into a workers' manual, *Knock On Any Door*, there were such instructions as:

... Concentrate in those areas where the natural Wallace supporters live ... working people, minority groups, Negro people, farmers and small businessmen ... the people whose basic needs are met by the Wallace program.

They also went on to list some "Do's and Don'ts" for volunteer workers:

1. Don't canvass too late, or too early.
2. Canvassers should be neighbors if possible.
3. Be "up" on local issues.
4. Seek points of agreement, not argument.
5. Secure hosts, hostesses for meetings.

Highly effective for the Progressives in certain instances, such as the February Isaacson election, the method proved far
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less successful for the presidential campaign itself. As Shikes remarked later, the house-to-house emphasis was "both a strength and weakness" of the third party. It had succeeded in getting signatures for the ballot drives—a situation where "legwork" was necessary. But when it came to changing minds of citizens already decided for the presidential contest, it was a different story. The technique evidenced the same shortcomings as the machine performances of the party bosses it had been designed to combat; it was best adapted to elections with small participation. In the face of a large turnout of uninstructed and independent voters, it was subject to swamping.

In addition to house-to-house methods, the Progressives also launched a virtual flood of printed campaign material—an estimated 25,000,000 copies of some 140 different leaflets, pamphlets, brochures, and other handouts. Printed in approximately seventeen languages, including Spanish, Italian, German, Finnish, Croatian, and Greek, they indicated the various minority groups to whom the Progressive appeal was directed.

The most ambitious of these was an eight-page tabloid newspaper, the Citizen, which made its first showing at the Philadelphia convention and then appeared sporadically until the close of the campaign. Another, These 15 Million, was a four-page tabloid aimed at the Negro voter. Its approach was indicated by a feature story that the "Stevens Congress," denounced by President Truman as the "worst in history" (the Eightieth Congress was only "second-worst"), had done a great deal for Negro rights, whereas the Truman administration had allegedly done nothing.

Much of the printed material consisted of locally mimeographed sheets which emphasized issues of limited scope. According to Publicity Director Shikes, "We frequently [found] such leaflets more effective than slick printed material or radio talks."

In addition to these direct party publicity devices, a new
weekly newspaper, the *National Guardian*, was launched as a result of the Wallace campaign. Originally planned as the *National Gazette* by York, Pennsylvania, publisher Jess Gitt, Progressive Party chairman in that state, the Guardian’s mid-October appearance was so belated that it had little, if any, impact on the 1948 campaign.

Far more impressive than the deluge of words in apparent effectiveness was the use that the Progressives made of music and singing throughout the campaign. Carrying on the tradition set at Philadelphia, rallies and meetings invariably opened with a period of audience participation in both folk and campaign songs. “The Same Old Merry-Go-Round” and “Everyone Wants Wallace” were sung out coast to coast in third-party circles with “several hundred thousand” song sheets reportedly sold. In addition, transcriptions and recordings were prepared for broadcast use so that the radio audience might also be introduced to the Progressives’ singing campaign. And of course the Wallace-Taylor rallies always featured the rich baritone voice of Paul Robeson or the guitar and ballads of young Peter Seeger.

Completing the range of media employed, more than a dozen films were turned out for the party “on a shoestring by volunteers.” These presented in cartoon, comedy, and dramatic forms some of the political issues of the campaign for presentation to home groups and small local gatherings remote from the paths of the touring caravans.

The Progressives left no stone unturned. They neglected no possible technique or medium—old or new, tried or unproven—for publicizing their candidates and campaign. From comic books to billboards, they attempted to blanket the nation.

But how were these efforts received? What responses did they evoke from the public? How did the Progressives’ political adversaries react?
In New York State the American Labor Party soon encountered political chicanery from two sources: in Albany the O’Connell Democratic machine succeeded in infiltrating the Albany County ALP to gain Labor nominations for Democratic henchmen. These stooges then withdrew on the last filing day, leaving the ALP line devoid of all local candidates. In this manner the O’Connells expected to make it impossible for backers of the third party to vote a straight ticket and to create an impression of weakness by a nearly blank Row C, thus inclining voters to the full Democratic slate. This maneuver, however, was checkmated by New York Supreme Court Justice Isadore Bookstein, who ruled with a closer eye to justice than legal technicalities that the ALP’s State Central Committee had the power to fill the vacancies, even though the September deadline for such action was a month past.

A second tricky maneuver came in New York City, where Tammany Hall organized a ghostly United Laborite Party, or ULP, hoping to gain a second line on the ballot for the machine’s candidates and obviously expecting that many unwary ALP voters would pull down the ULP lever instead of their own. The courts rapidly rejected this transparent attempt, on the grounds that it violated a state election statute forbidding the adoption by a new party of any portion of an established party’s name. This view of the lower court was upheld unanimously by the State Court of Appeals and the ULP died a-borning (Marcantonio v. Heffernan, 82 N.E. 2d, 298 N.Y. 661).

In the realm of more violent attempts to suppress the third party, further attacks came in the South, where five Progressive Party workers were abducted from the Augusta, Georgia, winter home of Pennsylvania chairman Jess Gitt. Despite the fact that Augusta Chief of Police C. J. Wilson claimed he was unable to find “a single piece of evidence to support their story,” Georgia Bureau of Investigation Agent J. P. Hillen (identified by party workers as one of the abductors, yet as-
signed by the Governor to investigate the case) was reported in the *Baltimore Sun* as saying:

The incident undoubtedly occurred, but it did not happen just as they stated it to begin with, and, after its commission, these people tried in every way to use the publicity to their advantage.

Furthermore, said Hillen, the abduction had taken place without, "any roughness whatsoever," and, anyway, the party workers "have been openly associating with the colored race in that locality." Such, then, was Georgia justice in the election campaign of 1948.

But the South was not alone in witnessing violent attempts to stifle dissent from the nation's bipartisan foreign policy. In Illinois, members of a Progressive Party caravan of senatorial candidate Curtis MacDougall were stoned near West Frankfort, Illinois, while police refused to furnish protection. MacDougall reported being struck by at least ten stones; a female worker was slug; and all attempts to speak were suppressed. Following several unavailing phone calls, one party worker sought protection at police headquarters and was, according to the *Washington Post*, told by the Desk Sergeant, "We don't like you any better than they do. Get out of town." Later, Police Chief E. B. Ragland said his reports indicated "only that a bunch of fellows broke up the meeting because they apparently did not like what was being said." So much for the First Amendment in Illinois, or at least in West Frankfort!

In many cities less violent tactics were employed, as in Youngstown, Ohio, where a detective attending a Wallace rally compiled a list of contributors to third-party funds or as in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where steelworkers attending Progressive gatherings were checked off on union lists as they entered the hall.
But perhaps the most common method of harassing third-party workers was to challenge their usage of sound trucks, public address systems, and street-corner meetings. Notwithstanding a series of court decisions upholding their rights in virtually every instance, the Progressives found their speeches interrupted and their speakers hauled down off rostrums. If, in the course of the arrest, a disturbance occurred or police instructions were resisted, officials then had a constitutionally airtight case of disorderly conduct against the offender.

A report of one incident in the New York Times was revealing.

Some city officials here [White Plains, New York] asserted recently that the police erred in refusing to permit public meetings on public thoroughfares if the meetings would not interfere with traffic. After conference, however, officials agreed to support the position of the police in the current cases, which involve disobedience of policemen's orders. [Italics supplied.]

This then was the atmosphere in which the fall campaign was waged—an atmosphere which gave prudent individuals considerable pause before announcing open support for Henry A. Wallace. Opposition forces were making the "fight for peace" a war of attrition rather than a battle for men's minds.

As the fall campaign progressed, it became increasingly apparent to all—observers and participants alike—that the "fight for peace" was not going well for the third-party crusaders. Despite the exhausting tours of the candidates, despite the wealth of funds and the myriad of methods employed to publicize both candidates and issues, it became obvious that new adherents were not flocking to the Wallace banners in
any appreciable numbers; in fact, it seemed that the substantial following of ten months earlier was continuing to fade away.

Newspapermen accompanying the nation-wide caravan were quick to herald the decline in attendance at Wallace rallies, and, despite occasionally conflicting stories, they agreed on the trend. So it was with the pollsters. Soon to be discredited in their final forecasts, their surveys nonetheless accurately indicated the Wallace ebb tide. Rather than building to a climax with the close of the campaign, Wallace strength was slumping to an all-time low of only 4 per cent of American voters by mid-October.

As Cabell Phillips noted in the *New York Times*:

> The preponderance of the available evidence suggests that the chill winds of apathy have begun at last to affect Henry Wallace’s public. The members of this group have developed an observable tendency to shuffle their feet and to sit on their hands.

Progressive officials publicly derided both the polls and the reports, predicting the turnout of a huge hidden vote. Secretly, however, they viewed with alarm the post-convention slump in the party’s fortunes, with the last-minute shift to a radio campaign evidencing their last-ditch attempts to turn the tide of battle.

What were the reasons for the decline? Once again, events beyond the party’s control or compass—events in Moscow, Berlin, and Washington—destroyed almost completely the possible appeal of its “Peace, Freedom and Abundance” planks. The remaining coffin nails were supplied by the party itself in its failure to overcome additional internal handicaps.

The final death knell to Progressive hopes of peaceful coexistence was dealt by their Truman-alleged allies in the Kremlin. The May thaw of Joseph Stalin, reflected in the ex-
change of letters with Henry A. Wallace, had hardened into June's Berlin Blockade. With continued Soviet intransigence during the fall, the cold war had begun in earnest. While Stalin's motives remain an "enigma wrapped in a mystery," his tough policies produced a clear impact on the American voter and on the third party. Instead of creating public pressure on the administration for a relaxation of containment, his actions crystallized support behind the bipartisan get-tougher-still approach of Truman and Vandenberg.

As Cabell Phillips remarked in the New York Times, the party had "lost much of its zealous appeal, chiefly because of the paradox of Mr. Wallace's pro-Russian policy in the face of the realities of Russian conduct in Europe and the United Nations." From the viewpoint of Howard Norton in the Baltimore Sun, this was the result of "a growing and spreading conviction among New Dealers and other 'liberals' that Wallace, wittingly or unwittingly is playing Moscow's game and is hurting rather than helping the cause of peace." And it was undoubtedly true that Russian maneuvers—during the spring in Czechoslovakia and now, during the fall, continued in Berlin—strengthened the feeling among the better informed that no conciliatory approach was possible. But newspapermen were all too reticent in accepting credit for the role of the press in instilling in the public mind both the view that Henry Wallace was, if unwittingly, a "tool of Moscow" and the concept that the Progressive and Communist parties in the United States were only "two doors into the same house." Nor were the gentlemen of the press quick to assess the part in the decline of third-party strength played by their own constant insistence, direct or implied, that all questioning of the bipartisan foreign policy clearly indicated either a lack of American patriotism, an affinity for communism and Moscow, or both. But, since the American public was acting on the basis of the information most easily available to it, rather than on the full facts in the matter, this continuing smear
was undoubtedly a factor in the decline—a factor sufficiently important to warrant treatment in a subsequent chapter.

And while events overseas may have been little noted and not long remembered by many voters, domestic happenings began to attract their attention increasingly. Earlier rent by the centrifugal forces of the Dixiecrats to the right and the Progressives to the left, the Democratic Party finally began to pull its remnants together as an effective political organism for the first time since 1944. Roused from their funereal lethargy by the newly found "give 'em hell" eloquence of their leader Harry S. Truman, they began to fight against the inevitable loss to Republican candidate Thomas E. Dewey. Faced with disaster, the President began to shift his policies to the left. Freed by the Philadelphia walkout from the Dixiecrat restraining influence, he began to invoke the politically potent images of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal in a dramatic "whistlestop" campaign.

Pushed by liberal Democratic Party elements led by Minneapolis Mayor Hubert Humphrey, the President adopted for the first time an unequivocal position on civil rights. Whereas only a few months before he had been attacking price controls as "dictatorial" and had been threatening to draft striking railroad workers, he now began to go "all out" to prove that his proposed Fair Deal offered all the features of the New Deal and more. The Truman who, ten months before, had been content to accept an anti-inflation measure virtually identical with that proposed by "Mr. Republican"—Senator Robert A. Taft (Ohio)—now assailed in vigorous terms the "no good, do-nothing Republican-controlled 80th Congress" which had refused to accept his proposals.

Whether or not these were, as Wallace contended, only words—the mouthings of a "vocal liberal"—remained to be proven or disproven by history. But for the moment at least, Harry S. Truman was talking virtually all the liberal domestic policies so strenuously advocated by the Progressives throughout the campaign.
Even in the field of foreign affairs, there were indications that the Man from Missouri might be starting to yield. For in the midst of the campaign, apparently hoping to detract from the appeal of the Wallace “peace” plank, the President had suddenly prepared to send Supreme Court Chief Justice Fred Vinson on a new “Mission to Moscow” to explore ways of peacefully ending the cold war with Russia and the Berlin Blockade. Although this peace scare had been rebuffed in no uncertain terms by General Marshall and other State Department advisors, it seemed to indicate that Truman was abandoning the position of personal intransigence that had prevailed since the Potsdam Conference of 1945.

In the face of a third-party campaign which threatened to deprive him of the presidency, Harry S. Truman appeared to be making concessions all along the line, attempting to steal the thunder of the Progressives in the very midst of the campaign. And in so doing he was, in all except foreign affairs, promising to effectuate their advocated policies. Thus, on the domestic scene, regardless of the outcome at the polls, the efforts of Henry A. Wallace and Glen H. Taylor seemed certain to be crowned if indirectly with a modicum of success.

But in addition to the sweep of events outside the party, there were internal frictions and forces at work that may have played a part in the decline. Veteran newspapermen like Cabell Phillips, writing in the New York Times, felt that the Progressive Party was “beginning to suffer a certain degree of internal disintegration. Within its own radical constituency it seems to be suffering from the classical and hereditary ailment of all political parties—the incompatibility of right and left.” But while it was scarcely to be denied that the left-right cleavage had indeed seriously affected party machinery in several states, this had remained fairly well hidden from public sight.

Such was not the case, however, with the widely publicized argument that the party was “deliberately attempting to split the liberal vote” in order to elect reactionary candidates
to senatorial and congressional posts. Phillips argued that the party's "belated withdrawal of opposition to other liberal candidates cannot win back the independents who deserted on this account." According to Howard Norton, misgivings had been created "over the efforts of Wallace earlier this year, to defeat such outstanding 'liberal' Democrats as Helen Gahagen Douglas and Chet Holifield—efforts which cast a shadow on Wallace's claim to be the true prophet of the liberal movement."

Undoubtedly this belief, fostered by the press, had an important effect on Progressive support. For this threat, "The third party is going to elect reactionary Congressmen by 'splitting the liberal vote,' " was the constantly repeated theme of such groups as the Americans for Democratic Action. In the views of some, including CIO President Phillip Murray, there was a deliberate plot to elect purposely a "reactionary Congress" in 1948 so that the Progressives might benefit from a countertrend in 1952.

While the exact degree of influence possessed by this allegation in the decline of Progressive strength in the fall campaign of 1948 is difficult to assess, the truth of the charges may be examined with some accuracy. On November 2, 1948, the Progressives still had in the congressional races of twenty-five states a total of 114 House candidates of their own, plus a total of 9 senatorial candidates. In addition, they had formally endorsed some 14 Democratic candidates who carried both major- and third-party designations on the ballot. Prior to election day, they had, however, withdrawn a number of nominees from various congressional races as well as from the crucial Connecticut gubernatorial contest.

Criticism of their "belated withdrawals" stemmed from a news dispatch of September 30 in which it was reported that the third party was "withdrawing its candidates for thirteen House seats in five states." Actually, according to Ralph Shikes, publicity director for the third party, Campaign Man-
ager C. B. Baldwin had released to the press a *summary* of previous withdrawals at this time in order to counteract the Democrats’ and ADA’s “splitting the liberal vote” propaganda. But in reporting this release, the press, he claimed, had so distorted the statement as to make it appear that the withdrawals had been newly effected. According to Shikes, the only “new” withdrawals had come some ten days earlier when the national organization had finally been able to convince local officials in Southern California of the need for withdrawing opposition to liberal Democratic candidates Douglas and Holifield.

These two races had been a continuing source of friction between local and national groups since early in the campaign. Following a discussion between Wallace and his campaign manager, the Progressive withdrawals were finally announced, but because of California statute, the third-party candidates’ names still appeared on the November ballot, despite their support for the Democratic slate. And as noted in an earlier chapter, Connecticut gubernatorial candidate Thomas I. Emerson had been pledged from the first to withdraw his name if the Democrats nominated an “acceptable” candidate, such as Chester Bowles. As soon as Bowles received the nomination, Emerson *had* withdrawn, although his shift, too, was labeled last-minute.

Concerning the charges that there was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Progressives to “split the liberal vote,” an excellent study—both scholarly and objective—was made by John Cotton Brown of ten different contests where this accusation had been made. Brown’s findings indicated conclusively that such was not the third-party purpose. Instead, they showed that seven other factors singly or jointly seemed to determine whether or not the Progressives endorsed a Democrat or entered their own nominee in opposition.

If the Democratic candidate was (1) reactionary by Progressive standards, which included such matters as his vote on the Truman doctrine, the peacetime draft, and the contempt citations of the “Hollywood Ten”; (2) “unreliable” concerning attitudes, receptivity to delegations, and liberal “leadership”; or (3) a liberal with no hopes of election, the Progressives refused endorsement. On the other hand, if the Republican candidate was a “moderate,” or if he would clearly owe his election to the third party’s balance of power position and hence be likely to moderate his position, then the third party also tended to enter independent candidates. Finally, if there was actually a chance of victory for the Progressives or if party power building considerations were involved (such as retaining Negro support with a Negro nominee), the third party again refused to endorse Democrats and entered its own candidates.

On the basis of his examination of New York City contests, Brown found that

The conclusion seems unavoidable that in New York City the ALP, by Progressive standards, did very little “splitting of the liberal vote,” and then only for calculated and justifiable reasons aimed at increasing its political power. No evidence was uncovered that the ALP was deliberately trying to elect reactionary congressmen, and there was considerable evidence to the contrary.

In summarizing his findings on the matter of “splitting the liberal vote,” both in New York and elsewhere, Brown concluded:

The 1948 Progressives faced a political dilemma. If they endorsed “liberal” Democrats instead of running their own candidates they were building Democratic rather than Progressive Party power. If they ran their own candidates
against “liberal” Democrats they were “splitting the liberal vote,” hence risking the partial achievement of Progressive programmatic objectives to which these Democrats, if elected, would contribute.

This dilemma was confused in the public eye by a general failure to distinguish between conflicting ADA and Progressive criteria of “liberalism” and by unsupportable propaganda charges that the Progressives were deliberately attempting to elect reactionaries through “splitting the liberal vote.”

While particularly aggressive, non-compromising personalities of “militant” local Progressive leaders got out of hand, tactical decisions appeared to result more from emotion than from cold calculations of strategy. Latter-day moderation of militant Progressive opposition to “liberal” Democrats apparently resulted from a recognition that such tactics were defeating both programmatic and power-building objectives.

On the basis of these findings it seems clear that this charge of “splitting the liberal vote” was hardly substantiated by the facts, although it may have gained some credence by the sheer force of repetition and thus contributed to the Progressive decline in the fall of 1948.

But what of the press and radio coverage afforded the crusaders? Reference has already been made both to the silent treatment given the spring campaign of the Wallace Progressive Party by the nation’s press and to the distortions that stereotyped the Philadelphia Convention as a Communist field day. This same trend continued and was even intensified during the fall campaign.

To cite one example, while the New York Times considerably increased its coverage, it continued to relegate news of
the party's tours and speeches to back pages, at the same time devoting front page attention to Communist charges leveled against the party or to stories of its decline. And while the *Times*’s accounts of the national tours were relatively objective, its editorial bias continued to be exhibited in local dispatches whenever the American Labor Party was mentioned. But by comparison with some of the less responsible and less restrained journals, the *Times* was a paragon of virtue both as to coverage and objectivity.

The dangers inherent in such a situation became apparent in the course of the fall campaign, even to many who opposed the Wallace Progressive Party. Thus, anti-Wallace commentator W. B. Hesseltine felt compelled to protest in the *Progressive*:

> The conspiracy of silence among the newspapers to suppress news of the party and its activities reveals a dangerous drift towards an un-American totalitarianism.

In addition to their conspiracy of silence and their slanted news coverage, many American papers employed still a third technique—the old device of the deliberately selected unflattering photograph. Senator Taylor was a leading target for this method of reporting, beginning with the shots accompanying the story of his decision to run—shots suggesting

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7 For comparison, the story of the abduction of Progressive Party workers in Georgia occupied a few inches on page 35 (October 3, 1948), while a story of the CIO Political Action Committee’s prediction of party decline appeared on page 1 (October 17, 1948).

8 For example, the following excerpt from an October 21 dispatch by Douglas Dales: “Fundamentally the difference between candidates [in New York’s Twenty-fourth Congressional District] is the difference between the Communist party ideas of foreign policy as expounded by Henry Wallace and other ALP candidates in New York and the bipartisan foreign policy of the Republican and Democratic parties.”
that only a dolt with a vacant expression (and presumably a vacant mind) would make such a choice. While Wallace had received similar treatment ever since entering the Roosevelt Cabinet, with press attacks on his “dreamy,” “visionary” schemes, Taylor now received the full impact as the press portrayed him—in word and pictures—as little more than a hillbilly jester, a buffoon in high public office. This then was the “paper curtain” with which the party had to contend.

How may the fall campaign of the “fight for peace” be evaluated? In its effect upon the Progressives themselves and their hopes for a large vote for Wallace and Taylor, the fall campaign, despite the large-scale expenditure of time, effort, and money, failed to gain any substantial number of converts to the third-party fold. While the Progressives were untiring in their efforts to get their views before the American public, public reception of these views—except on the part of those listening directly to radio speeches or personally attending rallies—was another matter. The “paper curtain” proved more than an imaginary barrier—either preventing or making difficult an undistorted image of either crusade or crusaders.

On the other hand, the campaign tours were successful in focusing the spotlight of publicity on some of the things endangering American democracy—particularly in the South. And Wallace and Taylor had the grim satisfaction of seeing their Democratic adversary set forth for the first time a Fair Deal program comparable in liberalism to the New Deal—even while it stole the thunder of their own “Freedom and Abundance” platform. But, just as in the spring, they were helpless in the face of international events—the increasing intransigence of the Soviet Union—that completely debilitated the appeal of the plank encompassing their prime purpose—the promise of peaceful coexistence underlying their “fight for peace.”