

# The Gurley Flynn Campaign

By Harry Ring

The decision of the Communist Party to run Elizabeth Gurley Flynn for the New York City Council has been welcomed by those Communist Party members who are most dissatisfied with the Party's policy of supporting the liberal capitalist wing of the Democratic party in the name of building a "people's anti-monopoly coalition."

Recognizing that support to capitalist politicians can only serve to further entrench monopoly rule, such Communist Party members saw the Gurley Flynn nomination as a step in the direction of independent political action in which a working class program would be presented in opposition to the capitalist program of the Democrats. But this view of the campaign is not shared by the leaders of the Communist Party.

The decision to enter the Councilmanic race did not represent in any sense a departure by the CP leadership from their class-collaborationist, coalition policy. It has in fact been motivated and justified by top CP spokesmen as reinforcement for the general line of support to the Democratic machine.

At the same time, however, the Flynn campaign is being used by the party leadership as a means of regaining some ground with those members and supporters who are seeking the road to genuine independent political action. Much left-wing phraseology is being employed in a demagogic effort to demonstrate that at bottom the leadership really favors a perspective of independent politics.

## INDEPENDENCE

For example, Albert Blumberg, co-director of the campaign, declared in the Aug. 29 Daily Worker that the campaign would "help extend the beginning of independent labor political action and organization."

This theme was echoed by William Z. Foster in a Sept. 20 Daily Worker article on the campaign where he described the political situation in New York as emphasizing "the ultimate need for a strong independent party of the workers and their allies."

But despite such lip service to an "ultimate" party of labor, the real attitude of the Communist Party leadership emerges. Through the smog of double talk it can be discerned that in reality they favor the re-election of the Tammany candidate, Mayor Wagner.

## ... BUT COALITION

Both the National Administrative Board and the New York State Committee have hailed the Flynn campaign as in complete harmony with the "people's anti-monopoly coalition" policy adopted by the party's past national convention. The policy calls for the CP to string along with the labor-endorsed candidates.

As is well known, the bulk of the New York labor bureaucracy is in Wagner's camp. And after all, how can you hope to weld a coalition with such "progressive" bureaucrats as David Dubinsky without lending a hand to his electoral machine which is out working to build a similar "coalition" with Tammany Hall?

This problem is dealt with in several Daily Worker articles on the meaning of the Flynn campaign.

On Sept. 5, William Weinstone wrote a reply to the various arguments advanced by those in the Communist Party who had opposed the proposition to run the Flynn campaign. The "most important of such arguments," wrote Weinstone, "is that the campaign for an independent Communist candidate is in conflict with coalition policies."

"Why should this be so?" he indignantly inquires as he explains that actually the campaign will serve to strengthen the "coalition" activities of CP members in the unions.

How will such activity be aided? "In this election," Weinstone declares, "it is essential to expose the reactionary character of Christenberry. . . It is also necessary sharply to criticize the Wagner administration for its failures on many issues."

When Weinstone speaks of the essential CP task of exposing Christenberry and merely "criticizing" Wagner he is dropping the broad hint that the

Party's main fire will be directed against the Republican candidate thus aiding CP unionists who will be busily trying to establish a "coalition" with the union bureaucrats by pitching in on the campaign for Wagner.

However, just in case the point was not made clear enough by Weinstone, it was picked up again the following day by the Daily Worker's labor editor George Morris. He, too addresses himself to the argument that the Flynn campaign "runs in contradiction to activity in support of the political activities of a union or other organizations."

Such arguments, Morris also assures us, are "groundless." Why? Because "such a campaign, far from hindering, would greatly stimulate support for those supported by labor as a whole."

Ironically the New York election campaign coincides with the opening of a drive by the CP leadership to "reconstruct" a crisis-ridden and almost completely shattered organization. Yet all they have to offer their members and supporters is the thoroughly discredited old "lesser evil" line, this time offered up in the guise of a "new look" coalition policy.

## SAME AS 'OLD LOOK'

This policy has served over the years only to aid the labor fakers in their efforts to keep the workers tied to capitalist politics. It has served to disorient countless radical workers. It contributed mightily toward leading the Communist Party into its present blind alley.

William Z. Foster, in the article previously quoted, is compelled to describe the Wagner administration as "another Tammany-type city government which has plagued New York from time immemorial." Omitted is the disgraceful fact that in 1953 the Communist Party leaders knifed the American Labor Party ticket to help elect that administration in the name of "correcting" the Party's previous alleged "left sectarian" line. In 1957 they propose to "reconstruct" the Communist Party by performing the same treacherous act all over again.