

LA GUARDIA'S RECORD: A LACKEY OF CAPITALISM

Fiorello is Wall Street's Cleverest Candidate But His Record is Damning

By James Casey

In New York at present we behold three candidates zealously bidding for the job of "savior" in, of course, the "democratic" American style.

This trio is unanimous in the pledge to save the municipality for doctrines of Americanism as laid down by the Chamber of Commerce, the American Bankers Association, the various manufacturer's groups and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Broadly speaking, this Americanism stands for "good government", "non-partisan rule", "efficient business administration", and all other forms of legalized robbery and exploitation of the city's population.

One of the well-known aspirants, Royal S. Copeland, has an adequate record to fit him for the job. He is a celebrated quack who aids patent medicine manufacturers, with a "health hints" column in one of the local newspapers. During his years in Washington, he has done everything possible for the public utility interests short of introducing legislation to send all the legislators back to their homes and have the vice-president of the Consolidated Gas and affiliated companies take over the whole parliamentary extravaganza.

"New Dealer" Mahoney

In Jeremiah T. Mahoney, the Senator has an interesting rival and one whose past is the envy of many a politician who also would like to serve the nation's biggest tax dodgers. As a former Democratic Judge, a Grand Sachem of the Tammany Robbers and a corporation lawyer, Mahoney is a reliable guarantor of the "good government" demanded by Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis clubs.

Yet, in spite of their willingness and their overwhelming ambition, neither of these two aspirants compare in subtlety, cunning and demagoguery to the remaining member of the trio—Hizzoner himself, Fiorello H. La Guardia, Republican, Democratic, Fusionist Communist, "Socialist" Progressive Social Democrat and Independent, one in all and all in one. Here you truly have a combination of parts that has won the admiration and appreciation of bankers, industrialists, merchants and manufacturers from one corner of the land to the other.

Big Capital Backs La Guardia

It is this striking unity on the part of Wall Street reaction and Stalin's representatives for their "all inclusive" candidate that makes it imperative for every toiler to become familiar with La Guardia's anti-working class record. James Burnham already has written a highly enlightening article on the Mayor and The Socialist Appeal in a previous issue has shown how La Guardia is backed by the Democratic New York Times, semi-official organ of Wall Street, the Republican Herald-Tribune, organ of Liberty League interests, and the Daily Worker, organ of the Stalinist Party. He is also supported by the Daily News of the International Harvester Co., a House of Morgan affiliate, the strike-busting Scripps-Howard newspaper and the yellow journalism of the New York Evening Post.

To La Guardia, the alliance in his behalf of reaction with working class deserters is neither strange nor new.

In the Fall of 1922 La Guardia

sought a seat in Congress on a straight Republican ticket. Once elected, however, he announced himself a "progressive" so that he might array new forces to his support in coming campaigns.

Fiorello and Tammany

And, as though to prove that he meant what he said, La Guardia took on as one of his first "progressive" tasks a retainer to serve as special counsel for the Tammany administration that was then fleecing the City's treasury. Having of late criticized Tammany politicians for their unshakable habit of making "grabs" of tax-payers' money, would it be so rude to remind La Guardia that he, too, likes to cash in, while the sun shines?

On August 31, 1932, La Guardia collected \$8,508 of taxpayers' money from the Tammany gang at City Hall for "services". On December 14, 1923 he received another check from Tammany officials, this time for a \$2,688.

It must be noted here that during the time he was making these collections from Tammany officials, La Guardia was officially a Republican legislator on the Federal government payroll.

Having wooed both Tammany and the Republicans for a spell with a fair amount of success, La Guardia decided to expand and try-out a new field. Thus, in 1924, he bloomed as a full-fledged "Socialist" and a candidate for Congress on the Old Guard-controlled Socialist Party ticket. But in that campaign Fortune lagged a bit and did not reach Fiorello.

Ham Fish's Man

In 1926 La Guardia was again in the race for Congress, this time as a good Republican, as a standard bearer of Ham Fish's Party and with the blessing of the Herald-Tribune.

What happened? Ham Fish's party, the Herald-Tribune, the Coolidge administration, the House of Morgan and Fiorello won a smashing victory. The working class candidates were defeated.

Fiorello Defends Tammany

Back to Congress therefore went La Guardia, with a light heart, a fat salary and still burning with ambition. It was during this session that La Guardia won his chance to tell the world what he thought of Tammany Hall. The occasion was a debate on the floor of the House on March 7, 1926 and Tammany's fair name was taken in vain. The impudent offender was Representative Lewis C. Crampton of Michigan. Whereupon, Fiorello got good and sore. His sense of justice was outraged to the breaking point. He jumped to his feet and this is what he told Congress, gallery spectators, the Congressional Record and the whole darned world:

"Tammany Hall is full of heart and full of human interest. Tammany has done more for the welfare institutions of the great city (New York) in one year than any private foundation with its theories and statistics can do from now until the end of time."

So there you have, in plain, healthy English, the official expression of the Morgan-duPont-Browder-Thomas candidate in regard to Tammany Hall.

Labor Record

Never before in American history have trade union leaders

thrown the full weight of Organized Labor behind a local candidate for public office as in the case this year of La Guardia. Under the circumstances, it would not be amiss to scan his position in labor matters and thus learn whether he merits this unprecedented action.

One need go no further than to the files of the Daily Worker for the first three years of La Guardia's administration. This was before the inauguration of the People's Front line and the Daily Worker, which is now avidly supporting his candidacy, was not then duty bound to conceal La Guardia's anti-labor record. Week after week, the Stalinist organ covered columns of space to show how he used his police force against demonstrations of jobless and his authority as arbitrator against the trade unions in wage and hour dispute. But his soiled record extends back to even before the issuance of the first number of the Stalinist paper that is now swallowing every word that it has printed against La Guardia in other years.

Against Postal Workers

In the summer of 1919 when the nation's postal employees were pressing for passage of a bill to increase their wages, La Guardia came out flatly against the measure. On September 6, 1919, he made a sharp attack on the postal workers' bill on the floor of the House. Indeed, the subsequent defeat of this bill was in no small measure due to the demagogic opposition of this "progressive."

His speech on August 30th last which was "played up" in all the city's newspaper and which advised trade unionists "to discipline themselves and not call unnecessary strikes" was a subtle assurance to Big Business that he can be counted on to deal with workers.

It must be borne in mind that La Guardia is not a union man and has never been a member of any trade union. Since 1905 he has served the ruling interests in one public capacity or another. The records show that he has spent not a single day as a bona fide member of the nation's working class.

Jingoism

But the trade union leaders, who hail him as a labor sympathizer, also herald him as a vigorous opponent of imperialist war. On this point, too, the claims and hopes and election campaign stories run counter to the cold and indisputable record. At the outbreak of the World War, La Guardia left his seat in Congress to enlist as an army aviator.

Soon after leaving for the front La Guardia was sent to Italy to whip up a war hysteria among the nation's more or less apathetic people. La Guardia speaks the Italian language fluently and he went from city to city and from village to village exhorting the citizenry to join in the "war for democracy." So well did he perform his task for the jingoists that he was elevated to the rank of major.

La Guardia returned to America and the "fighter for democracy" was again elected to Congress. One of his first official acts was to vote for a \$150,000,000 aviation building program as advocated by the War Department. La Guardia's sole objection to the

measure was that it did not provide for three brigadier generals as flying officers.

Aids Fascists

Again, La Guardia is looked upon as an anti-fascist. Wall Street is inordinately happy that Stalinists have chosen anti-fascist slogans to strengthen capitalist "democracy." Much is being made of La Guardia's verbal bouts with the Nazi dictator. But what about La Guardia's attitude toward the barbarous and deadly Mussolini regime? Why are the Stalinists silent? Why is La Guardia silent?

In 1935 when anti-fascist groups were preparing for a Columbus Day demonstration, the fascist forces arranged for a rally at Columbus Circle. La Guardia chose to speak at the fascist rally along with Generoso Pope, publisher of *Il Progresso*, New York's fascist daily. La Guardia addressed the meeting in spite of protests from liberal and working class circles and anti-fascists, who marched to the scene of the fascist meeting, were clubbed and trampled by the police of La Guardia's "progressive" administration.

Casey's next article will deal with La Guardia supporters).

NOTICE TO PARTY BRANCHES

Please send in names of comrades elected to serve as correspondents to the SOCIALIST APPEAL. Special attention must be given to providing us with timely stories on trade union struggles. All copy must be in by Saturday.

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Harry Lundeberg is Defended by N.M.U. Sailors Against Slander

By Joe Lookout

The Stalinist slander campaign against Harry Lundeberg, leader of the Sailors Union of the Pacific, received a sharp setback when the Headquarters Branch of the Deck Department of the National Maritime Union voted an investigation of an article in *The Pilot*, N.M.U. organ.

A nearly unanimous vote of the three hundred members present at the August 31 meeting, ordered an investigation of the writer of the article attacking Lundeberg, and a retraction to be printed if he cannot prove his statements. As a check against similar incidents, the membership also voted that similar articles hereafter not be printed until verified.

"Blackie" Meyers, Stalinist floor-leader, vainly sought to prevent the membership's action. This is the first important defeat

suffered by the Stalinist fraction in the N.M.U.

Moscow Frameup

The article accused Lundeberg of making a deal with the notorious Joe Ryan, dictator of the longshoremen union on the East coast. The absurdity of this "Moscow frameup" is obvious to the many East Coast sailors who, on trips to the West Coast, have been able to see for themselves that the West Coast sailors, under Lundeberg's leadership, have won superior conditions to those on the East Coast. The contrasts between Lundeberg's militancy and the soft-peddling of the Curran leadership of the N.M.U. was brought home to the sailors during the fight against the Copeland "fink book." The West Coast union prohibited its members from accepting the Copeland book, while Curran made it optional.

MORE PARTY BODIES FIGHT RIGHT WING

A unanimous vote condemning Ward Rodgers was adopted by the State Action Committee of the Colorado Socialist Party, August 30. The resolution follows:

"According to information received by the State Action Committee, Socialist Party of Colorado, Ward Rodgers, as representative of the N.E.C. of the S.P., USA, has brought criminal proceedings against Comrades Glen Trimble and Al Furth, charging them with theft and embezzlement for their failure to turn over to him property belonging to Local San Francisco, Socialist Party of California.

"Regardless of whether or not, as a last resort, a civil suit to recover possession of party funds or records might be justified under any circumstances, the State Action Committee of the Socialist Party of Colorado un-

qualifiedly condemns the resort to a criminal court in any inner-party controversy."

The resolution is signed by Carl Whitehead, Chairman, and Marjorie McCormick, Secretary.

...

The Louisville (Kentucky) Local of the Socialist Party has passed the following resolution by a unanimous vote:

"It is hereby resolved that Local Louisville of the Socialist Party goes on record as vigorously opposing the mass expulsions, past and pending, due to political beliefs. We urge the immediate reinstatement of those expelled, the abandonment of this method of procedure in the party, and the restoration of the traditional democracy, the abdication of which we can only view with alarm."