

Harold Ickes to Samuel I. Rosenman, with attachment, October 14, 1948. Subject File, Rosenman Papers.

Ickes

HAROLD L. ICKES
3624 PROSPECT AVENUE, N. W.
WASHINGTON 7, D. C.
DUPONT 2281



October 14, 1948

Dear Sam:

I am sure you will agree that the candidacy of Henry Wallace has confused and distorted this Presidential campaign. One of the most disconcerting aspects of the Wallace movement lies in the persistent efforts of its spokesmen to wrap themselves in the glory of Franklin Roosevelt.

Enclosed you will find a statement drafted with this particular point in mind. It is my hope that the signers of this statement will include all of the prominent men and women associated with the Roosevelt Administration. I feel strongly that the issuance of a statement of this kind will not only disabuse many who may still regard Wallace as a spokesman for the Roosevelt tradition, but will demonstrate to the people of Europe that American liberals support them in their stand against totalitarianism.

The statement will be released in the name of the signers from the office of Americans for Democratic Action in Washington. Will you kindly wire me ~~collect~~ care of ADA, 1740 K Street N.W., Washington 6, D.C., to indicate that your name may be included?

Sincerely yours,

Harold
Harold L. Ickes

The Honorable
Samuel I. Rosenman
165 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

*Glad to sign statement. Would
like to see it shortened
Regards*

AN APPEAL TO THE LIBERALS OF AMERICA



American liberalism is facing its most serious test in 1948.

Under the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the American tradition of militant liberalism enjoyed an unequalled period of effectiveness and power.

During these years fighting liberal leadership guided our nation successfully through the grimmest depression and gravest war of our history.

We are profoundly committed to the continuing battle for human freedom and against economic and political tyranny. We propose to carry on this fight in the name and spirit of Franklin D. Roosevelt. We believe deeply that the freedom and security of the United States depend ultimately on the triumph of the Roosevelt spirit of fighting liberalism.

Yet, today we see a major effort to break up the liberal-labor coalition which brought about the great gains of the past 15 years. This effort is being conducted by a new party calling itself "Progressive". It is being made in the name of the ideals of Franklin Roosevelt and on behalf of a man who played an active role during the Roosevelt era.

But the name of the party, the candidacy of Henry Wallace and the pretensions to liberalism must not obscure the stark fact that this new movement, in its origin and in its objectives, runs counter to the humane impulses of American progressivism and to the spirit of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

We appeal to every American who takes pride in our liberal past and who wishes to enlist in the fight for a liberal future to reject the so-called Progressive Party.

The Progressive Party breaks sharply with the American democratic tradition. It represents a corruption of American liberalism. It represents, in particular, a repudiation of the methods and purposes of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In its foreign policy, the Progressive Party invites a betrayal of free people throughout the world. The issue in Europe today is an issue between those who believe in human freedom and those who do not; and in this struggle the Progressive Party has lined up unashamedly with the forces of Soviet totalitarianism. A vote for the Progressive Party, whose foreign policy is an American carbon of Soviet policy, is a vote for the destruction of the anti-totalitarians of Europe.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was not deceived about the nature of the Soviet Union. In 1940 he said, "The Soviet Union, as a matter of practical fact, is a dictatorship as absolute as any other dictatorship in the world."

The whole objective of his foreign policy was unflinching opposition to aggression and to totalitarianism. He was ready to give the Soviet Union the benefit of every legitimate doubt; but when the Soviet Union demonstrated its aggressive intentions in the weeks after Yalta, Franklin D. Roosevelt reacted sharply and with vigor. "We must be firm," he wrote to Churchill an hour before his death.

(more)

No conception in foreign policy is closer to the objectives of Roosevelt than that of the European Recovery Program. Every believer in the possibility of a free and democratic Europe must give that program his heartiest support. Opposition to this program is the major theme of the Wallace campaign and the core of Progressive Party policy.

We resent the slur upon a great statesman and patriot, implied in the suggestion that Roosevelt would not have drawn the same conclusions which the entire democratic world has drawn from recent Russian policy; and would not have recognized the necessity of standing firmly against Communist encroachments.

The Progressive Party domestic policy is merely an imitation of the Democratic Party program, touched up point by point in a demagogic attempt to outbid everybody for everything. It is an incidental concession to political necessity. The chief motivation of the Progressive Party is the promotion of its foreign policy.

The striking and fundamental divergence between the Progressive Party and Roosevelt's political philosophy is its theory of collaboration with Communists. The Philadelphia convention of the Progressive Party demonstrated conclusively that collaboration with Communists means control by them.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was not deceived about the nature of the American Communist Party. In 1936, he said, "I have not sought, I do not seek, I repudiate the support of any advocate of Communism..."

In 1940 he did not have to repudiate the Communists because they, along with many persons now key figures in the Progressive Party of 1948, were denouncing him as today they denounce President Truman -- as an "imperialist" and a "war-monger."

In 1944 Roosevelt said again, "I have never sought and I do not welcome the support of any person or group committed to communism."

The Progressive Party does not repudiate Communism, as Franklin Roosevelt did. It represents, on the contrary, the most serious attempt in the history of our nation by a totalitarian group to capture and destroy American liberalism.

That is why the men most closely associated with Franklin D. Roosevelt, the leaders of the American labor movement, and other liberal leaders are united in repudiating the candidacy of Henry Wallace.

We believe that there is a liberal alternative to the fake progressivism of the Progressive Party.

President Truman is a candidate for re-election on the most liberal platform ever adopted by a major party in America. His Republican opponent was Roosevelt's opponent four years ago. The election of Governor Dewey would return this country to the hands of those who nearly wrecked it the last time they were in power. The record of the 80th Congress shows that whatever the current amiable inclinations of the Republican candidates, the Republican Party has learned nothing and forgotten nothing since the days of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover.

The Wallace candidacy presents a fundamental challenge to the liberals of America -- to their sense of political responsibility.

We urge all followers of Franklin D. Roosevelt to oppose Henry Wallace and his Progressive Party.

We urge all followers of Franklin D. Roosevelt to vote on November 2nd for Harry S. Truman and Alben W. Parkley.



