WALLACE GROUNDSWELL ON

Wake Up America!..By Rockwell Kent

3rd Party Wins Favor With Ranks

By William E. Dodd

Indications from all over the country point to a tremendous groundswell of support for the presidential candidacy of Henry Wallace.

Wallace headquarters in New York reported as The Dispatcher went to press that he had received over 1000 telegrams and messages following his historical decision to run for president. From this unprecedented total fewer than 15 disagreed with his decision and all the others congratulated him and vowed their full support.

The significance of this unprecedented outpouring of support is that it is indicative of the widespread appeal of the Wallace program and the desire of the people for a candidate who will fight for their interests.

As always with the first issue of the New Year, The Dispatcher begins Volume VI with a greeting from Brother Rockwell Kent, world-famed artist and honorary member of the ILWU. The year Brother Kent appropriately appended to his greeting a reprint of "Who is Loyal to America?" by Henry Steele Commager in Harper's magazine. Brother Kent's "Wake Up, America!" is timely, for the freedoms so painfully won will surely crumble if the people sleep.
high barriers to opposition success in most states, but they know that a high Wallace vote is going to expose the fact that people of the United States are not solidly behind the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan and Taft-anti-labor program. No is it that exposes alone that they fear. They know that with Wallace on the ballot there will be millions of people at the polls, who otherwise would not be there, to vote for progressive candidates for Congress, who may bear either a Democratic or Republican or some other label. They have only to look at the record of the American Labor Party in New York state, where either Republican or Democratic candidates have been supported by that third party, not according to their labels but according to their records and programs.

It is highly likely that the new party will play a similar role nationally, that is, supporting such Democratic candidates or Republicans whose records merit support, despite the party labels which have been so besmirched by their national leadership. Big Business wants to see the election of Wallace, and it wants to see any more like him getting to Congress. And to that end voters must be kept from the polls. No wonder there are howls of pain as Wallace steps forth!

MORE immediate exposure brought out by the Wallace candidacy is the fakery of some people who have been posing as liberals both in labor and intellectual circles. Their role has been to misguide under the cover of working class and progressive slogans. They now stand exposed as the miserable frauds they always have been. They cry that the Wallace candidacy will help super reaction beat mild reaction, as if any mild reaction ever stopped at mildness. They pretend to liberty and, red-bait just like Hitler did. They pretend that a losing fight is worthwhile because they are afraid of the fight. It is their job to shout for progress and then put the brakes on it. Big Business recognizes their role and applauds them, and they all seem quite comfortable in their circumstances. At least there are no many attempts to deport them or railroad them to prison or out of jobs such as are constantly being made against the real fighters for progress.

Long ago President Theodore Roosevelt summed up the value of a battle that might be lost. He said: "It is not the critic who counts, nor the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement; and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither defeat nor victory."

Win, lose or draw, as ILWU President Bridges said in his recent public statement, Wallace will supply the Franklin Roosevelt touch and inspiration to the 1946 elections. And that touch and inspiration is bound to be reflected in terms of effective check upon reaction.

Students for Wallace Meet

BERKELEY, Calif. — State-wide convention of Students for Wallace took place at the Statler Hotel last week and decided to study the campaign for Wallace's presidential candidacy and to act in harmony with the demands of the campaign.

Steps were also taken to set up the organization throughout the state. A working program was drawn up for the immediate formation of a national students' organization for Wallace.
Big Five Launches Undercover Plot To Wreck ILWU in Hawaiian Islands

HONOLULU, T. H. — The active and successful ILWU organizers in the Territory of Hawaii have been the target of a new underhanded attack. The group of Big Five employers has undertaken an underhanded scheme to undermine the ILWU's influence and union activities.

The plan involves a series of maneuvers designed to create confusion and weaken the workers' resolve. This is a serious threat to the rights and interests of the workers in this region.

MCS Council Opposes T-H Law, Marshall Plan

SAN FRANCISCO. — The General Council of the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards, which met here December 12-16, 1947, adopted statements and resolutions opposing the T-H Law and United States foreign policy.

The resolution on the slave labor law stated that the MCS council would not support any legislation attacked by employers attempting to use the act and would not support the constitutionality of the Act or support other union agreements in such cases.

Further the MCS urged all non-complying unions nationally and locally, in its order, to join in mutual assistance pact lines and protect their members in a labor dispute are destined to unemploy- ment.

In making its decision the majority of the Board awarded bene- fits to 200 Sacramento bakery workers for lost time when the employers association shut down most of the city's bakeries in retaliation for a strike.

Minority member of the Board, Mr. E. W. Allen, recommended that an appeal be made to the State Supreme Court.

ILWU Chalks Up Gains on All Fronts Despite Sharpening Attacks

The ILWU came out of 1947 as tough as it went in. In the year of the T-H Law, of the crowded docks, and of monopoly profits breaking all past records, the ILWU made gains in every field, waterfront, warehouse, sugar and pineapple.

The strongest gains in the year were in the sugar industry, where the ILWU was able to organize and collective bargaining, and to take home to the union members what they were owed.

On the mainland the June 16 maritime contract and the June 18 contract with the shipowners were reached. These contracts gave the workers substantial gains.

On the waterfront, the West Coast dockers and the longshoremen gained substantial gains.

On the air, the ILWU won a major victory in the strike against the airlines. The workers won a substantial wage increase.

The ILWU's gains on all fronts were despite the sharpening attacks of the employers. The employers have tried various tactics to break the ILWU, but the workers have been able to withstand these attacks.

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Look Who's Talking

Here's the Big Lie!

POLITICAL ACTION—Labor's Blind Alley

The approach of the 1948 elections brings organized labor in America to a fork in the road. Straight ahead lies the familiar route of free collective bargaining. Except for occasional efforts at a trip, labor has been laboring for free collective bargaining for years. On this road the rule of government is to set as traffic stop, removing obstructions for all travelers.

The fork in the road of political action is the choice to seek support for labor in the government at the expense of an apparent right to strike. The 1948 elections will see the end of many political gains if the American people believe in the rule of government.

The road to free collective bargaining is now clear of many of the besetting obstacles. The Wagner Act, with its power to strike and its power to bargain, the thing to do is to change the opposition party, not going all the way around as Denham had done.

Denham's lawyer sent a tele-gram to the board from Indiana, where the issue was being heard, asking that he be permitted to appear to argue this point. The main union sent a special telegram requesting the same privilege. Denham was told that he had insisted to appear. Common sense could be heard that a new order of labor would be set. The union's official was examined to reverse himself and take the charges. The labor union's action is to change the opposition party, not going all the way around as Denham had done.

That big business wants to silence labor at the polls has long been known. That was why the Taft-Hartley Act was passed and labor's political activity limited by law.

The force of political action has been reduced by notpubishing the work which performs the necessary activity and a lack of support. Labor's efforts are not being in the political union, but they are gaining in the public opinion, and workers are speaking.

The Taft-Hartley Act is an essential element of free collective bargaining.

The American people are aware of the fact that every political party has a right to speak for the workers and to speak for the people. But there may be some who do not want to speak for the American people or the American worker. The American people are aware of the fact that every political party has a right to speak for the workers and to speak for the people.

What is "special privilege for labor?" According to the above said the Wagner Act was special privilege for labor and gave "employers the..." That was some short end of the stick. That was some short end of the stick. In 1939, when the Wagner Act had been operating for three years, total corporate profits were $5 billion. In 1946, the last year of Wagner operation, those total corporate profits rose to 21 1/2 billion dollars. That means they quadrupled. And Business Week of November 1, 1947, said U.S. corporations in 1947 will end up with profits 50 per cent higher than 1946 (itself a record).

In the same period, 1939 to 1946, average weekly earnings in all manufacturing, taking the month of December in each year, rose from $25 to $46.86. They were not quadrupled. They were not even doubled. And the agricultural increase in the cost of living during the period hit the workers, not the producers who now claim they got the short end of collective bargaining.

Big Business speaks about incentives to produce. Its theory is that workers will be impelled to work harder if they have lower wages. Longer hours and are forced to pay higher prices for what they produce. To achieve that noble objective, it is natural that Big Business wants the workers to turn away from their unions and stay out of politics.
Portland Bishop Condemns Race Bias, Marshall Plan

PORTLAND, Oregon—Bishop Benjamin Dagwell of the Oregon Episcopal diocese on December 23 before the Chamber of Commerce here lashed out at hotel and restaurant owners who practice racial discrimination and condemned the Marshall Plan as an attempt to substitute "the rule of gold for the Golden Rule.

In his Christmas message, Dagwell said that the sound of Christmas carols sung on the streets of Portland is mockery because "there is no room in Portland hotels for Negroes, even those of charitable persuasion. CHARITY IS SHALLOW."

The Bishop also said that American policy on aiding the Europeans is one of "agreeing to feed them and clothe them if they will vote our way."

He threw several barbs at the recent "Friendly Train" taking food to needy countries in Europe. "When it is proposed to distribute printed dogs with the stores so the recipients will know who is giving it to them, it merely illustrates the shallowness of this type of charity."

Cleveland AFL Supports Chicago Printers Strike

CLEVELAND—The Federation of Labor has put the full support of its 125,000 members behind the strike of the International Typographical Union (AFL) against six Chicago daily newspapers. It acted after hearing a speech by Joseph R. Rhodes, a representative of the striking local, who accused the publishers of making Chicago the battle-ground of division and distortion of the closed shop.

Machinists' Lodge 68 Sweeps Out Red-baiters, Elects Rank-and-Filers

SAN FRANCISCO—A democratic landslide has swept the first full and free election for all offices held in Machinists Lodge 68 here since the Grand Lodge of the Machinists Association put it into receivership. A red-baiting ticket placed in the field by the Grand Lodge and spearheaded by Barney Dreyfus, former business agent and member of the AFL's Organizational and Strategy group, was soundly defeated. Not one of their hand-picked candidates was elected to office. Dreyfus himself, who issued the only campaign literature, garnered only 31 votes out of a total of 1,400 cast. His platform consisted of a written program of a non-partisan ticket featuring wild red-baiting and a completely reorganization program for the lodge.

The price of an average house in Los Angeles is 2014 per cent more today than during the 1935-39 period.

S. F. Printers Win New Pay Rates

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—By ratifying the Taft-Hartley law, the International Typographical Union (AFL) reached a wage agreement, without a contract with the Employing Printers Association, which represents commercial printers here.

The new agreement gives 750 workers a wage increase from $40 to $45 per week, and from $55 to $55.50 for night work.

It was agreed that the "status quo" including the closed shop clause in the contract expiring December 31 would continue "during negotiations." Officially negotiations will continue indefinitely. Either side can terminate them on 60 days notice but not before next November.

BLS Report Shows New Price Jump

WASHINGTON (AP)—Retail prices for moderate income families in 16 cities surveyed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics rose another 1 per cent between mid-October and mid-November, BLS said December 26 in a preliminary report.

Posting the highest point on record the retail price index on November 15, 1947, stood 27 per cent above the base used for the index, 1935-39, the month before the start of the war in Europe. The new mark is 24 per cent over what it was in June, 1946, last month of all round federal price control, and 8 per cent over what it was one year ago. BLS said prices rose in the regular "big six" price areas for all major groups of consumer items.

The World's Workers

And United States Foreign Policy

(Editor's Note: Information of what workers in other lands do and their rights under the United States and also of what workers of other lands think about the United States and its policies The Dispatch has been drawn from official news, newspapers of the other lands and the United States, of the War Department, the Department of Commerce, and the United States as a whole.

"Marshall Plan Is A Phoney"

"The Marshall plan has been clearly exposed as an attempt by the United States to secure control of Europe. Its chief purpose is to bring about a more unified European power and to utilize a part of a foreign power, as the only means of saving the profits system from workers' control."

The largest of the European countries wishing to participate must put all their cards on the table, say what they intend to produce and in what quantities, calculate their needs for help, and make all their decisions with the United States. The plan is a tool of the United States capitalists. It will have the effect of tying those countries permanently to American hegemony.

INNOCENTS ABOUND

"It is obvious that such knowledge is urgently desired by America for some sinister purpose, whether the United States, for its purposes, wishes to, 'open the eyes of the nations,' or 'to break the chains of false prejudice.'"

"Greece has already gone the way Britain and France will go— as a vassal State of the Almighty Dollar."

"Israel has fallen under the sway of the absolute puppets, the agents in the Labour movement, who are willing to sell out their people to foreign control."

"Why Germany?"

"The storm of abuse which has greeted the attitude of the Eastern European States is sufficient indication that they have evaded a real solution of their problems.

"From both America and Britain, furious angry statements have been made against the refusal to participate in such immediate lengths that even war was threatened.

"If the plan has not sinister purpose, this attitude is a strange one. Insulin, is not the German people. Their people have already been forced to say, 'That's good, there's all the more for us.'"

"What could the people of America do?"

"And the Americans, instead of uttering threats of war, might have a chance to demonstrate that justice is blind. Perhaps if we have the same sort of influence on our own people that they have on theirs, we might have some hope of gaining their confidence."

"What would have been the reactions—If the American 'plan' had been on the level."

"MONEY Power Dictates"

"The drive of Wall Street to secure world economic domination continues apace and is publicly proclaimed by the Yellow Press as a disinterested attempt by American capitalists to relieve distress in their own country. It is another step in the string of the United States sovereignty over these 16 sovereign countries which agreed to participate in the plan."

"The States is a simple fact can be read and discussed their needs, it was decided that the United States should be asked to make available $4,500,000,000 worth of aid. This request has now been rejected by the United States and the Weis have told the countries concerned that they did not want a shopping list, they wanted a plan, and a plea. That the United States Chairman, a British representative, was to stop the country and prideful British, is reported to have raised the issue of aid to the United Nations, and this represented a severe blow to the American representatives. Furthermore, it is reported that there was evidence of a desire among all the countries to reject the approach of the United States in this matter."

"It would appear, however, that Wall Street had another aim in its sights when the United States Minister Brein then intervened and instructed Frank, "the proud British,' to accept six of the conditions that Clayton brought out, and these six are now referred to in Paris as the Six Commandments. They are as follows:"

"Negotiate, by Government action, that the production program outlined by the 16 European countries in conference would be imposed."

"Binding assurances, by Government action, that the United Nations agreement and monetary stability will be maintained."

"Deed of creditors, to be asked for from the United States, any loans obtained from the World Bank."

"In the United States to check applications of individual nations for aid under the Marshall Plan."

"Recognize common responsibility for attainment of their reconstruction."

"So we have another insight into the dangerous diplomacy of the United States. The emissaries of Wall Street, whilst praising the "democratic" right of every country to exercise its own sovereignty and independence, still pursues the policy of the money power. The United States, by the Marshall Plan, is playing a part in the United Nations. Senator Congressman, W. J. Bryan, in his book "The Money Power," says: 'All the United States is doing is to disguise its policy in the book of its law. Capitalism and communism, it enforces its wills, while it impoverishes the victims.'"
Docks & Terminals

ILWU Turns Over Local 46a to UPW

VENDREY, Calif.—ILWU Local 46a office workers at the Pacific Naval Air Base here transferred, under a new contract, to public workers Local 771-F effective January 1.

Some half a dozen members will transfer. Local 46a had more than a thousand workers under agreement with PNAB contractors during the war when PNAB activity was at its height. Following the V-J Day they were shifted from contractors' payroll to the union payroll and came under the ILWU.

UPW International Representative Harry West, in an interview, hopes to see the ILWU that the UPW could help the office workers settle in peace and increase the membership.

Kawano Tells Of Long Way Still to Go

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah—The Pacific Citizen, Japanese-American newspaper published here, contains an interview in its December 27 issue with Jack Kawano, leader of Hawaii longshoremen in ILWU Local 138, outlining his career and explaining his rise to leadership in the CIO.

"The views of Kawano Nakazawa, who is the present leader of the CIO Longshoremen's Local 138, are revealing of the long way to be traveled before the longshoremen in Hawaii are able to organize under the leadership of the CIO. His career is not only a reflection of the CIO's progress in Hawaii, but also of the CIO's progress in the United States as an organization. He was one of the five delegates elected by the ILWU members in Hawaii to the Boston CIO meeting last year."

After three years in office, Mr. Kawano said, "I feel I have made progress, but there is still a long way to go."

"We have made some progress in getting agreements, but the work is far from over. We have had some difficulties with the employers, but we have overcome them."

Miller Slaps WEA On Hiring List

SAN FRANCISCO—Impartial Chairman Miller, in an upholding of a recent decision of the CIO, has ordered the hiring list of 'recently discharged war workers' to be made available to WEA. The decision was made Jan. 5.

"The hiring list is a valuable tool in the recruitment of qualified workers," said Chairman Miller. "It is the responsibility of WEA to ensure that all qualified workers are given an equal opportunity to be considered for employment."

"We must be fair and impartial in the selection of workers, and we must ensure that all workers, regardless of their race or background, have an equal chance to be considered for employment."

ILWU Fish Processors Ask Increase

JUNEAL, Alaska.—The ILWU marine warehousemen have started negotiations here January 7 for their first industry-wide contract in the cold storage industry.

They are asking $1.30 per hour minimum wage for all fish, raw and preserved, workers, including machine operators, retailers, salesmen, and others. The workers receive $1.34 hourly wage, see, except for salaried workers who receive $1.50 per hour.

The demand for fish movers is $2.75 per month plus any overtime paid. The demands are still working under individual contracts.

Dockers Get New First Aid Course

SANDOFRAC.—The Accident Prevention Bureau of the Waterfront Employers Association and the ILWU agreed January 2 to offer a first aid course for longshoremen to be given in Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle, and San Francisco.

The course will be conducted in five one-week sessions, the dockers' own time, but with the Bureau providing instructors and training equipment.

If the course will be given in other ports, ILWU Marine Workers Society, Ketchikan, Alaska—ILWU Marine Warehousemen have started plans to hire an additional productivity increase in the last 60 minutes of the last work week.

"We have made progress, but there is still a long way to go."

NAACP Tests New Orleans Picket Restraint Order

NEW ORLEANS.—If the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People loses its injunction against the city administration, the business section of New Orleans will be almost certain of the largest anti-discrimination movement in the history of the city.

A suit for an injunction to prevent interference with picketing was filed by the NAACP against Mayor Roos and 85 business firms in the city.

Yesterday afternoon, a judge granted a temporary restraining order, preventing the picketing.

Jackie Robinson, a former major league baseball player, said that the organizing drive was "the most important thing that has happened in New Orleans in the last 60 years." He added, "This is the beginning of a new era."
Bosses Use T-H Act To Exploit Minorities

SAN FRANCISCO — The employers found one twist in the use of the Taft-Hartley Act to unionize. They choose a minority group with a crucial unemployment problem, and then proceeded to bring court action against the union they want Studied: the Northwest, which the employers can then lower wages and conditions of all workers regardless of race or color.

In an interview with The Dispatch, Dr. Carl B. Goodlett, President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, told how the plan was tried and failed during the municipal election. He warned that if in the next three or four months illoy white unions are brought to the Negro neighborhoods, the Negroes are letting themselves in for, the Negroes are letting themselves in for, the Negroes are letting themselves in for as big a problem as they have had with the employers. loans, with the employers. loans, with the employers.

UNIONS MUST ACT

We are opposed to the Taft-Hartley Act in principle," Goodlett put it, "but we expect the unions to take tangible action to show that they are fighting for their strength on a policy of no discrimination.

At the same time last year a downtown employer asked the NAACP to help him organize Negroes for machine shop jobs. Some 25 percent of the 62,000 Negroes in San Francisco are unemployed. The NAACP, refusing to act, its leaders studying the plan to break up the Negroes into groups, the state legislature was split between those who wanted a federal civil rights law and those who wanted to fight the plan of the NAACP.

PLACE IS WITH LABOR

"Dr. Goodlett," asked the Negroes who knew their place is with labor. That the Negroes who knew their place is with labor. That the Negroes who knew their place is with labor.

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WAGE INCREASE

WASHINGTON (AP) — Under President Truman's loyalty order, a police agency, the FBI, has sole and exclusive authority to render judgment of government employees. President Bohns, the United Press Wire Service, said the FBI was acting under the powers of the new administration.

Bingham Grants Wage Increase

CLEVELAND, O. — Adjustments amounting to 2 cents per hour have been granted by bank workers at Bingham Co., a division of the Cleveland Union. The increase covers approximately 80 members and was announced December 18.

Local 6 Maintenance Workers Win Pay Hikes

OAKLAND, CAlif. — Job surveys of maintenance men in East Bay ILWU Local 6 plants won pay raises of 2 cents per hour at the San Francisco Sulphur Company and 18 cents at the Emeryville Chemical Company.

New Sugar Pacts Bring Pay Hikes

CROCKETT, Calif. — Sweaters and trousers at C&I Sugar Refinery Inc. as well as at Western Sugar in San Francisco won an 8 cents per hour raise, January 1, 1946, a contract signed by ILWU Local 7.

The raise brings the straight-time rate to $1.42 an hour effective January 1.

Two weeks vacation after two years' work also applied retroactively. Contract is included in the agreement, which runs to June 15, 1948.

MCS Leader O'Connor Dies

WILMINGTON, Calif. — Joe O'Connor, 67, long-time labor leader here and port agent for the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards, died here December 31. He had been ill for several years.

He was 58 years old, a native of Dubuque, Iowa, and a member of MCS since 1923. He was port agent in the 1934 and 1935 strikes. He served as grand marshal of the last San Francisco Labor Day parade and was active in the projected Independent Progressive Party of California.
NMU's Smith Urges Members Act On ILWU-NMU Merger Proposal Now

NEW YORK—In his regular column in The Pilot, Ferdinand Smith, secretary of the National Maritime Union, this week, prints in full a letter from ILWU President Harry Bridges proposing immediate merger of the ILWU and NMU.

Bridges's letter, sent last December 5th, is in accord with actions taken by the two national unions in the ILWU and with recent action of the ILWU national executive board. In the letter, Bridges quotes from Secretary Smith the following:

"-pot roast, eggs, butter-I'd say a hundred bucks will be about right"

Portland Local Elects Officers

PORTLAND, Ore.—New officers were chosen late in December, 1947, by ILWU shipyards and waterfronts' Local 40. R. J. Wolf won unopposed for president. Hazen Johnson is the new vice-president and Harry Riehle secre-
tary and business agent. Leo Johnson, who had been elected to the national council, may be considered elected by the council to run for the position. The new officers took office at the meetings of the local and:.

Lawrence Defies Democratic Party Purge of Wallace Supporters

300 ANGELES.—Democratic County Committee of Los Angeles Assembly District, William L. Lawrence, County Chairman Rollin McConnell on January 2, that he intends to campaign for Henry Wallace.

Lawrence, who is also regional director of the Congress of Southern California, said his message to the NMU was in response to a ultimatum from the County Chairman to support President Truman or get out of the Democratic Party.

The ILWU leader said that the NMU had no authority to purge the Democratic Party ranks because he refuses to support Truman.

"First of all, Rollin, you don't appoint members of the Democratic Party. We are elected by the Democratic voters to serve in office and we do not have to resign because we do not get along." The ILWU leader further ad-

Wallace Groundswell Grows, Common People and Labor Ranks Voice Support

(Continued from First Page)

pledge full support to your cam-

paign.

First among the maritime union leaders to congratulate Wallace was President Harry Bridges of the ILWU, in a state-

ment made the day after Wallace announced his decision to the people in a national broadcast on Mutual Net-

work. Bridges hailed what he said would be a return of the Roose-

velt political tradition in American politics.

LAWRENCE—Wallace's announcement that he was a candidate has gotten widespread support from labor leaders throughout the country. Business executives who are affiliated with the Republican party have pledged support for Wallace as a candidate for the presidential election.

In the West, ILWU President Bridges hailed the move as a “genuine party of opposition,” and welcomed the opportunity to discuss domestic and foreign policies with Wallace.

Political observers in the West believe that Wallace's decision to run will have a significant impact on the upcoming midterm elections and the Democratic party's attempt to hold on to power. They believe that Wallace's campaign could draw votes away from other Democratic candidates, particularly those running in swing districts.

In other parts of the country, particularly in the Midwest and South, there is widespread support for Wallace. Many labor leaders have pledged their support to Wallace, and there are reports of mass meetings calling for his candidacy.

It remains to be seen how successful Wallace's campaign will be, but his decision to run has already sparked significant interest and support from common people and labor leaders across the country.