chants, their incense, their genuflections. It was, of course, not an atheistic movement; on the contrary, it recognized the presence of a divine force. It was, and is, a movement to establish a rational view of life, especially in its relation to the unknown. One reason why it did not grow faster, I suppose, was that it lacked warmth, and perhaps emotion, in its Sunday devotional services. Yet there have been times when I have sat in Felix Adler's audience and been more deeply stirred by him than by any other preacher that I ever listened to.

It was a source of deep regret to me that I had to break my ties with the Ethical Culture Society when the war came and it refused to take any position on that greatest tragedy of mankind. It was explained to me by some of the members that to do so would disrupt the society. I objected that that was the very argument made by all the churches, which were turning their backs upon the Prince of Peace and amending a certain Commandment to read: "Thou Shalt Kill." My objection met with few approvals. In the face of the greatest ethical disaster of modern times, the Ethical Culture Society remained silent. I thought it ought to speak out, and if necessary perish, in protest at the crucifixion of mankind. Had its leaders spoken out, I believe that the movement would be far, far stronger today than it is, just as I think that the Quakers, weak in numbers as they are, are stronger because of their policy during the war than they would otherwise have been. I would have had Felix Adler and his fellow-leaders imitate Wendell Phillips in his demand that if he died before emancipation of the American Negro it should be recorded on his tombstone that he refused to remain loyal to a church that was silent in the presence of a nation's sin, and that he was "recreant to a country which was a magnificent conspiracy against justice." But my feeling on this matter never for a moment affected my tremendous admiration for Felix Adler. Nor does it prevent me now from stating my honest belief that few men have made such contributions to the ethical welfare of the United States as did he; few men have more generously and completely served their adopted country.

And still there are multitudes among us who would put up the bars against any future Morris Hillquits and Felix Adlers. They forget that the greatest leader of mankind was a Jew who was born in a stable. I never hear people saying that we ought to shut out these ignorant, ill-bred South Europeans and Jews, and cling to the Nordic stock, without my gorge rising. I hate the ingratitude of it; I abhor the selfishness of it; I despise the folly of it, its readiness to shut the door on men and women seeking liberty and our way of life, among whom are to be found again and again individuals of purest gold whose contributions to our American life are priceless. My father, too, was an immigrant, but I hope that if he had been a native-born American I should still have sufficient justice to give every man his due, and to recognize such high idealism, such unselfish efforts for the betterment of their times, as distinguished Morris Hillquit and Felix Adler, and will, beyond all question, distinguish many others of their race in the years to come. That fine-hearted English Tory, Ormsby-Gore, told the Hitlerites to their faces in Geneva the other day that where Jews were decently treated they became the most loyal and patriotic of citizens. I know that he was right. Now as never before I think it is incumbent upon us who have no Jewish blood in our veins, and who know what the facts are, to bear our testimony.

Oswald Garrison Villard

LaGuardia Versus McKee

By PAUL BLANSHARD

NOT since Henry George ran for Mayor of New York in 1886 has any municipal election assumed such national importance as the present fight between LaGuardia and McKee in New York. When Fiorello H. LaGuardia was nominated for Mayor last August by a motley coalition, including the City Party and the Republican Party, most of the wise political prophets predicted his defeat by the all-powerful Tammany machine. Then, as the weeks went on, and successive tax programs of the O'Brien administration met with overwhelming public opposition, it became evident that New York was facing political upheaval.

Early in September it appeared that fusion had a chance to win. Late in September, with the defeat in the Democratic primaries of McCooey's choice for Controller by the opposition Tammany leader Frank J. Prial, it became evident that Tammany faced not a revolt but a whirlwind. Now, as I write these lines three weeks before election, all signs point to the worst defeat for O'Brien that any organization mayor has ever suffered. He is running a bad third in every newspaper, magazine, and theater straw vote. Like Taft in 1912, who carried only Vermont and Utah for reelection, O'Brien seems destined to be the worst-defeated incumbent his office has ever had.

The race is between McKee and LaGuardia, with the odds now favoring LaGuardia because of the enormous registration of voters, 2,322,000, only 16,000 fewer than the high-water mark of last year's Presidential election. If only 1,500,000 voters had registered, the task of the fusion nominee would have seemed hopeless. The silent vote is for the most part a non-Tammany vote. For many years Tammany has triumphed in New York elections largely because only half the people of New York take the trouble to vote at an ordinary city election. With 3,250,000 eligible voters in the city, fewer than 1,500,000 took the trouble to vote at the last election for aldermen in 1931. O'Brien was elected Mayor in 1932 for one year by only 28 per cent of the city's potential voters.

When, late in September, the approaching Tammany doom became apparent, Jim Farley, President Roosevelt's astute political manager, and Edward J. Flynn, for many years political boss of the Bronx, suddenly realized that they had the opportunity of a lifetime to gain control of the New

York City Democratic machine. As far as party enrolment is concerned, New York is overwhelmingly a Democratic city. Farley and Flynn reasoned that this fact, plus the personal popularity of Joseph V. McKee during his brief term as Acting Mayor in 1932, would give them a chance to defeat LaGuardia in November. They reasoned also that many conservative elements in the city, including reactionary Republicans who had followed the defeated Republican boss Sam Koenig, were distrustful of LaGuardia's progressivism. After days of argument, hesitation, and doubt they finally persuaded McKee to launch his candidacy on September 29. The entrance of McKee into the fight was so astounding that for the time being all political camps were thrown into complete confusion. The prestige of the President was so great that the meaning of the Farley-Flynn maneuver did not at first become apparent. Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers saw in McKee, and still see in him, simply a clean man of the Roosevelt stripe, attempting to give the city a new deal in the Roosevelt manner.

One reason for the popularity of this conception of the man was the *World-Telegram's* effective campaign in his favor in 1932, when it persuaded a large number of citizens to write in his name on the ballot. The *World-Telegram* then overrated McKee as valiantly as it is now debunking him. The conception of McKee as a good man is partly due also to his personal appearance, his dignity, and his splendid radio personality. He is quiet and scholarly in his method of address; he is garbed pleasingly and correctly; his collars and neckties fit well; his face is always pink and well shaven; he is an Irish Catholic; no scandals have been printed concerning his private life. These are no mean qualifications for success in New York City politics. In fact, the form and manner of political campaigning are often more important than the substance. LaGuardia has none of McKee's smoothness. His radio voice is not good. He is immensely forceful but not polished. Although a native of New York, he comes from Italian stock, and there is still great prejudice in New York against Italian leadership.

But when one looks behind these superficial qualities the contrast in the records of the two men is amazing, especially so when one considers that many New Yorkers are balancing them as almost equal in reforming zeal. McKee has always been a machine politician; he served for years in the New York State Assembly without any signs of rebellion and sat for seven years at the right hand of Jimmie Walker on New York's Board of Estimate without once attacking the corruption that surrounded him. Not until he had been denied the regular Democratic nomination for Mayor in 1932 did he show any signs of breaking with his Tammany connections. After all the revelations of the Seabury inquiry he declared on September 12, 1932, while serving as Acting Mayor, "I am an organization Democrat, always have been, and always will be."

I do not say here that the record of McKee can be used as the basis of any certain prophecy concerning his future conduct. He is a shrewd and an ambitious man. If he is elected Mayor of New York it is possible that his character will definitely change for the better. In the past his reticence in the presence of corruption has been based upon personal ambition and the fear that any other course might mean political doom. That same personal ambition and astuteness might lead him as Mayor of New York to give the city a sound and progressive administration, because the line of promotion of a Mayor of New York is away from machine politics toward the governorship and the Presidency. And it still pays for a man to be good in the *upper* reaches of American politics.

If Joseph V. McKee is elected Mayor of New York, however, and becomes a courageous progressive, he must overcome one of the worst coteries of political gangsters in American politics, the district leaders of the McCooey, Flynn, and Curry machine, who have recently climbed upon his bandwagon in the desperate effort to save their jobs. Space will not permit me here to call the roll of these various leaders who are now supporting McKee. They include former License Commissioner James F. Geraghty, whose department was found to be a "hotbed of petty graft" by the Meyer Legislative Investigating Committee. They include the notorious James W. Brown, Bronx political leader and godfather of former Magistrate Silbermann, who admitted on the witness stand before Judge Seabury that district leaders considered it their "civic duty" to intercede with magistrates in cases pending before them, and who remarked, "That is the way we make Democrats." They include "Hymie" Schorenstein, register of Kings County, who claims that he can read and write. They include, besides a host of others, Kenneth F. Sutherland, boss of the Sixteenth District of Brooklyn, who for many years drew $10,000 as McKee's assistant in the office of the president of the Board of Aldermen. In fact, nothing could possibly have occurred in the course of the campaign that would more clearly reveal the nature of the forces supporting McKee than the desertion to his standard of many of Tammany's worst district leaders. The Seabury inquiry made clear that the fundamental force in New York's corruption is the district-leader system, a system whereby the political leaders in each assembly district fix judges, choose court clerks, and issue orders to the Mayor. The fact that these same leaders, after years of association with Joseph V. McKee in the same political party, have now decided to support him is the best imaginable proof of his past character and future weakness.

LaGuardia, on the fusion side, has very few embarrassments. In minor places on his ticket are many commonplace Republicans, but LaGuardia is burdened with no political boss. The defeat of Sam Koenig and the desertion to McKee of the most reactionary financial interests have left LaGuardia free to be himself. The guiding spirit of his campaign is Samuel Seabury, whose integrity is unquestioned, and whose fearlessness is so extreme that at times it becomes very bad politics. If McKee is elected, his office will swarm with Flynn henchmen, and Flynn will doubtless succeed Curry as the political boss of New York. If LaGuardia is elected, it is equally obvious that he will not owe allegiance to any political overlord. His difficulty will not be subservience to a political boss but the unification of the many diverse elements that are now working for his success. Some Socialists are charging that he is a bankers' candidate because he has one running mate who is an officer in a financial institution, but the description is obviously nothing more than political oratory in view of the make-up of the fusion slate. It is a motley slate, as any slate would be when made up so hurriedly, but it is not a bankers' slate. Hearst, who is supporting McKee, is attacking LaGuardia on the other flank

by calling him "the little red flower of communism." Incidentally, the LaGuardia slate has more leading Democrats than Republicans. What is more important than any associations of LaGuardia's is the forthright manner in which he has spoken in this campaign, and the record of the man in thirty-two years of public life. He has never pulled his punches in Congress, and it seems to be as certain as anything can be in politics that if he is sent to the City Hall he will exercise the vast powers of the Mayor of New York with economic insight and political independence.

Let us test LaGuardia and his rival, McKee, by the two most important criteria: what is the record of the two men in public life, and what do the two men stand for in the present campaign? While McKee has played the role of a political regular all his life, LaGuardia has been a bold rebel leading the fight in Congress for almost every progressive measure advocated by the pioneers of American social reform. He was the author of the anti-injunction bill which abolished the yellow-dog contract; he fought for old-age pensions, national unemployment insurance, a federal employment bureau, the five-day week, and employers' liability laws. He has been a staunch enemy of the power monopolies and he fought for the public development of Muscle Shoals. No man in Congress worked harder than he did for unemployment relief or against child labor.

Apparently McKee's natural inclinations have been against these progressive measures of economic control that have been the central aims of LaGuardia's political life. Again and again at the Board of Estimate I have watched McKee's face during discussions about unemployment relief. I have heard his cold, parsimonious comments on the extremity of the unemployed. All through these last years of the great depression McKee has abetted the niggardly policy of Tammany in giving to the unemployed of New York City less than the amount necessary to sustain them decently. He has united with the Tammany politicians in keeping down relief to a figure approximately one-fourth of that which the welfare agencies themselves estimate is necessary to maintain a family at the decency level. His educational philosophy is equally reactionary. He complained before the Board of Estimate at a public hearing on school expenditures last year because public funds were being spent on children more than fourteen years of age.

At a hearing before the Board of Estimate on the tentative budget for 1933 McKee, after hearing pleas for the retention of continuation schools and adult education, said:

> Where is education going to stop? We are carrying on classes in stenography and the like for adults. We did it because we had the money at one time. Now that we propose to stop it, we are attacked. It is my belief that if pupils are more than fourteen years old we have gone too far beyond American ideals in education. We are pampering and softening boys and girls. It wasn't so many years ago that boys were working for a living when they were fourteen. Now we are educating boys of eighteen and over, and inclining their minds toward theories of government education far beyond what is necessary.

This conservative attitude of McKee on educational matters has been the occasion for the unwelcome intrusion of the religious issue into the campaign. Now that the issue has been raised it may as well be admitted that it plays an important part in the struggle. For several weeks it continued in the whispering stage. McKee, it was said, had attacked the Jews, and Tammany was printing two million copies of a statement of his for use among Jewish voters. The facts were not particularly secret, for the statement had been published with large headlines on the front page of the Brooklyn *Eagle* of November 19, 1932, and had been partially requoted in the *World-Telegram* of October 12 last. Finally, it was dragged into the headlines and on to the front pages of the papers of October 15. The original statement, more anti-Socialist than anti-Semite, was contained in an article on education by McKee in the *Catholic World* of May, 1915, written when he was a teacher at De Witt Clinton High School and a frequent contributor to Catholic journals. McKee wrote:

> Our city is the most cosmopolitan city in the world, with inhabitants of every race and creed. Of the 5,000,000 people, about 75 per cent are Christians, of whom Catholics constitute 76.5 per cent. The Jewish race constitutes a little over 1,000,000 or about 25 per cent. This is a ratio of three Christians to one Jew.
>
> Yet when we examine the enrolment of our city high schools, we find that less than 25 per cent are Christians—that more than 75 per cent are of Jewish stock. Although the Jewish people are in such a minority, their children possess an overwhelming majority in our high schools. . . .
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> After the election last November a composition entitled "Why I Like the Election" was given to five classes totaling about 150 boys. On examining the papers the writer found that over 90 per cent of these students rejoiced particularly in one thing, the election to Congress of the Socialist, Meyer London. These were pupils drawn from many classes of the school, and were representative of the whole student body.
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> The fact stated is merely an indication of their attitude on one of the vital economic questions of the day. In overwhelming numbers these students are Socialists, or Socialists in the making, whose gospel is contained in the New York *Call,* and whose ambition is the furtherance of socialistic dogma.
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> Whatever hold the teachings of Zionism had upon these people is lost when the children learn English. The obligations of the orthodox Judaism of their fathers and mothers prove irksome in the competition for material advancement, and are soon laid aside. The influence of religion, consequently, is a negligible factor in shaping their thoughts and actions.
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> In oral discussions on such topics as "Is Lying Justifiable?" or "Is It Wrong to Cheat?" their words consistently show that they recognize no code of morals, and are governed by no motives higher than those originating from fear of detection and consequent loss in money. Surely we cannot look for ideal results from such material.
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> It is to such as these that our children who are without the benefits of education must bow in later years. It would be denying that result follows cause to gainsay this, for training and education do give to the possessor advantages over his more poorly equipped fellow. We are giving them the sharper tools, the better instruments, and then are expecting our children to cope successfully with them. It must follow that in the years to come our handicapped boys will be forced to give way in competition for better positions and higher advancement in law, medicine, education, and business. It was only recently that a prominent authority on education remarked that "within twenty years these people will be in control of our public education."

Neither LaGuardia nor McKee, of course, will bring about a social revolution in New York City. Within the framework of our State and federal governments what could a good Mayor accomplish? He could not, even if he were a Socialist, with a Socialist Board of Estimate, go very far in the direction of public ownership without running afoul of the State constitution and the conservative legislature at Albany. New York does not have the power to build its own houses, operate its own buses, or own its own banks; and none of these powers can be obtained without the consent of Albany. In general, there are four important and permanent things that a progressive administration in New York City could accomplish. It could give the city a new charter with proportional representation and thoroughly reorganized departments; it could eliminate political job-holders and establish a genuine merit system throughout the whole government; it could launch a large municipal housing development with the help of the federal government, although even this might require the approval of Albany; it could unify New York City's transit system, with municipal ownership and operation and the maintenance of the five-cent fare. It is difficult to see how any city administration could go beyond these four things until a more progressive party captured the State and federal governments and released the city from some of the present restraining limitations upon its governmental powers. Public ownership of electric and gas companies, for example, is probably impossible in the next four years because of the city's recent agreement with the bankers to limit real-estate taxes, and because of the general unsalability of New York City's bonds.

On all of these practical issues the position of LaGuardia is absolutely clear, while the position of McKee is either hostile or doubtful. McKee is opposed to public housing and has even expressed great hostility to tax exemption for any kind of housing enterprise. When he opposed the recent Hillside housing development in the Bronx, which, incidentally, would have put many hundred people to work, he declared that there were no slums in the Bronx, his own borough, although it is notorious that the Bronx has some appalling sections. When he appeared before Judge Seabury, McKee spoke vaguely about minority representation, but he has never come out flat-footedly as LaGuardia has for the practice of proportional representation. If LaGuardia became Mayor and put into effect his charter plan, it would give the Socialist Party its first opportunity for revival in many years, since it could be represented on a municipal council in proportion to its total vote in each borough. McKee would strengthen and enlarge the borough presidents' offices, which now are centers of incompetence and local patronage; LaGuardia would continue the office of borough president, but would make each borough president a kind of acting mayor for executive work, with only very limited powers.

In the great unemployment relief crisis which afflicts New York, LaGuardia has come out for cash relief, more relief stations, the abolition of the "skip-feed" system of relief, and the payment of rent before evictions instead of afterwards. He favors the consolidation of the Home Relief Bureau, the Work Relief Bureau, and the City Free Employment Bureau. He has pledged himself to abolish all political favoritism in relief.

Both McKee and LaGuardia stand for the unification of subways and municipal ownership with the five-cent fare, but the record of McKee in regard to transit during his seven years as president of the Board of Aldermen raises a grave question as to his attitude toward traction companies. He not only voted for the notorious Equitable bus bill which was one of the main factors in bringing about the downfall of Jimmie Walker, but he did it as part of a larger deal in which a favorite Bronx bus company received a cut of the franchise pie. Walker supported McKee's favorite company in the Bronx, and McKee supported the Equitable Coach Company's franchise at Walker's request. Even after the Equitable Coach Company had been disclosed as an irresponsible and fly-by-night concern, McKee voted to continue its franchise in force.

This record of the man is immensely important in view of the transit crisis in New York. Within two years after taking office the new Mayor of the city will be compelled to recapture or purchase from the great transit companies the present subway and elevated lines, or lose the five-cent fare. The State law requires that within two years the new city-owned system must be self-supporting, and it is unthinkable that this new city system could adopt a ten-cent fare while the private lines operated on a five-cent fare. Quick and aggressive bargaining with the transit companies can save the five-cent fare, and these companies know that LaGuardia and his associates are men who cannot be fixed.

McKee is now making eloquent promises concerning municipal housecleaning, but it is not even clear that under Flynn's rule he would be able to eliminate those whose faithlessness is a matter of public record. One of McKee's last official acts as Acting Mayor was to restore to the city's pay roll his own chief examiner, Francis T. McEneny, whom Leonard Wallstein, in his investigation of the condemnation racket, had caught red-handed. Wallstein proved that McEneny had used McKee's office for getting inside information concerning schoolhouse land that the city was about to buy. When the scandal became public, McKee was forced to dismiss McEneny, but some mysterious power forced the reinstatement of McEneny even after the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court had declared in an official decision: "McEneny is shown to have deceived his superior, and therefore was removed from his position."

Several times in New York's history, when the tide of anger has risen against Tammany's misrule, adroit substitutes have been put forward who have given the city certain obvious and surface reforms, but who have left the Tammany district leaders secure in their favored positions. Gaynor, in spite of his bold public pronouncements, left most of the Tammany army in office, so that when he was dead Tammany came back with all its old arrogance. All signs now point to McKee as the new "good man" chosen to satisfy the public clamor for reform, but destined, if he should be elected, to shift only slightly the leadership and methods of the old machine.

From the long-range point of view the coming election in New York is important not only because the election of LaGuardia might bring new faith in the capacity of a city to use democracy intelligently, but because LaGuardia, with his social progressivism, could make out of New York a gigantic laboratory for civic reconstruction. Certainly his record indicates that his elevation to New York's City Hall might mean a genuine new deal for a long-suffering metropolis.