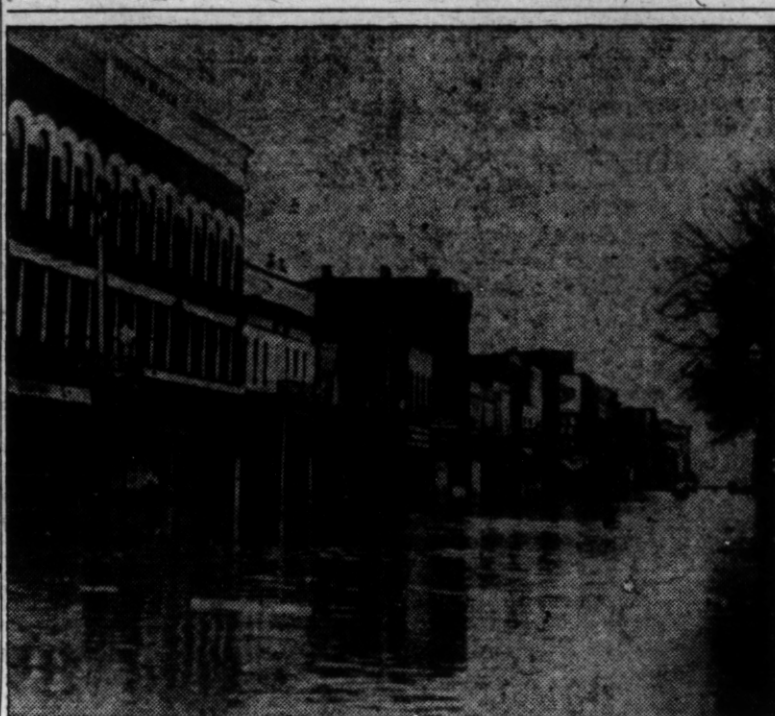


27 Million Go to Italy Polls; Popular Front Confident

By JOHN GATES Editor, Daily Worker
By Cable to the Daily Worker

ROME, April 18.—The people of Italy voted today in calm, peaceful atmosphere, except for minor incidents in scattered places. Voting will continue until 2 p.m. tomorrow. Final results should be known Wednesday. It is esti-



Marietta Flooded: The Ohio River, overflowing its banks along most of its entire length of 981 miles, covers most of the ground floors of buildings in the city of Marietta.

estimated 27 million Italians voted. Urns will be sealed and remain in the polling booths. Doors and windows will be sealed. A police detail will guard booths and committees of representatives of all parties will watch police. Voting is heavier in north Italy than in the south.

According to the election law here, voting is obligatory.

The only penalty for failure to vote, however, is the entering "did not vote" on one's good conduct certificate which might possibly be held against someone applying for civil service employment.

Women voted in large numbers where I visited. There are separate lists for men and women although both vote in same booth. The Communists organized a corps of girl baby sitters to stand guard while mothers went to the polls.

The Democratic Peoples Front has first place on ballot because they applied first. Because of this, the Christian Democratic Party applied last so they could have last place. So many parties are on the ballot that first and last places are the most advantageous.

Police and armed forces were very active during the day, rushing around in cars, motorcycles, trucks,

armored cars, sirens screaming, without visible effect, however, on the population.

I have spoken with leaders of the Popular Front and they report an important change in sentiment in favor of the Front has occurred in the last two weeks. The reasons, they say, are that people fear de Gasperi is drawing Italy into a new war; the disgust of many people with unprecedented interference of American government in their affairs, and use of religion by Vatican for political purposes.

I can confirm from my own observation that the de Gasperi government is very much on the defensive, while the People's Front has the initiative. The People's Front conducted a reasoned, serious, dignified campaign on basic issues, while Christian Democrats resorted to slander and vilification.

There was a red-baiting prediction by the State Department that reaction would win overwhelming victory because of Trieste. On the same day that a headline appeared in the Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune: "Italy Stunned by Soviet Note on Trieste," I investigated how stunned Italians really were.

NONE HEARD OF IT

I spoke to a dozen people on the street. No one had even heard of the Soviet note and didn't seem to care. I learned on further inquiry that the reactionary forces have not been able to organize a single demonstration in Rome on Trieste issues.

The only meeting on Trieste in Rome was organized by the Popular Front. The Front has taken away the issue from its adversaries.

I toured several working class areas on the outskirts of Rome today. In Primavalle I asked if many had received letters from America. Several said they had, advising them to vote Christian Democrat or run the risk of going to hell. They laughed at these letters.

Some have written back to their relatives urging them to vote for Wallace.

Inquiring around, I found the flood of letters from the U. S. had

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Arab Chiefs Try Red Scare As Fighting Rages in Zion

JERUSALEM, April 18.—With heavy fighting going on in the battle for Mishmar Haemek near the plains of Armageddon, Arabian military leaders launched a "red scare" to help them out. Spokesmen for the Arabian leaders said that "Russia is helping" the Jewish forces.

Gary Steel Local Elects Wallace Man As Delegate

Special to The Worker

GARY, April 18.—Inland Steel, Local 1010, United Steelworkers elected its Boston convention delegates and instructed them unanimously to oppose an increase in dues or reversal of the union's non-compliance policy on the Taft-Hartley Law.

The high man in the balloting for a delegation of 11 was John Sargent, president of the local and widely known as supporter of Henry Wallace. Sixteen hundred balloted

News of heavy fighting continues to arrive here from the battle zones. It was reported that 150 armed Jews halted an ammunition train between Tel Aviv and Haifa. They captured 20 tons of mortar ammunition and some arms.

King Abdullah of Transjordan promised to "eliminate Communism" from the Middle East, the United Press stated yesterday. The Arabian chiefs are working the "red scare" overtime since the United States delegation at the UN broke its pledge to back participation and a new Jewish state. UN developments are not attracting much attention here any longer. The Jewish population feels that all problems will have to be settled here.

United Press correspondent Eliav Simon, who made the hazardous Jerusalem-Tel Aviv journey in a Jewish convoy yesterday, reported

from that all-Jewish city that British mortars were fired on the Yeminite settlement of Tel Aviv. Shells fell in the field, but the settlement's inhabitants fled to nearby orange groves. No reason was given for the shelling.

David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Jewish Agency executive, reserved comment on the UN proposals for a truce. It was understood, however, that the agency's views had been sent to Moshe Shertok, head of the political section of the Agency at Lake Success.

NO TRUCE

There was no indication that Arabs or Jews would comply with the truce order. The usual reports of bombings, train attacks and other violence poured into Jerusalem's press communication center, which itself had a bomb scare.

27 Million Vote in Italy

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had some effect in Rome quarters, but it was overestimated in the U. S. and that they caused more resentment than anything else.

COMMUNIST PREDICTION

Predictions of Communist leaders are as follows: Eduardo D. Onofrio, whom I knew in Spain, and who heads the Rome district of the Party, told me the People's Front would get 35 percent in Abruzzo Province as against 29 percent in 1946; that Rome would register a 10-percent increase.

Massola of the Marches region, predicted a 10-percent increase there. Amendola of Mezzogiorno (the south) predicted his region would no longer be the dead weight at the foot of Italy but would greatly increase the Front vote. He said villages which gave 5 or 10 votes in 1946 to the Front would give hundreds this time.

Cinanni of Calabria foresaw an increase over the 40 percent received last election. Pessi of Liguria said the same. Bardini of Tuscany predicted an increase from 55 percent to 65 percent; Colonbi of Emilia, from 66 percent to 70 percent. Marie Bontagnana of Piedmont predicted an absolute majority there.

Rome showed an interesting trend in the past three elections. The people's bloc received 181,868 in June, 1946; 189,174 in November, 1946, and 208,566 in October, 1947. Christian Democrats got 215,510, 103,387, 204,247 respectively in the same elections.

SEES INCREASE TO 42-48%

All evidence points to advance of Popular Front from 39.7 percent of the vote received in 1946 to at least 42 to 48 percent of the vote now.

Central issue now is will De Gasperi respect the election results or will he try, backed by the U. S. War and State Departments, to annul election by force and violence.

Latest maneuvers and statements by government spokesman are alarming. Yesterday, Scelba, Minister of Interior, stated that if there are any incidents he might suspend the elections. This was immediately challenged as illegal by Togliatti.

De Gasperi said in an article in *Il Messaggero* that he would not resign. Latest decree bans all assemblages for Monday.