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11 November 1964

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MEMORANDUM

TO : SAC, NEW YORK
FROM : SAC, NEW YORK
SUBJECT: [illegible]



Two copies of the New York Times, dated 11/24/64, are being furnished to the New York Office for information. This information is being furnished to the New York Office for information. This information is being furnished to the New York Office for information.

Charles Pletti
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Letter to the New York Times
11/24/64

Enclosure 1 - New York Times
11/24/64



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Georgiana Hamilton Rogers
near



Miss Janet M. McCarty
its L. H. H.

SS JANET McCARTY PROSPECTIVE BRIDE

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Joseph McCarty of 1148 Fifth Avenue have announced the engagement of their daughter, Janet M., to Maj. John Philip Tichy, who served eighteen months in the Southwest Pacific in the Fifth Army Air Force.

GEORGIANA ROGERS FIANCEE OF OFFICER

Vassar Senior, Graduate of
Madeira, Engaged to Lieut.
R. H. Guthrie, Air Forces

Announcement has been made by Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Rogers Jr. of Brooklyn and Waccabuc, N. Y., of the engagement of their daughter, Georgiana Hamilton, to Lieut. Richard H. Guthrie, Army Air Forces, son of Maj. William F. Guthrie Jr., AUS, and Mrs. Guthrie of Denver, formerly of Kansas City, Mo.

Miss Rogers, a graduate of the Madeira School in Greenway, Va., is in the senior class at Vassar College. She was presented to society in 1941 at a dinner dance in the Trilium Room of the St. Regis. The prospective bride is a sister of Mrs. John B. Dunlop of Brooklyn and Capt. Charles E. Rogers 3d, USMC.

Lieutenant Guthrie attended Dartmouth College and also studied law at the University of Michigan before entering the service.

CHARITABLE AGENCIES SHARE IN HART ESTATE

Charitable institutions receive virtually all of the estate of Mrs. Emily C. Hart, widow of Edward A. Hart, who died Oct. 26 last, leaving a gross estate of \$805,734 and a net of \$556,791. A transfer tax proceeding in the case was approved yesterday by David K. Karp, appraiser for the metropolitan area.

After leaving legacies of \$25,000 each to Stony Wold Sanitarium at Lake Koshong, N. Y., and The Rosharian Order, San Jose, Calif., Mrs. Hart bequeathed \$20,000 to three individuals and directed that her residuary estate be shared equally by four institutions: American Association of the Blind, Seamen's Church Institute, Skin and Cancer Hospital, and the Seeing Eye Kennels of Morristown, N. J. These legacies were valued at \$121,400 each.

The New York Times One Hundred Neediest Cases Fund and the Federation for the Support of Jewish Philanthropic Societies share equally in the residuary estate of Melville J. Marx, valued at \$5,084. Mr. Marx died on May 1, leaving a gross estate of \$10,085 and a net of \$10,085.

PRINCESS AT SHOW

With Party of Norwegians
Sings 'Song of Norway'

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Advantages Are Seen in P. R.

Experience of Other Countries Cited as Proving Benefits of System

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Your editorial of Aug. 26 "To Make Democracy Strong" appears to accept the totally unproved theory, which has gained some credence in this country, that proportional representation was at least partly responsible for Mussolini and Hitler and tends in general to a multiplication of parties and a parliamentary ineptitude which paves the way for popular disgust and dictatorship.

That no such general charge can be fairly leveled at P. R. is demonstrated by the fact that Switzerland, Elve, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and Czechoslovakia have all used forms of P. R. for their national Parliaments for periods ranging from eighteen to forty years and still have it except for the temporary interruption of Nazi occupation in some of them. These are all among the most successful democracies in the world.

France, which is usually cited as the prize example of bloc government, never had P. R. and was in the process of adopting it when the Nazis walked in. The Chamber of Deputies had accepted it, but the Senate had not yet acted.

Democracy Not Weakened

If you compare the success and stability of government in Ireland and Sweden, for example, both of which now have one party in an absolute majority under P. R. and get along very well even when there is no such majority, with the difficulties of government in France and Spain without P. R., it is clear that P. R. cannot be charged with any general tendency to make democracy weak.

But let us not avoid the worst examples. Italy and Germany did have forms of P. R. before their dictators took over. You say that P. R. in Italy and Germany "shattered the electorate and the legislature into a multitude of parties and factions of bitter extremists who would have had no real chance of getting into power under the majority-voting system and the two-party system." Is this charge justified by the facts?

Neither Italy nor Germany ever had the two-party system, though both had the majority-voting system for a considerable period before P. R. came in. Both had a multiplicity of parties before P. R. and P. R. did not materially

either device can bring them down to two. Under the plurality system, with several parties contesting, the normal result will be for a majority in each district to fail to elect the persons they wanted. Furthermore, the total result will be an obvious distortion of electoral justice, with some one or two parties getting far more than their share and others being unfairly shut out. It was just such a situation which led to the civil war in Spain.

Switzerland's Case

When the Italian-speaking Canton of Ticino in Switzerland was torn by civil strife after an unfair election result in 1889, proportional representation was introduced as the remedy at the suggestion of the Federal Government. The Canton was pacified and F. R. gradually spread to the other Cantons and then to the Federal Government itself. Would it not be better to give the new Italian democracy the benefit of a fair system to start with, rather than subject it to the quite unnecessary strains of electoral injustice?

A democratic Government is as strong as its popular support. A Government in which a majority of the people are not represented by deputies of their own choosing, a Government which is regarded as a caricature of real popular desires, is bound to be weak, no matter how controlling a majority it may have in the legislature. On the other hand, a Government based on a legislature in which nearly everyone feels he is fairly represented is essentially strong, even if no one party is in a position to lay down the law to the rest.

The Rev. Canon Luce, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin, summed up the effect of P. R. in Ireland in these words:

"P. R. has been a healing force in our midst. Old political feuds are dying; public spirit is replacing faction. Our elections are well conducted. The voice of reason is heard, and the gun is silent. P. R. deserves much of the credit; for P. R. produces contented and loyal minorities, whereas the other system breeds muzzled, sullen, discontented minorities, predisposed to doctrines of violence. P. R. has been a unifying force, and unity is strength."

GEORGE H. HALLETT Jr.,
Secretary, Citizens Union.
New York, Aug. 25, 1944.

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Neither Italy nor Germany ever had the two-party system, though both had the majority-voting system for a considerable period before P. R. came in. Both had a multiplicity of parties before P. R. and P. R. did not materially affect the number of parties with substantial representation. To the extent that the many-party situation was responsible for their difficulties, it was not chargeable to P. R. P. R. merely gave the many parties equitable instead of distorted representation.

But other countries with many parties—Switzerland, the Netherlands and Denmark, for example—have fared very well in their democratic governments. It was not even the many-party system which caused the failure in Italy and Germany.

Absolved in Italy

Italy had P. R. in effect for only two years, and most of the damage had been done before its arrival. The Italian Socialist party, disgusted with the political intrigues long experienced under the majority system, voted in 1919 against the advice of its own leaders to turn its back on parliamentary institutions and prepare for a proletarian revolution. The Socialist party was an important party in Italy, not created by P. R. This decision on its part prevented its elected representatives from taking their natural share of responsibility for providing Italy with a government and at the same time gave ammunition to Mussolini in arousing the people against the expected Socialist revolt.

In 1922, the year of the march on Rome, a majority of the Socialist Deputies declared themselves ready, despite their instructions, to support a new Cabinet to restore public peace, but it was then too late. Professor Salvemini, in his history of the Fascist dictatorship, says: "Had the Socialists taken their decision in July, 1921 (one year earlier), they would probably have saved their country from the evils of military Fascist anarchy and free institutions from destruction."

In Germany there is evidence that even the defective form of P. R. there used saved the republic from overthrow by monarchist parties on more than one occasion before the rise of the Nazis and probably delayed the advent of Hitler by two elections by giving full

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In Germany there is evidence that even the defective form of P. R. there used saved the republic from overthrow by monarchist parties on more than one occasion before the rise of the Nazis and probably delayed the advent of Hitler by two elections by giving full representation to the smaller moderate parties of the center. No one who has noticed the Communist representation in France or the recent Socialist victory in Saskatchewan, for instance, can logically contend that the majority system would have kept the Nazi party from developing. Once it became the largest party, there is every reason to believe that the majority system would have exaggerated its representation.

Hitler's Strong-Arm Methods

Hitler never did win a majority under P. R. and got control of the Reichstag only by throwing out the Communist Deputies with the aid of the more moderate Nationalists. Having thus achieved a fictitious majority, he proceeded to throw out everybody else, including the Nationalists. This is a striking illustration of the little-understood truth that the representation of all substantial minorities, even the most unpopular, is essential to majority rule. The Communists could not hope to impose communism by their minority votes, but they were an essential part of the majority against Nazi dictatorship.

Returning to Italy, the main subject of your editorial: Just think what trouble there will be if the new Italy does not use some form of proportional representation. There are several large parties there, and no electoral system or

August 20, 1943

Hon. A. A. Berle
State Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Berle:

The fact that Charlie Poletti, who sponsored our proposals for P. R. for the state legislature in the New York Constitutional Convention of 1938, is now in Sicily suggested to me that it would be an excellent idea to elect by P. R. an Italian constituent assembly to draw up a constitution for a democratic Italy and to govern the country, within any limits which may have to be imposed by the army of occupation, until the new constitution is adopted and put into effect.

The last free election that was held in Italy before the advent of Mussolini was held by a list system of P. R. and I know that some of the Italian democratic leaders are strongly in favor of the principle. While the first use of P. R. in Italy only two years before the Fascist march on Rome was not sufficient in itself to save the situation, it did, I understand, bring some improvement in the chaotic parliamentary condition which preceded it and undoubtedly gave a much fairer representation of the Italian people than they had ever been able to get before.

The list system of P. R., which was used in Italy and quite a number of the other countries of Europe before the totalitarian tide swept over them and which is still used in Sweden, Finland and Switzerland, is not so good in some important respects as the single transferable vote plan of P. R. which is used in New York, Cincinnati and other American cities and throughout southern Ireland. This latter plan has been used for some years, with strikingly successful results, in the island of Malta, which as you know has a large Italian population. It was introduced for the elective members of the Maltese parliament by an act of the British parliament and was worked out in such a way that it was used successfully even by illiterates. With this experience as a precedent I should hope that the better plan could be used for the Italian constituent assembly instead of the partly defective plan introduced just before the advent of Mussolini.

At the close of the last war the new state of Austria was set up with a constituent assembly elected by P. R., which functioned very successfully with a cabinet also chosen on the proportional principle so as to contain the leaders of the various parties in the assembly. It was not expected, of course, that this steering

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committee of the assembly would be unanimous in its recommendations and no crisis was precipitated when there were minority as well as majority recommendations, just as there often are in our Congressional committees. The idea of a representative parliamentary leadership was not continued after the constituent assembly finished its work, but subsequent events in Austria indicated that possibly the country might have fared better if it had continued the plan.

If the idea of a proportional representation constituent assembly for Italy should be accepted, I should be extremely interested in helping to set up the machinery to put it into effect. Another man who would be at least as competent to do so and who has witnessed P. R. elections in Malta is my friend Mr. John H. Humphreys, secretary of the British Proportional Representation Society, 32 Victoria Street, Westminster S. W. 1, London. George H. McCaffrey, former research director of the New York Merchants Association and one of the best informed people on P. R., is somewhere abroad now in the military government force and could also be very helpful.

I should be glad to come to Washington at any time to discuss this matter with you further.

With best personal wishes, I am

Cordially,

George Hallett

GHH:md

4700

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

Aug. 25, 1943

In reply refer to
A-B

My dear Mr. Hallett:

I have read with interest your letter on the subject of
P. R. for Italy.

My first reaction is that this is a subject which must be approached very carefully. Experience appears to indicate that democracy functions best where there is an effective two party system. P. R. certainly is not a means to that end. It has proved its value in eradicating many of the evils of a one party system. It is my hope that the future national government of Italy will have a constitution that will create an effective two party system and therefore, if I were asked, I would not be inclined to favor a proportional representation constituent assembly unless I were convinced that it was impossible to establish a two party system and that P. R. was necessary in order to avoid the evils of a one party system, and I perceive no basis for any such conviction. Local government is another matter, and experience, at least in this country, seems to show a tendency towards domination by one part which may make P. R. the most practical instrument of democracy for local purposes.

I should be delighted to discuss the matter with you any time you may be here.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) A. A. Berle, Jr.
Acting Secretary

4103

Mr. George Hallett,
Citizens Union of the
City of New York,
41 Park Row,
New York, New York

August 27, 1943

Hon. Adolf A. Berle, Jr.
Department of State
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Berle:

I appreciate very much your prompt reply to my suggestion about the possible use of P. R. in Italy.

I think the chances of getting a two-party system in Italy, regardless of the method of election, are practically nil. Certainly France has never succeeded in approaching a two-party system although it has tried about every system of election except P. R.

It is an interesting fact that Tasmania, which has used the best system of P. R. for state elections longer than any other community, has a full-fledged two-party system, while the other states of the Australian Commonwealth have three or more large parties. It is also interesting that southern Ireland, starting without any single party in a majority, has during a considerable part of its long experience with the best form of P. R. had a single majority party. There is some evidence in the experience of these two states to indicate that, when people have as adequate a means of controlling the parties as they have under the best form of proportional representation, they tend to prefer representation in large and powerful groups rather than small ones.

However, I agree that proportional representation will not force a two-party system and will give the people just the sort of representation they want, which I take it is the purpose of a self-governing democracy.

Examples of efficient democracy with proportional systems and without one-party majorities have been furnished over a considerable period of years by Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland. In all of these countries a fair representation of all points of view has contributed to the stability and serviceability of government and its willing acceptance by the people. In the Swedish election of 1940 the Social Democrats, which had formed part of a ruling coalition in the preceding parliament, gained an absolute majority of the seats in both houses of parliament for the first time. In spite of this the majority party voluntarily continued the coalition.

When the people decline to align themselves in two parties, as they do in most European countries, anything short of proportional representation results in the most undesirable distortions. A party with a third of the electorate, for example, may win two-thirds of the

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seats or none at all, depending on how its votes happen to be distributed in arbitrary districts. This sort of misrepresentation would subject a new and inexperienced democracy to quite unnecessary strains. When P. R. was first used in Switzerland, in the Italian-language canton of Ticino, it was introduced to correct a glaring misrepresentation which had led to outbreaks of violence amounting to civil war, and complete pacification was the result. There are some who claim that the recent Spanish Civil War would never have broken out if the rightist elements had not been grossly under-represented by the election method, which gave disproportionate representation to the largest political group in each district.

I think there is significance in the statement of the Reverend Canon Luce, professor of moral philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin: "P. R. has been a healing force in our midst. Old political feuds are dying; public spirit is replacing faction. Our elections are well conducted. The voice of reason is heard, and the gun is silent. P. R. deserves much of the credit; for P. R. produces contented and loyal minorities, whereas the other system breeds muzzled, sullen, discontented minorities, predisposed to doctrines of violence. P. R. has been a unifying force and unity is strength."

I appreciate very much your willingness to discuss the idea with me in person. Checking ahead on my schedule I find that Friday, September 17th, or Saturday, September 18th, would apparently be a good time for me to get away for a short trip to Washington. Would either of those days be convenient for you? If so, just set the time and I will be there. Otherwise I should like to make it some other time soon at your convenience.

Cordially,

(Signed) George Hallett

GHM:md

4703

Aug. 28, 1944

Hon. Adolph Berle
Assistant Secretary of State
State Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Berle:

You will remember our correspondence and conversation of about a year ago in regard to the possible use of P. R. for the election of a constituent assembly to frame a new constitution for a democratic Italy. Everything that has happened since seems to me to reinforce the argument. There are obviously a number of important parties with a desire to cooperate in the government. When the time comes for elections it is obviously desirable that they should all be fairly treated and not rebuffed by the vagaries of an unfair election system.

I was surprised to see in the Times of August 20 an editorial on the other side of this very question. I have since had a long talk about it with Henry Hazlitt, who wrote it, and sent an answer to the Times which I hope they will print at least in part. Since the editorial may possibly have come to your attention also I enclose a copy of my answer. It may also serve to summarize some of the ideas which we discussed earlier.

If I can ever be of any help in this matter in any way, you know that I shall welcome the opportunity.

Cordially,

(Signed) George Hallett
Secretary

ghh/jc

4764

September 5, 1944

My dear Mr. Hallett:

I appreciate your letter of August 28, 1944 and enclosed answer to the Times on the question of proportional representation in Italy.

Your very interesting observations are being called to the attention of Department officials who at present are actively studying this and other related problems affecting post-war Italy.

Sincerely yours,

Adolf A. Berle, Jr.
Assistant Secretary

Mr. George E. Hallett, Jr.,
Secretary, Citizens Union of the City of New York,
41 Park Row,
New York 7, New York

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