

Title: The Lost Progressive: Henry A. Wallace and the Decline of New Deal Democrats
Presenter: Jacob Cipriano, Los Angeles City College
Mentor: Christina Heisser

This paper analyzes the fall of Henry A. Wallace from the heir apparent of the Roosevelt administration to the radical idealist of the Progressive party to his eventual marginalization from political life. Henry Wallace's split from the Democratic Party and the formation of the Progressive party would act as the last dying gasp of New Deal-era Democrats before the redbaiting and Communist hysteria of the 1950s and 60s. The difficulty in understanding Wallace's decline is the still politicized and ideological debate surrounding his views. Today, popular articles use Wallace as either a symbol of the left's foolish idealism or of the left's martyr-like resolve. We have little understanding of Wallace beyond the label of "naive idealist." So much of this difficulty revolves around Wallace's shifting views on foreign policy and Soviet-American relations. How much did Henry Wallace personally damage the progressive movement in the 1940s and 50s, or was this decline in progressive politics sowed in the coup of Vice President Wallace in 1945? How much was American business interest in the Democratic Party crucial in determining American foreign policy from 1945-1948? Were those the same interests that ousted Wallace in 1945? The answers lie in the issue of the Soviet Union, Wallace's opposition to Harry Truman, and the elusive ideal of world peace -- the ideal that Wallace seemed too stubborn to compromise.

References

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