I. F. STONE:

The ADA—Third Force Or Truman Stooge?

First of a Series

Washington, Apr. 2 — The cold war is the Great Divide of American left-of-center politics. The place to begin an examination of the convention held here this weekend by Americans for Democratic Action is with the position it took on foreign policy.

For the question of foreign policy is the fundamental differences between those ex-New Dealers who followed Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt into the ADA and those who followed Henry A. Wallace into the Progressive Party.

The ADA would like to be a progressive tail strong enough to wag the Democratic dog. Those who would like to determine which wags which may find it instructive to study several documents which figured at the convention.

These documents all dealt with the task of amending and bringing up to date the statement of principles adopted last year. One document gave the amendments on foreign policy put forward by the Washington, D. C., chapter of the ADA, the best informed chapter in the organization.

Another document provided the text of the amendments "drafted at the direction of the National Board, but not reviewed by the National Board or Executive Committee."

This was the work of the ADA headquarters staff, which is more alert than the leadership.

A third document was the "proposed foreign policy program" as drafted by the Foreign Policy Commission and submitted to the floor.

A study of these documents shows a constant watering down of critical viewpoint to attain conformity with the Truman Administration's point of view. The rejected amendments are the buried bones from which the political paleontologist can reconstruct the inner life of the ADA.

None of these rejected amendments embodied views which do not command wide support abroad among non-Communist and anti-Communist Parties in Western Europe and the non-Soviet colonial world. To study the amendments which were shelved is to see that the ADA is being pulled by the Cold War into positions which are to the right of similar "Third Force" groups in Europe and Asia.

Let us begin with the Marshall Plan. A rejected amendment by the Washington chapter said "the extension of East-West trade in Europe is essential to the success of the ERP and to the stabilization of the European economy. It should, therefore, be encouraged, subject to the requirements of military security."

The first sentence merely stated one of the fundamental assumptions which supported the original Marshall Plan. The second sentence allowed ample leeway for cold war embargoes on war materials. It would not, however, support a licensing system like the one now being used to wage economic warfare against Eastern Europe—at the cost of hampering recovery in Western Europe.

The amendment would, I believe, command a majority vote not only in the non-Communist West European left but on the West European right. It never got through to the floor at the ADA.

In the amendments drafted by the staff on ERP there is the sentence, "We condemn those who would use the ERP as a means of preventing necessary social change." The sentence before this and the sentence after it were left intact by the draft which emerged from the Foreign Policy Commission. But that sentence was left out.

I do not think I exaggerate when I say the omitted sentence embodies something the non-Communist pro-Marshall Plan West European left-of-center—including a section of the Catholic center parties in France and Italy—have been desperately trying to tell their American friends for months.

Point 4

The same drift in response to the same kind of Trumanite conformist pressure is visible when we turn from the Marshall Plan, which concerns Western Europe, to Point 4, which concerns the colonial world.

The amendments drafted by the staff said, "We believe that the present plans rely too heavily upon inducing a flow of private capital through a scheme of preferential arrangements for American investors."

Careful scrutiny of investment guaranties was asked to make sure they do not "involve improper interference" with internal affairs.

The Washington chapter voted to ask the convention to strength-

INDEXED
100-348196
APR 19 195

New York Daily Compass
Monday April 3, 1950
Page 5