Now it is conceivable, however, that the end is in sight—not because of a crushing defeat but because of a famous victory. The new political circumstances created by Mayor Wagner's rout of the machine-men in the Democratic primary create the real possibility of the Liberal Party's merger with both the Democratic reform movement and the large labor bloc represented in the newly-formed Brotherhood Party.

Such an alliance could lead to genuine liberal—small "t"—control of New York's Democratic Party. It could have serious impact on political alignments throughout the nation.

This cannot happen overnight. Probably the first prerequisite of such a coalition is that Mayor Wagner win the election; the second is his readiness to lead such a combination if and when he is reelected.

So large a political upheaval would require a symbolic leader, and the Mayor would be the man if he completes the upset begun on primary day.

Granted the uncertainties, it is nevertheless a simple matter of fact that influential men are already discussing the prospect. Close associates say that when the subject is broached to David Dubinsky he discusses it with that merry gleam in his eye which so often signifies the approaching birth of an idea.

He is said to be still full of qualifications and reserve. He reportedly talks of the ancient antipathy between Liberal Party members and the Democratic old guard. At the same time, however, he is stressing steady dissolution—through death and retirement—of long-forgotten feuds which have long divided and so often rendered impotent the liberal-labor forces of the city. He is known to speak warmly of the increasingly close cooperation between Liberal Party chiefs and Harry Van Arsdale, key figure in labor's Brotherhood Party.

It is apparently plain that he would not view the death of the Liberal Party through such a merger as a dishonorable ending, but as the dawn of a new beginning.

To a decisive degree the Liberals would have been the architects of their own fate. Out of mingled motives of personal sentiment and political investment they kept Mayor Wagner's candidacy alive at a time when most politicians had written him off.

There were derisive sounds when Liberal strategist Alex Rose called the mild-mannered Mr. Wagner "Fighting Bob" a few months ago. If Messrs. Buckley and Sharkey had not decided to shoot the works, if Mr. questionable who won the vale war with Carmine DeSapio would have suffered to rally the reform bloc to a major effort in his behalf. If the Liberals had not continued to hold the Mayor's hand, neither Mr. Buckley nor Mr. Sharkey might have been disposed to turn on him so savagely and treat him as a renegade from the clubhouse.

All that is history. What remains to be seen is the effect of the Mayor's triumph on the man. He is under heavy pressure to repeal the significance of his victory by treading with caution. Perhaps he will follow that course, giving the local rynie the field day for which they hungrily yearn. But it is also possible that the battle has deeply altered him, and that, perhaps more slowly and less spectacularly than some may hope, he will lead the fight for a transformation of New York's Democratic Party. His course, in turn, may depend on the ability of reform, liberal and labor leaders to rise to the occasion.

There would remain a rough road ahead. The Democratic Party here, as in many places, is a weird amalgam of divergent spirits. It is steadily losing the allegiance of right-wing Catholics...
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The Liberal Party can provide such troops. So can the Brotherhood Party. They can do so effectively, however, only if there is a true merger which permits their adherents to participate directly in the reorganization and reconstruction of the Democratic Party.

No doubt this report will invite the cry from Hearst political writers (who profess deep devotion to the Democratic Party between election days) that the Liberal Party is planning a sinister seduction of the Democratic virgin. That is nonsense. The real question is whether New York's Democratic Party, so often a bellwether for the nation, can finally become an authentic fusion of the forces of political liberalism and humane government. That would be big news; it can happen.