
THE HOOVER-DEWEY-McCORMICK ELECTION THREAT TO TEHERAN

(Speech delivered at the National Convention of the Communist Political Association, May 20, 1944. Abridged text.)

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

THE present elections, as Earl Browder has repeatedly stated, are the most important since 1864. At stake are the Teheran decisions with their profound significance both nationally and internationally. Victory for Roosevelt would mean the carrying out of these decisions, whereas victory for the Hoover-Dewey-McCormick Republican machine would gravely jeopardize them. All over the world, the democratic forces are hoping for a fourth term for President Roosevelt, while Hitler and international reaction are basing their hopes upon a Republican success.

I want particularly to signalize the danger of the Republican and poll-taxer opposition, both in the election and in the post-war period. Summing up Earl Browder's report, our main convention resolution says: "The decisive issues in these fateful elections are: the victory program of our Government and Commander-in-Chief; Teheran and the firmest unity of the American-Soviet-British coalition; the national unity and security of the United States; full production and maximum employment; safeguarding the welfare and democratic liberties of the American people. . . ."

First, as to the task of winning the war—the central issue in the campaign. Aside from the Hearst-McCormick group, obviously the powerful capitalist forces behind the reactionary Republican leadership do not want a Hitler victory. Nevertheless they have undermined national unity by slandering our Commander-in-Chief and by assailing the trade unions; they have fought against price and profits control; some of them have nurtured traitorous fascist elements and sought to undermine the United Nations by anti-British and anti-Soviet agitation.

To win the war and the peace it is indispensable to maintain the Roosevelt Administration in power. Roosevelt is leading us to victory, a Dewey would give us a peace equivalent to defeat. The war issue must be thus squarely placed before the nation. A Dewey would not prosecute the war to complete victory, smash fascism throughout Europe, or formulate a democratic peace. Throughout the war the Hoover-Vandenberg-Dewey forces have shown a constant tendency to come to an agreement with world fascism.

Secondly, there is the vital election issue of post-war collaboration among the nations to maintain world peace and to lead in economic reconstruction, as outlined by the Teheran Conference and as expressed by Earl Browder at this Convention. During the war the thinking of the American people on international matters has profoundly altered. Isolationism has received a mortal blow, colonialism has fallen into deep discredit, a friendly attitude has developed toward the U.S.S.R., and the conviction is now almost universal that the United States must become part of a post-war world organization of states. Excepting for the most reactionary elements, of the du Pont, Hearst, McCormick stripe, American capitalists realize that the United States will have to collaborate, in the post-war stage, with the U.S.S.R., in the United Nations. Their wide acceptance of the Moscow and Teheran agreements evidences these new moods.

Therefore, with Roosevelt continued in office and backed up by the labor movement, the United States, after the war, would continue in collaboration with its present war allies, to maintain world peace and to work upon the gigantic tasks of economic reconstruction. This would guarantee that the Teheran agreement would be essentially realized.

With a Dewey or any other Republican administration, however, the whole Teheran program of world order would be gravely imperiled. The outcome would send a shudder of apprehension throughout Latin America, the occupied countries, the

whole democratic world. It would be a victory of the most reactionary, most militantly imperialist, and most pro-fascist elements in the American capitalist class.

This country, undamaged by war devastation, will possess a huge army and the largest navy and airforce in the world; it will have a merchant fleet about twice as big as Great Britain's, and an enormously expanded industrial system clamoring for export outlets; moreover, its major capitalist competitors will be either weakened or knocked out altogether by the war.

That such a situation would invite aggressive imperialist policies by a reactionary American government is obvious. A Dewey administration, controlled by the most reactionary sections of monopoly capital, allied with poll-taxer Democrats and pushed on by isolationists and profascists of the Hearst-McCormick breed—an administration in which organized labor's influence would be at a minimum—could be deterred from dangerous imperialist policies only by determined mass democratic pressure and the resistance of other world powers. In this election, therefore, we cannot ignore the imperialist danger inherent in a reactionary victory, and the menace it bears to the fulfillment of Teheran. Especially is this necessary because of the tendency among many to accept the eleventh-hour speeches of Dewey and Bricker as proof that the reactionary leaders of the Republican Party have embarked upon a policy of genuine wartime and post-war collaboration with the democratic peoples of the world.

In view of the strong trend among the American people toward international cooperation, Dewey finds it necessary to hide demagogically his real position on international affairs. Significant of his true position is his cheek-by-jowl friendship with American isolationists, his erstwhile condemnation of the Roosevelt Administration for recognizing the U.S.S.R., his proposal to the Mackinac Conference of Republicans for an American-British alliance obviously to be directed against the U.S.S.R., his hyper-critical attitude toward the Teheran agreement, etc. To elect to the Presidency a man holding, either now or in the recent past, such reactionary ideas would be to invite disaster to the whole democratic program laid down at Teheran.

Thirdly, the post-war period will require a program of world-scale economic reconstruction for vast areas devastated, whole populations impoverished, industries wrecked, government debts piled mountain high, world markets shattered, and oppressed classes and peoples everywhere demanding freedom and a better life.

In the long run these great problems cannot be basically solved short of establishing socialism. But, obviously, the decisive masses of the people in Europe, Asia and America are not yet prepared to adopt socialism. Hence, the capitalist system, in order to live, to meet the crying needs of the people and to move toward an era of prosperity, spoken of by Browder in his report, must adopt many new and drastic

economic and political policies. In the main, these will go in the direction of a greater democracy and also of a more active intervention by governments in the economic life of the respective countries, within the framework of existing social conditions and in cooperation with the decisive sectors of all classes.

In the post-war period the influence of the Soviet Union will be immense in the economic and political reconstruction of the world. It will be a decisive factor in maintaining international peace; it will provide a huge market for imports; its socialist economy will astound the world with its swift recovery from the war's ravages and its rapid advance to mass prosperity. But the capitalist system generally will be able to alleviate its problems only if it takes the path, already indicated, toward greater democracy and a more planful organization of its economy. The formation of the U.N.R.R.A. and the projected eight-billion-dollar currency stabilization fund are only foretastes of the far-reaching economic measures still to come. Private enterprise, while given full opportunity to meet the problems of employment and production, will have to be supplemented by governmental policies which will involve curbing harmful practices of monopolies and cartels, state assistance in the organization of foreign trade, the planned industrialization of backward countries, etc. The British capitalists are pretty generally alert to the need for more such measures, and this is true also of many American capitalists.

If the United States is to play its decisive role in meeting the great economic post-war problems, the Roosevelt Administration must be continued in office. Its record and its program show that, with the active support of an alert labor movement, it can and will meet these problems in the spirit of Teheran. It could not only prevent a post-war economic collapse, but, as our new preamble says, open up a new era of prosperity. But a Republican administration would surely head toward eventual economic disaster.

The leadership of the Republican Party and its big monopolist backers show no comprehension of post-war economic needs. On the international scale they have proposed nothing adequate to meet the grave post-war problems, and on the domestic scene, judging from their various pronouncements, they would try to face the post-war period by driving millions of women out of industry, by letting the restored 40-hour week take care of six or eight million more workers, and by forcing several million others to walk the streets unemployed. This is the real meaning of Governor Bricker's plan of a 100-billion-dollar national income, which would be equal to only about \$70 billion in pre-war values.

The Republican leadership is depending upon a post-war boom, after the first readjustment period, to solve the economic problems after the war in the foregoing limited sense. Any endorsement it may give to social insurance, government works, lowered tariffs, or government planning, to protect the work-

ers and to keep the industries in operation is of a perfunctory and auxiliary character. Such a post-war boom, which would necessarily be very limited in scope, could not solve the profound post-war economic problems.

The present fanatical cry for "free enterprise" is directed to defeat Roosevelt, and to win unrestricted economic-political control for monopoly capital. While, as Browder has said, this hysterical shouting cannot be countered by demands for socialism or even for government ownership of key industries, nevertheless it must be met with a firm insistence by the win-the-war, win-the-peace forces upon the necessity of their program of a strengthened democracy and of the supplementation of private industry with government planning for maximum production and employment. Summing up Earl Browder's report, our main resolution indicates the general lines along which this planning must go.

But a Dewey, or other Republican administration, dominated by reactionaries, would, following a short-lived and limited boom, literally have to be kicked into makeshift planning (which they would seek to adapt to reactionary purposes) after untold mass suffering and widespread economic breakdown; whereas a Roosevelt Administration, supported by organized labor and other democratic elements of the nation, instead of merely depending upon a spontaneous boom and then rushing in with half-baked relief measures after the economic crash had come, would take the

necessary governmental steps in advance, by planning to ensure the industries from collapse and by providing protection for the toiling masses.

In short, a Roosevelt Administration would offer the opportunity to realize the economic perspectives opened up at Teheran, whereas a Republican administration would blot out such perspectives.

* * *

Fourthly, as to the vital question of extending American democracy as an important part of a growing world democracy. A progressively strengthened democracy is necessary not only in the liberated countries but also in the United States and all of the victorious capitalist countries. Only democratic governments with a solid people's base will be able to take the necessary fundamental steps for decisive victory in the war, to rout out fascism, to maintain world peace through a collaborative United Nations, and carry through the far-reaching post-war economic reconstruction—in short, to realize the great goals outlined at Teheran. The national unity, consisting of the anti-Hitler forces of all classes, must be one in which labor and other democratic elements play a decisive role. In Europe a sign of this new democratic national unity is the inclusion of Communists in various anti-Hitler provisional governments of the occupied countries. In the United States, it is to be seen in the growing influence of the labor movement and of other democratic forces. Our main resolution hits the nail squarely on the

head when it says: "The camp of national unity, which is composed of the patriotic forces of all classes, from the working people to the capitalists, rests and depends upon the working class, the backbone and driving force of the nation and its win-the-war coalition."

Re-election of the Roosevelt Administration, with a strong victory Congress behind it, is a precondition for the full carrying out of the Teheran decisions, nationally and internationally. Behind Roosevelt stand the great democratic masses of the American people; in first line, the labor movement. Only a government with such a democratic base can attack the great problems of the war and the post-war period successfully. Victory for Roosevelt in the elections would also mean a victory for world democracy; his defeat would be a body blow to democracy everywhere. The election of a Dewey to the Presidency would give new hope and strength to reaction and fascism in the United States and throughout the world.

In this country, there are strong and sinister forces of reaction, the makings of a dangerous growth of fascism. A Republican victory would galvanize all these anti-social elements into life and confront us and the world with a most serious fascist danger. These reactionary elements are licking their chops in anticipation of what they would do to the workers in the event of a Republican victory. During this election year, it is true, they are careful not to arouse the workers too much; but we would be fools if we were to forget their

rabid anti-union drive in Congress and in many state legislatures only a few months ago, as well as their sinister rallying in support of Avery in the Montgomery Ward case.

For its own protection, as well as for the welfare of our nation, therefore, organized labor with other patriotic forces must see to it that reaction is thoroughly defeated in this crucial election. To do this, labor must strengthen its ranks, economically and politically. It must mobilize all its forces for the election struggle. It must have as part of its victory program plans to prevent a post-war economic collapse of which the reactionaries would surely take advantage to attack the living standards and organizations of the workers. And, especially, it must proceed upon the non-partisan program emphasized so strongly in Earl Browder's report.

The Teheran policies must be fought for, and the biggest fight we now have on the home front is to defeat reaction in the elections. President Roosevelt has behind him a substantial majority of the American people, and his strength is constantly growing, as many recent local elections show. But let us not underestimate the opposition. The forces arrayed against Roosevelt are very powerful. While the bulk of American capitalists want to win the war and to have post-war international cooperation to maintain world peace, nevertheless many of them, because of their opposition to Roosevelt's labor and social policies, are working, either covertly or openly, to defeat Roosevelt, whose re-election is fundamental to the suc-

cess of Teheran. The same opposition is to be found in at least 90 per cent of the press in the North and West. The reactionaries, likewise, have secured a powerful hold in the agricultural areas, and they are also busily provoking anti-Roosevelt movements among the large national groups of Germans, Italians, Poles, and Irish.

The win-the-war, win-the-peace forces have a stiff fight ahead in the elections. But the struggle can and will be won, particularly if we pay attention to the systematic application of the non-partisan policy of educating the voters to rise above party lines, to vote for the win-the-war Roosevelt Administration. Our Association, strengthened by many thousands of new members, will be a real factor in winning the victory. We must do mass work, as an organization and jointly with other forces on an unprecedented scale, including the organization of many hundreds of outdoor and indoor meetings. There must also be a vast increase in our radio work over anything we have ever done before in the elections. We must distribute millions of pieces of election literature and stimulate our forces everywhere to support organized labor in the formation of its political action committees. We must assist in registering the war workers and in getting ballots to the soldiers. We must work to bring out the workers on election day. Our Association can and must be a truly vital factor in helping the American people win next November a world-decisive democratic victory.