



A POLITICAL PROGRAM OF NATIVE AMERICAN FASCISM

By EARL BROWDER

IF AMERICANS WISH to understand the fundamental forces which work within our country to take it upon much the same path that Hitlerism took Germany—if we wish, in short, to know our own native fascism—we must look upon the noisy imitators of the Nazis as merely the surface froth on a movement much deeper and more menacing. The source of power and programmatic direction of this native fascism operate from more “respectable” bases. This article is an examination of native fascist trends as expressed in the public utterances of Dr. Virgil Jordan, President of the National Industrial Conference Board, as well as their influence on Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, late Republican candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Dr. Jordan is chosen for examination as the most consistent ideologist of this trend, who functions as head of the “Brain Trust” for the most reactionary and militant monopolist capitalists in America, our native counterpart for the German Thyssens who financed Hitler’s rise to power; Gov. Dewey is also selected for special consideration because he became the instrument upon which that reaction-

ary camp depended for execution of its effort to assume power over the nation in the 1944 elections.

FOUR YEARS EVOLUTION OF DR. JORDAN

On December 10, 1940, Dr. Jordan made a speech to the Investment Bankers Association; on December 1, 1944, he addressed a meeting of the Associated Industries of Massachusetts. Very interesting, indeed, is a comparison of these two speeches, which reveal how the changes in the world are reflected in the political thinking of the reactionary circles of big business.

In 1940, Dr. Jordan assumed that he was speaking for a united and self-confident capitalist class, which had America and the world “by the tail on a downhill pull,” to use an old Western American colloquialism. He bubbled over with enthusiasm and an overwhelming sense of power. He was riding “the wave of the future.” He foresaw no serious difficulties in doing business with Hitler, then engaged in seizing most of Europe; he assumed that Hitler was going to solve “the Russian question” for him and his fellows; and he en-

visioned only the minor problems of salvaging the British Empire for a junior partnership in the rising American Empire for which he spoke. He rose to lyrical heights in his peroration, picturing the world as a ripe plum about to fall into the hands of American monopoly capital without a struggle. He said:

Whatever the outcome of the war, America has embarked upon a career of imperialism, both in world affairs and in every other aspect of her life. . . . Even though, by our aid, England should emerge from this struggle without defeat, she will be so impoverished economically and crippled in prestige that it is improbable that she will be able to resume or maintain the dominant position in world affairs which she has occupied so long. At best, England will become a junior partner in a new Anglo-Saxon imperialism, in which the economic resources and the military and naval strength of the United States will be the center of gravity. Southward in our hemisphere and westward in the Pacific the path of empire takes its way, and in modern terms of economic power as well as political prestige, the sceptre passes to the United States. All this is what lies beneath the phrase "national defense"—some of it deeply hidden, some of it very near the surface and soon to emerge to challenge us.

By the end of 1944, however, Dr. Jordan himself reveals that four years before he profoundly misjudged both what was near the surface and what was deeply hidden. Strangely enough, this profound mistake was

not shaken his confidence in the correctness of his basic views; he displays a fanaticism worthy of a Hitler in fighting to the end for his chosen goals. But it is a fanaticism shot through with profound pessimism, and the pessimism arises from the growing unity among the American people and among the United Nations. Those things which give hope to the democratic world, bring despair to Dr. Jordan.

Let us see in more detail how Dr. Jordan views his country and the world at the end of 1944.

First, as to America's relation to the world. The 1940 dithyramb on "America uber Alles" has been replaced by its opposite. Dr. Jordan now sees only a "spiritual reconquest of America by the Old World." He elaborates this theme:

Business, labor and government, no less than educators, scientists, economists, and artists, in one degree or another have felt the drag of this spiritual undertow pulling them back toward the Old World way of life. . . . America . . . has become once more a kind of spiritual dependency or colony of Europe. . . . Anyone who understands the direction of the ideas embodied in the post-war plans being debated today in Britain, and in the reconstruction schemes proposed for France and other countries on the Continent, and who realizes the influence these have on our ideas about the future in America, must feel the terrific force of this undertow.

What is the archetype of this "Old World" from which America must

emancipate herself? Of course, it is the Soviet Union. The name of Stalin is the only one mentioned by Dr. Jordan as an "enemy" of the United States. He cryptically enunciates his program toward the Soviet Union in the formula of Herbert Hoover: "The world cannot live for long half under Socialist serfdom and half under economic freedom."

But Dr. Jordan, without naming their leaders, recognizes a world of enemies. He says:

. . . In most of the rest of Europe, in Italy, France and even in England, no Red armies were necessary to destroy economic freedom and civil liberty. It has been done long before by the business men, the labor unions and the governments of these countries. Our armies abroad are fighting for ideas—for a philosophy of life and a conception of government—which were dead nearly everywhere in the Old World long before the war began.

Furthermore, these enemies of Dr. Jordan's conception of the good life not only control all of Europe. They also control the United States itself. His description of the state of affairs in America is fully as black as that of Europe. Not only American labor and government have succumbed to the black plague of socialism, but also the ranks of business, and even Dr. Jordan's special field, big business itself!!!

"The mind of American industry," Dr. Jordan finds, is a "wilderness of confusion, conflict, folly and wear."

"We have abandoned or surrendered," Dr. Jordan finds, the basic principles of American life, "like most other people . . . and what is worse, there are now many among us, in business and elsewhere, who are willing to deny or repudiate or compromise them as no longer applicable. . . ."

Dr. Jordan sets himself the task of leading a struggle to reverse the whole world trend of development, of our own country as well as of all others. And he has lost all his illusions that this will be easy to do. He sees it as necessary to win the capitalists back to their lost faith, to "re-convert" the capitalists themselves, before he can win his battle.

The greatest difficulty that faces us in reconversion is that business itself no longer has any coherent conception, conviction or philosophy of its function. During the past decade it has suffered a deep wound to its integrity of spirit, a profound sense of inferiority or guilt, from which it has not been able to recover despite its spectacular accomplishment in this war. It drifts today toward the difficult problems of the post-war future without any clear and consistent philosophy—or even any principle other than that of momentary expediency.

Dr. Jordan finds the key to the whole evil new way of life, into which America has drifted with the rest of the world, in the concept of planning for full employment. He therefore rejects bodily the concept of full employment, which he calls "the ideal . . . of the 'silver pig-sty,' out of which no strong, prosperous

or secure people ever came." The evil that must be driven out of American life, and out of the whole world, is the "monotonous reiteration of imaginary and arbitrary measures of national income, full employment, consumer purchasing power and social security as goals for the future."

Dr. Jordan's remedy for all the ills of the world is "freedom"—planless freedom, except for the plans that will be made by the "private enterprisers" who make up the National Industrial Conference Board. And he holds out the promise that this planless freedom, once it has been extended to the world markets, will also bring prosperity to America, since England, our principal competitor, "knows that her post-war planned economy, however complete, cannot compete in any free markets of the world with the productive power of a free America."

Here we have come to the "constant" factor in the "variable" sum of Dr. Jordan's view of world affairs. Here is the point of basic unity of the Jordan of 1940 with the Jordan of 1944. For the "freedom" to which Dr. Jordan sings such ecstatic songs of praise, is nothing more nor less than the freedom of American monopoly capital to conquer the whole world and make it its own empire. The program for which he fights is no more nor less than a program of world conquest, by economic power and free competition so far as possible, by military and naval power so

far as necessary. It is a program for a new world war.

Despite all his extreme pessimism, Dr. Jordan has not surrendered the fight. He admits his program received a severe defeat in the recent elections, when his candidate Dewey was defeated. (He speaks derisively of "the last election or auction.") But he insists that "no ultimate issues were settled." He acknowledges that in the world as it now exists, his "idea of economic freedom" is nothing less than a "subversive revolutionary force internationally as well as internally, just as Bolshevism was after the last war." He boldly faces the issue that "this fact will furnish the key to most of the post-war problems of international relations as well as those of domestic policy for another decade or two," and assumes for himself unhesitatingly the role of "revolutionist." He sings the glories of heroism, risk, and sacrifice, not for the extermination of the Axis, but for the extermination of the existing regimes of all the United Nations.

In the utterances of Dr. Virgil Jordan we have the authentic faith of our native American fascism, with its program which, like all fascism, is a program of imperialist conquest of the world. It comes from the common source of inspiration for fascism in all countries, from the rotting reactionary circles of monopoly capitalism, drunk with power and contemptuous of the great stream of human progress, culture, and democ-

racy, which in the midst of the bloody business of crushing the Axis is working out a successful program of harmonious co-existence and co-operation between the socialist and capitalist worlds.

DEWEY AS THE CANDIDATE OF THE JORDANS

It is of more than academic interest to review the performance of Thomas E. Dewey, in the 1944 election campaign, as the chosen candidate of Dr. Jordan and likeminded circles. The record reveals much as to the relation of forces of the two main political camps in the United States.

To what extent did Dewey put before the country the Jordan program?

The keynote of the Dewey campaign, its *leitmotif*, was one hundred per cent on the Jordan line. It was the "Red scare." Dewey stated it in his Oklahoma City speech on September 26, as follows:

Let's get this straight. The man who wants to be President for sixteen years is, indeed, indispensable. . . . He's indispensable to Sidney Hillman and the Political Action Committee, he's indispensable to Earl Browder, the ex-convict and pardoned Communist leader.

This keynote was worked up to the crescendo of Dewey's Boston speech, which reached the level of hysteria. American home-owners would have their homes taken away from them if Roosevelt was re-

lected. Roosevelt was identified with Browder, and then Browder was characterized in the following terms:

Browder stands for everything that would destroy America. Everyone knows that communism is for State ownership of all property, including your house, your farm and the factory and the shop and the office in which you work. It stands for absolute dictatorship, the abolition of civil rights and total political and economic bigotry.

And because a majority of Americans know nothing whatever about communism, they could not know that Dewey was a liar about communism, they could only judge that he was lying about Roosevelt. Dewey did his best, however, to put across the Jordan line that Roosevelt's practical policies are destroying everything for which Americans have an affectionate attachment, that "the American way of life" is being liquidated by the Roosevelt Administration. This "destruction of America" was identified with the appearance of labor as a political force in alliance with the progressive capitalists behind Roosevelt; in the Dewey-Jordan concept of the "American way," labor enters public life only through the servants' entrance.

After this fundamental assault upon national unity at home, the second most important point of the Dewey campaign in agreement with Jordan's line was the attack against United Nations' solidarity. Here al-

ready we see Dewey, the politician seeking votes, unable to express himself with the same blunt forthrightness as does Jordan the ideologist, although the fundamental unity is equally complete. Dewey was careful not to put himself in open opposition to our Alliance and to the Dumbarton Oaks plan. But on particular issues which he believed were obscure to the general public, he boldly espoused a stand which would wreck the Alliance and reduce Dumbarton Oaks to an illusion. He denounced the Teheran and other conferences as "secret diplomacy," with a dozen variations, and thus served notice that if elected he would not deal directly with our Allies as Roosevelt has done. He openly identified himself as an unconditional supporter of the anti-Soviet Polish government-in-exile in London as against the Soviet Union. He denounced the armistice which took Roumania out of the war, because it was signed for the Allies by Marshal Malinovsky, which was practically a denunciation of the Alliance itself. (And to this cake he added the fancy frosting of a sneering mispronunciation of the Marshal's name, as of some obscure personage whose correct designation it would be undignified to know.)

Thus on Allied unity, while Dewey's score of agreement with Dr. Jordan could not be placed at one hundred per cent, nonetheless it is a fact that Dewey and his advisors borrowed a great deal from Jordan's

arsenal. The degree to which disagreement existed was not in spirit, but was protective coloration.

The point at which Dewey failed the Jordans seriously, was in his handling of domestic economic policy. This was doubtless equally as painful to Dewey as to Jordan, for their hearts were in the same place; but it was on these questions that there emerged the sharpest contradiction between that which was necessary to win votes, and that which was necessary to forward Dr. Jordan's program.

Dr. Jordan declared (after the election):

Let us tell them that neither business, nor labor, nor government, can guarantee them economic security and leave them their civil liberty and personal freedom. . . . Anyone who tells them otherwise is a fool or a fraud.

Well, that is exactly what Dewey did, he told the voters otherwise, and according to Dr. Jordan's yardstick it is Dewey who is a fool or a fraud.

It is very interesting to review Dewey's utterances on this field. Here are a few gems:

Never again must free Americans face the spectre of long-continued mass unemployment. We Republicans are agreed that full employment shall be a first objective of national policy. (Acceptance speech, June 29.)

We must have full employment. It must be at a high wage level. We must have protection of the individual from loss of his earning power through no

fault of his own. We must have protection of the individual against the hazards of old age. We must have these things within the framework of free—and I mean free—collective bargaining. To reach these goals we must increase, not decrease, our standard of living. We must increase, not decrease, our production. (Speech at Seattle, September 18.)

Here we must pause a moment, and note that Dewey promised unemployment and old age insurance "within the framework of free collective bargaining," which might mean that he wished to leave these questions to be settled by each trade union with each individual employer. However, we must be charitable, and assume this was merely a slip of one unfamiliar with the problems he was speaking on, that he really intended to promise federal insurance supported by statute.

There is a third thing that is essential to achieving our agreed objective of world peace and prosperity. This absolute essential is a strong and vigorous America with jobs for all. (Speech at Portland, September 19.)

Whether we like it or not and regardless of the party in power, government is committed to some degree of economic direction. Certain government measures to influence broad economic conditions are both desirable and inevitable. . . . If at any time there are not sufficient jobs in private employment to go around, then government can and must create additional job opportunities. There must be jobs for all.

. . . We have unemployment insurance, old age pensions and minimum wage laws. They are going to stay and we are going to broaden them. . . . In agriculture, in labor and in money, we are committed to some degree of government intervention in the free workings of our economic system. In many directions the free market which old-time economists talked about is gone. . . . We have seen in the war what can be done when American technical and management skill is given a chance to do a job. All that was necessary was to give American enterprises the green light in order to bring forth miracles of production. In the same spirit, American business and American industry can be given the green light for peacetime production. Then we shall see peacetime miracles as we have seen war-time miracles. (Speech at San Francisco, September 21.)

We stand committed to the proposition that America can and must have both economic security and personal freedom. (Speech at Pittsburgh, October 20.)

Direct all government policies toward the goal of full employment through full production at a high level of wages. . . . (Speech at Buffalo, October 31.)

We must have here in America a land of opportunity, a land of full employment at high wages, with a rising standard of living. (Speech at New York City, November 4.)

Thus we see that from beginning to end of the campaign, Dewey formally committed the Republican Party to the goal of full production

and full employment, to be achieved in so far as necessary by governmental intervention to *create* the number of jobs required to achieve the goal. So far as formal commitment to a goal is concerned, and the general means of governmental intervention to reach it, Governor Dewey went as far as any political leader ever went; and he went squarely against the policy laid down by Dr. Jordan.

Still Dr. Jordan supported Gov. Dewey, whom he classifies as a "fool or a fraud," and considered it a calamity that he lost the election.

Evidently the Jordan school of thought is ready to bow to the realities of modern American political life. And one of those realities is this, that any candidate who failed to promise full production and full employment, with the government as guarantor for its achievement, would not even be a serious contender in the election.

Of Dewey's 22 million votes on November 7, a big majority would have been lost to him if he had taken any other stand than he did on production and jobs. If he had openly expressed Dr. Jordan's policy on this point, Dewey would probably have gotten less than six million votes.

What this means, practically, is that the Jordans do not expect to win elections by an open fight for their policy. They expect to win by indirection in the electoral field, with their candidates bowing hypocritically before the overwhelming opinion of the mass of the voters, and by

extra-electoral methods, through their control of industrial and financial power and all that goes with it that is outside the control of government—and, as Jordan frankly says, by "subversive revolutionary" methods.

Dewey represents the political and economic interests and methods of thinking of the Jordan school, plus the tactical approach of the politician hunting for votes at all costs. Therefore, Dewey cannot be judged merely by his direct utterances on such questions.

Where Dewey stands in reality on the issue of production, jobs, and social security, is therefore better judged by what he did not say than by his commitments. What he formally committed himself to was a program already inaugurated by President Roosevelt; what he did not say, was any single word new on the subject, any single proposal that went an inch beyond what was already established beyond hope of overthrow by appeal to the voters. That is the best proof that Dr. Jordan judged correctly when he picked Dewey as the candidate to best help in the project to reverse the political and economic current of the democratic world.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

A few obvious conclusions may well be formulated as a result of this examination of the speeches of Dr. Jordan and Governor Dewey.

1. They confirm the fact, which we noted in January 1944, that the

decisive sections of the American capitalist class have abandoned the old policy of hard-boiled reaction and imperialism, and are seriously trying to adjust themselves to the democratic currents and needs of the nation at war. There is no longer any decisive unity of the bourgeoisie around a reactionary program; the fascists, like Jordan, no longer lead the class, but only a minority of it.

2. The democratic national unity in America, extending over all class lines, is more and more crystallizing upon a program which faces the realities of today, and seeks a solution of the national problems in a new way

that abandons the old capitalistic dogmas, with such force that even the enemies of this national unity program must pay lip service to it.

3. And finally, that from now on we must be on the alert for the flank attacks of masked enemies of national unity and of the United Nations; these will be more dangerous than the open assaults from now on; but with the nation on the alert, so that it cannot be tricked and thrown into confusion, there are bright prospects ahead for great advances and victories for democracy. The national and world currents are now fully moving toward that end.