

NOVEMBER 7 AND THE FUTURE

By **EARL BROWDER**

Shortly after the election Earl Browder, president of the Communist Political Association, gave his first analysis of its results at a gathering of a group of friends of NEW MASSES. Because of the importance of Mr. Browder's speech we are here publishing its text. We believe that a full understanding of the strategy used by the anti-Roosevelt lineup is imperative: it will help combat that lineup in the post-election period. Next week we will publish the questions and answers that followed his talk.

I AM always glad to meet a group that is gathered by the NEW MASSES. That is one of the reasons why several months ago, when I was having lunch with Joe North, I made a promise that when the election campaign was over I would speak under the auspices of the NEW MASSES to deliver my first extensive analysis of the election results.

Another reason why I made that agreement was that I have a very high opinion of the NEW MASSES. I want to take this occasion to express it. I say that it is my opinion that the NEW MASSES has been doing, especially in this last year, but for a good many years back, a real bang-up job of dealing with the most important issues of the day, of giving clarity and understanding to its readers. I don't know of any more important job than that of bringing clarity into this confused world. And I don't know of any other publication in this field that is bringing any great degree of clarity to its readers as yet. So I am going to continue to support the NEW MASSES, and I hope that its editors will not get tired and not look around for any other occupation.

Now I am going to talk about the elections, so I'll pull out my notes. First of all, I want to warn you that I am not going to give any rounded-out estimate on all phases of the great battle that ended November 7. I think it would be presumptuous of anyone to think that that would be possible because this was one of the great battles of his-

tory, and men will be studying it for generations to come to draw its lessons. We have just lived through one of the great turning points of history and I set myself now a very modest objective of trying to make one step towards an analysis and understanding of this battle in terms largely of examining the strategy of the political camp that was headed by candidates Dewey and Bricker and of tracing the main outlines of how that strategy worked out in the course of the campaign. Well, of course, you know Roosevelt was reelected, and it is for a fourth term. At the same time Congressional elections changed the composition of our Congress both in the House and in the Senate in the direction of strengthening the support for the President's policies.

It is my opinion that no event in America since the time of Lincoln has had such a great effect upon the peoples of the whole world. This was an international, not merely a national event. This news of the election of Roosevelt was flashed around the world in every country, and everywhere the masses of the people were waiting for that message and they received it with joy. This was one of the greatest and most fateful political struggles of history. And its outcome was the outcome that the peoples of every country in the world were hoping for and praying for.

The large significance of this election was that America confirmed the concord of Teheran, the agreement that was formulated and given to the world some eleven months ago by Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin, the program for victory in the war and a durable, prosperous peace. All of the combined issues of this campaign are summed up in that statement. The outcome of the battle was determined through a complicated and bitter struggle. In the course of that struggle the camp of reaction and the enemies of Teheran in America threw in all their resources. They employed every political strategy in the book. I presume you know which book I mean. The Presi-

dent mentioned it early in the campaign. The book is *Mein Kampf*.

The reactionary camp was defeated by the aroused intelligence of the masses, by the unity brought about among the advanced sections of all classes in America, and by the superb leadership of President Roosevelt at the head of the camp of national unity. The plans of the reactionary camp for this campaign began to shape up immediately after the 1940 election. You could see them taking shape from 1941 on. The strategy that gave coherence to all these plans we can describe in a few main points. I have listed seven of them to describe the strategy of the Hoover-Dewey camp in this election campaign.

PPOINT number one of that strategy was to secure command of the Republican Party as the main base of operations. For this the main task was to overcome the Willkie forces and eliminate Willkie. For the elimination of Willkie it was necessary to find a candidate for the Republican Party who had no well defined isolationist record, preferably one who had no record at all. That is why Dewey became the front man for the real power in the Republican Party, for such gentlemen as Hoover, Vandenberg, Taft, and others such as Pew and a few of the reactionary monopolists, financiers and industrialists.

The second point of the strategy was to penetrate the Democratic Party and either capture it for reaction, in which case the election would have been won without a battle no matter which candidate was elected, or if that was impossible, to disintegrate and split the Democratic Party from within. For this purpose Hoover and company worked a long time over a period of many years, and they found at hand a host of powerful agents ready for this job. At the head of these agents of the Republican reactionary machine, working within the Democratic Party, there was Jim Farley, for eight years the national chairman and organizational chief of the

Democratic Party. Jim Farley was ripe for treason to his party for reasons which we don't need to discuss here, which are the subject of some speculation—perhaps disappointed personal ambition, or perhaps something deeper—but for whatever reason, Jim Farley for four years had been working toward the disruption of the Democratic Party for the 1944 campaign, working hand in hand with the Hoover Republicans. There were such people as Garner and Martin Dies and Senator Byrd, Senator Reynolds, Senator O'Daniel and others of that kind. That sector of the Democratic Party, especially in the South, part of the anti-Roosevelt camp in Congress, was ready for a coup to split its own party and to split the Solid South or part of it away from the President.

Then there were such men as Governor Edison in New Jersey, who had made a coalition with the Republicans to campaign under the false banner of "reform," and who was highly successful in many of the liberal circles of America in leading them around by the nose and almost led them right into the Dewey camp. Remember that it was not long ago that the liberals made such an outcry against the Communists for having dared to say that, as against Edison, we supported Hague in New Jersey, and yet, when the crucial battle that determined not only the course of our country but the course of the world took place, Hague was on the side of progress and Edison was a traitor, and everybody knows it today. Who was it had foresight, who was it understood the real role of Governor Edison in New Jersey? The battle is the pay-off, as they say, and this was the battle that determined the true political position of every man in America, and we saw where Edison stood. Edison was a part of the Republican conspiracy to break up the Democratic Party in order to elect Hoover's man, Dewey.

Many other examples can be cited. There were many more Republican allies within the Democratic Party working from the headquarters of Hoover. In New York State Jim Farley delivered the governorship of this state to Dewey, just as much as if he had openly nominated him, when he forced Bennett upon the party against the wishes of the majority, against the wishes of Roosevelt, against the wishes of all progressive Democrats in this state. All in all, the Hoover camp had reason to figure that point number two of their strategy, the disruption of the Democratic Party, would be successful.

Point number three of the strategy which I want to elaborate on is that the reactionary camp directed itself toward keeping the total national vote as low as possible by obstructing the ballot of the armed forces and hampering registration. We can discuss this more fully later on as we go along and see how it turned out.

Point number four of that strategy was to divide and demoralize the labor movement and thus prevent it from rallying to Roosevelt as in the past. To this end, the Republicans made elaborate preparations for years. They joined with their Democratic allies in Congress in passing over the President's veto the Smith-Connally bill which places sharp restrictions on labor political action and encourages strikes; and then they sav-



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agely attacked the labor movement and the administration for the strikes that resulted. The Republicans took John L. Lewis under their protection, while blaming Roosevelt for the strikes Lewis instigated and led, not only among the miners but throughout all industry. In 1943 there was a grave danger that the whole war effort would be disrupted by a surge of strikes throughout the country. Lewis was the organizer of it all, the organizer, the inspirer and the instigator. Lewis was only defeated by a very sharp struggle inside the labor movement. But the forces of the American public saw that strike danger—and it was a real strike danger—saw that they had to back the labor movement and to back Roosevelt in this war. The people were aware of the real source of that danger to the war effort and of the forces who took Lewis into their camp, took Lewis under their protection, and defended him against all efforts to make him pay the penalty that should have been his for his disruptive acts—public opprobrium and public condemnation.

The Republicans gathered evidence of malpractices among AFL labor leaders, not in order to bring about reforms among them, but in order to blackmail them into coming out in support of the Republican candidates. I won't spend the time going into some of the known details of the great volume of work that was done, about most of which we don't

know the details, but we know enough to know that a most tremendous, unprecedented effort was made to blackmail a large section of the AFL leadership into dividing the labor support of this campaign and throwing as much as possible to Dewey. The Republicans therefore stimulated by all means the divisions and suspicions between the AFL and the CIO and all other potential differences in the body of the labor movement.

The fifth point in the Republican strategy was to bring back the Negro people to their traditional allegiance to the Republican Party. The Republican Party had practically the united vote of the Negro people in America from the Civil War down to FDR, and they seriously set themselves to win back the Negro vote in 1944. Typically, they set themselves to accomplish this by provocation. The Republicans supported the poll tax Democrats of the South in blocking the repeal of the poll tax, in defeating the anti-lynching bill, in sabotaging the Fair Employment Practices Committee. Then they turned around and adopted in their own convention platform planks in favor of all those things they had helped to defeat. They blamed Roosevelt for all the grievances of the Negro people which he had been trying to remedy. This exceedingly clever maneuver was depended upon to take the Negro people away from the President in the election.

Point number six in the reactionary strategy was to mobilize every discontent and grievance existing in the country and combine them all into a movement against Roosevelt. Promise everything to everybody, regardless of how contradictory the promises may be. Promise economy and greater spending, lower taxes and higher governmental income, the abolition of all government controls but the preservation of the results of control, continuation of all Roosevelt policies but the reversal of all these policies at the same time. Promise to continue the war to victory but give the wink to all the anti-war forces in the country. Speak for the continuation of all war alliances, but insult our allies and gather up all the anti-ally sentiments. Speak for postwar international collaboration, but slyly inject policies which would make that impossible to realize. Combine the *Chicago Tribune* with the *New York Herald Tribune*.

Point number seven in the Hoover-Dewey strategy—and this is the last one that I'll deal with, because I am not going very deeply into the subject—the keystone to the whole structure of Re-

publican strategy was the masterpiece of Hitlerite technique: the use of anti-Communism and its shadow, anti-Semitism, to split and splinter the nation and thus dissolve all effective opposition to the Republican seizure of power in the elections.

This is the main outline of the Hoover-Dewey strategy in entering the 1944 campaign. If all these main attacks registered some results, it was assumed that the cumulative results would guarantee a reactionary victory. If any single one of these points had gained its maximum results, that alone would bring the reactionaries to power. If several of these attacks scored a breakthrough, that would have meant the dissolution of progressive power in the United States for a long time to come.

How did all of this strategy work out? Well, we know it was defeated in its main objectives. That's not enough. We've got to know much more than that to get the point of the election struggle. The whole world knows that Dewey was defeated. The whole world does not know how critical and close was the battle and how seriously the United States stood at the brink of a Nazi-like abyss of reactionary resurgence of power. It is therefore of more than ordinary importance to examine in some detail how the victory for democracy and progress was achieved.

The interplay of forces on these various strategic fronts was very complicated and any over-simplified analysis of the results would falsify the picture of reality. I want to venture a simple outline of the factors that made this complicated struggle develop. I want to follow through with the seven points of the reactionary strategy and see how each one worked out in the election struggle.

First, on the reactionary control of the Republican Party: this is the front on which superficially the Hoover-Dewey camp scored its greatest gain. It secured complete dominance of the Republican Party, without which it had no base of operations, and completely shut Willkie and his friends out into the cold. But right here in the basic first step of the reactionary attempt at the seizure of power they ran into the first contradiction which began to prepare their ultimate defeat. They secured the dominance of the Republican Party, but their technical victory was so complete that in the result it acted as a boomerang. For with the development of the fight on all issues of the campaign, the

Morris Schappes

America's most distinguished political prisoner came back to freedom last Monday. Morris U. Schappes left Walkill Prison a bigger man than on the day when the jury and the judge, sacrificing justice to anti-Red hysteria in a period when both the United States and Russia were still uninvolved in the war, declared him guilty of first degree perjury. We know now that Schappes' real crime was "premature anti-fascism." For this a legislative committee headed by a man whose law firm was the representative of the Vichy government in this country, Sen. Frederick R. Coudert, Jr., expelled him and several other anti-fascist teachers from New York's city colleges and instigated the prosecution of Schappes. Chief Justice Irving Lehman of New York State's highest tribunal, the Court of Appeals, thought the case against Schappes was too flimsy to warrant conviction. Hundreds of distinguished Americans agreed. But the majority of the court said Schappes must stay in jail and so, in effect, did Gov. Thomas E. Dewey who, for a man of his avowed passion for fair play, proved remarkably allergic to the many appeals for a pardon. Schappes was finally released on parole after serving a little over a year.

We of New Masses feel a special joy that Morris U. Schappes is free once more. Our readers know him as a frequent contributor to these pages, and the editors know him as a loyal friend and a man whose courage and flaming devotion to the anti-fascist cause are an inspiration to us all. Congratulations to him and to his brave wife, Sonya. Welcome home, Morris Schappes!

exclusion of the Willkie forces prepared the pre-conditions for the swinging of the Willkie forces away from the Republican Party to the support of Roosevelt. I would say that perhaps the number of Willkie Republicans who voted for Roosevelt may have been as many as Roosevelt's popular majority. The swaying of these Willkie votes was prepared by the completeness with which the Dewey forces seized control of the Republican convention and the party machine. The Hoover-Dewey dominance was so complete that it became obvious to the Willkie followers that they no longer had a place in the Republican Party, at least in this campaign.

On the second point, the reactionary disruption of the Democratic Party, this scheme collapsed entirely in that phase in which it did all it could to reduce the electoral vote in the Solid South and finally produced no result beyond reducing the volume of popular votes for Roosevelt. The scheming and millions of dollars that were spent didn't change a single electoral vote. In fact, the reactionary camp once more overreached itself and the net result of what they got out of their efforts to disrupt the Democratic Party from within was that they brought about the defeat of a whole series of their Democratic allies in Congress, thereby greatly strengthening the President's position in the nation as a whole and opening the way for fundamental improvement in the political life of the South. I think one of the greatest points of significance in this electoral struggle was that the South emerged from the control of the poll tax machine of the Democratic Party, and the poll taxers emerged so fundamentally weakened that they can never again pretend to exercise any sort of veto power in the Democratic Party.

Farley's treason in New York State was overcome so that the President carried the state with a bigger majority than in 1940. Although there was the most persistent and widespread sabotage within the Democratic Party by the agents of Farley and Hoover, all of this was overcome by the upsurge of the masses of the people and by the fact that important sections of the Democratic machine were not infected by the treason, and among them, the Hague machine in New Jersey and the Kelly machine in Chicago. The worst spots in Democratic machine politics were spots where the Republicans did not attack because they had the collaboration of the Democratic machine leaders. But all of it brought no results beyond a certain

diminution of the President's popular vote, but didn't affect a single electoral vote.

ON THE third point, the scheme to reduce the total vote: This was revealed some time ago in the Congress debate on the soldier vote bill when the President's opponents declared that they would vote for the federal soldier vote ballot, but only on condition that the President would promise not to be a candidate. Later Dewey's supporters publicly speculated that a national vote of forty millions would guarantee Dewey's election, a vote of forty-five millions would leave the result in doubt, while anything over forty-five millions guaranteed the election of FDR. That wasn't a theory put forward by the Communists; it wasn't the NEW MASSES; it wasn't Earl Browder; it wasn't any Roosevelt man. It was the open supporters of Dewey who put forward the thesis. Its anti-democratic basis is characteristic of the whole Dewey campaign.

On the basis of this theory, the Republican machine tried to cut down the registration. They did this by limiting facilities, by keeping long lines waiting at the polls and making large numbers of people come back to the polls a second and sometimes a third time, and so on. Also in New York they made spectacular legal investigations, subpoenas were served on first voters during the late hours of the night, wholesale warrants of arrest for fraud were issued, and so on, all designed to scare away first voters from the polls. But the more the Republicans tried to cut down the vote, the more it acted as a boomerang, and as a result they stimulated the masses to get the vote out. They stimulated the mass movement by these anti-democratic moves which did more than the work of the Political Action Committee. Although the PAC work was a very valuable and a very effective thing, it must take second place to the Dewey job of trying to keep the vote down. That is first of all what brought the vote out. The Dewey speculative formula worked out, in the sense that the vote did go above forty-five millions, and that Dewey did lose.

Point number four, the scheme to divide the labor movement: This hinged on the exploitation of the rivalry between the AFL and the CIO by Republican demonstration of warm sympathy for the former and sharp attacks against the latter. They gave protection to John L. Lewis who led strikes

and endangered the war effort. There were planned provocations by employers and an effort to create a strong strike movement during the election period, and so on. There were a hundred different forms in this attempt to disrupt the labor organizations. Huge efforts were made through corruption and intimidation to bring labor leaders into open support of Dewey and other reactionary candidates. Vernal labor papers were paid to publish Dewey's divisive propaganda. The daily press was literally full of it for weeks. They tried to reach the rank and file of the labor movement, but this scheme, it seemed, was without success. They were successful, though, among a few top leaders of the AFL. In the Executive Council those for Roosevelt were Dan Tobin of the Teamsters and two or three others: Brown of the Machinists, Flore of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers, Harrison of the Railway Clerks. The others gave their indirect support to Dewey. Among the millions of members and most of the lower leaders of the AFL there was quite a different picture. Far from dividing AFL from the CIO, the Dewey campaign, as it developed, brought an unprecedented unity among the two great divisions of the labor movement; their rivalry became transformed into a struggle to see which could do the most for the reelection of President Roosevelt. I deliberately went out and stimulated that rivalry. In one place when I was with members of the AFL, I told them that the CIO was doing a better job than they, and then when I spoke to members of the CIO, I told them the AFL had it all over them. This rivalry was wonderful; it went higher and higher and before the campaign was over it was difficult to see which really had done the best work. In some places, the AFL did a better job than the CIO; Illinois was one of them. We must say that the labor movement demonstrated a high political maturity and that the Dewey strategy toward labor was a flop.

THE fifth point, the plan to win the Negro vote: For a few weeks after the national party conventions it looked as if the Hoover-Dewey strategy had registered deeply. But as the campaign developed, the realities broke through the demagoguery, and the Negro voters came through their period of hesitation and swung overwhelmingly to Roosevelt on election day. The turning point came with the Philadelphia traction upheaval. You remember the so-called

strike of the traction workers in Philadelphia, which was instigated by powerful figures in the Republican Party of Pennsylvania with national advice. The Republican Party tried to incite the white workers there to drive the Negroes out of employment in order that they could tell the Negro people of America that the government did not protect their rights and that they would have to put in Dewey to get their protection. That provocation in Philadelphia was another boomerang. It was another boomerang because the Transport Workers Union was on the job and the Roosevelt administration stepped in and followed the advice of the Transport Workers Union in that situation. They took charge of the Philadelphia Transit System with federal troops; and the Transport Workers Union went in and put it back to work again. The authority of the Fair Employment Practices Committee was upheld by the combined power of the Roosevelt administration and the labor movement. And the fact that the Republicans had been behind this effort was exposed to the country, especially to the Negro people, who studied that situation very carefully.

Well, the result was that what was to have been the crowning stroke of the Republican strategy for winning the Negro back turned out to be the opposite. It was the stroke that turned the Negro masses back to Roosevelt.

Point number six of the reactionary strategy, the doubletalk scheme of Dewey: Perhaps the modern radio should be given some credit for the breakdown of this little scheme of working both sides of the street and gathering support from both sides of every controversial question. Because of the radio everybody heard all the speeches that were made, and while Republicans had intended and planned to have, as Secretary Ickes said, a Seattle Dewey, a Los Angeles Dewey, a Chicago Dewey and a Pittsburgh Dewey, those of us who listened to the radio saw all of the Deweys. We saw all of them at the same time and saw their contradictions.

The doubletalk scheme of Candidate Dewey and his talking out of both sides of his mouth was so widely recognized that hard-boiled Republicans were blushing for him. But there were a large number of backward masses who were influenced by Dewey and his doubletalk and it trickled in and left its effects. However, it is equally certain that this was approximately offset by