

July 28, 1944

Dear Sumner:

I was just about to write you a letter of comment on Dewey's silence on the issues of the day. I was about to say, "up to this moment we have not had a word from Dewey on the vital issues of the campaign" and to elaborate by personal comment, when I went outside for a moment to obtain from the elevator girl the issue of this afternoon's Express, for a glance at the headlines, when lo and behold on the front page is this headline: "Dewey comes out against Hamilton Fish." The story itself goes on to state:

"In a statement dictated to reporters by James S. Hagerly, Dewey's press secretary, the GOP Presidential nominee said:

'Two years ago I publicly opposed the nomination and election of Congressman Fish. Statements attributed to him confirm my judgment expressed at that time.

'Anyone who injects a racial or religious issue into a political campaign is guilty of a disgraceful, un-American act.

'I have always fought that kind of thing all my life and always will regardless of partisan consideration. I have never accepted the support of any such individual and I never shall.' "

Here is the first forthright and convincing, as well as courageous, stand on the injection of race and religion into the campaign. Obviously he is to be heartily commended not only for what he said but for the timing of the statement as well.

One swallow, of course, does not make a summer and it is early yet to say how far and how soon Dewey will make his ideas known to the general electorate. Being this year a Mugwump, I will continue to remain on the fence until I know exactly where he stands on the vital issues. I have a feeling that he will make his views crystal clear but that he is biding his time for the proper moment. Timing is a very important psychological and strategical factor.

I know one road that Dewey could travel and arrive at his destination in short time. By that road he could avoid many misinterpretations and misunderstandings as to what his words mean or intend. That road has never before, I believe, been travelled, but he could blaze the path, do the startling thing as a pioneer, and attract to himself those people who, like myself, are now marking time and who carry the balance of the voting power. The path is for Dewey to announce the names of those whom he would select as the members of his cabinet if he were elected President and he need do no more to make his views known and understood. If he named, let us say, Wendell Willkie as Secretary of State we would know at once where he, as President, would stand on foreign policy. If he named a very prominent, honest, courageous and liberal labor leader as his Secretary of Labor, the people would know at once how labor would be treated in post-war legislation. And so on down the line. By naming each one of the ten members of the cabinet,



(after consultation with them, to be sure, and their willingness to accept and to be publicly mentioned), Dewey would thereby have passed the philosophic as well as pragmatic and acid test. Notwithstanding Roosevelt's practice policy on government, no one man can run this country of ours successfully. If he is to have a plan, order and system he must have a strong cabinet whose members can assume responsibility and carry out the work entrusted to them. If Dewey would say to the country, "this is my Board of Directors. You know their qualifications, you know their background. You have confidence in them. You trust them. Having become associated with them I expect you to approve of my selection and to elect me President."

The war news is mounting in intensity of excitement and hope for a quick collapse of Germany. It does seem that we are nearing the end of the European phase.

Affectionately,