

# The Liberal Line...

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The Liberal propaganda machine over the past week has stressed:

1. The President's health. Day by day in every way it gets better and better.

2. The domestic political situation. The question is, whom are the Democrats going to run for President?

3. The character of the leaders of the Soviet Union. They are wicked men, the Geneva Spirit and the New Look to the contrary notwithstanding, as one can plainly see from their current behavior in the Middle East.

4. The crisis in the Middle East. It is grave in the extreme.

5. The Eisenhower Administration's foreign economic policy. They are pikers about foreign spending.

Number One and Number Two add up to what we may call a wheel-spinning operation, which is something any propaganda machine worth its salt must know how to conduct successfully. Such an operation is needed when the machine finds itself up against a great event whose consequences are still uncertain (in this case the President's heart attack). Wheel-spinning is also in order when considerations of discretion or of good taste render inadvisable any direct reference to what the machine would *like* to be talking about (in this case, clearly, the urgent need of forcing the Republicans to nominate, as usual, a dependable anti-Republican Republican), or when the themes it yearns to plug away at might subsequently lay it open to the unbearable charge that it has been wrong about something, or misread the course of events.

A propaganda machine that is merely spinning its wheels either talks learnedly about everything save what lies closest to its heart, which with the Liberals is always control of the Presidency, or hits away at the easy ones, such as delight over the President's health. Until, therefore, History has jumped one way or the other, so that the machine can adopt appropriate and rewarding themes about the Republican nomination, we may confidently expect an uninterrupted flood of

learned talk about this or that irrelevancy (see, for example, the Alsops' astonishing Sunday column on the general theory of obsolescence in armaments) and endless speculative chatter predicated on the notion that the three-cornered race in the Democratic Party really matters.

The important thing is not to be taken in by it, which calls for remembering that what the machine is really worried about is the following awful possibility: that the Republican nomination may go to the rather young man who was prematurely anti-Communist, and who may, one day, despite the respectable Liberal noises he is now making, kick over the traces and move back in on the Communists, here and abroad.

The themes that relate to the wickedness of the Soviet leaders and the gravity of the Middle Eastern crisis can likewise be bracketed together as a single operation. The latter represents the Liberal line in its most typical—and by the same token most sinister—vein. For the crisis in the Middle East confronts the Liberals with the necessity of devising appropriate and rewarding themes, calculated to shore up a crumbling propaganda position.

Only by urging these self-imposing themes and urging them successfully, can they hope to conceal from the target audience (and from themselves!) the suicidal character of our Liberal-dominated foreign policy.

What the total operation amounts to is, quite simply, this: the United States has for years been upsetting the apple-cart in the Middle East without reference to the consequences for the Arab countries. The Arabs point out that they have only Israel's word for it that her military build-up is for purely defensive purposes. (After all, Israel didn't even exist ten years ago.) And, that being the case, the day *had* to come when the Arabs, accepting help from whatever source might be available, would move to restore the status quo ante. And when the Soviet Union, ever alert to opportunities for putting U.S. policy over a barrel, would facilitate such a move. The third theme, emphasizing that the Soviet leaders have given us further evidence of their wickedness, is worth the Liberals' insisting on, then, because it provides an explanation for the "crisis" that leaves our planners and their apologists looking pretty good after all.

Absurd? Ah, but this column does not invent the Liberal line. It merely reports it.

As for Number Five (the Eisenhower Administration are being pikers about foreign economic aid), watch it. Both the Alsops and Walter Lippmann gave it a preliminary workout last week. I predict for it a brilliant future.

## The Editors of National Review Believe:

1. That there is a Liberal point of view on national and world affairs, for which the word "Liberal" has been appropriated;
2. That the point of view consists, on the one hand, of a distinctively Liberal way of looking at and grasping political reality, and on the other hand of a distinctively Liberal set of values and goals;
3. That the nation's leading opinion-makers for the most part share the Liberal point of view, try indefatigably to inculcate it in their readers' minds, and to that end employ the techniques of propaganda;
4. That we may properly speak of them as a huge *propaganda machine*, engaged in a major, sustained assault upon the sanity, and upon the prudence and the morality of the American people—its sanity, because the political reality of which they speak is a dream world that nowhere exists, its prudence and morality because their values and goals are in sharpest conflict with the goals and values appropriate to the American tradition;
5. That NATIONAL REVIEW must keep a watchful eye on the day-to-day operations of the Liberal propaganda machine: the theses it puts forward, the arguments (if any) it advances in their support, and the (implicit or explicit) policy recommendations it urges on us—in a word, on the *Liberal Line*.