

Toward Freedom

REPUBLICAN efforts to dress Gov. Dewey up as the noble champion of a permanent FEPC is characteristic of the cynical demagoguery with which their entire campaign is being conducted. But if they are wise they will soft-pedal this issue, because President Roosevelt holds all the cards—and the people know it. **Just look at the President's record on FEPC.**

When it was apparent that special steps must be taken to enable Negro workers to share in the expanding war industry, President Roosevelt (summer, 1941) issued the famous Executive Order 8802, barring racial discrimination in employment and creating the Committee on Fair Employment Practices to enforce the order. Never before in history had a special agency of the federal government been set up to break down racial discrimination.

When War Manpower Commissioner McNutt cancelled FEPC's scheduled southern railroad hearings during the President's absence from the country (spring, 1942); it was commonly predicted that FEPC would soon die. But the President reconstituted FEPC on a firmer basis and ordered the southern railroad hearings to proceed.



By Doxey Wilkerson

WHEN Comptroller General Warren ruled in the Southeastern Bell Telephone Co. case that FEPC directives were merely "advisory" and need not be followed (fall, 1943), the President promptly reversed this ruling and made it perfectly clear that FEPC directives are "orders" which must be obeyed.

When Sen. Russell of Georgia introduced his amendment to kill FEPC as a non-statutory agency without authorization by Congress (spring, 1944), the President recommended a congressional appropriation of \$500,000 for FEPC and fought hard to win its approval.

And, finally, when FEPC faced its greatest crisis in the recent Philadelphia transit strike (fall, 1944), the President, then in the South Pacific, demonstrated to the entire country just how far he was ready to go to defend this anti-discrimination agency. He called out the Army, the ultimate authority of the United States, to enforce FEPC's order for the upgrading of eight Negro workers.

Contrast this with the Dewey-Republican record on FEPC.

WHEN the FEPC appropriation was before Congress, House Republicans joined up with reactionary polltax Democrats from the South and were on the point of killing the appropriation until Representative Marcantonio forced a record vote. Then they ran

FDR's Record on FEPC Compared With Dewey's

for cover and allowed the appropriation to pass.

When the Philadelphia race-hate strike tied up war production for nearly a week, the Republican mayor of that city and the Republican governor of the state said not one word of condemnation. Gov. Dewey and two dozen other Republican governors, then meeting in St. Louis to draw up their platform of "states' rights," completely ignored the transit strike, not even issuing a statement in support of FEPC or against the strike's instigation to racial violence.

When the Governor's own anti-discrimination committee introduced bills for a New York state FEPC (spring, 1944), Dewey deliberately killed the bills for fear that their passage might cause southern delegates to the Republican national convention to vote against his nomination as the GOP presidential candidate.

When candidate Dewey and his GOP backers now say (as Dewey did in his Seattle speech), "We shall establish the Fair Employment Practices Committee as a permanent function and authorized by law," the Negro people are unimpressed. They remember the record.

But President Roosevelt need not say a single word about his support for the continuance of FEPC. The Negro people are already profoundly impressed by his deeds. And on Nov. 7 they will remember the record.