

Our Conclusion

This newspaper has weighed the issues developed in the Presidential campaign and has come to the conclusion that the election of Governor Dewey would better serve the welfare of the United States. Respecting the right of others to make their own evaluation, we here state briefly the chief considerations that have entered into our decision:

Fourth Term. We have regarded the long-cherished unwritten rule of two terms much more seriously than do those who see it merely as a tradition or cynically use it as a smokescreen for partisanship.

We do not believe that Franklin Roosevelt is going to make himself a dictator. We do believe that anything which brings the people to suppose that the purpose, power, and wisdom of the American people can be properly expressed only by one personality weakens the roots of self-reliant self-government. We decry and oppose the obsession with personality which takes the form of hate; it is no less dangerous than that which takes the form of worship. But both feed on long tenure in the Presidency.

Long tenure smothers alternative leadership. The third term was advocated as a necessity in a crisis. So is a fourth. Will there be no grave national problems in 1948? Long tenure tends to collect the encrustations of officialdom, to harden old animosities and administrative conflicts, to take a President more and more out of touch with the people, and to develop a "papa-knows-best" attitude which is the antithesis of democracy.

Other practical and nonpartisan disadvantages today add to those which Jefferson foresaw. Item: The existence of 3,300,000 Federal employees. All of these may not feel a personal obligation to keep a President in office, but certainly many of them do and they influence a multitude among their families and friends. Item: The possibility of reshaping the whole judicial system. Mr. Roosevelt has not only already refashioned the Supreme Court; he has appointed 165 of the 275 principal Federal judges, and in that number somehow found only two Republicans qualified.

Foreign Policy. This newspaper was among the earliest to warn of isolationism and appeasement. We favored a stronger policy of resistance to aggression when Japan went into Manchuria, when Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, when the democracies appeased the Fascists in Spain, China, and Czechoslovakia. We have long supported the Hull tariff policy and consider the lowering of trade barriers one of the chief hopes for peace. We have applauded Mr. Roosevelt's peace planning so far as it has developed.

But Governor Dewey has now taken a parallel position on international cooperation and the enforcement of peace. He has declared himself in favor of giving the American representative on the World Security Council "adequate power for swift action" to prevent aggression. On one point he has been even more specific than the President—in favoring the Austin-Connally plan for fixing the procedures for American participation by a simple majority vote of Congress. Mr. Dewey has shown a tremendous growth in understanding of world affairs. We have good reason to believe that his purpose is as sincere as his position is clear.

Can he carry his party with him? We have many times criticized the Republican record in Congress on the arms embargo, conscription, Lend-Lease and tariffs. We do not believe the isolationists have all seen the light. We think citizens will need to bear down on them for more specific pledges to make American participation in peace-policing really effective—whoever is elected.

We believe Republicans in Congress should co-operate with a Democratic President as well as a Republican in peacemaking. But as a practical matter we recognize that Governor Dewey has certain advantages in obtaining bipartisan support for the peace. He has already managed wisely to bring many of his party leaders into a co-operative attitude, whereas Mr. Roosevelt in his peace efforts would inherit considerable opposition to himself and to the New Deal from Congressmen of both parties. And he would lack the leverage of patronage which a new President could command at the beginning of his term.

An additional and highly important point in weighing the foreign policy issue is that of performance as dis-

tinguished from planning. There is increasing evidence that the administrative confusions and conflicts of the Roosevelt régime are bungling the actual conduct of American relations with other nations. This has managed to build up great resentment toward the United States among Frenchmen, Italians, Poles, Spaniards, Latin Americans, and Yugoslavs.

No one knows how much of the new stiffening of German resistance is due to the amazing episode in which Mr. Roosevelt allowed Secretary Morgenthau to by-pass the State and War Departments and bring out a plan for German industry with which Herr Goebbels was able to frighten all Germans. Millions of Americans have been rendered uneasy by such appointments as that of Robert Murphy as chief adviser to General Eisenhower on Germany and of Jefferson Caffery as Ambassador to France, to say nothing of other evidence that reactionary and clerical influences operate widely in American foreign policy.

Domestic Issues. Here full employment and full production appear to be the first postwar objectives. We are not satisfied that either party has a sure-fire solution. Mr. Roosevelt is widely credited for winning a considerable measure of recovery in his first two terms, but there were still 8,000,000 to 10,000,000 unemployed in 1940. The Democrats offer no new assurance and, while saying private industry can provide jobs, seem to approach the problem with a defeatist, punitive attitude. We believe the Republicans are more likely to provide an atmosphere in which private enterprise will operate with enthusiasm.

The prospects for effective action both on domestic and foreign affairs cannot be adequately appraised without noting the situation in Congress. The President has gradually built up an opposition coalition of conservative Democrats and Republicans which for months has refused to accept his leadership. It has gone along on war measures, but has rejected White House proposals like the soldiers' vote bill and carried its own over the President's veto, as on the tax bill and the Smith-Connally Act.

Congress may be changed somewhat in the election, but unless Mr. Roosevelt should be elected by a landslide, political observers believe there is considerable prospect that the Republicans will control the House of Representatives. It is unlikely that they can gain enough to organize the Senate this year, but the coalition opposition to the President would remain. He could hardly hope to carry through any extensive program of domestic legislation under such conditions, and a more probable situation would be a dangerous stalemate.

A further practical consideration in surveying the prospects under a continuation of the Roosevelt regime is the political mortgages which the President has accumulated. One of these is his great indebtedness to the Congress of Industrial Organizations and its Political Action Committee. This relationship has already embittered the split in the American labor movement. How can the debt be paid off without giving one section of the labor movement undue power over national policy? Another mortgage would be held by the Kellys and the Hagues. How would it be paid off?

One of the gravest issues is the trend toward regimentation and socialization which the New Deal greatly speeded. Both candidates are now promising very similar Federal controls over farm prices and wages. Both favor labor and social security policies which run roughly parallel. We believe the Republicans would go more slowly along this path and with more respect for individual liberties and more care for economy and efficiency in administration. The Republicans may at times be less aware of the common man's aspirations but they are also less open to paternalistic and collectivist theories and to the influence of corrupt big city machines.

Other issues enter the campaign, but these are the big ones. We believe that on domestic issues the vast majority of Americans would not think of a Fourth Term. Those who believe that the differences between candidates and parties on foreign policies override all other considerations are entitled to their own judgment. For ourselves we find that the weighing of issues brings us to a clear conclusion—that changing horses is the best way to get across the streams ahead.