

Reasons for Our Confidence

When after the Eisenhower nomination a good many followers of Senator Taft were so keenly disappointed that they threatened to vote Democratic this newspaper questioned their position. Today it seems to us some of the general's followers are approaching an equally strange attitude when they threaten to desert him because of his efforts to unify the Republican Party.

They appear equally bent on asking the party to fly to victory on one wing. They seem to us equally ready to defeat their own major interests. We respect their adherence to their own ideals. But we question the wisdom of their course.

This newspaper retains its allegiance to the purposes that inspired the independents and liberal Republicans who enthusiastically sought General Eisenhower's nomination. We are confident that those purposes can be realized. Here are our reasons:

Our hopes from the Eisenhower candidacy were several. First, that it would effect a change of administration and revive the two-party system.

A change seemed to us then, and seems to us today, fundamentally important to obtain a thorough house-cleaning in Washington. The corruption that has become a veritable pattern is no accident; it is the product of entrenched political power permeated by the sordid atmosphere of the big-city machines. No leader of the same party, however sincere, can enjoy full freedom to attack these evils.

Another reason for desiring a change was to check the drive toward centralization and socialization. The New-Fair Deal has encouraged one voting bloc after another to depend on federal support. Moreover through the years even its reform programs have developed excrescences of excessive bureaucracy, paternalism, waste, debt, and inflation. The attack on these can best be made by those who have not permitted or fostered them.

Again in foreign affairs we believe that a fresher, more imaginative approach can be obtained by a change. The party in power would thus be freed from the grooves of past mistakes. The opposition would be rescued from the reckless extremes of criticism and forced to take the sobering responsibilities of power.

General Eisenhower, a distinguished, nonpolitical figure, mentioned for nomination by both parties and noted for his success in getting men and nations to work together, appeared—and to us still appears—most able to weld Americans into a strong national team in this critical hour.

There was the further hope that the two-party system could be revived by liberalizing the Republican Party and attracting the support of independents and dissatisfied Democrats. Indeed the uniting of these elements appeared necessary to win a majority and achieve a change. Before the advantages of a change could be experi-

enced the general had two main tasks: To unite his party and to make effective attacks on the party in power.

Some liberals and independents either assume that these tasks were unnecessary or that the course taken in achieving them will destroy the original long-range purposes. But does the actual situation justify the assumption either that the Republican Party cannot be liberalized or that General Eisenhower has been "captured" by isolationists and witch-hunters?

The evidence is that he has succeeded in winning the support of many independents and dissenting Democrats. He has wider popular support than right-wing Republican congressmen in their own states. Some of them are likely to be defeated; those that ride into office on his coattails will be in no position to control him or his party. As to isolation and witch-hunting, they will be in a minority, probably of their own party, certainly of Congress as a whole.

Nor do we expect the general to be dominated by reactionaries on domestic policy. Where is there any evidence that he has "surrendered" to them? He has always taken a basically conservative position in so far as opposing centralized or wasteful government is conservative. But he has promised not to turn the clock back on social legislation and his closest friends and earliest supporters are in the liberal wing of the Republican Party. On domestic issues he would doubtless work in harmony with the bipartisan conservative majority which is expected to continue to control Congress.

On foreign policy General Eisenhower's record is plain. So is the 10-point program he announced at Philadelphia. His commitment to the United Nations and to cooperation with other free nations in pursuit of peace is firm and unequivocal. So is his rejection of un-American methods of rooting out Communists. Many correspondents who have ridden his campaign trains and planes report that the Eisenhower of today is in fundamental purposes the same Eisenhower so many Americans desired to draft in July.

His manifest popularity is evidence that the bulk of the independents are not deserting him. To do so would be to risk loss of the election, surrender of the Republican Party to the right wing and still further weakening of the two-party system. To do so would be to give up in advance the high hopes of the great long-range advantages to be won from a change.

Does dissatisfaction with "bedfellow" situations in the campaign justify paying so high a price? We do not see it. A wise man once said: "You don't divorce your wife because you got a poor breakfast on Thursday morning."

We respect the right of all persons to make their own evaluation of the situation. But for the reasons given we are confident that the original purposes that led to the Eisenhower nomination are within reach and that their attainment only requires continued clear-sighted, steadfast support.