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A historical analysis of the nomination of Wendell Lewis Willkie for the presidency of the United States of America

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A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE NOMINATION OF
WENDELL LEWIS WILLKIE FOR THE PRESIDENCY
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of History
The University of the Pacific

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Jerold David Gritz

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This thesis, written and submitted by

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND THE RESEARCH

The facts of the election alone stamped Willkie as the greatest personality the Republican party had developed in a generation. Willkie's personal traits, the same earnest and unflagging energy which drove him through a campaign schedule that would have killed many another man, made it certain that he could not and would not stop fighting for the principles in which he believes.¹

In this rather apt description of Wendell Willkie, the 1940 Republican presidential nominee, two important characteristics of the man stand out: his personal traits and energy and his strength of conviction in fighting for the principles in which he believed. Willkie cannot be regarded a politician in the usual sense; he was a businessman who, because of his convictions, waged a personal war against Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal--a war conducted outside the realm of partisan politics. His successes in the fight with the administration brought Willkie a measure of recognition and aroused the interest of certain Republicans who held like opinions of the New Deal; his personality and continued expression of his beliefs deepened this interest, resulting ultimately in his nomination. It is the purpose of this study to analyze the conditions which enabled Willkie to rise from comparative

¹"History in the Making," Current History, 52:7, November 26, 1940.

obscurity to become the 1940 G.O.P. standard bearer, presenting in the analysis the Republican campaigns for the nomination, the G.O.P. convention, and the influence of Roosevelt's third term decision and the European war on the selection of the party's nominee.

I. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In the election of 1936 the Republican party's attempted challenge of the New Deal and its chief architect, Franklin D. Roosevelt, ended with a stunning defeat in which the G.O.P. carried only two states. The party's policies and ideals had been rejected by the American electorate. During the next two years the party leaders worked to rebuild both the organization and the image of the Republican party, and in the Congressional elections of 1938 the G.O.P. gained sufficient strength to become again an effective opposition party. Fortified by these victories, they looked forward to re-challenging the New Deal in 1940; they were optimistic about their chances, and the public opinion polls gave them good reason to be so.

The enthusiasm and assurance of victory which had characterized the party during 1939 suffered a dramatic setback when, in September, war broke out in Europe. The existence of an international crisis, coupled with Roosevelt's reluctance to announce his decision regarding a third term, made the choice of the G.O.P. nominee a crucial decision; for,

if the party selected the wrong candidate in such a situation, they would face the prospect of another ignominious defeat at the hands of the Democratic party and, as many believed, Franklin Roosevelt.

Faced with political survival in a critical election, the Republican party chose as their 1940 standard bearer not a politician, but a political amateur from the ranks of American business. The explanation of this occurrence has been debated for twenty-five years, during which time many answers have been advanced; however, historical agreement as to the cause of the nomination has not been reached. The present study is important because it is essential to American political history that the conditions which produced the phenomenal nomination be subjected to careful study and critical historical analysis to achieve, for the first time, a complete and accurate explanation as to why the Republican party nominated Willkie to represent the party in one of the most crucial elections in which they had ever participated.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The basic organization of the study follows a chronological presentation of the historical events; and within this framework, certain significant events have been emphasized to facilitate the understanding of both the presentation and the conclusions of the study. Chapter II presents an analysis of

the political climate of the country during the year 1939, discussing the revival of the Republican party, the sectional outlook of the country, the popularity of Roosevelt and his third term decision, and the emergence of the Republican candidates for the presidency. Chapter III, presenting an analysis of the first five months of 1940, discusses the Republican pre-primary and primary campaigns, the Democratic and Republican primary elections, and the popularity of the President and the third term question. Chapters II and III, therefore, present an account of the nation's major political activity from January, 1939, through May, 1940. The chronological analysis is interrupted to trace the political rise of Wendell Willkie from a critic of the Tennessee Valley Authority and other policies of the New Deal to a presidential contender. Chapter V fulfills the dual purpose of presenting information relative to the G.O.P. campaigns during the first three weeks of June, the period of time immediately preceding the convention, and of tying in Chapters II and III with Chapter IV; the chapter reveals the impact of the Willkie campaign on the other Republican presidential aspirants. Chapter VI presents the Republican convention, both the outward activity and the behind the scenes maneuvers; the comments of political leaders, political writers, and newspapers concerning the Willkie nomination; and a survey of the opinions which have been advanced to explain the cause of the upset nomination. Chapters II

through VI present a factual analysis of the historical events from January, 1939, through June, 1940, and serve as a basis for the conclusions of the study presented in Chapter VII.

III. HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

A search through Dissertation Abstracts, the Cumulative Book Index, The Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, and the New York Times Index revealed that there exists nowhere a complete analysis of Willkie's nomination. The research for the study verified this contention and disclosed that the election itself has been partially discussed in various works in political science concerned with the history of the two political parties, presidential elections, and general works on American politics; and that the Republican candidates, campaigns, and convention activities have been presented in biographies of the candidates and in the magazines and newspapers of the period. The information derived from the biographical sources was valuable, but the authors of these sources did not discuss the nomination in its entirety, but only in relation to the subjects of their works. Although the magazines and newspapers covered the political events during these two significant years quite well, neither presented a complete study of the aforementioned subject. In addition, no work which attempted to present the development of the third term decision in light of its influence upon the Republi-

can party could be found. The present study represents not only an examination and evaluation of the causes of Willkie's nomination, but also a complete picture of the Republican campaigns and convention activities and the influence of the war and Roosevelt on both.

IV. THE RESEARCH

The source material used in the study was derived from articles published in the New York Times, the magazines and political journals of the period, biographies of individuals discussed in the study, and various works on American political history.

The source material for Chapters II and III was secured from the New York Times, magazines, and political journals published during the period January, 1939, to May, 1940. Since these chapters follow a chronological presentation, the majority of the information was obtained from the New York Times, allowing the writer to set down a week-by-week account of the campaigns, the sectional outlook, and the popularity of the President. The magazines and political journals provided information as to the background of the candidates and the over-all political picture of the nation during this critical period. It might be noted that public opinion polls have been utilized to trace the popularity of the Republican candidates, the President, and the third term; the relative strengths of

the two political parties; and the popular reactions to certain major domestic and foreign events occurring during the period. The two polls used were the Fortune poll, conducted by Elmo Roper, and the Gallup Poll, conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion; and the results of these two polls represent an essential part of the foundation upon which the conclusions of the study have been based. The reliability of these polls is demonstrated by the fact that of all the public opinion surveys conducted during 1939 and 1940, only these two polls proved to be verifiable when compared with the results of the election. Both polls traced the ups and downs of public opinion during the months of the campaigns, and both arrived at substantially the same conclusions in their final polls, conclusions which were very close to the actual results: Roper came within one-half of one per cent; and Gallup, with his four per cent error correlation factor, was equally close.² Based on this information the assumption has been made that because both final polls were verifiably accurate, the sampling techniques utilized by Roper and Gallup throughout the pre-election period were the same as those producing the final polls. In view of the evidence, the assumption is not unreasonable.

²"Why the Polls Failed," The New Republic, 103:644, November 11, 1940.

The information contained in Chapter IV, the discussion of the political rise of Wendell Willkie, was derived from newspaper sources, magazines and political journals, and books. The majority of the information again came from the New York Times, with the presentation following the same structure as that of Chapters II and III; however, much valuable information was obtained from books containing biographical material on Willkie and historical references indicating the part he played in the growth of the Republican party.

For Chapter V, presenting an analysis of the effect of the Willkie boom upon the other candidates, an overwhelming majority of the source material came from the New York Times, which carried a great many articles on the pre-convention activities, especially on the Stimson-Know appointments and the development of Willkie's political career. In addition, information concerning the political situation in Philadelphia immediately before the convention opened was obtained from magazines and political journals; the topic was not developed in the book sources.

The information for Chapter VI, discussing the convention, came from newspapers, magazines and political journals, and books. For the most part, the material pertaining to the chronological presentation of events was derived from the newspaper and magazine sources; and the behind the scenes explanations of the events were taken from the biographies of Willkie

and works on American political history. The discussion of the platform has as its basis not only the full text of the document reprinted in the New York Times, but also comments taken from all available sources. The section presenting the reactions to the nomination and the many theories as to its cause was composed mainly from material found in magazines and political journals, although some was found in the New York Times and in book sources.

Chapter VII contains the conclusions of the study, the explanation and interpretation of the facts recorded in the study. Since this information has previously been substantiated by citations, only the factual information not found in the body of the study will be footnoted in this chapter.

V. THE METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The first step in preparing the study was to gather all of the available information concerning the problem under analysis and to arrange it into logical divisions corresponding to the proposed format of the study. Once this had been done, a draft of the study was prepared, presenting a chronological listing of all events from January, 1939, to July, 1940. This general picture was then broken down into the logical divisions corresponding to the aforementioned format. To this skeletal outline was added information explaining the events, molding each of the divisions into a stage in the development of the

problem under study. These divisions were then set down so as to form the basis from which the conclusions of the study would be drawn. The result of the research and this method of procedure is a comprehensive analysis of the nomination of Wendell Lewis Willkie for the presidency of the United States.

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND--1939

In American political history presidential campaigns have traditionally, and quite logically, begun sometime after the Congressional elections, two years before the presidential election. During this two year period the party in power attempts to shore up the administration in preparation for the impending attack; the opposition party starts mapping out strategy and, more important, sounding out possible candidates to spearhead the attack on the administration. During this early period trends in voting behavior, candidate popularity, and party strength become important as the candidates and issues emerge.

From January to September of 1939 the Republican party was characterized by a growing spirit of optimism as a result of their comeback in the 1938 Congressional elections. This spirit of optimism, partially supported by the public opinion polls, grew as the candidates began throwing their hats into the ring and denouncing the New Deal.

During this same period the Democratic party suffered from indecision and confusion; they had little reason to be optimistic because the President had refused to reveal his plans for 1940, and no one knew if he were planning to retire after his second term, or to run for a third. Such a situation

effectively stalled the campaigns of the potential Democratic candidates and stifled the enthusiasm of the rank and file.

The existing political situation was significantly altered in September when the Germans invaded Poland, forcing Britain and France to declare war on the aggressor. The seriousness of the international situation was to affect not only the issues of the political campaign, but also the popularity of the candidates and their programs.

I. THE REBIRTH OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

After the G.O.P.'s poor showing in the 1936 election, it appeared that the party had lost its position as a major political force in United States politics. An integral part of the background for 1940 is an analysis of the Republican party's rebuilding program which removed this stigma of defeat and replaced it with a spirit of optimism.

In April, 1937, Fortune released the results of a public opinion survey concerning the future of the G.O.P. Of those polled, 21.7 per cent believed that the party would recover in something like its old form; 40.0 per cent felt that it would revive under new and more liberal leadership; 6.6 per cent thought the party would be succeeded by another party; 8.9 per cent stated that the G.O.P. was dead; and 22.8 per cent stated that they had no opinion.¹

¹"The Fortune Quarterly Survey: VIII," Fortune, 15:112, April, 1937.

An interesting feature of this survey concerned the 40.0 per cent who believed that the party would revive under new and more liberal leadership. Of the various economic groups sampled, the percentage given to this answer was the highest given: 60.8 per cent of the salaried executives, 32.8 per cent of the laborers and farmers, 50.0 per cent of the students, and 28.9 per cent of the unemployed.²

The 40.0 per cent who believed that the party would revive under new and more liberal leadership proved to be correct; and in the 1938 Congressional elections the Republicans captured eleven Senate seats, 169 House seats, eighteen governorships, and control of both houses in nineteen state legislatures.³

The American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Poll) reported that the results of the elections indicated a wide swing from the New Deal, which had sustained losses in thirty-six of the forty-six states carried in 1936.⁴ Gallup, in his interpretation of the election results, stated that so one-sided a change in public opinion (five percentage points or better in twenty-seven states coast to coast) was not the

² Ibid.

³ "The Republican Party: Up from the Grave," Fortune, 20: 33, August, 1939.

⁴ New York Times, February 5, 1939, p. 5.

result of state and local issues and situations, as reported by the administration. In the industrial states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan--states representing 142 electoral votes--the Democrats lost an average of eight percentage points.⁵

The victories of 1938 stimulated Republicans all over the country to begin planning for the presidential election of 1940. Their optimism was clearly demonstrated in the Lincoln Day oratory of February, 1939. Former President Hoover, in a speech before the National Republican Club in New York City, declared that the 1938 victories represented encouraging signs of a Republican victory in 1940. After criticizing the New Deal as a mixture of coercion, collectivism, and lust for personal power, Hoover declared that the American voters had sent independent men to Washington, men who would not be controlled by government.⁶

Republican National Committee Chairman, John D. M. Hamilton, declared that the 1938 victories showed conclusively that the party was united and would be victorious in 1940.⁷ He also reported that twenty-one of the forty-eight states were "unquestionably Republican" and that if the party carried New

⁵Editorial in the New York Times, February 9, 1939, p. 20.

⁶New York Times, February 14, 1939, p. 1.

⁷New York Times, February 15, 1939, p. 11.

York in 1940, they would put their nominee in the White House.

The Gallup Poll confirmed Chairman Hamilton's optimism with the release of a report which revealed that of all voters with opinions, fifty-one per cent had indicated that they would like to see the Republican party win the presidency in 1940.⁹ One month later, in April of 1939, the Gallup Poll indicated that in a cross-section survey of the voting population in all states 52 per cent expected a Republican victory in 1940. Dr. Gallup presented a statistical picture of the party's comeback which showed that the Republican party had increased its percentage by twenty-two points since January, 1937. He also stated that during the months immediately after the party's defeat in 1936, politicians were seriously asking themselves if the Republican party were dead. According to Gallup, the gains occurred after the Supreme Court fight, the business slump of 1937-38, and the Democratic purge of 1938. These three events brought considerable gains to the Republicans, raising the percentage from 30 per cent in 1937 to 52 per cent by April, 1939.¹⁰

One of the major reasons for the successful comeback of the party was the work of the Republican National Committee

⁸New York Times, February 27, 1939, p. 1.

⁹New York Times, March 29, 1939, p. 1.

¹⁰New York Times, April 30, 1939, p. 18.

Chairman, John D. M. Hamilton, who had begun rebuilding the G.O.P. soon after the 1936 campaign. He made a study of minority party practices in the British House of Parliament and established a research department under Glenn Saxon to obtain facts for speeches and bills, a publicity department under Franklyn Waltman to inform the country of Republican policy, and a women's department under Miss Marion Martin to coordinate the efforts of the National Committee and the various women's groups supporting the party. Hamilton also sought to bring the Republican party from a "hate Roosevelt" stand to one of offering constructive opposition to the New Deal. To this end conferences with Republican legislators were held to map out strategy by which the legislators could attack New Deal legislation. The G.O.P.'s stand on the issues of the day were given to the publicity department for distribution to the mass media of the nation.¹¹

II. THE SECTIONAL OUTLOOK

The Republican party had come a long way in its attempt to recover the reins of government; however, the surveys and sectional analyses published during 1939 indicated that, while the party standings were close, the G.O.P. was still the minority party. The gains made in New England, the Middle Atlantic

¹¹"The Republican Party: Up from the Grave," Fortune, 20:97, August, 1939.

States, and the Central States were not sufficient to offset the Democratic strongholds of the South, the West, and the large Eastern cities. This contention was borne out by three separate analyses, conducted by Fortune, The Nation, and the Republican National Committee.

New England

In the 1938 elections the Republican vote gained over its 1936 totals in all the states in this section, except Maine.¹² The Republican National Committee asserted that the entire region--Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Connecticut--would vote Republican in 1940.¹³

Fortune, in its analysis of New England, declared that Republican stock had risen considerably in the region. The party held six governorships, nine of the twelve Senate seats, twenty-one of the twenty-eight Congressional seats, and legislative control in all the states, except Connecticut, where they held only the House. The magazine reported that the Democrats had written off all of New England, except Massachusetts and, possibly, Connecticut.¹⁴

¹²New York Times, February 5, 1939, p. 5

¹³New York Times, February 27, 1939, p. 1.

¹⁴The Republican Party: Up from the Grave," Fortune, 20:101, August, 1939.

Joseph F. Dinneen, analyzing the region for The Nation, arrived at approximately the same conclusions as did the Fortune analysts. He found that the New Deal had become very unpopular in New England because the people believed that they would end up paying for the extravagances of the rest of the country. In addition, business had been slow to recover from the Recession of 1937-38, and this had served to dampen the enthusiasm for the administration's policies. Dinneen reported that Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire were lost to the Democrats in 1940; but that Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut had been helped by the New Deal--roads, bridges, and jobs--and were considered states which could go either way in 1940.¹⁵

There was, then, in New England a definite trend toward conservatism, a move toward Republicanism. The dissatisfaction with the New Deal manifested itself in the election of Republican candidates in 1938. Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont were safely within the hands of the Republican party; and Connecticut and Rhode Island were generally conceded to be leaning toward the G.O.P. for 1940.

The Middle Atlantic States

In the presidential election of 1936 the Democrats carried every state in this region; however, in the Congress-

¹⁵ Joseph F. Dinneen, "This Is America: VI. The New Yankee G.O.P.," The Nation, 149:168-71, August 12, 1939.

sional elections of 1938 the Republicans had staged a strong comeback, gaining in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and West Virginia and losing only in Maryland.¹⁶ On the basis of these gains the Republican National Committee claimed New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania for 1940. They also declared New York to be a borderline state, though leaning toward the G.O.P.¹⁷

In their study of the Middle Atlantic States, Fortune reported that the Republicans, in order to win in November, had to carry New York; but the magazine also indicated that the party machine in that state was weak. In Pennsylvania the G.O.P. held the governorship, but Governor Arthur H. James' labor policies had antagonized that politically influential group. In New Jersey, the political control of the state rested in the hands of Boss Hague and the Hudson County machine, and the Republicans were given no chance of capturing this state in 1940.¹⁸

In his analysis of the political situation in the Middle Atlantic States, Kenneth G. Crawford, writing in The Nation, came to the conclusion that if Roosevelt were the Democratic candidate, the entire section would vote Democratic in 1940;

¹⁶New York Times, February 5, 1939, p. 5

¹⁷New York Times, February 27, 1939, p. 1.

¹⁸"The Republican Party: Up from the Grave," Fortune, 20:97-99, August, 1939.

however, if a non-Roosevelt-supported reactionary became the candidate, the party would lose the entire section to the Republicans. He contended that F.D.R.'s popularity was so great in the section that there was no real evidence that the voters would turn down the third term attempt, if it developed. According to Crawford, Dewey was the only Republican with a following in the region; but his candidacy was opposed by the Old Guard, who had lined up behind Vandenberg. The only Democrat other than Roosevelt who had Eastern support was Vice-President Garner. Crawford's analysis of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania generally agreed with that presented by Fortune; however, he declared that the Democratic leadership in New York and Pennsylvania was not much better than that of the G.O.P. In West Virginia John L. Lewis' miners were reported to be content and still loyal to the New Deal, and in normally Democratic Maryland the New Deal was still popular. In Delaware, the war industries of the duPont family had been expanded and were figured to increase Republican popularity materially and bring the state back to the fold in 1940.¹⁹

The Central States

The Republican party lost this entire twelve state region in 1936; however, in the 1938 elections they gained in every state: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa,

¹⁹Kenneth G. Crawford, "This Is America: VII. Roosevelt and the Vital East," The Nation, 149:237-40, September 2, 1939.

Minnesota, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.²⁰ The Republican National Committee claimed every state in this region for 1940, except Illinois and Missouri. The former was considered to be a borderline state, though leaning toward the Democratic party.²¹

In the Central States, Fortune reported, farmers were dissatisfied with the New Deal farm program and had expressed their feelings by giving overwhelming support to the Republican party in the Congressional elections of 1938. The magazine reported that the Democrats had written off Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin for 1940, but hoped to maintain their hold on Illinois and Missouri. According to Fortune, Indiana was rated as borderline, though leaning toward the Democrats by virtue of the state's control by the Paul V. McNutt machine.²²

William L. White, writing in The Nation, indicated that there was a definite trend toward conservatism throughout the Middle West. He stated that there existed a general feeling of warm affection for the President, although the same could not be said for his program. If war were to break out prior to the election, there would be, according to White, a strong

²⁰New York Times, February 5, 1939, p. 5.

²¹New York Times, February 27, 1939, p. 1.

²²"The Republican Party: Up from the Grave," Fortune, 20:100, August, 1939.

movement in this section to draft Roosevelt for a third term; however, if the President's interference in European affairs brought the United States to the brink of war, then the Middle West would oppose him and send a large contingent of isolationist Congressmen to Washington in 1940. White also reported that the Old Guard Democrats had lined up behind Garner, while the New Dealers had voiced a preference for James Farley, the Democratic National Committee Chairman. In the Republican camp many had expressed interest in Dewey's candidacy, but there existed some skepticism as to his experience and ability. Arthur Vandenberg, no stranger to the voters of the Middle West, had a considerable following.²³

Arville Schaleben, in his study of the North Central States, also reported that there existed a good deal of dissatisfaction with the New Deal, as well as a trend toward conservatism, which could result in a Republican sweep of the section in 1940. He declared that the political situation in Michigan and South Dakota pointed to almost certain defeat for the Democratic party, even if the country were at war. In Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin the Democrats faced probable defeat. Schaleben attributed this reversal to the fact that the people of the section were tired of unemployment, economic strife, and relief. In addition, Roosevelt's foreign

²³William L. White, "This Is America: I. The Middle West Drifts to the Right," The Nation, 148:635-38, June 3, 1939.

policy, with its involvement in European affairs, was not popular in the North Central States; and, according to Schaleben, the Democrats would find it difficult to popularize the war issue in this section to divert attention from domestic difficulties unsolved since 1932. He also reported that Vandenberg and Dewey were the two leaders on the region's G.O.P. presidential preference list.²⁴

The West

In the presidential election of 1936 the Republicans failed to carry a single state in the West; however, in the elections of 1938 the G.O.P. made gains in all eleven: Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Oregon, and Washington.²⁵ The Republican National Committee, however, did not believe these gains to be significant to claim a majority of the region; for the Committee declared that only Wyoming and Oregon were safely in the G.O.P. camp for 1940. Idaho was considered to be a borderline state, but leaning toward their party; Montana was also considered borderline, but found leaning toward the Democratic party.²⁶

According to the Fortune study, nearly all the Pacific

²⁴Arville Schaleben, "This Is America: II. The North Central States," The Nation, 148:690-92, June 17, 1939.

²⁵New York Times, February 5, 1939, p. 5

²⁶New York Times, February 27, 1939, p. 1.

Coast region rested safely within the Democratic camp. The Democrats had control of both California and Washington, lost to the Republicans for 1940 because of conflicting local ideologies. The magazine gave the G.O.P. only Oregon in this section of the country.²⁷

In analyzing the political opinions of the Southwest for The Nation, Charles Curtis Munz predicted that the region would vote Democratic in 1940. Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma were all figured to support the Democratic party; however, there existed no concrete evidence that they would support a third term, but the President did have many active supporters in these four states who would back such an attempt. If Roosevelt declined to run in 1940, Garner would receive the whole-hearted support of the Southwest.²⁸

Howard G. Costigan, in his study of the political climate of the Western States, declared that the West had traditionally decided the outcome of close presidential elections and that the election of 1940 would be such an election. According to Costigan, the typical Westerner went to the polls to express his traditional protest against the status quo; however, even against this background of protest, the West was figured to line up behind the Democrats and the New Deal in 1940. He also

²⁷"The Republican Party: Up from the Grave," Fortune, 20:102, August, 1939.

²⁸Charles Curtis Munz, "This Is America: IV. The Garner Country," The Nation, 149:66-68, July 15, 1939.

reported that if the candidates in 1940 were Garner and Dewey, the West would vote Republican because the Democrats would split into three groups: the Old Guard, who would support Garner; the liberal faction, who would cross over and vote for Dewey; and the New Dealers, who would form a third party, at least in the West. On the other hand, if Roosevelt decided to run for a third term, drafted or otherwise, he would be impossible to defeat in the West.²⁹

The South

In the South, Republican hopes were dim, as usual. In 1936 the G.O.P. lost all thirteen Southern States, and in the Congressional elections of 1938 the Republican party gained in only four states: Tennessee, North Carolina, Alabama, and Texas.³⁰ The Republican National Committee did not claim any of the states in this region, conceding all thirteen to the Democrats.³¹

A discussion of the South had not been included in the Fortune analysis. It was generally conceded that the Democratic party completely controlled the politics of this section, and there was not much danger of the Republican party making inroads into this Democratic stronghold in 1940.

²⁹Howard G. Costigan, "This Is America: V. The Maverick Far West," The Nation, 149:123-26, July 29, 1939.

³⁰New York Times, February 5, 1939, p. 5.

³¹New York Times, February 27, 1939, p. 1.

John Temple Graves, II, writing in The Nation, declared that whomever the Democrats nominated for president in 1940, the South would vote for him because the Democratic party still owned the region; the party could count on its political support. He reported that the Southern anti-New Dealers had lined up behind Garner, but that the movement was not a large one and did not seriously threaten the New Dealers' position in the South. According to Graves, there existed a growing belief that the only acceptable candidate to the South would be one supported by the President, or the President himself. With the virtual collapse of the Garner and Hull candidacies, both lacking support from Southern political leaders, and the very weak Republican party, it was clear that Roosevelt needed only to announce his candidacy for a third term and he would be sure of receiving nearly every Southern delegation.³²

The three sources used in this sectional analysis did not agree on every state's political leanings; however, they agreed on the over-all picture within each section. The Gallup sectional poll, published in August, 1939, did not entirely agree with the Fortune analysis. The Gallup Poll reported that the voters of Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois favored a Republican victory in 1940 by 52 to 54 per cent.³³

³²John Temple Graves, II, "This Is America: III. The South Still Loves Roosevelt," The Nation, 149:11-13, July 1, 1939.

³³"1940," Time, 34:16, August, 1939.

New York and Illinois had been placed in the Democratic column in the Fortune survey. This apparent conflict concerning the political leanings of these two important states substantiated the evidence that the Democrats held only a slim lead in several states and that a reversal of the existing situation could occur at any time. According to the results of the sectional analyses, the key to the pre-war political situation appeared to be the popularity of the President and his long-awaited third term decision.

III. THE POPULARITY OF THE PRESIDENT

The popularity of the President became an important factor in determining the presidential nominees of both parties because as the single most popular "candidate," he could dictate the Democratic choice by virtue of his position of leadership and could profoundly influence the selection of the Republican nominee. Concerning the Democratic nomination, Roosevelt could either influence the selection of his successor from the field of potential candidates, or he could attempt to secure a third term by not choosing a successor and accepting a draft at the convention. Roosevelt's ultimate decision would also affect the Republican nomination; for if F.D.R. decided to accept a third term draft, the G.O.P. would be forced to nominate a colorful candidate in an attempt to offset the President's great personal appeal.

If, on the other hand, he decided not to run, the Republicans would be free to nominate a safe conservative or a moderately liberal candidate, depending on the political currents of the time.

Roosevelt's popularity, therefore, became a prime consideration of the G.O.P. leadership because if they were able to predict correctly the third term decision, their chances to emerge victorious in November would be materially better. Political writers and analysts, as well as the pollsters, were also cognizant of this political situation and began to explore the currents of public opinion, to analyze the chances of the potential candidates in both parties, to attempt to second-guess the man in the White House. These attempts began early in 1939 and continued throughout the year.

In November, 1936, Roosevelt's popularity had reached its peak; in the election month, 62.5 per cent of the nation's voters had indicated that they approved of the President. However, Roosevelt had not been able to generate a comparable amount of popular support for the 1938 Congressional elections. The percentage of voters approving of the President in December, 1938, was 55.5 per cent, a drop of nearly 7 per cent from the percentage received two years before. By January, 1939, 58 per cent of the voters supported the President; this increase possibly resulted from the Republican showing in the 1938 elections. A sectional breakdown of this vote revealed that

Roosevelt had maintained a clear majority in all sections of the country: 51 per cent in New England, 57 per cent in the Middle Atlantic States, 55 per cent in the East Central States, 56 per cent in the West Central States, 68 per cent in the South, and 64 per cent in the West.³⁴

Even more important than Roosevelt's popularity index was the public reaction to the possibility of the President's running for a third term. In March of 1939 Fortune asked a cross section of the nation's voters if they believed Roosevelt would make such an attempt. The poll indicated that 31.1 per cent thought that he would, 45.1 per cent that he would not, and 23.8 per cent that they did not know.³⁵

The third term question became more and more of a news item and a topic for political hypotheses as one New Dealer after another publicly announced that he believed F.D.R. should seek a third term. Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, in their analysis of this situation, stated that no one knew whether Roosevelt had come to share the belief set forth by the New Dealers; however, they reported that no other New Dealers had a ghost of a chance to get the Democratic nomination because they had all been politically murdered by Democratic party leaders. The article also indicated that reports of the

³⁴New York Times, January 8, 1939, p. 35.

³⁵"The Fortune Survey: XIX," Fortune, 19:130, March, 1939.

President's private talks seemed to reveal a shift in emphasis from discussions of a happy retirement after 1940 to mentions of a President's duty to break the third term tradition under certain circumstances.³⁶

Another political analyst interested in the third term mystery was Arthur Krock, a columnist for the New York Times, who declared that the President's refusal to discuss his future plans with any degree of finality until the end of the Congressional session (for the announced fear of losing or seriously reducing his influence to conduct policy) might have been a sound maneuver at the start of the session; however, the tense international crisis had altered the logic of this position. Roosevelt's silence, according to Krock, had resulted in a stiffening of the opposition to the administration's programs and had possibly endangered the nation's national defense.³⁷

Others interested in the third term decision were not content to sit back and write about the controversy. Many reporters and political writers attempted to question the President, his family, and high administration sources in order to smoke out the answer to the third term decision.

³⁶Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, "'President Must Run Again' Rises as Definite Cry of New Dealers," New York Times, May 2, 1939, p. 4.

³⁷Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: Fear of Third Term Affects Grave Decisions," New York Times, April 20, 1939, p. 22.

James Farley, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, answered reporters' questions as to the party's presidential campaigns by declaring that it was futile to talk about the candidacies for 1940 until the President made known his intentions. Farley, who had just returned from a 7500 mile trip from coast to coast to sample public opinion, refused to discuss the merits of any possible candidates, although he did declare that the Democratic party would carry Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Wyoming, Nevada, and Utah--all states included in his trip--in 1940.³⁸

In contrast to the optimism expressed by the Democratic National Chairman, Fortune published a poll in May which indicated that F.D.R.'s popularity had suffered a substantial drop. The magazine reported that in March, 63.5 per cent of the nation's voters had indicated that they liked the President, and 36.5 per cent had replied that they did not; however, by May only 58.8 per cent answered in the affirmative.³⁹

The reported decrease in Roosevelt's popularity was partially substantiated by the May Gallup Poll, which reported that in a hypothetical race between Senator Robert Taft and the President, a cross section of the electorate came

³⁸James A. Hagerty, "Farley Says Trip Shows Party Safe," New York Times, May 26, 1939, p. 7.

³⁹"The Fortune Survey: XXI," Fortune, 19:87, May, 1939.

up with a fifty-fifty split of those expressing an opinion. In addition, it was related that in another hypothetical race between Thomas Dewey and Roosevelt, the President came out on the losing end, 45 per cent to 55 per cent.⁴⁰

During the month of June, speculation over the third term again made the headlines when Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes commented in a national magazine that Roosevelt should attempt a third term; Ickes, in his endorsement, also criticized Garner and other Democratic presidential aspirants. When reporters attempted to get Roosevelt to comment on the Ickes' statements, the President refused to be drawn into a discussion of his plans for 1940.⁴¹ In another press conference held two weeks later, Roosevelt refused to answer a direct question as to the third term decision and told the questioner to go stand in a corner.⁴²

Some political writers turned from questioning to predicting what would occur in 1940. The New Republic reported that Roosevelt would probably be glad to retire to Hyde Park after turning over the position to a New Dealer who would carry on the administration's programs. The magazine stated that the President would not allow an outsider who would undo

⁴⁰New York Times, May 31, 1939, p. 8.

⁴¹New York Times, June 7, 1939, p. 2.

⁴²Felix Belair, Jr., "Roosevelt Asked if He Is Candidate Replies with a Quip," New York Times, June 21, 1939, p. 1.

all which had been accomplished in the preceding eight years gain control of the Democratic party. Without stating that Roosevelt would become a candidate, the magazine reported that F.D.R. had shown no signs of endorsing Hull, Wallace, or Farley.⁴³

Bruce Bliven, also writing in The New Republic, stated in July that if the United States were to become involved in a war prior to the election, Roosevelt would be re-elected. If this situation did not occur, according to Bliven, the nation's political future would be up in the air.⁴⁴ In another issue, published during the following month, the magazine presented an analysis of the potential Democratic presidential possibilities and eliminated all of them by stressing the political liabilities of each.⁴⁵ By implication Roosevelt was held up as the only acceptable candidate for the Democratic nomination. This one segment of the liberal press believed that if an international crisis were to develop before the election, the result would be an increase in the President's popularity; with no other Democratic possibility in sight, such a situation could have a significant bearing on the third term decision.

⁴³"Washington Notes: The Third Term," The New Republic, 99:187, June 21, 1939.

⁴⁴Bruce Bliven, "Looking at 1940," The New Republic, 99:183, June 21, 1939.

⁴⁵"Those Charming Young Men," The New Republic, 99:320-21, July 26, 1939.

As the political guessing game continued, with reporters drawing blanks at the press conferences and political writers attempting to predict the future, the President's personal popularity again began to increase. A Gallup Poll survey of voters of both parties on the hypothetical race between Dewey and Roosevelt indicated that F.D.R. had gained three percentage points over the May survey; the vote in June was 52 per cent for Dewey and 48 per cent for Roosevelt.⁴⁶

In July, Roosevelt himself stimulated more third term questioning when he asserted in a press conference that there were twelve to fifteen "charming" young men in Federal service who might have presidential aspirations. Speculation around Washington covered the interesting point of whether Roosevelt had included himself among the "charming" young men he had mentioned.⁴⁷ At his next press conference Roosevelt turned aside several questions as to whether he had informed anyone that he would positively run for a third term and that he wanted Paul McNutt as his running mate.⁴⁸ Again, one week later at another press conference, the President, when asked if he could indicate when a statement on the third term could be expected by the country, chuckled and said that he could

⁴⁶New York Times, June 23, 1939, p. 5.

⁴⁷New York Times, July 13, 1939, p. 1.

⁴⁸New York Times, July 19, 1939, p. 6.

not.⁴⁹ Several days later, on August 1, Roosevelt and the press assembled broke into laughter when a reporter asked the President if he had a few words to say on the twelfth anniversary of Coolidge's statement, "I do not choose to run;" Roosevelt did not answer the question.⁵⁰

While Roosevelt and the reporters were conducting their battle of wits, the New Dealers continued to build up strength for the third term draft. Several members of the Cabinet were outright or slightly conditional advocates of a third term for Roosevelt, as were many New Deal Congressmen and governors and labor organizations all over the country. A national organization to draft Roosevelt for 1940 had been established in Chicago.⁵¹

The efforts of the New Dealers appeared to be making some headway, as evidenced by the August Gallup Poll's announcement that the nation's young Democrats favored a third term. A carefully selected cross section of several thousand Democrats between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine were polled, and 52 per cent declared themselves in favor of a third term. The survey also indicated that Democratic voters as a whole opposed a third term by the same margin--52 per cent

⁴⁹New York Times, July 29, 1939, p. 3.

⁵⁰New York Times, August 2, 1939, p. 5.

⁵¹Turner Catledge, "Third Term Showdown Expected to Come Soon," New York Times, July 30, 1939, IV, p. 7.

to 48 per cent. In addition, 38 per cent of those Democrats expressing an opinion on a third term stated that they would not vote for Roosevelt if he should run in 1940, while 62 per cent declared that they would.⁵²

In mid-September the Gallup Poll reported that the President had become the leading choice of Democratic voters, citing the results of a nationwide survey of that party. The poll also indicated that if the President did not run in 1940, Garner would be the leading choice among Democratic voters.⁵³ The results of the poll are significant in that the effect of the outbreak of the European war had not been measured in the survey. In October, the Gallup Poll reported that the war in Europe had triggered a definite upturn in the pro-third term sentiment. In a cross section analysis of men and women in every state, 43 per cent of those polled indicated they favored a third term. In May the percentage had been only 33 per cent; in August it had risen to 40 per cent. In a sectional analysis the October poll showed that in New England 34 per cent favored a third term, while 45 per cent in the Middle Atlantic States, 32 per cent in the East Central States, 37 per cent in the West Central States, 61 per cent in the South, and 47 per cent in the West expressed a like opinion.⁵⁴

⁵²New York Times, August 18, 1939, p. 20.

⁵³New York Times, September 13, 1939, p. 30.

⁵⁴New York Times, October 1, 1939, p. 26.

Even though 57 per cent of the nation, according to the Gallup Poll, opposed a third term for Roosevelt, the results of the survey revealed a significant point. Within the space of a month the President had increased his lead over the other possible Democratic presidential aspirants and had gained considerable support for a third term. The effect the war would have on public opinion suddenly loomed as the single most important factor in the third term decision, for national attention had been focused on the foreign affairs issue: the part the United States should play, if any, in the conduct of the European war.

Alf Landon, the "nominal" head of the G.O.P., urged Roosevelt to disavow the third term in the interest of national defense. He called upon the President to take the proposed repeal of the embargo on munitions out of politics by issuing a definite declaration that he would not run in 1940. Landon reasoned that Roosevelt's silence might have been justifiable during normal times, but in the tense international situation the President's stand had created resistance to the normal conduct of affairs because many believed that the third term issue was of greater importance than any change in the Neutrality Act. Roosevelt declined to comment on Landon's statement, but expressed hope that partisan politics could be adjourned during the crisis.⁵⁵

⁵⁵New York Times, September 13, 1939, p. 30.

F.D.R. was destined not to get his wish, for one month later Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace stated publicly that Roosevelt's talents, training, and experience in foreign affairs were necessary to steer the country's domestic and foreign policy through the international crisis. Administration leaders refrained from comment on Wallace's reopening of the third term controversy, but G.O.P. leaders took the opportunity to declare that the statement represented a public affirmation of the third term candidacy.⁵⁶ White House Press Secretary Stephen T. Early remarked that it would have been kind and polite for Wallace to have consulted his "victim" before making the statement. Early refused to discuss the matter further when reporters sought to obtain an elaboration on the remark.⁵⁷

Wallace's statement brought forth another round of questioning by reporters and guessing by political analysts. In a press conference held in late October, Roosevelt again laughed at a reporter's question as to the third term decision, but no answer was forthcoming.⁵⁸ The President's wife was also subjected to intense questioning, as were members of his family. The First Lady, when asked of her husband's plans for

⁵⁶New York Times, October 26, 1939, p. 1.

⁵⁷Felix Belair, Jr., "Wallace Rebuked by White House," New York Times, October 27, 1939, p. 12.

⁵⁸New York Times, October 28, 1939, p. 6.

1940, replied that she did not know for she had not asked him.⁵⁹ In mid-November, Roosevelt refused to comment on the announcement by Garner supporters that they intended to canvass the country to seek delegate strength on behalf of their man.⁶⁰ The President himself deepened the speculation when, speaking at the ceremony for the laying of the cornerstone of the Jefferson Memorial, he stated that he hoped he would be able to come to the dedication in January, 1941. This statement was interpreted by some to mean that F.D.R. wished to make the dedicatory ceremonies one of the closing acts of his administration; others declared that the statement represented an indication that the President was looking forward to a continuation in office after his second term had expired.⁶¹

The November Gallup Poll showed that four out of five Democrats throughout the nation supported a third term. The poll indicated that the pre-war political situation, characterized by the confidence of the Republican party that the country would elect a G.O.P. candidate in 1940 and that Roosevelt could not be elected if he chose to run, had changed with the deepening of the European war.⁶²

⁵⁹New York Times, November 4, 1939, p. 18.

⁶⁰New York Times, November 15, 1939, p. 15.

⁶¹New York Times, November 16, 1939, p. 1.

⁶²New York Times, November 5, 1939, p. 47.

The international crisis had not only strengthened F.D.R.'s control of his party, but also had elevated the Democratic party's chances for victory in 1940. In April, 1939, the Gallup Poll had indicated that 52 per cent of the nation's voters favored a Republican president for 1940; by November, the poll indicated that public opinion had shifted and that 54 per cent favored a Democratic president.⁶³ A poll of fifty Washington correspondents conducted in April had predicted a G.O.P. victory in 1940; however, by December the poll had reversed itself, judging by a two to one margin victory for the Democrats.⁶⁴

The European war had substantially strengthened both the pro-third term sentiment and the chances for a Democratic victory in 1940, but the crisis had not induced the President to make any statement concerning his future plans. He had carefully side-stepped reporters' ingenious inquiries and had declared that he was too busy to discuss third terms, third parties, or 1940 presidential candidates.⁶⁵

IV. THE EMERGENCE OF THE CANDIDATES

The Congressional victories of 1938, and the resulting

⁶³New York Times, November 19, 1939, p. 14.

⁶⁴Editorial in the New York Times, December 2, 1939, p. 16.

⁶⁵New York Times, December 23, 1939, p. 6.

spirit of optimism, prompted some Republicans to throw their hats into the ring. Throughout 1939, these candidates campaigned for the nomination, seeking to obtain support from the party's rank and file and leaders with programs which indicated the New Deal domestic policies; however, the outbreak of the war in Europe and Roosevelt's silence on the third term decision figured to change the complexion of both the issues of the campaign and the popularity of the candidates.

In January of 1938, Fortune conducted a survey in which they asked the nation's voters whom they would prefer as president if Roosevelt did not run in 1940. To this question the prosperous and the business executives expressed a preference for Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg; the poor and the factory laborers indicated a preference for Senator William E. Borah.⁶⁶

By February, 1939, Vandenberg had been replaced by Thomas E. Dewey as the choice of the prosperous and business group. This survey, also conducted by Fortune, asked voters, regardless of their party affiliation, which Republican they would vote for in 1940. Of those sampled, the largest percentage, 38 per cent, stated that they did not know for which Republican they would vote. The remaining 62 per cent indicated preferences for a wide variety of potential candidates.

⁶⁶"The Fortune Quarterly Survey: XI," Fortune 17:92, January, 1938.

In the poll Dewey received the highest percentage, 12.2 per cent, with Fiorello LaGuardia of New York, 11.5 per cent; Arthur Vandenberg, 11.5 per cent; Alf Landon, 8.2 per cent; Herbert Hoover, 5.1 per cent; Henry Cabot Lodge, 4.6 per cent; Senator Gerald P. Nye, 4.1 per cent; and others, 4.8 per cent, receiving lesser amounts of popular support.⁶⁷

In the Gallup Poll, also published in February, a cross section of Republican voters were asked to name the individual they would like to see as the party's candidate in 1940. The results showed Dewey leading with 27 per cent, followed by Vandenberg with 21 per cent, Borah with 4 per cent, Hoover with 4 per cent, and LaGuardia with 4 per cent. The poll also indicated that nearly one-half of the Republicans interviewed had no definite choice at that time.⁶⁸

In both of the February surveys, one sampling all voters and the other concentrating on just the Republicans, the leading presidential contender for the G.O.P. was New York City's District Attorney, Thomas Dewey. A possible explanation for his lead at this early stage in the fight for the nomination was the national recognition he had received as a result of his "crime-busting" activities in cleaning up New York City. After

⁶⁷"The Fortune Survey: XVIII," Fortune, 19:68, February, 1939.

⁶⁸New York Times, February 17, 1939, p. 14.

the resignation of Judge Martin T. Manton, several New York Republican leaders, including Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., declared that Dewey had surged to the front in the race for the G.O.P. nomination.⁶⁹

Dewey, preferring not to announce his candidacy, stated that he was not a candidate for public office and formally repudiated the "Dewey 1940 Popular Committee to Nominate Thomas E. Dewey for President of the United States on the Republican Ticket," a group formed to boom him for the presidency.⁷⁰

Another New Yorker mentioned in the February polls, Mayor LaGuardia, also took himself out of the 1940 presidential race when, at a press conference, he declared that he would not even get a ticket to the gallery of either convention.⁷¹

The New York Times reported that Vandenberg's close friends had asserted that the Senator had taken himself out of the 1940 presidential race because of the opposition to his candidacy by the Landon faction and other powerful elements within the Republican party. His friends believed that Vandenberg had gradually withdrawn as developments took place which appeared to be to his disadvantage, such as Dewey's rise in the public opinion polls. The paper also reported that if

⁶⁹New York Times, January 31, 1939, p. 9.

⁷⁰New York Times, January 20, 1939, p. 3.

⁷¹New York Times, February 21, 1939, p. 5.

Vandenberg were eliminated as a candidate, Dewey's boom would attain greater strength. Many Republican Senators, according to the article, had conceded that Dewey was the front running candidate, but felt that he would have to define his position on major national questions before he would gain the party's endorsement.⁷²

With or without the support of the G.O.P. professionals, Dewey continued to gain support among Republican voters. In the March Gallup Poll, Dewey received 50 per cent of the vote, while the majority of the other presidential aspirants lost ground. In the poll Vandenberg received 15 per cent, Taft 13 per cent, Hoover 5 per cent, Landon 4 per cent, Lodge 2 per cent, and Borah 2 per cent. The poll pointed out that the Dewey gains came after the successful prosecution of New York Tammany leader James J. Hines.⁷³

In April, Dewey again disavowed his candidacy, repeating that he was only concerned with his present position of District Attorney. Politicians known to favor Dewey's candidacy refused to comment on the statement, preferring to believe that Dewey opposed being the object of an abortive boom.⁷⁴

Former President Herbert Hoover, in a speech before news-

⁷²New York Times, February 28, 1939, p. 2.

⁷³New York Times, March 27, 1939, p. 13.

⁷⁴New York Times, April 22, 1939, p. 4.

paper editors from Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, also stated that he was not a candidate for the 1940 nomination. In the speech Hoover declared that Republican prospects for victory in the election appeared to be very bright as a result of the failure of the New Deal domestic policy to instill confidence among the nation's businessmen.⁷⁵

While Dewey and Hoover were disclaiming their candidacies, the Gallup Poll reported that in a hypothetical race between Taft and Roosevelt, a cross section of voters from both parties rated the race even, with each "candidate" receiving 50 per cent of the vote of those expressing an opinion.⁷⁶ The results indicated that Dewey was not the only Republican presidential possibility with public support.

In mid-May Governor Luren D. Dickinson of Michigan issued a press statement which declared that he and other Republicans in the state had begun a campaign to draft Vandenberg for the Republican nomination. Dickinson added that the efforts were being carried out without Vandenberg's knowledge or consent.⁷⁷

Soon after Governor Dickinson's announcement the New York Times reported that a group of G.O.P. elder statesmen had started a movement to control the balance of power at the

⁷⁵New York Times, May 21, 1939, III, p. 5.

⁷⁶New York Times, May 31, 1939, p. 8.

⁷⁷New York Times, May 19, 1939, p. 12.

convention and turn it against Dewey. The group reportedly wanted a candidate who was familiar with economic issues and trends; and, while they believed Dewey to be a dynamic personality, they felt that he had not demonstrated such a capacity. The article also stated that the nomination would not be denied Dewey were he to show himself to be seasoned and versed in public questions.⁷⁸

Raymond Moley, writing in Newsweek, also declared that the Republican party needed a candidate with less glamor and more experience and that the tactics used against the corruption in New York City would not be suitable for a national campaign. According to Moley, The G.O.P. candidate had to be one with a deep understanding of the problems of business, labor, and agriculture; and he believed that Dewey was not that man.⁷⁹

Thus Dewey, by virtue of being the front running candidate, became the target of his rivals. Even though he had repeatedly denied his candidacy, his position in the polls had prompted his rivals to combine strategy to deflate his boom. The anti-Dewey forces planned to run favorite son candidates in the primaries and to attempt to get states to send uninstructed delegations to the convention, thereby insuring themselves

⁷⁸New York Times, May 20, 1939, p. 6.

⁷⁹Raymond Moley, "Perspective: Dewey," Newsweek, 14:48, July 17, 1939.

control over the convention.⁸⁰

The anti-Dewey movement did not deter other presidential aspirants from entering the race for the nomination. In June, Kenneth W. D. Douglas issued a press statement that a movement had been started to secure the nomination for Henry Cabot Lodge. The group planned to establish Lodge-for-President clubs throughout Massachusetts to win favorite son support for their candidate.⁸¹

In early August, Taft publicly announced his candidacy and presented his program. The candidate stated that Roosevelt would be the weakest candidate the Democrats could name because the basic issue in the campaign would be the reversal of New Deal policies involving continued deficits and excessive business regulation; but he cautioned the nation to expect no "overnight" miracles from the Republican party in their attempt to balance the budget. Taft also declared that the administration's farm program was unsatisfactory and that the restriction on production had to be abandoned; however, he did not indicate alternative solutions. He further stated that the National Labor Relations Act should be amended to separate the prosecuting and judicial functions of the National Labor Relations Board, a change needed to halt the prejudice directed against employers and the American Federation of Labor. Concerning

⁸⁰New York Times, May 20, 1939, p. 6.

⁸¹New York Times, June 15, 1939, p. 6.

social security, Taft recommended a coordinated program which would "make sense," providing for a reasonable non-contributory pension granted by the states with Federal aid supplemented by an optional pension plan, to which employer and employee would contribute. On foreign affairs the candidate declared himself in favor of keeping out of European affairs; however, he did state that he favored the repeal of the arms embargo because he could not see how selling to all nations on a cash and carry basis had anything to do with neutrality.⁸²

Taft's managers announced that they had made no plans to seek delegates from any other state than Ohio, although they reported that the candidate had heard favorable comments on his candidacy from G.O.P. leaders in various sections of the nation. Taft men were reported to have planned to campaign for delegates in the Middle West and the Far West.⁸³

Republican leaders in New York reported to the New York Times that Associate Justice Owen J. Roberts and Ohio Governor John W. Bricker were the two leading dark horses in the field of candidates. According to the sources, the country's business interests, formerly holding great influence in the G.O.P., were reported to be not wholly satisfied with any of the leading candidates--Dewey, Vandenberg, and Taft--and planned to

⁸²New York Times, August 4, 1939, pp. 1,4.

⁸³Ibid., p. 4.

keep the convention open so as to consider the candidate best suited to run against the Democratic nominee.⁸⁴

Governor Bricker had been frequently mentioned as a possible G.O.P. presidential candidate; but if he had had any chance for the nomination, it was dealt a severe blow when Taft announced his candidacy. Bricker, reportedly, stepped aside for the state's Senator, declaring that he would not attempt to secure the Ohio favorite son spot in the primary. He had no comment to make on Taft's declaration of candidacy.⁸⁵

His chances were also somewhat lessened by an attack launched by Senator Claude Pepper before a Young Democrats meeting in Pittsburgh. In a speech delivered to this group Pepper declared that Taft, Vandenberg, and Dewey had been appraised by the duPont group and had been found to be unacceptable as candidates. Pepper reported that Vandenberg had been impolite to Pierre duPont during the Nye Munitions Investigations and, therefore, had been eliminated from the race for the nomination; that Dewey had been judged unacceptable because of his liberalism; and that Taft had been discarded because of his bull-headed and self-righteous attitude. According to Pepper, the duPont group wanted a man whom they could control, and that man was Governor Bricker.⁸⁶

⁸⁴New York Times, August 20, 1939, p. 30.

⁸⁵New York Times, August 4, 1939, p. 4.

⁸⁶"Washington Notes: Mr. duPont Presents," The New Republic, 100:130, September 6, 1939.

Dewey and Bricker were not the only presidential possibilities receiving criticism and political "pot-shots." Oswald Garrison Villard, writing in The Nation, stated that it was almost effrontery for Taft to run for the presidency when he had been in public life for so short a time. He further declared that Taft's dull speeches would not arouse the interest or enthusiasm of the people; but Dewey, on the other hand, would be a brilliant campaigner, if nominated. Villard did temper his praise of Dewey with the statement that there existed no evidence that the candidate knew what was going on in the world.⁸⁷

Concurrent with the announcement of Taft's candidacy came the report out of New York that Dewey had established a "brain trust" of the type set up by Roosevelt prior to the 1932 campaign. The report was denied by Dewey's friends, declaring that a research bureau had been organized to find facts to aid the candidate, not a "brain trust" group to impose their ideas on him.⁸⁸

The August Gallup Poll showed a gain for Vandenberg and relatively little change in the popularity of the other candidates. In the survey Dewey received 45 per cent, Vandenberg 25 per cent, Taft 14 per cent, Hoover 6 per cent,

⁸⁷Oswald Garrison Villard, "Issues and Men," The Nation, 149:197, August 19, 1939.

⁸⁸New York Times, August 5, 1939, p. 3.

Landon 3 per cent, Borah 2 per cent, Bricker 2 per cent, and others 3 per cent. A significant fact pointed out in the poll was that 44 per cent of those Republicans sampled had not yet made up their minds on the candidate they would prefer for 1940.⁸⁹

The Gallup Poll published in October indicated a continuation of the trend established in the August poll. Dewey had fallen to 39 per cent, while Vandenberg gained to 27 per cent and Taft to 17 per cent. Others receiving votes were Hoover with 5 per cent, Landon 4 per cent, Borah 3 per cent, Lindbergh 1 per cent, Bricker 1 per cent, and others with 3 per cent. Charles Lindbergh made the poll on the basis of a speech in which he advocated strict United States aloofness from the European conflict.⁹⁰ The outbreak of the European war had started to affect the popularity of the candidates and potential candidates.

The war had triggered a sudden increase in Roosevelt's popularity with both the Democratic rank and file and the nation as a whole. This reversal of the President's popularity could have resulted from the Democrats' desire for an experienced leader during the international crisis. Carrying this reasoning one step further, it is logical to assume that the rank

⁸⁹New York Times, August 13, 1939, p. 3.

⁹⁰New York Times, October 13, 1939, p. 14.

and file of the Republican party also turned to the experienced leaders within their party, which could partially explain Vandenberg's sudden rise in the polls, as well as Dewey's sudden drop.

Taft viewed the war as beneficial to the G.O.P. because he believed that the overwhelming majority of the American people were determined to keep the nation out of war and that they could not trust the Democratic party to do so. He stated that the Republican party was bound to become the peace party in 1940.⁹¹

Representative Hamilton Fish, Jr., of New York, took a more drastic isolationist stand on the war; in a nationwide radio address, he declared that he would become an active candidate for the nomination if the G.O.P. attempted to "soft pedal" the importance of keeping the United States out of the war. He stated that his decision would depend on the views of the candidates and the wishes of the people. Fish reported that thus far in the campaign, the candidates had failed to present the issue as paramount and unless they did so soon, he would take the issue directly to the people in the primary contests.⁹²

Frank Gannett, a Rochester, New York, publisher and chairman of the National Committee to Uphold the Constitutional

⁹¹New York Times, October 13, 1939, p. 12.

⁹²New York Times, November 28, 1939, p. 18.

Government, leaked the report that he had been giving consideration to his possible candidacy. He declared that he was being pressured into taking the step, although he had never been ambitious for political office.⁹³

In November, with the election a year away, Turner Catledge, writing in the New York Times, reported in his assessment of the Republican campaigns that Dewey, Taft, and Vandenberg possessed campaign organizations working in the field to gather support for their candidates. He stated that Taft's organization, headed by David Ingalls (former Assistant Secretary of the Navy) and John H. Hollister (Congressman from Cincinnati), was thus far the most active. Taft men had spread throughout the country to gather convention support, using a more traditional approach than any of the other candidates. Catledge stated that Dewey's supporters had also moved out into the field to gather delegate strength and had established a letter-writing campaign to line up pre-convention support. It was also reported that Dewey planned to give a series of speeches to answer the questions as to his stand on the domestic and foreign affairs issues of the day. Catledge also reported that a cloak of mystery surrounded Vandenberg's activities and intentions. An organization for the candidate had been established; however, little had been accomplished outside Michigan,

⁹³Ibid.

and Vandenberg himself had been casual toward questions as to his candidacy. The secondary candidates, according to Catledge, were Associate Justice Owen J. Roberts; Governors John Bricker, Arthur H. James, Leverett Saltonstall (Massachusetts), and George D. Aiken (Vermont); Senator H. Styles Bridges (New Hampshire); Representatives Bruce Barton, James W. Wadsworth, and Joseph Martin--all from New York; former President Hoover; and former Governor and presidential nominee Landon.⁹⁴

While some political observers were analyzing the field of candidates or assessing the political implications of the war, a poll of fifty Washington correspondents conducted in December revealed that in their judgment, the Democratic party would win in 1940. In April, a poll of the same group had resulted in the prediction that the G.O.P. would win.⁹⁵

These and other signs of the changing political scene did not slow down the campaigns, nor did it dissuade others from entering the race. In early December, Frank Gannett formally announced his candidacy and presented a seven-point program on which he would run: keep the nation out of war; barricade all paths of dictatorship in the country by repealing the President's blank check powers and by restoring

⁹⁴Turner Catledge, "Election Results Raise Republicans' 1940 Hopes," New York Times, November 12, 1939, IV, p. 7.

⁹⁵Editorial in New York Times, December 2, 1939, p. 16.

constitutional balance; restore national confidence by worthy policies and government by law, not by bureaucrats; restore industrial peace by rewriting labor laws to protect the rights of both workers and employers; fumigate the relief administration and place control with the communities; abandon the exploded spend-lend policy; and wipe out conditions which encourage dictatorships by restoring prosperity.⁹⁶

Representative Fish, whose foreign policy concepts were close to Gannett's, also jumped on the campaign trail in December. Speaking in Illinois and Wisconsin, Fish again threatened to enter the campaign if the existing candidates continued to neglect what he believed was the most important issue: keeping out of the war. He declared that he had received telegrams from World War Veterans offering to set up Fish-for-President clubs on his behalf.⁹⁷

Dark horse possibility Governor Bricker also appeared to be launching a campaign, for in a speech before New York G.O.P. leaders he stated that the administration's relief program had become a political racket by the practice of padding the payrolls in election years and demanded the replacement of the existing system with one administered locally and financed jointly by local, state, and Federal participation.⁹⁸ It had

⁹⁶New York Times, December 10, 1939, p. 2.

⁹⁷New York Times, December 13, 1939, p. 22.

⁹⁸New York Times, December 17, 1939, p. 1.

been reported that a gentlemen's agreement between Taft and Bricker put Ohio's delegation behind Taft. The delegation, which was figured to be headed by Bricker, reportedly would continue to support Taft as long as he had a chance to win; a deadlock, it was further reported, Bricker's supporters would go to work to line up the delegation for the Governor.

Although Bricker's close friends denied his candidacy, it was rumored that he had important business support which could swing delegations his way in a deadlocked convention. Joseph Pew of Pennsylvania and Kenneth Simpson, National Committeeman from New York--both prominent political leaders in their states--were reported to have considered Bricker as a possible candidate.⁹⁹

As of December the two leading candidates for the G.O.P. nomination were Dewey and Taft. Time compared their political struggle to the fabled race between the tortoise and the hare. In the article Taft was pictured as being prissy, solemn, and ponderous; Dewey was characterized as being a more dynamic candidate. The magazine also pointed to a number of blunders committed in the Taft campaign during this early stage of the political battle: in Iowa, Taft had denounced the corn loans on the very day the Department of Agriculture had released \$70,000,000 in corn loans to the state; in Kansas City,

⁹⁹Warren Moscow, "Ohio Relief Issue Vital to Bricker," New York Times, December 10, 1939, IV, p. 10.

he had crossed a year-old A.F. of L. picket line for no apparent reason; and in Texas, he had permitted himself to be photographed as a hunter, dressed in a business suit and a starched collar, holding a dead turkey.¹⁰⁰

The magazine also reported that Dewey's campaign had started to make headway during December, but that the party leaders had reportedly been considering him for the second spot on the ticket, not the first. The Time delegate analysis gave Dewey only New York's ninety-two convention delegates, one-fourth of which were not certain, while giving Taft three hundred.¹⁰¹

As the candidates and the country at large prepared for the election year activities, the question uppermost in the minds of all was the resolution of the third term question. Turner Catledge adequately summed up the problem facing the Republican party when he reported that the G.O.P. was facing one of the greatest political paradoxes of recent domestic history. Realistic members of the party had agreed that F.D.R. would be the strongest candidate the Democrats could run in 1940; yet, they also realized, just as strongly, that his renomination would give them the best issue they could possibly have. Roosevelt's declaration of his intentions would, accord-

¹⁰⁰"Hare and Tortoise," Time, 34:13, December 18, 1939.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 14.

ing to Catledge, crystallize the situation in the Republican party almost as much as in the Democratic. If the Democrats renominated Roosevelt, the man with qualities most likely to attract votes from the President would rise toward the top of the G.O.P. presidential heap. If a Democrat other than F.D.R. were nominated, then a candidate with different qualifications might be sought. Therefore, the third term question was an extremely important one for the Republicans; however, the situation was such that the party could not wait until the President resolved the mystery, the candidates were in the field to gather support.¹⁰²

In his assessment of the Republican campaigns as of December, Catledge stated that the morale of the party was as high as at any time since the outbreak of the war; before September, the party's hopes had soared into a virtual conviction that they would win in 1940, but the war had switched the major issue from New Deal domestic policies to the President as an international figure and to his foreign policy. The three major candidates, by concentrating on the administration's domestic failures, had not, according to Catledge, provided Roosevelt with a streamlined vehicle on which his official dependents expected him to ride over the third term tradition. Dewey's speeches and statements indicting the New Deal had

¹⁰²Turner Catledge, "G.O.P. Race Affected by Roosevelt Silence," New York Times, December 24, 1939, IV, p. 7.

been designed to impress on Republican leaders that he was the people's choice. Taft's campaign, concentrating on the issues of the administration's fiscal and spending policies and the New Deal bureaucracy, had given the candidate the largest bloc of pledged delegates. Taft's managers had even gone into the South to secure delegate votes. Vandenberg's campaign was still confined to Michigan, although the Senator had reportedly written letters to friends in other states asking them to look out for his interests. Catledge stated that Vandenberg's definite views for an isolationist wartime policy for the nation placed the candidate at odds with some of the leading figures of the party.¹⁰³ As the candidates continued their campaigns into 1940, the war issue figured to affect all the candidates involved in the race.

¹⁰³Ibid.

CHAPTER III

THE PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

The outbreak of the European war complicated the political situation to such a degree that few professionals would hazard a guess as to what the nation could expect in the crucial campaign months of January through May of 1940. It is possible that political sages could have predicted that Roosevelt would remain silent on his third term decision through the primaries and emerge in complete control of his party, or that Dewey would come out of the primary contests as the leading G.O.P. candidate, or even that Taft would rely on his political contacts with state and local leaders instead of challenging Dewey in the primaries; but it is doubtful that anyone could have predicted the effect the violent change in the course of the war would have on the national political scene. In April and May of 1940, the Nazi "blitzkrieg" was released on Northern Europe; and the repercussions following this aggression resulted in mass insecurity, a condition which elevated Roosevelt's chances for a third term and caused Republicans to reassess their candidates in light of the altered international situation.

I. THE REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGNS

During the first five months of 1940, the candidacies of

all G.O.P. aspirants, except Dewey and Taft, died quietly as the two front running candidates amassed delegate strength, with Taft gaining his through conversations with political leaders and Dewey gaining his in the primaries. Two significant developments of the period, aside from the intensification of the international crisis, were the creation of a "Stop-Dewey" group and the sudden rise of Wendell Willkie as a presidential contender.

The Pre-primary Period: January--February

In January, 1940, Time reported that Vandenberg was honestly disinterested in the nomination and that it would take a miracle for either Hoover or Willkie to capture the prize.¹ It was the general consensus that the nominee would be either of the two front runners, each representing a segment of the party--Taft drawing his support from the conservatives and Dewey ostensibly representing the liberal wing of the party.

The Gallup Poll of January reported that Dewey had substantially increased his lead as the favorite candidate of those who intended to vote Republican; however, the poll also indicated that 37 per cent had not made up their minds as to whom they would like to see nominated. In the survey Dewey had increased his vote to 60 per cent, followed by Vandenberg

¹"Up from Plenty," Time, 35:22, January 29, 1940.

with 16 per cent, Taft with 11 per cent, Hoover with 5 per cent, and James, Lodge, Bricker, Borah, and Landon with 1 per cent. All other candidates received only 3 per cent.²

In January, while Dewey, Taft, and Gannett were hitting the campaign trail, Vandenberg and Bricker issued statements which seemed to take them out of the race. Senator Nye of North Dakota declared to the press that he would not run for the nomination and urged Republicans to back Vandenberg. The Michigan Senator stated that he would be willing to serve as the G.O.P. candidate, but that he had no personal aspirations for the position and that he would not personally participate in any pre-convention campaign for delegates.³

Governor Bricker declared that the campaign headquarters established in Chicago in his behalf was unauthorized and not approved. He also stated that he was not thinking of the presidency and denied the suggestion that the Ohio delegation would support his candidacy if it appeared that Taft could not win the nomination.⁴

Gannett, an ardent campaigner, concentrated his campaign on domestic issues. He had been a one-time friend of the President when the latter was governor, but had become a bitter

²New York Times, January 7, 1940, p. 14.

³New York Times, January 10, 1940, p. 1.

⁴New York Times, January 30, 1940, p. 4.

critic of the New Deal, especially after Roosevelt's Supreme Court packing attempt.⁵ In January, the Rochester publisher assailed the New Deal and most of its works and charged that the New Dealers had ruined the "American System." He also promised to effect measures (which he did not define) which would bring about recovery and ease unemployment. Gannett declared that the nation's form of government and liberties would be menaced until the New Deal theorists were replaced by individuals who believed in private enterprise and knew how to make it work.⁶

It was reported that Gannett had the unqualified support of Representative James. W. Wadsworth of New York, as well as the tacit backing of Republican leaders in the rural counties of Central and Western New York State. His backers predicted that their candidate would receive first ballot support from at least thirty of New York's ninety-two delegates and fifty votes from other states.⁷

While Gannett's campaign centered around domestic issues, Taft was taking a close look at the administration's foreign policy. In Milwaukee, Taft raised the question as to whether Roosevelt had accepted the view that the United States must

⁵"Gannett for Gannett," Time, 35:22, January 22, 1940.

⁶John L. Underhill, "Gannett Launches Presidential Race." New York Times, January 17, 1940, p. 1.

⁷Ibid., pp. 1,15.

stay out of war, except a war of defense. The Ohio Senator denounced the argument that the United States would be overwhelmed by Germany and Russia if France and England were defeated. He also warned his listeners of the arbitrary powers which would be given to the President in the event of war. In answer to Roosevelt's pleas for non-partisanship, Taft declared that the appeal itself was partisan because it had attempted to put the G.O.P. in the position of being partisan whenever they criticized New Deal policies.⁸

In late January, Dewey took his campaign north to New England. In the tour the candidate avoided New Hampshire because of Senator Bridge's regional control, Vermont because of its relative remoteness, and Connecticut because of its proximity to New York. The idea of this brief campaign trip was to allow the people to see and hear him and to give the Republican leaders in the region a chance to meet the candidate. It was reported that while he did not receive any great spontaneous ovations, he did receive far more than a courteous and cordial welcome. It was further reported that none of the politicians meeting Dewey avowed himself to be sold on the candidate as a result of the tour. Dewey went back to New York to prepare a long campaign trip to the Pacific Northwest.⁹

⁸New York Times, January 20, 1940, p. 20.

⁹Lauriston Bullard, "Dewey Liked in New England, but G.O.P. Avoids Judgment," New York Times, January 28, 1940, IV, p. 10.

The purpose of Dewey's February trip to the Northwest was to catch up with Taft in delegate strength. To achieve this goal the candidate traveled 7,500 miles in eleven and one-half days, made forty-eight platform speeches and ten formal addresses, held eleven large press conferences, and attended ten receptions; but as his managers readily admitted, the people turned out in great numbers to hear the racket-buster, not the oratory of the presidential candidate.¹⁰ On his way to Portland, where he planned to deliver a Lincoln Day address, Dewey conferred with party leaders and gave speeches in Chicago, Butte, Helena, and Spokane; on the return trip the campaign was brought to Ogden, Salt Lake City, Boise, Cheyenne, and Omaha.¹¹

During this western tour Dewey centered his campaign around the New Deal's failure to put the unemployed back to work, declaring that the energy of American enterprise could create more jobs and relieve the unemployment problem and that the New Deal's failure to utilize this energy had resulted in an attitude of defeatism.¹² In Portland, Dewey charged the New Deal with an erosion of capital, which had depleted the country's productivity by seven billion dollars, causing

¹⁰"Up the Mountain," Time, 35:15-16, February 26, 1940.

¹¹New York Times, February 4, 1940, p. 3.

¹²"Up the Mountain," Time, 35:16, February 26, 1940.

continuance of unemployment and dividing the nation.¹³ On his return from the tour Dewey stated that he had found widespread, serious interest in the immediate political future of the country; and he commended the strong, intelligent, and courageous men and women who were vigorously preparing to lead the party to victory.¹⁴

During February, Senator Taft also stressed domestic issues as he campaigned in Florida, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. In Florida the candidate warned his listeners that unless the New Deal were defeated, the inevitable result would be increased government regulation and the gradual absorption of all industry into a collectivized state. He also criticized the Securities Exchange Commission for going beyond its original purpose of protecting investors against fraud, the National Labor Relations Board for the influence of "left wing enthusiasts," the administration of relief, the New Deal's tax program, the Federal encroachment into business with the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Wages-Hours Law for its stifling of small businesses. Taft advocated amendments to the Wages-Hours Law to prevent oppression; amendments to halt the Securities Exchange Commission from its attempts to pass judgment on the wisdom of investments; creation of a tax policy

¹³New York Times, February 13, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁴New York Times, February 20, 1940, p. 12.

to encourage investment instead of discouraging it; legislation to protect the farmer against foreign imports; and abandonment of the reciprocal trade treaties.¹⁵

In Greensboro, North Carolina, Taft declared that the nation must choose between Lincoln's republic or New Deal dictatorship.¹⁶ Again, in his Pennsylvania campaign, Taft stated that the nation needed constructive policies to replace the "destructive" ones of the New Deal, especially in the areas of business, agriculture, labor relations, national budget, relief, public health, and national defense.¹⁷ He advocated the cutting of government expenses to balance the budget; continuing such humanitarian projects as relief, old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and medical aid to the poor, but revising the administration so that it would be intelligent, economical, and fair; preparing adequately for defense, but keeping out of war; and abandoning the limiting of agricultural production, but keeping a reasonable subsidy for soil conservation.¹⁸

Senator Vandenberg, while still refusing to conduct a pre-convention campaign, met with farm, labor, and party leaders in St. Paul, Minnesota, to win support for his candi-

¹⁵New York Times, February 4, 1940, p. 4.

¹⁶New York Times, February 13, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁷New York Times, February 19, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 1,3.

dacy. It was reported that he would have support from Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Missouri, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, North and South Dakota, and Iowa--199 delegate votes--on the early ballots. It was also reported that a victory over Dewey in the Wisconsin primary was essential to Vandenberg's candidacy. His experience in the Senate was figured to weigh heavily in the primary election; however, it was generally believed that it would be a close race.¹⁹

The three leaders in the fight for the nomination did not have absolute control of the political limelight during February. Early in the month, General Hugh S. Johnson, in a speech before the Automotive Trade Association, advanced New York Representative Bruce Barton as the likeliest dark horse candidate and declared that Roosevelt could be re-elected in 1940 with only a loss of six states instead of two if the Republican party did not have something better to offer than they had at that time.²⁰

In Lincoln Day speeches across the country the New Deal was roasted on the political grill. In Omaha, Hoover declared that the nation's number one problem, unemployment, could not be solved until the country turned away from "statism" and

¹⁹James A. Hagerty, "Vandenberg Looks to the Northwest," New York Times, February 12, 1940, p. 18.

²⁰New York Times, February 7, 1940, p. 14.

unshackled free enterprise.²¹ In New York, Hamilton told his audience that the people of the United States were tired of "drifting" and looked to the Republican party for a return of Lincoln-Americanism.²² In Grand Rapids, Pennsylvania's Governor James criticized the New Deal for failing to find a cure for unemployment after a seven-year effort and for advancing war as the only solution.²³ Governor Harold Stassen of Minnesota, also speaking in Grand Rapids, called for legislation to cut out the overlapping and duplicating of functions within the Federal government. He also urged Federal legislation to provide for a "cooling off" period in industrial disputes and criticized the National Labor Relations Board for combining the functions of rules maker, investigator, prosecutor, and judge.²⁴

The February Gallup Poll showed that Dewey still held the lead among Republican presidential candidates, but that his lead had diminished somewhat. In the survey Dewey received 56 per cent, a loss of four percentage points from January, followed by Vandenberg and Taft with 17 per cent each, Hoover with 3 per cent, Gannett with 1 per cent, and others with 6

²¹New York Times, February 13, 1940, p. 1.

²²Ibid.

²³James A. Hagerty, "James Addresses Vandenberg Rally," New York Times, February 13, 1940, p. 4.

²⁴Ibid.

per cent. James, Lodge, Bricker, Landon, and Borah had been knocked off the poll. The poll also indicated that a majority of G.O.P. voters throughout the nation had expressed themselves in favor of a more liberal standard bearer--more liberal than Landon--for 1940; 59 per cent wanted a more liberal candidate, while 17 per cent wanted a more conservative candidate, and 24 per cent wanted one neither more liberal nor more conservative.²⁵

In mid-February, the Republican National Committee announced that the Republican convention would be held in Philadelphia on June 24, thus ending a problem which had been in existence for several months. In November, 1939, Roosevelt had suggested that both parties hold their conventions a month and a half later than usual to save both parties money and to spare the country the boredom which usually accompanied such fanfare. The announcement had been answered by Hamilton to the effect that the President had arrogated a great deal of authority when he undertook to direct when the G.O.P. should hold its convention.²⁶ In December, the Republican National Committee had gone on record favoring the middle of June as the convention date, irrespective of when the Democrats met. Waiting until the Democrats announced their date would work to

²⁵New York Times, February 11, 1940, p. 9.

²⁶New York Times, November 29, 1939, p. 1.

the disadvantage of the G.O.P. because the opposition could run on the record of the New Deal, while the Republicans would have to have a longer campaign to organize the party to oppose such a campaign.²⁷ In January, the Republican National Committee decided to meet in Washington, D.C. to choose the time and place of the convention; sentiment within the Committee was against waiting until the Democrats had fixed their date.²⁸

In his announcement of the convention date Hamilton challenged the Democrats to renominate Roosevelt so that the country would have a clean-cut issue, the New Deal. He also stated that the demoralized and embittered Democratic party could not present a united front against the Republicans in 1940. It was reported that many members of the National Committee assumed that F.D.R. would be renominated by the Democrats.²⁹

As a result of the pre-primary campaigns, most G.O.P. professionals believed that the party's choice for 1940 would be either Dewey or Taft; and they looked to the primaries for an indication of the trend of public opinion, the choice of the rank and file.

²⁷New York Times, December 7, 1939, p. 25.

²⁸New York Times, January 11, 1940, p. 20.

²⁹New York Times, February 17, 1940, p. 1.

The Primary Months: March--May

Dewey's percentage in the polls had fluctuated from 50 per cent in 1939 to 60 per cent in early 1940 to 56 per cent by the primaries. His remarkable showing in these contests was destined to trigger another such rise, for it was apparent that Dewey was the only Republican candidate to take the primaries seriously. Dewey was to face Vandenberg in Wisconsin and Nebraska, and he had been challenged by Gannett in the New York primary; but these were the only races in which the leading candidates would face one another.³⁰ Taft was figured to enter the Ohio race, but his entrance into other contests had not been announced. In late February, his managers stated that Taft would not enter the New Jersey primary because his Washington duties would prevent him from conducting a campaign in that state. Taft's managers did indicate that there was a chance the Senator would enter the West Virginia primary.³¹

Turner Catledge, writing in the New York Times, depreciated the value of the primaries as a barometer of delegate strength. To support his contention, Catledge revealed that hardly more than one-third of the states, representing only one-half of the nation's population, held

³⁰Turner Catledge, "Presidential Primaries a Doubtful Barometer," New York Times, February 18, 1940, IV, p. 7.

³¹New York Times, February 24, 1940, p. 2.

primary contests and that since New York's delegates were chosen without having to announce their preferences, the percentage of population represented in the primaries amounted to only forty per cent. Catledge also stated that the primaries were indecisive because of the apparent unwillingness of the leading candidates to face one another in the contests.³²

The question as to the actual value of the primaries was one which could only be answered after the contests of political strength had been fought and the results analyzed.

James A. Hagerty, writing in the New York Times, reported in an early analysis of the campaign in Illinois that Dewey was regarded as certain to win over any other candidate or candidates entering the primary against him. Dewey's managers believed that a victory in Illinois would greatly increase their candidate's prestige throughout the country and would bring him the backing of party leaders who had remained cool to his candidacy. Hagerty declared that if either Taft or Vandenberg entered the primary, Dewey could lead either by two or three to one; if both entered, Dewey would have a greater vote than the combined vote of both.³³

Arthur Krock reported in his early analysis of the Wisconsin primary that the fate of Dewey's and Vandenberg's

³²Turner Catledge, "Presidential Primaries a Doubtful Barometer," New York Times, February 18, 1940, IV, p. 7.

³³James A. Hagerty, "Dewey Men Count on Illinois Vote," New York Times, February 1, 1940, p. 13.

candidacies could be decided in the April 2 primary. In assessing Vandenberg's chances, Krock stated that the Senator had supported certain social and economic New Deal measures of the type which had appealed to the Wisconsin voting majority for many years. Krock also pointed out that the isolationist doctrine, associated with Vandenberg, was popular in the state.

In the assessment of Dewey's chances Krock stated that while the New York District Attorney was not well known in Wisconsin, he had initiated a more frontal attack on the New Deal than had Vandenberg. It was also reported that Dewey's foreign policy views had not been presented in as great detail as had his views on domestic matters. If Vandenberg were to win in Wisconsin, according to Krock, Dewey's chances for the nomination could be severely impaired; however, were the reverse to happen, Dewey would be far ahead of the field of candidates. Vandenberg's managers reportedly were counting on support from the state's Progressive party; however, it was revealed that the Progressives would vote in the Democratic primary if a third term slate were entered. If such a move occurred, Dewey's chances for victory would be materially better because his supporters in the state were the "old-line Republicans," the traditional enemies of the Progressives.³⁴

³⁴Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: The Possibilities of the Wisconsin Primaries," New York Times, February 8, 1940, p. 22.

During the month of February, Dewey's publicity easily overshadowed Taft's. The former's tour to New England and to the Pacific Northwest and the political analyses of the Illinois and Wisconsin primary campaigns brought him almost daily headline space. In March, however, the situation was reversed; Taft's speeches in Virginia, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania were among the leading political stories of the month. In Virginia, Taft placed the "anti-war party" label on the G.O.P. and declared that if Roosevelt were re-elected, he would not bet the country could stay out of the war.³⁵ In Kentucky, Taft took advantage of published reports that the President had cited Farley's religion (Catholic) as a possible handicap to the Democratic National Committee Chairman's presidential candidacy by denouncing religious bigotry and declaring that such ideas sought to destroy the inalienable rights guaranteed to every American citizen.³⁶ In Philadelphia, Taft warned that four more years of the New Deal would lead to a government of men, not people, which would control every step of the nation's economic and political and individual life. He also stated that a planned economy was socialism and that socialism could not be carried out by deliberative legislative bodies.³⁷

³⁵ New York Times, March 17, 1940, p. 4.

³⁶ Turner Catledge, "Taft Denounces Religious Bigotry," New York Times, March 23, 1940, p. 2.

³⁷ New York Times, March 26, 1940, p. 9.

While Taft was campaigning in the East, Dewey made a trip to Chicago to confer with party leaders from Illinois and Wisconsin. Plans were worked out for the candidate's campaigns in the two states; the campaigning would consist mainly of rear platform speeches from trains.³⁸

Dewey hit the headlines in late March when the leaders of the La Follette Progressives repudiated the "Progressive Republican Club of Wisconsin." The Progressives charged that the misleading wording was a cunning deception, an attempt to lead the people of Wisconsin into believing that the Progressives had cast their support to Dewey. When the news broke, Vandenberg's supporters reportedly redoubled their efforts in the state and made an open appeal for the support of the Progressives.³⁹

In the New Hampshire primary, the first such contest of 1940, Senator Bridges led the field of eight running for the four places as delegates-at-large. Of the eight delegates elected, one had pledged himself for Dewey,⁴⁰ and the other seven, although unpledged, had expressed leanings toward Bridges as a favorite son candidate.⁴¹

³⁸New York Times, March 8, 1940, p. 11.

³⁹Turner Catledge, "Dewey Men Draw Wisconsin Rebuke," New York Times, March 28, 1940, p. 16.

⁴⁰James A. Hagerty, "Roosevelt Slate Carries Primary in New Hampshire," New York Times, March 13, 1940, p. 18.

⁴¹New York Times, March 14, 1940, p. 18.

The March Gallup Poll of Republican voters again placed Dewey as the front runner; however, the trend which had begun in February continued to manifest itself in the March poll: Dewey dropped from 56 per cent to 53 per cent, and Vandenberg gained from 17 per cent to 19 per cent; Taft again received 17 per cent. Others receiving votes in the poll were Hoover with 5 per cent, Gannett and James with 1 per cent, and others with 4 per cent. The poll also indicated that the number of undecided voters had increased from 36 per cent in February to 40 per cent in March. In a survey of twelve Mid-West states (Wisconsin, Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, Kansas, Missouri, North and South Dakota, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio) the poll asked G.O.P. voters to choose between Dewey and Vandenberg. The results showed Dewey leading with 45 per cent; Vandenberg received 33 per cent; and 22 per cent were undecided. The poll predicted that the vote in the Mid-West primaries would be close.⁴²

The April 2 Wisconsin primary was eagerly anticipated by Republicans all over the country. It was generally believed that the election would eliminate either Dewey or Vandenberg should one lose to the other by a decisive margin, while a close vote could eliminate both. Robert La Follette, the leader of the State's Progressives, was believed to be more likely

⁴²New York Times, March 24, 1940, p. 10.

to support Vandenberg's candidacy than Dewey's. In the primary campaign Dewey traveled through the state and conducted a very vigorous campaign, while Vandenberg made no personal appearance in the state and left the campaigning to his supporters.⁴³ As a result of his intense efforts, Dewey won an unexpected and startling victory by sweeping the state's twenty-four delegates. Vandenberg's candidacy was believed to be a dead issue after this defeat, and Dewey's candidacy began to draw more attention.⁴⁴

Although Vandenberg had made no effort to campaign for the nomination, many Republicans had picked him to sweep through the primaries and attain sufficient delegate strength to become the leading compromise candidate. In an attempt to analyze the defeat, Milton S. Mayer, writing in The Nation, explained that in foreign affairs Vandenberg had been difficult to pin down because he had vacillated from an internationalist in the World War period to an isolationist in 1940, and in domestic affairs he had stood squarely on both sides of every issue for the preceding ten years.⁴⁵

Senator Taft, when asked for his reaction to the results of the primary, declared that nothing would surprise him in

⁴³"Wisconsin Primaries," Time, 35:18, April 1, 1940.

⁴⁴"Dewey Gets Going," Time, 35:19, April 8, 1940.

⁴⁵Milton S. Mayer, "Men Who Would Be President: VI. Try to Find Vandenberg," The Nation, 150:587-88, May 11, 1940.

Wisconsin and added that he would have more votes on the first ballot than any other candidate.⁴⁶ Arthur Krock pointed to Dewey's victory as proof of the candidate's vote-getting power and predicted that his success would bring him a challenge from his rivals for the nomination.⁴⁷ Krock also reported that Dewey's Wisconsin campaign had implied a belief in the extreme principles of isolationism and that the candidate had seemed to vie with Vandenberg for occupying the innermost corner of the isolationist reservation.⁴⁸ James A. Hagerty stated that Dewey's two-day personal campaign in the state had been an important factor in his victory. He also reported that Vandenberg had declined to comment on the results of the primary; however, it was revealed that he had been surprised by the results,⁴⁹ that he had expected, at worst, an even break in the election.⁵⁰

The New York primary election was also held on April 2, and the big question in the contest was the number of

⁴⁶New York Times, April 4, 1940, p. 14.

⁴⁷Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: Mr. Dewey Goes to the Head of the Class," New York Times, April 4, 1940, p. 22.

⁴⁸Arthur Krock, "Draft-Roosevelt Plan Meets a Double Check," New York Times, April 7, 1940, IV, p. 3.

⁴⁹Charles R. Michael, "Washington Sees Dewey's Chances Enhanced by Vote," New York Times, April 4, 1940, p. 1.

⁵⁰James A. Hagerty, "Dewey Seizes Lead in Race," New York Times, April 7, 1940, IV, p. 6.

delegates Gannett would be able to capture from Dewey. Newsweek reported that Dewey's diligent campaigning had again paid off; he had captured eighty-two of the ninety-two delegates.⁵¹ Since the New York delegates were not bound to declare themselves for any candidate, the number allotted to any presidential aspirant would necessarily have to be an estimation. Between the April primary and the June convention the speculation over the number of New York delegates who would vote for Dewey would run high.

The next important primaries which captured the nation's attention took place in Illinois and Nebraska on April 9. After the April 2 Wisconsin primary, Senators Charles L. McNary of Oregon and Arthur Clapper of Kansas sent messages to Nebraska Republican leaders endorsing Vandenberg as a champion of agriculture; however, the two Senators disclaimed any participation in the primary campaign, but stated that they had been asked by the state's G.O.P. leaders for Vandenberg's voting record on agricultural measures. The Michigan Senator's supporters in the state declared the race to be even; however, they admitted that Dewey's Wisconsin primary victory and the candidate's personal visits in the state represented handicaps to the Senator's chances.⁵²

⁵¹"Primary Season Puts Roosevelt and Dewey Off to Good Start," Newsweek, 15:15, April 15, 1940.

⁵²New York Times, April 6, 1940, p. 18.

In the Nebraska primary, Dewey again emerged victorious over Vandenberg, this time by a margin of nearly 28,000 votes (99,905 to 72,108). Not only did the results give Dewey the state's fourteen delegate votes, but it also marked the first time since 1930 that the state's Republican primary vote topped the Democratic.⁵³

In Illinois, Dewey ran unopposed on the Republican ballot, receiving ninety per cent of the vote. He also outran the Roosevelt slate four to three throughout rural Illinois, which seemed to indicate that the G.O.P. strength in the state had grown considerably since 1936. Even though he received ninety per cent of the vote, the state's fifty-eight delegates were just "advised" to support him at the convention.⁵⁴

After the Dewey victories in Nebraska and Illinois Senator McNary and Senator Hiram Johnson of California stated that Dewey would be the party's nominee;⁵⁵ however, it was reported that the party professionals still relegated him to the second spot on the ticket.⁵⁶

Not content to rest on his successes, Dewey embarked on

⁵³"Campaign: G.O.P. Trend," Time, 35:15, April 22, 1940.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵New York Times, April 11, 1940, p. 17.

⁵⁶"The Republicans," Time, 35:18, April 8, 1940.

a campaign trip which would take him through the Western and Rocky Mountain States. In Oklahoma City, in answer to a question as to the opinion the national administration should take in regard to the European war, Dewey declared that the country would be safer in the hands of the Republicans. In Amarillo, Dewey attacked the administration's failure to solve the unemployment problem, the New Deal taxation policies, the growing power of the Federal government's regulatory agencies, and the growth of the national debt. Concerning the latter issue, the candidate declared, "Blessed are the young for they shall inherit the national debt."⁵⁷

As the Dewey campaign swung through California, the candidate continued to stress domestic issues. To 20,000 in the Hollywood Bowl he declared that the best way to keep out of war was to give our primary attention to the nation's domestic affairs and to refrain from attempting to intervene in the disposition of the affairs of the rest of the world. Dewey did, however, state that the nation needed to develop an adequate national defense system. He also pledged the G.O.P. to uphold and continue a permanent program of social security.⁵⁸

On the trip from San Francisco to Denver, Dewey conferred

⁵⁷James C. Hagerty, "Dewey Twits Taft on Maryland Race," New York Times, April 19, 1940, p. 17.

⁵⁸James C. Hagerty, "Nevada Leaders Talk with Dewey," New York Times, April 22, 1940, p. 7.

with Republican leaders from Nevada, Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado, in addition to giving several back platform speeches along the route.⁵⁹ In Colorado, the candidate was suddenly struck with an "intestinal ailment," and the campaign train headed eastward. With the end of the tour James C. Hagerty, covering the Dewey campaign for the New York Times, reported that the large turnouts in Indiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado indicated that many Republican leaders and a large section of the rank and file of the party regarded Dewey as almost a "sure bet" to win the nomination. Hagerty stated that while Dewey and his managers had estimated their delegate strength to be anywhere from 400 to 501, 358 could be claimed without much dispute.⁶⁰

A week later, in early May, Dewey was in Kansas conferring with Landon and making campaign speeches. In Wichita, the candidate assailed the doctrine that government was the source of all "blessings" and declared that there existed a need for "individual intergrity."⁶¹

Dewey's primary victories and his campaign tours

⁵⁹James C. Hagerty, "Dewey Cheered on Way to Denver," New York Times, April 23, 1940, p. 12.

⁶⁰James C. Hagerty, "Dewey Tour Brings 'Bandwagon' Hints," New York Times, April 28, 1940, p. 2.

⁶¹James C. Hagerty, "Dewey Asks Guard on Federal Power," New York Times, May 4, 1940, p. 18.

to the West gave him a virtual monopoly on April's political news; however, other politically significant events did occur. In mid-April the Republican National Committee announced that Governor Harold Stassen had been selected as the keynoter for the convention. At the selection meeting Dr. Glenn Frank reportedly had been eliminated from consideration for the post because the Old Guard regarded him as too pro-New Deal. Others nominated were Governor Ralph Carr of Colorado, Governor Harlan Bushfield of South Dakota, and Wendell Willkie, President of Commonwealth and Southern. Willkie had been suggested by Kenneth Simpson, but the latter withdrew the suggestion when it was pointed out that Willkie figured as a possible candidate and should, therefore, not be considered for the post. The meeting also produced several rules which would govern the convention activity, among which were the limiting of the nominating and seconding speeches and the banning of bands for use in demonstrations within the convention hall.⁶²

Taft's headquarters announced in mid-April that the Senator would campaign in West Virginia, Vermont, New Jersey, and Ohio during April and May, thus indicating that in Taft's mind the race was still wide open.⁶³ It was also reported that Taft was considering entering the May 6 Maryland primary

⁶²Charles R. Michael, "Republicans Make Stassen Keynoter," New York Times, April 17, 1940, p. 1.

⁶³New York Times, April 13, 1940, p. 8.

and that if he did so, it would be contrary to the advice which he had received concerning the move. His managers reportedly wanted the candidate to continue making short campaign trips and avoid the primaries, leaving the collection of delegates to his managers, who would continue to gather first and second ballot votes from the party leaders in the various states.⁶⁴

A rather curious situation occurred in the April West Virginia primary. Taft had campaigned in the state and had decided to enter the state's primary if another contender did. Dewey also decided to enter the primary, but only in the event another aspirant filed. Both candidates sent the filing papers to the state's National Committeeman, Walter Hallanan, on the condition not to file unless someone else did. The deadline for filing passed, and Hallanan still had both sets of papers, each set to be filed only if the other were filed first.⁶⁵

In Florida, another strange situation arose when that state chose two delegations, one "uninstructed," but pro-Dewey, and the other "uninstructed," but anti-Dewey. The Republican state convention met in April and elected a slate of twelve; however, the anti-Dewey forces stated that the state's National Committeeman, J. Leonard Repogle had used "steam-roller"

⁶⁴Turner Catledge, "Taft Weighs Entry in Maryland Race," New York Times, April 18, 1940, p. 17.

⁶⁵Ibid.

tactics in passing over Gannett and Taft supporters and choosing pro-Dewey men to represent the Florida G.O.P. In a rump gathering the dissenters chose their own slate, of which Gannett expected ten to twelve supporters and Taft four. It was also reported that both Vandenberg and Landon had friends on the rump delegation.⁶⁶

If the situation in Florida could be considered a movement to slow down Dewey's race for the nomination, it was not the only one. His leadership in the polls and victories in the primaries made him a target for Republicans and Democrats alike. Within the Republican party there were many professionals, a majority of whom were in the conservative wing of the party, who did not want Dewey and who actively sought to stop him. The arguments advanced by these conservatives were that Dewey might not stand up in the post-convention campaign and that even if he should win, a leader with his youth and inexperience during the critical international situation might not be good for either the party or the country. The "Stop-Dewey" group reportedly figured that both Taft and Dewey would go into the convention with about 300 votes each, leaving about 300 to favorite sons and "uninstructed" delegations. The group hoped to use this latter bloc of uncommitted delegates to stop Dewey's bid for the nomination and to put in whom they wished, using

⁶⁶Russell B. Porter, "Anti-Dewey Slate Chosen in Florida," New York Times, April 30, 1940, p. 11.

the vice-presidency in trade to swing the necessary delegates. There was a distinct possibility that the group would groom a dark horse for the nomination, but who it would be was pure speculation.⁶⁷

In late April, it was reported that the "Stop-Dewey" forces had been thinking of drafting Justice Roberts for the nomination in the event of a deadlocked convention. The group, the report continued, had been able to build up only one dark horse, Wendell Willkie. Although the Commonwealth and Southern President had widespread support among businessmen and the upper income groups, many within the "Stop-Dewey" movement doubted that they could get an ex-Democrat and utilities executive the nomination or get him elected in November should he get the nomination. The report also indicated that the members of the movement also doubted that Taft would be able to stop Dewey, and so the search for a compromise candidate continued.⁶⁸

The other group taking political aim on Dewey's candidacy were those Democrats seeking to draft Roosevelt for a third term. They had not hesitated to criticize those Democrats who had sought public support because the drafters wanted no one to be presented as an alternative to F.D.R. Dewey's apparent popularity and successes in the primaries prompted

⁶⁷Turner Catledge, "Can Dewey Be Stopped? Is Enigma of Campaign," New York Times, April 28, 1940, IV, p. 7.

⁶⁸New York Times, April 28, 1940, p. 8.

the group to attack and ridicule Dewey's candidacy. As early as February they had attempted to reduce his popularity by stressing the candidate's youth and inexperience. (Harold Ickes had declared that Dewey had thrown his diaper into the ring.) However, the whole matter was temporarily dropped when Dewey's campaign managers pointed out that he was the same age as Roosevelt when the latter ran for the vice-presidency in 1920.⁶⁹

As the month of April came to an end, it appeared that Taft and Dewey were about equal in delegate strength, with Dewey still holding a strong lead in the polls. A serious question not conclusively answered during the month was the fate of Vandenberg's candidacy--was he actually out of the running? Before the primaries George V. Denny, Jr., of radio's "American Town Meeting of the Air," had conducted a poll of the nation's newspaper editors. Denny had reasoned that these men could correctly ascertain the currents of public opinion within their geographical areas, and he used the information obtained from the poll to compose a picture of the nation's political climate. The editors were asked to indicate whom the Republicans would nominate and whom they should nominate. In answer to the first question, the editors gave Dewey the lead with 37.08 per cent, followed by Taft with 25.42 per cent,

⁶⁹Hamilton Basso, "Hats in the Ring: I. Young Mr. Dewey," The New Republic, 102:203, February 12, 1940.

Vandenberg with 24.58 per cent, Gannett with 1.67 per cent, and Hoover with .63 per cent. In response to the second question--whom the G.O.P. should nominate--the editors gave Vandenberg 44.79 per cent, Dewey 18.75 per cent, Taft 16.88 per cent, Hoover 8.13 per cent, Gannett 4.58 per cent, Bricker, 3.96 per cent, Martin 3.54 per cent, Willkie 1.88 per cent, Barton 1.67 per cent, and Landon 1.46 per cent.⁷⁰

If the results of this survey could be applied to a group representing a cross section of all Republicans instead of just to a relatively small group of editors, it could indicate that Vandenberg's candidacy had great public support; however, such an assumption is without foundation because such a survey was not made during April. The March poll showed Dewey far ahead in public support, with Vandenberg holding down second place. The May poll revealed that the Senator had dropped to third place, trailing both Dewey and Taft. Even so, some political analysts continued to predict that Vandenberg was not to be counted out of the race. John T. Flynn, writing in The New Republic, stated that he believed the central issue in the campaign would be free enterprise; and that issue, according to Flynn, would eliminate Dewey because the party leaders did not know where he stood on the issue and also Taft because he had been labeled a reactionary

⁷⁰George V. Denny, Jr., "What's Your Opinion?" Current History, 51:46-48, April, 1940.

by Republican leaders in the Middle West. Flynn stated that the issue of free enterprise would benefit Vandenberg's chances for the nomination and would bolster Justice Roberts and Governors James and Bricker as dark horse candidates.⁷¹ Democratic National Committee Chairman, James A. Farley, declared in early May that Vandenberg was the man to beat in the G.O.P. race.⁷²

With over a month and one-half remaining before the convention anything could happen; the entire complexion of the race could change at any time because, according to the March Gallup Poll, 40 per cent of the Republican voters were still undecided. (The May Gallup Poll indicated that 32 per cent of G.O.P. voters had not yet made up their minds as to the party's candidate.)⁷³

Republican concern over the choice of a nominee rose when the April Gallup Poll revealed that if the election were held at that time, the Democrats would lead 54 per cent to 46 per cent and that the two parties were more closely matched than they had been in twenty-four years. The poll gave the G.O.P. the six New England States and the Democrats the

⁷¹John T. Flynn, "Other People's Money: The Republican Campaign Huddle," The New Republic, 102:472, April 8, 1940.

⁷²Milton S. Mayer, "Men Who Would Be President: VI. Try to Find Vandenberg," The Nation, 150:589, May 11, 1940.

⁷³New York Times, May 31, 1940, p. 38. (Infra, p. 92.)

twenty-four states below the Mason-Dixon Line and west of the Rockies; the remaining eighteen states, according to the survey, were evenly divided. The states leaning Republican were Maine, South Dakota, Vermont, Kansas, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Illinois, and Wisconsin; those leaning Republican, but borderline cases, were New Jersey, Iowa, Rhode Island, Michigan, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Nebraska. Those states indicated as leaning Democratic were South Carolina, Mississippi, Texas, Georgia, Louisiana, West Virginia, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Utah, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Arizona, Montana, Maryland, Kentucky, Virginia, California, Missouri, New Mexico, Washington, and Colorado. The Democratic borderline states were Delaware, Oregon, Indiana, Idaho, New York, Wyoming, and Minnesota. The totals, if the results of the election were the above, would be 317 electoral votes for the Democrats and 214 for the Republicans.⁷⁴

Extremely interesting were the percentages for the borderline states. In New York, Minnesota, and Wyoming the Democrats led by only two percentage points--51 per cent to 49 per cent; in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Connecticut, and Nebraska the Republican lead was the same. In Indiana and Idaho the Democratic lead was 52 per cent to 48 per cent. In Oregon the

⁷⁴New York Times, April 21, 1940, p. 3.

Democratic lead was 53 per cent to 47 per cent; in Michigan and Massachusetts the Republican lead was the same.⁷⁵ It did not take a political expert to analyze the situation; the course of the war, the choice of the candidates, or some other significant event could change the political picture overnight. With a predicted close election such criteria as the political sensibilities of the various geographical sections and the sectional strengths of the candidates would become increasingly more important. As the campaign moved into its final stage, events were occurring which would alter the existing trend; a drastic change in the course of the European war would detract from Dewey's delegate strength and evelate the chances of both Taft and Willkie.

In early May, Dewey was still the front running G.O.P. candidate, even though many party leaders still opposed him. The mid-May Gallup Poll, sampling a cross section of Republican voters, gave Dewey 62 per cent, an increase probably resulting from his primary victories and his campaigns to the West. In the survey Taft received 14 per cent, passing Vandenberg, who received only 13 per cent. Others with votes were Willkie with 5 per cent, Hoover with 2 per cent, Gannett and Bridges with 1 per cent, and others with 2 per cent. Two significant points in the poll were the fall of Vandenberg after his

⁷⁵Ibid.

defeats in the primaries and the surprising rise of Wendell Willkie, the utilities executive. In March Willkie had received less than 1 per cent in the poll, but by the end of April his vote had increased to 3 per cent.⁷⁶ Willkie's popularity was growing, but he was still far behind Dewey.

The "Stop-Dewey" forces had failed to halt the popular swing to Dewey with their two-pronged attack on the candidate's youth and inexperience; however, in May they were able to bring a new argument into the attack. They began to stress the foreign policy stands Dewey had taken during his primary campaigns. They pointed out that he had not been consistent in his foreign policy statements during these campaigns and emphasized the fact that in the face of an international crisis it was important to have a candidate who was consistent. Dewey's opponents reported that his stand in January had been close to that of the President, but that in the Wisconsin campaign in March his foreign policy statements had taken on an isolationist tone. They stated that by May Dewey was declaring that aid to Britain would bring the nation into the European war.⁷⁷

This indictment of Dewey did not seem to have much effect, at least in Idaho and Maryland, because in early May he picked

⁷⁶New York Times, May 31, 1940, p. 4.

⁷⁷"Campaign: Trend," Time, 35:21, May 20, 1940.

up Idaho's eight delegate votes and Maryland's sixteen. The former were obtained as a result of instructions given by the state convention;⁷⁸ the latter were granted the candidate as a result of his eight to one victory over an "uninstructed" slate in the state's primary.⁷⁹

The new attack by the "Stop-Dewey" group showed that at least some Republicans realized the importance of the foreign policy issue. A Gallup poll published in early May attempted to sample all voters on the question of whether the United States should aid the Allies. The results showed that the voters of each party, by a two to one margin, favored a candidate who was willing to give all help to Britain and France, in the event they needed it, short of actually going to war.⁸⁰ If this survey accurately measured public opinion on this important issue, then an isolationist could, conceivably, have a very difficult time in the November election defeating a candidate who favored such aid. The three leading Republican candidates had expressed outright or modified isolationist stands on the war and on aid to the Allies. During the month of May, Dewey and Vandenberg remained silent on the issue; Taft, on the other hand, seemed to move contrary to public opinion by

⁷⁸New York Times, May 7, 1940, p. 14.

⁷⁹New York Times, May 8, 1940, p. 19.

⁸⁰New York Times, May 10, 1940, p. 8.

placing himself firmly in the isolationist camp.

Taft started out his May campaign with a bang by pick-up Ohio's fifty-two convention votes in the state's primary.⁸¹ He then traveled to Kansas to confer with Landon and other Republican leaders in the Middle West. In these conferences Taft stated that the European war had compelled many to desert Dewey's cause for his own because they felt the party needed a man of more experience.⁸² Taft also stated that he approved of Roosevelt's new defense program and agreed that the United States needed an adequate defense system at once; however, he declared that even if the Allies lost to Germany, the United States would not immediately be faced with the danger of attack from that country.⁸³ Even though virtually all the Kansas Republican leaders informed the candidate that sympathy for the Allies had been growing in the region, Taft cautioned the country to keep its mind on domestic issues lest the New Deal use the European crisis to expand its powers at home.⁸⁴

In St. Louis, Taft declared that he favored strict financial and military neutrality and cautioned the nation to stop playing with the idea that the nation could enter the war

⁸¹New York Times, May 15, 1940, p. 30.

⁸²Turner Catledge, "Taft's Hopes Rise for Illinois Votes," New York Times, May 18, 1940, p. 34.

⁸³New York Times, May 18, 1940, p. 34.

⁸⁴Turner Catledge, "Taft Asks Nation to Turn from War," New York Times, May 19, 1940, p. 4.

and concentrate on a genuine program of defense. He again took a position against aid to the Allies in the face of information he had received which indicated that in eight Middle Western states sympathy for the Allies had grown since the latest German offensive in April. Taking a more definite stand, Taft stated that if the United States were justified in spending billions for the Allies and supporting their navies, then it would be cowardice not to support them also with men.⁸⁵

Taft's managers labeled the Middle West tour a success and predicted that their candidate was now the leading contender for the nomination.⁸⁶

Gannett, campaigning in the South, predicted that his strength at the convention would surprise everyone and that no candidate would secure the nomination on the first ballot. He also stated that he would have a good chance for the nomination in the later balloting.⁸⁷ C. Nelson Sparks, Gannett's campaign manager, declared that his candidate would receive delegate votes from Utah, Arizona, Georgia, Arkansas, and Alabama and would pick up votes from other delegations after the first ballot.⁸⁸

⁸⁵Turner Catledge, "Strict Neutrality Demanded by Taft," New York Times, May 21, 1940, p. 16.

⁸⁶Turner Catledge, "Taft Is Confident as His Tour Ends," New York Times, May 22, 1940, p. 18.

⁸⁷New York Times, May 10, 1940, p. 18.

⁸⁸New York Times, May 20, 1940, p. 18.

From the declaration of war on September 3, 1939, until May 8, 1940, the date of the German breakthrough into Holland and Belgium, there was practically no military action occurring on the Western Front; and many labeled the conflict as "the phony war." In April, the Germans seized Norway and Denmark; in May, the Lowlands were attacked without provocation. This turn of events increased public sympathy for aid to the Allies, as evidenced in the polls and verified by state political leaders. The passing of "the phony war" had a profound effect on the Republican fight for the nomination.

Turner Catledge, in assessing the G.O.P. campaigns after the new German offensive, reported that the race was still wide open. Dewey was presented as the strongest "popular choice," however, it was revealed that Taft's chances had been improving in relation to both Dewey's and Vandenberg's. Catledge stated that the latter's rigid stand for complete "insulation" of the United States from European affairs was of questionable value under the circumstances. Catledge also reported that Willkie's stock had risen precipitously in certain regions; but the great question, still unanswered, was whether the Willkie forces could translate the public support into delegate votes at such a late date. It was revealed that the Republican pre-convention campaign had been slowed up by the feeling that there was not much sense worrying about nominating a candidate because if the war were to keep going

as it had, Roosevelt would be re-elected. Catledge's summation of the situation indicated that Dewey's popularity had declined as a result of concern over his youth and inexperience and that Taft's had risen because of his cool, stable approach to the problems of the day. Willkie's chances to get the nomination in the event of a deadlock were reported as being remote.⁸⁹

The end of May Gallup Poll verified the fact that Dewey was losing strength to both Taft and Willkie. In the survey, sampling a cross section of Republican voters, Dewey still led with 56 per cent, followed by Taft with 16 per cent, Vandenberg with 12 per cent, Willkie with 10 per cent, Hoover with 2 per cent, Gannett and James with 1 per cent, and others with 2 per cent. Most amazing was Willkie's increase from 3 per cent in early May to 5 per cent in mid-May to 10 per cent in late May. The poll reported that Willkie's strength was largely confined in the East, although his boom appeared to be growing.⁹⁰

During the month of June, the focal point of Republican activity centered in Philadelphia, even though there were still several weeks of campaigning left. As the delegates and the candidates converged on the city, the four most discussed topics were the delegate strengths of the candidates, the

⁸⁹Turner Catledge, "War's Turn Upsets Republicans' Race," New York Times, May 26, 1940, IV, p. 10.

⁹⁰New York Times, May 31, 1940, p. 38.

course of the European war and the fate of France and Britain, the rise of Wendell Willkie as a serious contender for the nomination, and the President's third term decision. By June, it was apparent that the events in Europe had greatly increased Roosevelt's popularity and had elevated him to the position of undisputed leadership of his party. It was equally apparent that the President's ultimate decision on the third term would have considerable influence on the G.O.P. nomination.

II. THE POPULARITY OF THE PRESIDENT

During the period January through May, 1940, Roosevelt maintained his silence on the third term decision, surviving a continuous barrage of questioning from reporters and theorizing from political writers. The international crisis had elevated F.D.R.'s popularity among both Democratic voters and the electorate of the nation as a whole during the final months of 1939, and in 1940 the deterioration of the European situation resulted in further support for a third term for the President. The New Dealers entered his name in eleven primary contests; however, Roosevelt, refusing to commit himself, neither expressed himself for or against the movement--the Democratic party and the nation as a whole were kept in the dark as to the President's intentions. By June, the convention month for the G.O.P., the polls had indicated that the nation preferred a Democratic president in 1940, that a major-

ity of the electorate expected F.D.R. to run for a third term and believed that he would win, and that the opposition to the third term had become a minority opinion. This powerful position attained by the President resulted from two developments occurring during the primary months: first, the President, as a result of the campaigns of the New Dealers, swept through the contests and obtained sufficient pledged delegate strength to be re-nominated on the first ballot; and second, the German advances into Norway, Denmark, and the Lowlands during April and May--the end of the so-called "phony war"--removed the effective opposition to the third term. By June, F.D.R. was in a position to control the Democratic nomination by either accepting it or by naming his successor.

The Pre-Primary Period: January--February

During the last months of 1939, the popularity of the President rose sharply. The New Republic reported that F.D.R. had become the overwhelming choice of the Democrats, possessing over seven times the support of Garner and three times the support of all the Democratic aspirants combined. The magazine also declared that Roosevelt could secure a third term without a single Republican vote and could even lose all the votes pledged to Garner, Hull, McNutt, and all other Democratic presidential possibilities.⁹¹ The pre-primary polls also

⁹¹"The President People Want," The New Republic, 102:9, January 1, 1940.

indicated that F.D.R. commanded a substantial lead within his own party. In January, the Gallup Poll revealed that in a nationwide survey of Democrats with opinions, 78 per cent showed a preference for Roosevelt, while 13 per cent were for Garner, 4 per cent for McNutt, 2 per cent for Hull, 1 per cent for Murphy and Farley, and 1 per cent for others. The poll also asserted that a majority of voters, of all parties, still opposed the third term.⁹²

In October, 1939, Secretary of Agriculture Wallace had made the front pages of the nation's newspapers when he declared that Roosevelt's experience and training made it essential that he seek a third term during the international crisis. The statement had evoked some irritation from the White House, and the Press Secretary, Stephen Early, publicly rebuked Wallace for the untimely remark. In early January, 1940, Wallace and Attorney-General Jackson made the same appeal before Jackson Day dinner audiences. When Early was asked if the two would be criticized for their statements, the answer given was, "Of course not." Early, when subjected to further questioning as to why the situation had changed, refused to comment. Roosevelt also declined to comment on the two statements, stating that he had not read them.⁹³

⁹²New York Times, January 3, 1940, p. 2.

⁹³New York Times, January 10, 1940, p. 14.

Throughout January and February reporters continued their attempts to "trap" F.D.R. into revealing his plans. In late January, he turned aside requests for comment on John L. Lewis' prediction of an "ignominious defeat" for the President were he to seek a third term by asking the reporters to give him one good reason why he should answer a question of that kind. Another reporter asked the President whether he had told Senator Donahey of Ohio that there would be no need for him to run as a favorite son for the Democratic nomination. Roosevelt stated that he had merely told the Senator the previous spring that he had hoped that Donahey would run again for the Senate.⁹⁴

Several days later Roosevelt had to dodge three more veiled inquiries. One reporter asked the President what name he planned to apply to the next year's March-of-Dimes dances in celebration of his birthday anniversary (ten days after his second term expired); the President laughed and declared that the questioner must have stayed up all night thinking up the question. Another reporter took a more direct approach by asking Roosevelt if he would comment on a newspaper dispatch which stated that he would seek a third term and that Farley would retire to a lucrative business post; F.D.R. answered that it was a fine, new question.⁹⁵

⁹⁴New York Times, January 27, 1940, p. 11.

⁹⁵New York Times, February 1, 1940, p. 13.

In early February, Roosevelt gave his first unsmiling reaction to the inquiries on his future plans with the statement that the country was probably tired of all the third term speculation and that further efforts to draw him out on the subject were silly and henceforth would be considered out of order.⁹⁶

During this pre-primary period, Roosevelt's silence did not deter his rise in the public opinion polls, nor did it appear to hinder his chances for re-election were he to decide to run. In February, the Gallup Poll indicated that 52 per cent of those sampled in a cross section survey of the voting population in all states believed that Roosevelt would seek a third term and that 60 per cent believed he would be re-elected. Before the outbreak of the European war only 48 per cent were of the opinion he would run in 1940, and only 45 per cent thought that he would be re-elected. A partisan breakdown of opinion showed that 57 per cent of the Democrats with opinions expected a third term race, while 47 per cent of the G.O.P. were of that opinion.⁹⁷

Dr. George Gallup, addressing the Advertising Club in Baltimore, stated that the key to the third term was the course of events in Europe. He remarked that Roosevelt's popularity

⁹⁶New York Times, February 6, 1940, p. 1.

⁹⁷New York Times, February 18, 1940, p. 2.

had risen sharply since the advent of war and that if the attention of the American public were to return to domestic problems, the sentiment could revert to what it had been before the war.⁹⁸ This was to be quite an "if" because two months after this statement, Germany would begin her march to conquer the world; and the headlines carrying the war dispatches to the people of the United States would focus attention on the foreign situation and keep it there for years to come.

In early February, the Democratic National Committee met and selected Chicago as the site for their 1940 convention. It was reported that ninety per cent of the leaders present at the meeting either favored or were not opposed to a third term; however, a resolution to draft Roosevelt was not discussed or adopted.⁹⁹

Arthur Krock declared that Roosevelt's silence indicated that the President had shown a willingness to let the third term project be used for political purposes. He also stated that Garner, Farley, Wheeler, and McNutt resented the evasive method which denied them their fair chance before the voting public and that if Roosevelt were to run, Garner would probably be the only Democrat with the courage to carry on the contest for the nomination. Krock reported that the New Dealers had

⁹⁸New York Times, February 4, 1940, p. 22.

⁹⁹Charles R. Michael, "Democrats Select Chicago, Postpone Choice of a Date," New York Times, February 6, 1940, p. 1.

entered Roosevelt slates in the Illinois and Wisconsin primaries, evidence that they had accepted F.D.R.'s silence as a consent for a draft.¹⁰⁰

In late February, it was reported that the New Dealers were elated by the fact that the deadline for withdrawing from the Illinois primary had come and passed without any word from the President. The failure to withdraw was generally accepted in Washington as practically a green light for the movement seeking to draft Roosevelt. The New Dealers planned to stop Garner's candidacy in New Hampshire, Wisconsin, and Illinois; and they would seek to stop Wheeler in Oregon and California. The draft movement also figured to broaden the plan so that the President could choose the nominee if he should decline to run.¹⁰¹

During the primary months, Roosevelt continued his refusal to discuss the third term decision or to promote the candidacy of any other Democrat; he became the only possible Democratic candidate.

The Primary Months: March--May

During the months of March, April, and May, the New Dealers campaigned to give Roosevelt the nomination on the first ballot, if he should want it. In February, the polls had shown that

¹⁰⁰Arthur Krock, "Democrats' Dilemma Deepens as Days Pass," New York Times, February 11, 1940, IV, p. 3.

¹⁰¹Turner Catledge, "New Dealers Hold Way Now Clear to 3rd Term Draft," New York Times, February 26, 1940, p. 1.

the nation's voters believed that the President would attempt to secure a third term and that he would be successful; however, the March Gallup Poll revealed that a majority of voters in all states still opposed a third term. In tracing F.D.R.'s rise in popularity the poll reported that in August, 1939, Roosevelt had received 56.6 per cent of the nation's support; however, the percentage had increased to 64.9 per cent after the outbreak of the European war. His percentage had dropped somewhat after the initial shock of the war had worn off (62.7 per cent in November, 1939); by February of 1940 his support had again moved back up to 64 per cent. The pro-third term sentiment, it was reported, had followed a similar trend: 40 per cent in August, 1939; 48 per cent in September; 43 per cent in November; and 46 per cent in February, 1940.¹⁰²

In another March Gallup Poll it was revealed that the Democratic party, in a nationwide poll of all voters, led the Republican party in popularity by 55 per cent to 45 per cent, with one voter in six still undecided. The survey still placed New England in the G.O.P. camp by a wide margin; the South and the West were again allotted to the Democrats. The poll showed the East and West Central States still about even, with the Republicans still holding on to the former by a 51 per cent--49 per cent margin and the Democrats holding on to the latter

¹⁰²New York Times, March 1, 1940, p. 14.

by the same percentage. The Mid-Atlantic States were put into the Democratic column by a 53 per cent--47 per cent margin.¹⁰³

Out of the maze of statistics one fact stood out quite clearly: the President controlled his party, and the party was favored to win in 1940. The only dissension appeared to be the opposition of the voters to the third term. Regardless of whether Roosevelt had made up his mind to run or whether the "Draft-Roosevelt" group had planned and worked independently of the White House, F.D.R.'s name had been entered in eleven primary contests with the avowed purpose of ascertaining the strength of the resistance to the concept of a third term.

In mid-March, it was reported that the President had let it be known that he desired delegate strength in order to be prepared to nominate himself or dictate his successor and the platform; however, the report was not confirmed.¹⁰⁴

In the New Hampshire primary, Garner and Farley went down to defeat as the Roosevelt slate swept the state's twelve delegates; however, the Republicans polled twice as many votes as the Democrats.¹⁰⁵ The G.O.P. votes plus those given to

¹⁰³New York Times, March 3, 1940, p. 4.

¹⁰⁴Charles R. Michael, "Roosevelt Is Reported Seeking Delegates So as to Hold Control," New York Times, March 12, 1940, p. 17.

¹⁰⁵"Primary Season Puts Roosevelt and Dewey Off to Good Start," Newsweek, 15:15, April 15, 1940.

Farley and Garner indicated that there existed a good deal of sentiment against the third term in that state. Turner Catledge reported that Farley and Garner polled about one-fourth of the Democratic vote and that those votes had to be accepted as anti-third term votes. He also stated that Garner's campaign managers had been elated over the results and had begun to work hard in Wisconsin, Illinois, California, and Oregon.¹⁰⁶

After the New Hampshire primary, the Gallup Poll released a survey which showed that as of mid-March, 47 per cent of all voters favored a third term, an increase of 1 per cent over the previous month.¹⁰⁷

In the Wisconsin primary, Roosevelt's slate again defeated Garner, but not by the five or six to one predicted by the F.D.R.'s supporters; in fact, Garner's capture of 30 per cent of the primary vote represented a blow to the third term drafters. Arthur Krock declared that if the Republican vote were added to the percentage of the Democratic vote received by Garner and applied to the nation as a whole, Roosevelt would be defeated were he to attempt a third term contest.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶Turner Catledge, "Early Primaries Serve as Guide to '40 Trends," New York Times, March 17, 1940, IV, p. 7.

¹⁰⁷New York Times, March 13, 1940, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸Arthur Krock, "Draft-Roosevelt Plan Meets a Double Check," New York Times, April 7, IV, p. 3.

The Illinois primary, held one week after Wisconsin's, did not alter the trend. The drafters had predicted a sixteen to one margin for F.D.R., but the results showed only a six to one margin. The Dewey vote, when added to Garner's, represented a fifty-fifty split in opinion over the third term.¹⁰⁹

In the Nebraska primary, Roosevelt ran unopposed on the Democratic ticket; however, Dewey and Vandenberg's vote topped the President's, representing the first time in ten years the Republican primary vote had surpassed that of the Democratic.¹¹⁰

In April, F.D.R. broke his silence to blast the G.O.P. and its presidential candidates. In the address the President declared that the three issues advanced by the Republican candidates had been first, that the administration was leading the nation into the war; second, that the New Deal measures could be handled more efficiently by the G.O.P.; and third, that the Republican party could provide jobs for all, maintain relief rolls at adequate levels, meet national defense requirements, reduce taxes, and reduce the cost of government by repealing the "horrid" restrictions on private business. To the first issue, concerning the war, Roosevelt told his audience that

¹⁰⁹"Campaign: G.O.P. Trend," Time, 35:15, April 22, 1940.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

they knew better than that; to the second, he recalled the scandals occurring under Republican administrations; and to the third, he declared that he did not have to comment. Although he gave no hint as to his future plans, he did warn the Democratic party that they could win in November only by nominating a liberal pair of candidates and a forward-looking platform.¹¹¹

Dewey's victories in the primaries and standing in the public opinion polls perhaps brought about the President's attack. Arthur Krock revealed that there existed strong implications that the Senate would investigate the use of campaign funds in Dewey's behalf during the primaries and that the New Dealers had begun a new tactic by declaring that Roosevelt had to run if Dewey were chosen as the Republican nominee. Krock also reported that grapevine messages from the White House stated both that F.D.R. would not run and that he would.¹¹²

In the May primaries, the struggle between the "Draft-Roosevelt" group and the anti-third term Democrats continued. Roosevelt's slate swept the California primary; and the third term foes, led by Senator Millard E. Tydings, clinched Maryland. By mid-May, the President had amassed a convention majority of pledged and semi-pledged delegates.¹¹³ There was

¹¹¹Felix Belair, Jr., "Roosevelt Scores Dewey's Criticism of Foreign Policy," New York Times, April 21, 1940, p. 1.

¹¹²Arthur Krock, "Many Signs Now Point to a Roosevelt 'Draft'," New York Times, April 21, 1940, IV, p. 3.

¹¹³New York Times, May 24, 1940, p. 16.

no longer any contest between the two opposing forces within the Democratic party; and the probable reason for this situation was the German offensive which began during the April-May primary period.

The June Gallup Poll reported that since the Nazi invasion of the Lowlands and France in mid-May, the pro-third term sentiment had risen sharply; it had reached a majority for the first time. Before the invasion, 47 per cent of the nation's voters had favored a third term; two weeks after the change in the course of the war the percentage had increased to 57 per cent. The poll showed that the increase had resulted from switches in the Democratic party; 8 per cent of the Republicans sampled favored a third term, while 91 per cent of the Democrats had cast support for the President.¹¹⁴

The primary elections, which had increased Dewey's chances for the nomination and had prompted a split within the Democratic party, needed to be re-evaluated in light of the international crisis. The German offensive had united the Democratic party behind Roosevelt; the President had the convention votes to nominate himself or name his successor, with either choice resulting in a Democratic victory. Still, the drastic change of events did not dissuade Roosevelt from his policy of silence; speculation over his future plans continued

¹¹⁴New York Times, June 5, 1940, p. 18.

to occupy the minds of the political leaders of both parties.

The sudden change in the international situation was also to have a dramatic reaction in the Republican race for the nomination. The German offensive forced Republican leaders to re-appraise the stock of the potential nominees. The foreign policy stands of the leading contenders--Dewey, Taft, and Vandenberg--pointed to a very perplexing problem: could an isolationist candidate defeat F.D.R. or any other internationalist candidate during the crisis? The problem was further complicated by the fact that Dewey and Taft possessed nearly equal delegate strength, which raised the possibility of a deadlocked convention and the choice of a compromise or dark horse candidate. Out of this distressing situation a dark horse was to enter the race, overtake the two leading candidates on the far turn, and win the nomination going away in the home stretch. This dark horse was Wendell Willkie.

CHAPTER IV

THE RISE OF WENDELL L. WILLKIE

Throughout 1939, as the nation's political parties and their candidates vied with one another for public recognition and acceptance, Wendell Willkie achieved national popularity as an outstanding critic of the New Deal; however, he was not a political candidate, but a spokesman from the ranks of American business who was attacking the administration's domestic policies. From January to April, 1940, Willkie was still not a candidate, although he had become a more popular critic; for his articles and speeches had attracted a good deal of attention. In April, a nationwide movement to secure the nomination for Willkie was started; however, it was being conducted without his consent, and he refused to campaign for the nomination. By May, Willkie had become an announced candidate; and the movement, which was only one month old, had picked up considerable momentum. As the boom grew, Willkie's popularity, as measured in the polls, increased correspondingly. By June, he had become the most-discussed candidate in the race.

I. BEFORE 1940

Willkie's debut on to the political stage took place during the first years of the New Deal. Willkie, a Democrat, took issue with the Roosevelt ideology and became a critic of

the administration's attitude and policies toward business. During the controversy over the concept, purpose, and legality of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Willkie, President of Commonwealth and Southern Company--the nation's largest producer of electricity--argued that it was wrong for the Federal government to establish public power plants for the benefit of a few people when all America had to foot the bill. In his fight with the New Deal Willkie had championed the cause of private enterprise over government-owned power plants; and, as a result of his efforts, he achieved recognition as a leading critic of the New Deal.

In the fight which ensued, Willkie fought the government on every possible issue; and, in a losing cause, he still managed to obtain his price for the company's holdings located within the Tennessee Valley Authority's jurisdictional area. This victory boosted him into the limelight as a stout defender of private enterprise, as well as an effective campaigner against the administration.

In 1938, columnist Jennings Perry reported to his readers that Willkie should run for the presidency;¹ and his statement marked the beginning of what was to become a movement of amateur politicians to put Willkie in the White House.

In February, 1939, The Saturday Evening Post carried an

²Joseph Barnes, Willkie: The Events He Was a Part of--The Ideas He Fought For, p. 157.

article by Alva Johnston which described Willkie's fight with the New Deal over public power; however, the article gave no hint of his possible political future.²

In May of the same year, David Lawrence discussed Willkie's chances as a Republican presidential possibility, drawing from the utilities executive the statement that he had no political ambitions, but that he was not indifferent to the suggestion.³

In June, 1939, Willkie's article "Brace Up America" appeared in The Atlantic Monthly. In the article Willkie expressed his views on the status of the American economy and criticized the New Deal's failure to cope with the nation's economic problems. He declared that in order to solve these problems, American industry had to be expanded; the government, according to Willkie, could not retard industry with strict regulation and taxation and expect economic recovery in return. Willkie also presented an indictment of the New Deal theory that a government could spend its way into prosperity, stating that such an economic theory had two evil consequences: an unbalanced budget and the creation of a deficit spending policy with higher taxes. He stated that government spending drove private capital out of industry, thereby inhibiting

²Ibid., p. 158.

³Ibid., p. 157.

industrial expansion and contributing significantly to the continuance of unemployment. Willkie also declared that the government harassment of industry also jeopardized the position of labor; for the small profits of industry stopped any chance for higher wages, which would result from industrial expansion. He also called for a revision of the nation's tax structure to encourage the investment of domestic capital into the nation's industries instead of into tax-exempt securities, as the existing tax structures had been channeling investment; new enterprises could absorb the country's idle money and idle men.⁴

In the same month another of Willkie's articles, "Idle Money, Idle Men," appeared in The Saturday Evening Post. Willkie again stated his program for economic recovery, declaring that industrial expansion would create jobs, solve the unemployment problem, and bolster the entire economy. Again he stressed the importance of revising the nation's tax laws to stimulate investment in the country's industrial future.⁵

In late July, 1939, Willkie received additional recognition by having his picture appear on the cover of Time; how-

⁴Wendell Willkie, "Brace Up, America," The Atlantic Monthly, 163:749-56, June, 1939.

⁵Irving Stone, They Also Ran: The Story of the Men Who Were Defeated for the Presidency, p. 349.

ever, the magazine reported that his candidacy was "mildly fantastic."⁶

Arthur Krock, a long-time Willkie booster, stated that nothing would come of the suggestions that Willkie could be a prime dark horse candidate, despite his national fame and qualifications. According to Krock, the fact that Willkie had been a Democrat would not necessarily disqualify him; but the fact that party leaders reportedly did not want a businessman as a candidate would. He also stated that Willkie possessed no organization or delegate strength, two essentials needed to secure the nomination. Krock declared that Willkie had gained a victory over Roosevelt and the Tennessee Valley Authority by refusing to keep still, to lie down and tremble, by presenting a devastating set of facts which had influenced both public opinion and Congress; and, because of this, if Willkie were to become the G.O.P. nominee, the President would attempt to stop him. According to the columnist, this situation represented a strong argument against nominating Willkie in the eyes of many Republicans. Another of Willkie's political liabilities stressed in the article was the utilities executive's low opinion of professional politicians; he did not think much of their capacity or character. These politicians would not nominate a man who knew their shortcomings and would

⁶Barnes, op. cit., p. 158. (See also Time, July 31, 1939, p. 45.)

receive support from Wall Street, a political liability in the aftermath of the Depression.⁷

The possibility of Willkie's candidacy was again raised in November, 1939. In a speech before the Bond Club in New York City, General Hugh S. Johnson described Vandenberg and Taft as good, average politicians and stated that

Dewey would face some difficulty in selling himself beyond the Alleghanies, where he was little known. In the question and answer period which followed the speech Johnson declared that Willkie would be a very strong candidate.⁸ The statement drew from Willkie the following quip: "In view of the speed with which the Federal Government is taking over my business, shortly I'll probably have to be looking around for a new job. General Johnson's is the best offer I've had thus far."⁹

Arthur Krock reported in late November that a group of businessmen and private citizens had been discussing the possibility of putting Willkie up for the nomination, but that the talk had indicated nothing but a fine disregard of the realities of politics in that the potential candidate would need a national organization, a large amount of financial support, and assistance from powerful political leaders.

⁷Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: Something the Republicans Probably Won't Do," New York Times, August 16, 1939, p. 22.

⁸New York Times, November 22, 1939, p. 13.

⁹Ibid.

Krock stated that Willkie possessed none of these essential requirements.¹⁰

With the approach of the election year, Willkie was still a spokesman for business and not a candidate. In December, in a speech before the Congress of American Industry, he warned his audience against the power of the government commissions and the dangers of excessive Federal control over the economic life of the nation. Willkie declared that an increase in individual opportunity would restore the functioning of free enterprise and that unemployment, the major economic problem, would be solved by American business if the government would get "off their backs."¹¹

II. THE WILLKIE MOVEMENT--JANUARY-MAY, 1940

Throughout the first four months of 1940, Willkie was not an announced candidate; but in May, he dropped the businessman-critic attack on the New Deal to become an active candidate for the nomination. Although the boom did not get started until after the major primary contests, it gained amazing strength during the month of May; in March Willkie had not been mentioned as a candidate in the polls, but by May he was in fourth place with 10 per cent of the vote in the Gallup Poll.

¹⁰Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: Mr. McNutt and His Old Frat Brother, Mr. Willkie," New York Times, November 29, 1939, p. 22.

¹¹New York Times, December 9, 1939, p. 1.

During the first two months of 1940, Willkie continued to present his economic program through speeches to civic, social, and business groups. In January, he declared that whenever a government assumed autocratic control over industry, it must, in order to maintain that control, gradually suppress freedom and civil liberties and that those who advocated more and more Federal power were the same people who maintained that the great pioneering days of America were finished. He stated that the apparent philosophy of an absolute government was a defeatist philosophy, with the government controlling all.¹² In February, he asserted that he had opposed the domination of the people by big business as he now opposed the domination by big government.¹³

Willkie reported that he had received thousands of letters from individuals urging him to run for the presidency. He added that he did not believe the nomination would be given to him, but if it were offered without any strings attached, he would have to accept. Still, Willkie did not announce his candidacy; in fact, he stated that he could not go out and seek delegates and make two-sided statements because he valued his independence.¹⁴

¹²New York Times, January 30, 1940, p. 4.

¹³New York Times, February 17, 1940, p. 7.

¹⁴New York Times, January 31, 1940, p. 5.

Arthur Krock, discussing Willkie's statement, declared that a candidate must, or generally did, surrender some of his independence when running for office in order to build up convention votes and that most candidates made two-sided speeches. Krock surmised that since Willkie could not surrender some independence and make two-sided statements, he could not seek delegates. The columnist reasoned that a long deadlock could produce a candidacy such as Willkie's, but the possibility of that occurrence was slim because politicians disliked candidates without "strings."¹⁵

In April, Willkie again declared that he was not a candidate and that he had not the slightest delusion about being nominated; however, he again stated that in order to preserve his intellectual well-being, he would accept the nomination if it were offered. Also presented in the speech was his reiteration of his solution to the nation's economic problems: curbing the authority of the various boards and commissions created by the New Deal, modifying the tax laws to encourage and stimulate investment, and changing the attitude of government toward business.¹⁶

In another April speech, Willkie declared that the current economic ills facing the country were primarily the

¹⁵Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: The Care and Feeding of Very Dark Horses," New York Times, February 1, 1940, p. 20.

¹⁶New York Times, April 5, 1940, p. 1.

fault of government, not the system itself. By making it impossible for American business to obtain the capital it needed for enterprises, the government had created a situation whereby the nation's businesses could not provide jobs for the unemployed, new expanding industries, nor new products for the consumers. Willkie charged that the New Deal took the term "businessman," which the country had honored for more than a century, and turned it into an epithet.¹⁷

Willkie's early criticism brought him publicity; the publicity brought requests from interested groups for speeches and elaboration on his principles, ideals, and arguments; the speeches brought Willkie increased publicity--this was the actual start of the Willkie boom.

By early April, it appeared that Willkie's criticism of the New Deal had been hitting the mark, for it was reported that the Federal government had begun an investigation of Willkie's business activities and that certain government officials had declared that they were out to "get" him. Roosevelt, when questioned about the alleged threats, stated that nobody took things like that seriously.¹⁸

Investigation or not, Willkie continued his attack. In April, his article "We the People" appeared in Fortune; and in

¹⁷New York Times, April 6, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁸New York Times, April 6, 1940, p. 1.

the article he declared that the United States should not be a laboratory for social experimentation and condemned the New Deal for failing to solve the economic problems facing the nation since 1932.¹⁹ The arguments presented in this article were not new; they were the same points of criticism Willkie had been emphasizing since his struggle against Roosevelt and the New Deal began; however, the effect of the message was significant. Accompanying the article in Fortune was an endorsement of Willkie by the Luce editorial board, an indication that his message had made a few converts.²⁰ After the publication of "We the People" Willkie received 2000 requests for speeches.²¹

Perhaps the single most important individual in the Willkie movement, aside from the man himself, was Oren Root, Jr., the grandnephew of Elihu Root and an attorney associated with the New York firm of Davis, Park, Wardwell Gardiner and Reed. Without consulting Willkie (Root had not even met him), Root mailed out a little more than a thousand "declarations" throughout the country in order to get signatures in support of Willkie's candidacy. Root stated that the idea was his own and that he had financed the printing of the forms because he

¹⁹Stone, op. cit., p. 351.

²⁰Barnes, op. cit., p. 161.

²¹Ibid.

believed that there was a great demand among thinking people for the nomination and election of Willkie as President.²²

Root also reproduced copies of "We the People" and mailed them with the "declarations" to inform the addressees of the arguments and principles of his candidate.²³

Less than a week after he had sent out the "declarations" Root reported that they had been well received and that the printers had received orders for 20,000 more forms. Root also revealed that Willkie had contacted him and had explained that he neither approved or disapproved of Root's activities and that he would not participate in any organized effort to get the nomination.²⁴

Late in April, Root reported that he had rented an office on Madison Avenue to administer the Willkie drive and had received requests for 35,000 "declarations." He also stated that contributions had enabled him to open the headquarters and that Willkie had told him that he was more interested in getting popular support for certain ideas than in obtaining support for personal advancement. It was also reported that the "Stop-Dewey" forces had been discussing the possibility of putting a halt to Dewey's aspirations by throwing their support to

²²New York Times, April 11, 1940, p. 20.

²³Stone, op. cit., p. 352.

²⁴New York Times, April 15, 1940, p. 7.

Willkie, if they failed to stop him with Taft or Vandenberg.²⁵

The Willkie movement continued to gain momentum through the month of April, demonstrated by the fact that the Root headquarters had received 200,000 signed "declarations" by the end of the month. Root stated that he planned to show them to the delegates to inform them of the widespread support for Willkie.²⁶

Arthur Krock, continuing to provide the Willkie supporters with helpful hints in candidate building, declared that the movement was still only a wish and a hope, not a reality. He reasoned that in order to be a candidate Willkie would need a small reservoir of delegates in his pocket when the convention opened and that since Willkie had no pledged delegate strength and had made no attempt to gain support, his slim chance to capture the nomination had grown smaller. Krock reported that the Willkie men would have some difficulty convincing G.O.P. leaders that Willkie was the best candidate in light of his announced support of the reciprocal trade treaties (Only five Republican members of Congress had voted to extend them.) and aid to the Allies. Krock suggested that Willkie's supporters, in order to secure delegate votes for their candidate, set up a political organization in his home state of Indiana.²⁷

²⁵New York Times, April 22, 1940, p. 7.

²⁶New York Times, April 30, 1940, p. 12.

²⁷Arthur Krock, "In the Nation: A Dilemma Evoked by Our Political System," New York Times, April 16, 1940, p. 22.

The lack of delegate votes did represent a handicap to Willkie's chances; the movement appeared to be concentrating on winning nationwide public support instead of delegates. Root's headquarters, aside from distributing "declarations," also started handing out buttons and urging citizens to form "Willkie-For-President" clubs. Root distributed 25,000 campaign buttons as an experiment, and soon the Willkie Clubs were dispensing over 80,000 buttons a day. In response to Root's suggestion that interested citizens establish local clubs to work for Willkie's candidacy, thousands of political amateurs began contributing their time, money, and energies to the cause.²⁸ The Willkie boom was a reality, even though it was promoted by groups from the organized public and not political leaders and delegates.

In addition to his magazine articles and speeches, Willkie was afforded the opportunity of presenting his program to several million people when he appeared on an April broadcast of the radio show "Information Please." The panel of professional wits would have been delighted to slaughter Willkie before the large radio audience; however, he turned the tables and stole the show.²⁹ After his appearance and the start of his boom, Willkie moved up in the polls, but the professional

²⁸Stone, op. cit., p. 352.

²⁹Barnes, op. cit., pp. 161-62.

politicians still did not give him a second thought.³⁰

During the month of May, the Willkie boom slowly gained momentum. His advance in the polls had been gradual, but it represented a clear indication of his rising popularity.

After Root had begun his initial program to unite Willkie sentiment throughout the country, other important figures jumped on the bandwagon. Russell Davenport resigned his position as managing editor of Fortune to work for Willkie's nomination by organizing Willkie clubs. John Cowles, publisher of the Minnesota Publisher; Gardner Cowles, Jr., publisher of Look and the Des Moines Register and Tribune; Henry Luce; and Ogden Reid of the New York Herald Tribune were other publishers who supported the Willkie movement. Other converts included John W. Hanes, a former New Deal office holder; Henry Breckenridge, Assistant Secretary of War under Wilson; Samuel F. Pryor, Republican National Committeeman from Connecticut; and Fred Smith, a prominent public relations specialist.³¹

While Willkie's active supporters were engaged in promoting his candidacy, he remained aloof from the activities. Willkie had stated that he would not seek delegates nor actively campaign for the nomination; however, during the month of May he made several speeches in which he expressed

³⁰Malcolm Moos, The Republicans: A History of Their Party, p. 410.

³¹Barnes, op. cit., pp. 162-63.

his views on both domestic and foreign policy. In a speech before the American Newspaper Publishers Association Willkie stated that he opposed the New Deal's domestic policy and believed, as did millions, that Roosevelt had done a pretty good job in the administration of the nation's foreign policy. He expressed apprehension that since many of those who opposed the New Deal thought it would be a wise political move to be against all its policies, the voters might be forced to make a choice between two half-rotten apples in November. Willkie also presented a clear stand on aid to the Allies when he declared that possibly the most effective way of keeping the country out of the war would be by helping the democracies in every way possible, within the limits of international law, because if the totalitarian powers won, the odds could be substantial that the United States would have to meet them in armed conflict.³²

In mid-May, Willkie was invited to Minnesota to confer with Governor Stassen and state Republican Leaders. In a speech delivered during his stay he characterized the New Deal period as a "decade of decadence," charging that free enterprise had been abandoned and a highly centralized government substituted in its place, a government which controlled the enterprises of the people by non-elected commissioners. Willkie called for

³²New York Times, May 5, 1940, p. 3.

a freely publicized foreign policy and urged extension of every aid short of war to the democracies of Europe.³³

Continuing his Mid-West speaking tour, Willkie declared in Indianapolis that Roosevelt had conducted a deliberate campaign to destroy the people's confidence in their enterprises and hope of the future under a system of free enterprise.³⁴

In Des Moines, he asserted that the New Deal's blundering domestic policy had "hamstrung" industry and left it without sufficient skilled labor or plant equipment to build defenses the President now wanted. Willkie also warned Republicans not to attempt to wipe out the existing farm program until it had a better one to offer.³⁵

In New Jersey, he charged that the New Deal had created chaos in government and industry and lacked the ability and confidence to carry out the task of coordinating the nation's national resources in the drive to strengthen national defenses. In this political speech Willkie also dealt with his utilities connection, which had been presented as a handicap to his candidacy, by declaring that he was very proud to be in the utilities business; he asked his audience to recall when in the nation's history had American businessmen been barred from

³³New York Times, May 12, 1940, p. 3.

³⁴New York Times, May 16, 1940, p. 48.

³⁵James C. Hagerty, "Willkie Pictures Defense Handicap," New York Times, May 18, 1940, p. 9.

running or holding office.³⁶ Willkie may have stated that he was not a candidate, but he began to sound as if he were.

In late May, Willkie warned that if the totalitarian countries won the war, they would control world trade on their own terms and the only way the United States could trade would be to set up a similar type of government here, thus abrogating at least some of the traditional American liberties. He also asserted that anyone who believed that the results of the European war would be of no consequence to him would be blind, foolish, and silly. The only way to avoid war, according to Willkie, was to build up our strength.³⁷

Willkie's energetic supporters and the "candidate's" speeches had gotten the boom off to a good start. A Gallup Poll survey published early in May indicated that Willkie's stock had increased during the short period the boom had been in existence. The poll showed Willkie in fourth place, moving ahead of Hoover, Landon, Gannett, Bridges, and Martin; however, the poll also indicated that he had a long way to go to catch Dewey, Vandenberg, and Taft.³⁸

By mid-May, Root declared that the popular support for Willkie was increasing rapidly; he asserted that it was an

³⁶New York Times, May 21, 1940, p. 17.

³⁷New York Times, May 22, 1940, p. 16.

³⁸New York Times, May 8, 1940, p. 18.

independent, spontaneous movement and that there was no stopping it. Root also reported that Willkie Clubs had been established in twenty-three cities.³⁹ Root's enthusiasm was somewhat confirmed by James C. Hagerty, who reported that if the convention were deadlocked, Willkie's supporters believed they would gain delegate strength from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Indiana, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Iowa, Minnesota, and Missouri. He also stated that Willkie had scored heavily in the Mid-West with his statements on both the foreign situation and the farm problem.⁴⁰

Confirmation of Willkie's growing strength came in the New Jersey primary, held in late May. The utilities executive's supporters had conducted a spontaneous, eleventh-hour write-in campaign, and the results showed that Willkie had surprising strength in the state. The write-in vote was figured to be of both practical and psychological value to his candidacy.⁴¹

The end of May Gallup Poll showed that Willkie was still in fourth place, but that he had increased his percentage materially. In the March poll he had received less than 1 per cent, and by April he had only 1 per cent; however, by early May he had moved ahead to 3 per cent. As the boom expanded

³⁹New York Times, May 16, 1940, p. 48.

⁴⁰James C. Hagerty, "Willkie Shedding 'Dark Horse' Role," New York Times, May 19, 1940, p. 2.

⁴¹New York Times, May 23, 1940, p. 21.

and as the candidate began his Mid-West speaking tour, his percentage began to climb. By Mid-May, Willkie had 5 per cent; by the end of May, this had increased to 10 per cent.⁴²

Indicative of the expansion of the boom was the report in the first week of June that five hundred Willkie Clubs had been established, growing at the rate of twelve per day, and that a volunteer "Women's Committee for Willkie" had been organized and was sending out 5,000 letters a day in behalf of their candidate.⁴³

In the face of this overwhelming evidence that Willkie commanded a large and growing public following, political analysts continued to point out to the American people the reasons why he could not possibly gain the nomination.

McAlister Coleman, writing in The Nation, reported that it was unfortunate that Willkie had been so closely associated with the holding companies because "old-fashioned American liberalism would have had in him a doughty champion."⁴⁴ Raymond Moley, writing in Newsweek, stated that the G.O.P. professionals would refuse to support Willkie's candidacy because he was not a political administrator, a dispenser of jobs and favors to the

⁴²New York Times, May 31, 1940, p. 38.

⁴³"Willkie Boom Is Republican Sensation as Philadelphia Convention Nears," Life, 8:25, June 24, 1940.

⁴⁴McAlister Coleman, "Men Who Would Be President: IV. Wendell Willkie's Hat Is on His Head," The Nation, 150:472, April 13, 1940.

loyal party workers.⁴⁵ The Christian Century recognized the widespread interest in Willkie's candidacy, but indicated that the American people would not turn Roosevelt out of office for a public utilities man who had agreed with F.D.R.'s foreign policy and disagreed with his domestic policy.⁴⁶ William Allen White, reporting in The New Republic, asserted that there were handicaps to Willkie's nomination: first, he had been a regular Democrat until 1935; second, he had been too candid and decent during the growth of his boom; and third, he had alienated the isolationist wing of the G.O.P. by supporting Roosevelt's foreign policy and Hull's reciprocal trade treaties.⁴⁷

The political experts within the Democratic party apparently held similar opinions of Willkie's chances. Ickes revealed that F.D.R. had stated that he did not believe that Willkie had much of a chance to get the nomination; Ickes also recorded that Farley had considered Willkie the strongest candidate the Republicans could name.⁴⁸

Willkie, who had been a spokesman for business in 1939,

⁴⁵Raymond Moley, "Perspective: Willkie--A Study in Irony," Newsweek, 15:72, May 20, 1940.

⁴⁶"The Phenomenon of Wendell Willkie," The Christian Century, 57:725, June 5, 1940.

⁴⁷William Allen White, "Wendell Willkie," The New Republic, 102:818, June 17, 1940.

⁴⁸Harold Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Vol III, The Lowering Clouds, 1939-1941, p. 201.

emerged during the Spring of 1940 as a candidate. As the pre-convention campaign moved into the final weeks, Willkie became the main topic of conversation. No one actually knew how much support he held, nor did anyone know if his dramatic rise in the polls would alter the existing situation. Dewey and Taft were far ahead in pledged delegate strength, and it was reasonable to assume that one of the two would be chosen the 1940 G.O.P. standard bearer at the convention.

CHAPTER V

TWENTY-THREE DAYS IN JUNE: WILLKIE AGAINST THE FIELD

As the pre-convention campaigns went into their final days, the political situation became more and more muddled, at least for the G.O.P. For the Democrats it was certain that Roosevelt had full control of the destiny of the party; however, no one knew exactly what that destiny would be, possibly not even the President. In the Republican race Dewey, Taft, and Willkie continued their respective campaigns; however, the leading candidate, Dewey, seemed to be losing strength to Willkie, who appeared to be heading toward the convention on the crest of a nationwide boom. To further complicate matters for the G.O.P. strategists, and the delegates as well, was the growing significance of the foreign policy issue in light of the deterioration of the international situation, Roosevelt's appointment of two Republican interventionists to the Cabinet, and the respective stands the various G.O.P. candidates were taking on the issue. Opinion as to who should receive the nomination was far from being crystallized; neither the rank and file nor the professional politicians seemed satisfied with the existing situation.

I. THE BOOM THAT GREW

The momentum of the Willkie boom carried the candidate into the month of June as the most active Republican candidate.

Dewey and Taft, possessing vast delegate strength by comparison, continued to confer with delegates and political leaders throughout the nation; however, Willkie conducted a strong personal campaign in the West and another in New England and reportedly gained considerable support. It was also rumored that a "Stop-Willkie" movement had begun.

Although much attention had been given to the Willkie boom, the practical politicians of the party could not help but relegate Willkie to a dark horse category because he possessed little delegate strength, the votes bestowing the nomination. The three leading candidates had amassed a considerable number of such votes, both pledged and promised, by June. With 992 delegates chosen as of June 1, Dewey led the field with 150 pledged votes. Others possessing pledged support were Taft, with fifty-six; Vandenberg, with thirty-eight; Hanford MacNider, with two; Senator Capper, with eighteen; and Senator McNary, with ten. The remaining delegates were not pledged; these "uninstructed" delegates numbered over 700.¹ A majority of the latter delegates had promised, both publicly and privately, to support various candidates; however, the actual delegate strength of each of the contenders was unknown. Dewey was estimated to have slightly less than 300 first ballot votes, although his managers had predicted 450 on

¹New York Times, May 30, 1940, p. 15.

the first ballot; Taft's strength was estimated to be 275, but his managers had not made specific predictions, declaring only that Taft would win the nomination.² As the campaign entered its final weeks, it was little wonder that the professionals believed that either Dewey or Taft would win the nomination.

Willkie, finally acting as if he were a candidate, took his program to the West during the first weeks of June. In Denver, he declared that unless the wheels of industry were started, the cost of the defense program would come out of the standard of living of the ordinary person; it would be paid by the poor instead of the rich. He also stated that the removal of Roosevelt was the only way the United States could present a united front against the threats of totalitarian powers and added that he would "love to go to the people against that fellow."³ One point Willkie stressed time and time again on this tour was that since the overwhelming sentiment throughout the nation favored aid, short of war, to the Allies, the party must not adopt an isolationist foreign policy plank. He predicted that if the G.O.P. presented a united front with a platform with a "realistic outlook" on the European situation and leveled the principal attack on the domestic policy of the

²James A. Hagerty, "First-Vote Choice of Dewey Is Found Unlikely in Survey," New York Times, June 3, 1940, p. 1.

³New York Times, June 1, 1940. p. 7.

New Deal and its "proven incompetence" to build an adequate defense system, the party would win in November.⁴

The success of the boom, including the enthusiastic reception of Willkie's program and speeches, prompted Root to predict that if the nomination were not won by the second ballot, the delegates would give the nomination to Willkie.

Root declared that he was confident that the delegates would feel "the subconscious desire of the American people."⁵

Additional evidence that the boom had grown during the first weeks of June came from Russell Davenport, who reported that Willkie-For-President clubs had been established throughout the nation and numbered almost 500. He also revealed that 350,000 buttons had been distributed in June and that 150,000 copies of a pamphlet listing Willkie's principles had been distributed by his headquarters.⁶

During early June, Taft, continuing his methodical delegate collecting, took his campaign to Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama. During this tour he continued to criticize the administration for its failure to prepare the country's defense system. On the same issue he declared that the United States had to take in its belt by cutting expenditures and

⁴New York Times, June 9, 1940, p. 3.

⁵New York Times, June 4, 1940, p. 18.

⁶New York Times, June 12, 1940, p. 23.

revising tax structures in order to pay for the rising defense costs. Taft also declared that Roosevelt should renounce the third term because he had failed to prepare the nation for attack by foreign powers.⁷

Dewey's forces were also active during this period. In early June, Dewey's Philadelphia headquarters were opened in the Hotel Walton, and the candidate's managers announced that Dewey would conduct a personal campaign in Vermont, Rhode Island and Massachusetts before the convention opened.⁸

With the pre-convention campaign rapidly coming to a close, it appeared that the Taft and Dewey campaigns had slowed down considerably from their earlier pace, while that of the newcomer, Willkie, appeared to be speeding up. The Mid-June Gallup Poll indicated that the latter's boom had indeed been growing. The results of the survey of Republican voters showed Dewey still leading, with 52 per cent, but Willkie advancing into second place with 17 per cent, Hoover 2 per cent, Landon and Gannett 1 per cent, and others 2 per cent. The survey indicated that Willkie's rise had been at Dewey's expense, with Taft's and Vandenberg's totals remaining rather steady. After labeling the Willkie boom as phenomenal, the

⁷New York Times, June 8, 1940, p. 16.

⁸New York Times, June 15, 1940, p. 34.

poll remarked that it was a dramatic challenge to the validity of the old political theory that voters tend to climb on the bandwagon of the candidate shown to be in the lead.⁹

Soon after the publication of this poll, Willkie announced that Representative Charles A. Halleck of Indiana would place his name in nomination and that Representative Bruce Barton of New York would deliver one of the seconding speeches. The candidate also predicted that the nomination would be made on the sixth or seventh ballot and that he would have approximately seventy first ballot votes.¹⁰ After making this announcement, Willkie left for a three-day campaign tour in New England.

In Boston, Willkie again presented his arguments in favor of aid to the Allies and again assailed the New Deal's defense program. When asked if he would lead the country into war if elected, Willkie declared that no president should take the nation into war unless and until the people demanded such action; in a democracy, he maintained, it was the right of the people to decide upon war.¹¹ It was reported that Willkie was well received in the region and had gained valuable support. In Rhode Island, Governor Vanderbilt formally endorsed Willkie

⁹New York Times, June 12, 1940, p. 23.

¹⁰New York Times, June 13, 1940, p. 10.

¹¹New York Times, June 15, 1940, p. 11.

at a Republican rally, and the latter was assured that he would receive six of the state's eight votes. In Connecticut, Willkie was informed that the state's sixteen votes would be his no later than the second ballot; and in Massachusetts, Republican leaders indicated that he would get twenty-two of the state's thirty-four votes early in the balloting. It was also reported that if Bridges withdrew from the race, Willkie could receive support from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.¹²

Dewey, also speaking in New England, made no claims concerning his support in the region. In a Vermont speech he also criticized the administration for its lack of preparedness and declared that the first step which needed to be taken was to remove the national defense system from political control and to replace incompetent Cabinet officers with qualified men. Dewey implored the people to take "realistic" steps to protect the nation instead of leaving the job to Roosevelt and his "crew of fuzzy-minded theorists." Commenting on the international situation he remarked that Marshal Petain's offer of surrender was the saddest statement that he had ever read.¹³

Before Dewey had departed on his New England tour, his managers announced that Willkie was the man they had to beat for the nomination. Dewey's strategists had planned a campaign

¹²New York Times, June 17, 1940, p. 17.

¹³James C. Hagerty, "Dewey Demands Strong War Steps," New York Times, June 18, 1940, p. 27.

to convince the delegates that their candidate would get more votes than any other candidate, especially more than Willkie, who they declared would be hurt by his corporate and banking connections. The Dewey forces had also stated that letters stressing Dewey's vote-getting power and indicating the results of a private poll, showing Dewey far ahead of the field would be sent to the delegates.¹⁴

Further evidence that the other candidates were concerned over the Willkie boom was the report that an effort had been started to block Willkie's attempt for the nomination. It was also reported that G.O.P. leaders from Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, and other farm states opposed his candidacy and in a deadlock might combine to give the nomination to Dewey or Taft to stop Willkie. The opposition reportedly stemmed from the fact that Willkie was an ex-Democrat and an utilities executive, two drawbacks which would be emphasized if he continued to gain strength.¹⁵

In the face of growing opposition the Willkie boom continued to expand. Root revealed in mid-June that an estimated 4,500,000 Americans had signed petitions calling for Willkie's nomination. The boom received another boost on June 20, when the Scripps-Howard papers came out for Willkie's nomination,

¹⁴New York Times, June 17, 1940, p. 17.

¹⁵James A. Hagerty, "Effort Is Started to Block Willkie," New York Times, June 20, 1940, p. 20.

declaring that he stood out like an oak in a thicket and that he was the only Republican candidate with whom the party could win.¹⁶

II. THE PRESIDENTIAL BOMBSHELL--THE PLAN THAT FAILED?

Several days before the opening of the Republican convention Roosevelt exploded a political bombshell with the announcement that Colonel Henry L. Stimson and Colonel Frank Knox had been appointed Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy, respectively. The announcement aroused a great deal of excitement in the Republican party because both men were G.O.P. leaders with avowed interventionist beliefs with regard to the existing international crisis. The President declared that he had made the appointments in the interest of national defense, and he indicated that there existed overwhelming support throughout the nation for aid to the Allies. Both of the appointees had been identified by the press as sympathizers with Roosevelt's pro-Ally foreign policy stand. G.O.P. leaders condemned the appointments; however, the significance of the maneuver rested with the Presidential motivation: were the appointments actually made in the interests of national defense, or did they represent the President's attempt to induce the G.O.P. to adopt a strict isolationist platform and to nomi-

¹⁶New York Times, June 20, 1940, p. 20.

nate a candidate adhering to that foreign policy stand? The Stimson-Knox appointments, regardless of their intent, did produce a violent reaction within the G.O.P.

One of the first reactions was a new round of questioning on the third term decision because Landon and previously stated that no Republican should enter the Cabinet until F.D.R. foreswore any third term aspirations. Reporters were unable to pursue the subject further because White House Press Secretary Early refused to comment on the question.¹⁷

The importance of the appointments rested with the effect they would have on the G.O.P. convention, which was to begin on June 24. The repercussions among those assembling in Philadelphia were great. Aside from virtually reading Knox and Stimson out of the party, Republican leaders and delegates denounced the appointments as "petty politics," a move toward dictatorship, and preparation toward placing the nation into the European war. It was reported that it was almost certain that the Republican platform would go much further in declaring for a policy of non-intervention and that those who supported all possible aid to the Allies were concerned lest the move toward isolationism ended their chance for such a plank. Many Republican leaders believed that Roosevelt had given the G.O.P. the cue to become strictly a "peace party." It was also

¹⁷Felix Belair, Jr., "Capital Surprised," New York Times, June 21, 1940, p. 1.

reported that since Willkie had been closely identified as an interventionist, the party was not likely to nominate him and that the candidacies of Taft and Dewey would probably be enhanced by the furor following the announcement.¹⁸

Isolationists in the platform committee took the position that it was virtually mandatory that the convention adopt a non-interventionist plank; they began to work in that direction.¹⁹

The comments issued by Republican leaders pointed out the fact that opinion of the appointments varied--they had not been universally condemned--and that several G.O.P. leaders used the controversy as a propanganda vehicle directed to the rank and file of both parties, as well as to the delegates assembling at the convention: Mac Nider declared that he was sorry to hear of Knox and Stimson's departure from the G.O.P. to the war party; former Senator David Reed of Pennsylvania stated that he wished Roosevelt had filled all the other positions with Republicans and then resigned himself; Halleck asserted that the appointments made Willkie the logical candidate; former Senator Walter E. Edge of New Jersey stated that the President got a couple of good men to strengthen his Cabinet; and David Ingalls stated that since they had not

¹⁸James A. Hagerty, "Stimson and Knox Disowned by Party," New York Times, June 21, 1940, p. 1.

¹⁹Ibid.

consulted any Republican leaders before accepting the positions, they could no longer be considered Republicans.²⁰

The candidates, and potential candidates, were more careful in their comments. Hoover declared that the appointments were of no particular importance to the race for the nomination or to the election. Dewey stated that the appointments held the gravest implications for the nation's future, for the taking of two interventionists into the Cabinet could only be interpreted as a direct step toward war; and, according to Dewey, Roosevelt took the step in order to protect himself from the political consequences of failing to prepare the nation's defenses.²¹ Taft declared that the appointments improved the Cabinet, and surmised that Knox and Stimson had been apparently selected because of their interventionist sympathies.²² In answer to a question on the Knox-Stimson acceptances, Willkie remarked that each conscientious individual had to determine such things according to the dictates of his own conscience.²³ Upon being informed of the appointments Bridges stated that he was incapable of comment; however, McNary stated that the appointees should make able executives.²⁴

²⁰Ibid.

²¹New York Times, June 21, 1940, p. 4.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

The President's bombshell had the immediate reaction in a resurgence of isolationism; the platform makers were determined to make the G.O.P. the "peace party" in 1940. This resurgence, if it remained the dominant philosophy, would practically eliminate Willkie as a candidate, or at least stop his boom; however, the day after the announcement of the Cabinet changes it was reported that Republican sentiment favoring aid to the Allies had rebounded and that the Willkie boom had gathered new strength.²⁵ It was also reported that 500 members of the Willkie-For-President clubs had arrived in Philadelphia to convince the delegates that Wendell Willkie was the only logical choice for the nomination and that the delegates had been deluged by thousands of telegrams, letters, and postal cards urging them a vote for Willkie. The growing strength of the boom was evident even to those Republican leaders who opposed his candidacy; they agreed that he had great "secondary strength," especially in New England, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Indiana, Minnesota, Colorado, Michigan, and even some in the South.²⁶

If the purpose of the President's appointments had been to halt the Willkie boom, it failed; however, if the purpose had been to persuade the Republicans to entrench themselves

²⁵New York Times, June 22, 1940, p. 1

²⁶James A Hagerty, "Confusion Is Fading," New York Times, June 22, 1940, pp. 1,20.

firmly in the isolationist camp, a position seemingly contrary to public opinion, it appeared to have been partially successful. It was reported that the individuals within the platform committees favoring aid to the Allies were meeting rather stiff resistance from groups planning to draft a definite declaration against any American intervention in the European war. The subcommittee on national defense and foreign policy had postponed consideration of these two important planks; however, it was apparent that the showdown between the two groups would have to occur sometime before the convention started.²⁷

At the height of the controversy surrounding the appointments the final Gallup Poll of Republican candidate popularity was published, indicating several important developments. The survey of G.O.P. voters showed that Dewey, while still in the lead, had again lost ground to Willkie. Of those Republicans with opinions, 47 per cent favored Dewey, while 29 per cent now supported Willkie. Taft and Vandenberg received only 8 per cent, a substantial decrease in popular support; and Hoover gained to 6 per cent. The poll also reported that 34 per cent of G.O.P. voters had not yet made up their minds on the candidates; if this were true, then the race was far from settled.²⁸

As the Willkie boom moved into the last days of the pre-

²⁷Turner Catledge, "War Planks Shift on Cabinet Change," New York Times, June 21, 1940, p. 17.

²⁸New York Times, June 21, 1940, p. 17.

convention maneuvering, enthusiasm for the utilities executive increased among the rank and file of the party and began to infiltrate the ranks of the delegations; the boom would soon challenge the politics of the convention.

III. CONVENTION EVE

The arrival of the candidates in Philadelphia marked an increase in political activity, both outwardly and behind the scenes. While the candidates gave speeches, held press conferences, and made predictions, their supporters practiced the art of persuasion.

American political conventions have, throughout their history, carried the stigma of "dirty politics" and political "deals"--conventions of little people controlled by professional politicians, the kingmakers of the parties. As the Republican leaders, candidates, and delegates advanced on Philadelphia, no one actually knew what was going to happen. Rumors of plots, deals, switches, and combinations filled the conversations, but there appeared to be no machine organization, group, or kingmaker pulling the strings or making the decisions. In reporting the absence of leaders or groups of leaders, the New York Times predicted a hotly contested fight both for the nomination and the foreign policy plank of the platform.²⁹ There was to

²⁹James A. Hagerty, "Convention Unbossed," New York Times, June 23, 1940, p. 1.

be a battle for the nomination, and it began in earnest when Dewey, Willkie, and Taft arrived on June 22.

As the three candidates arrived, they were met by their enthusiastic supporters and members of the press. All three stated that they were in the race to stay, that they were not engaged in any trades, and that they had no interest in any job but the presidency.³⁰

In his press conference Dewey declared that he favored sending "surplus" materials to the Allies and disapproved of "exporting" warships since the United States only had one-half of what they needed. On the Stimson-Knox appointments Dewey now stated he would, if he could, vote for the confirmation of the appointments; he declared that the Republican party was big enough for all views. Commenting on the Willkie boom, Dewey expressed admiration for the technical skill by which the boom was started and perpetuated and asserted that he doubted that the popular support had expressed itself into delegate votes.³¹

It was reported that Dewey's managers claimed from 400 to 450 first ballot votes, although other sources estimated his strength to be about 350, and admitted that Dewey's chances would be lessened if the balloting went beyond the third.³² It

³⁰Warren Moscow, "Crowds Welcome 'Big Three' of Race," New York Times, June 23, 1940, p. 2.

³¹Ibid.

³²James A Hagerty, "Convention Unbossed," New York Times, June 23, 1940, p. 1.

was also reported that Dewey's chances were jeopardized by two serious handicaps: he had begun his campaign very early and had committed himself to a foreign policy which had been defensible in 1939, but one which had become less so and less popular as the European war progressed; and he had, by announcing his candidacy too early, made himself a target for coalition rivals.³³ Regardless of his handicaps, Dewey was still the front runner, both in popularity and in delegate strength, and generally regarded as the man to beat.

Taft arrived late in the evening, too late to make the headlines along with Dewey and Willkie; however, it was reported that Taft had made no formal declaration of his strength, though it was believed that he had approximately 300 first ballot votes. It was also reported that Taft's chance for the nomination would come if and when he moved ahead of Dewey on an early ballot; if Taft then failed, the dark horse candidates would have a chance. It was revealed that Dewey's and Taft's managers realized the situation, but had formed no combination or deal to prevent Willkie or any other dark horse from securing the top spot on the ticket.³⁴

Willkie's arrival was characterized by tremendous demon-

³³Denis W. Brogan, The Era of Franklin D. Roosevelt: A Chronicle of the New Deal and Global War, p. 293.

³⁴James A. Hagerty, "Convention Unbossed," New York Times, June 23, 1940, p. 1.

strations of public support. He was mobbed by supporters upon his arrival at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, and his remarks were loudly applauded. It was reported that Willkie expected no more than fifty to seventy first ballot votes; however, it was generally believed that he held a great deal of support in reserve, delegates who would come to his side after the early ballots. The delegates figures to switch were mainly from New England, the Middle West, and some from the South.³⁵

After his "press conference" Willkie visited two of the four Willkie headquarters which had been established in the convention area. As he walked through the streets, he was attended by a large crowd of his supporters and the curious; again he held no formal press conference, but gave his views to reporters and to anyone who asked him. To W. L. Tooze, chairman of the Oregon delegation, Willkie declared that he favored the principle of the reciprocal trade treaties because they had been first advocated by G.O.P. statesmen, Presidents McKinley and Taft. He also declared that he favored all possible aid to the Allies without getting into the war.³⁶

During this early period there was also some speculation over the fate of certain favorite son candidates and the delegate strength they controlled. One such favorite son was

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Warren Moscow, "Crowds Welcome 'Big Three' of Race," New York Times, June 23, 1940, p. 2.

Governor Arthur James of Pennsylvania, whose delegates were controlled by oilman Joseph Pew. Pew reportedly opposed Dewey and admired Willkie; however, it was also reported that Pew was concerned with Willkie's vote-getting power in view of his statements favoring aid to the Allies and the reciprocal trade treaties.³⁷

Another favorite son candidate with a great deal of support was Vandenberg, who had been mentioned as a presidential possibility, but had not campaigned for the nomination. He stated in his diary that Willkie had come to him and had asked for his support; and, according to the Senator, the two parted good friends, but made no deal. He also recorded that he had been contacted by Dewey and had been offered the second position on the ticket for his support of Dewey's candidacy. Vandenberg revealed that he had suggested that the two men flip for the top place on the ticket and that Dewey had not replied.³⁸

If the convention became deadlocked, the votes of the favorite son delegations could be a determining factor in choosing the nominee. Willkie's supporters moved in on these delegates, as well as the delegates committed to other candidates, in order to persuade them to switch to Willkie. To convince them the Willkie men stressed the candidate's rapidly rising

³⁷Charles R. Michael, "James Candidacy Called Important," New York Times, June 23, 1940, p. 2.

³⁸Barnes, op. cit., p. 175.

percentage in the polls, the establishment of over 700 Willkie Clubs and over 200 Willkie-For-President clubs, and the efforts of the 50,000 Volunteer Willkie Workers--all demonstrative of their man's great public appeal.³⁹ Another talking point developed was that the men of wealth and influence who controlled the finances of the party actually preferred Willkie and Hoover over Taft and Dewey and that Willkie had the greater appeal of the two, especially with the non-professionals of the party.⁴⁰

Combating this surge for delegates, those seeking to stop Willkie's drive for the nomination exhumed the arguments used against the candidate when his boom began. They declared that Willkie did not have sufficient delegate strength or political machine, that he was a big businessman and utilities executive, that he was an ex-Democrat, that he was a man with Wall Street connections, and that he was in favor of aid to the Allies and the reciprocal trade treaties--all of which, they maintained, guaranteed that he would be a poor candidate if nominated. They also pointed out that the course of the war had made the third term attempt virtually certain and that no

³⁹"Campaigns: The Story of Wendell Willkie," Time, 36:16, June 24, 1940.

⁴⁰Charles Malcolmson, "Rites for the G.O.P.," The Nation, 150:748, June 22, 1940.

businessman could match Roosevelt's appeal and glamour.⁴¹ In addition, some party professionals reportedly opposed Willkie because the amateurs running his campaign did not know or recognize them and treated them in an offhanded manner.⁴² Others opposed him because he was not an organization man, but a political amateur.⁴³

Willkie was a political novice, but he had reportedly reached several delegations through "non-political" devices. His headquarters imported pretty young socialites to answer telephones and send messages, while other Willkie supporters placed campaign literature into the delegates' laundry packages.⁴⁴ Probably nowhere were Willkie's disarmingly non-professional tactics more effective than in his statements to the press and to the delegates whom he met. On his arrival in Philadelphia he told reporters, "Ask me any damn thing in the world, and I'll answer it. Nothing is off the record."⁴⁵ During the tour of his headquarters, Willkie told reporters, "My campaign headquarters are in my hat. Be sure to put it

⁴¹"Campaigns: The Story of Wendell Willkie," Time: 36: 16, June 24, 1940.

⁴²"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:12, July 8, 1940.

⁴³Jonathan Mitchell, "How They Won with Willkie," The New Republic, 103:49, July 8, 1940.

⁴⁴Mary Earhart Dillon, Wendell Willkie: 1892-1944, p. 153.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 139.

down that I'm having a swell time."⁴⁶ To those who asked about his being an ex-Democrat and supporter of the New Deal in 1932, Willkie declared that if there were one thing he had done, it was to fight the New Deal.⁴⁷ To those who questioned his lack of political experience in public office and his business association, Willkie replied that he was proud of both his lack of political experience and his business background.⁴⁸

The New York Times reported on June 24 that Governor Raymond Baldwin of Connecticut had withdrawn from the race, pledging the state's sixteen votes to Willkie; and it was also revealed that a bloc of New York delegates, led by Syracuse's Mayor Rolland B. Marvin, had indicated they would support Willkie.⁴⁹ Despite these important gains, Willkie still needed a lesson in practical politics. Arthur Krock and Turner Catledge came to Philadelphia to cover the convention for their newspaper. In the Willkie headquarters they were perplexed by its amateurish character and by the fact that Willkie had designated no floor leaders, those practical politicians who knew convention strategy, how to get votes, and when to release support. Krock suggested that Willkie ask Governor Baldwin to

⁴⁶"Gentleman from Indiana," Time, 36:14, July 8, 1940.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸"G.O.P. Moves on Philadelphia to Pick the Man and Issue," Newsweek, 15:31, June 24, 1940.

⁴⁹New York Times, June 24, 1940, p. 1.

assist him in the capacity of floor manager, and Willkie asked if Stassen were available for the position. Krock told the candidate that Stassen had indicated he would not engage in any convention activity.⁵⁰

In his column Krock revealed that Willkie had not appointed anyone to these important convention positions and that it could be too late to do much good because the other candidates had liaison men and women in every delegation and political floorwalkers in contact with the delegates. Krock declared that Willkie's campaign headquarters may have been in his hat at one time, but that it was time to set up a strategy committee--possibly including Baldwin, Stassen, Pryor, Simpson, Marvin, and others who reportedly favored his candidacy.⁵¹

On June 23, the day before the convention was to begin, it was reported that the first ballot strengths had not changed after the week of political wheeling and dealing. Dewey was expected to have 350 votes on the ballot, with Taft receiving 275, Vandenberg eighty, James seventy-two, and others 163. The report also forecasted that after the second ballot Dewey would lose ground to Taft and Willkie and that after the recess, probably following the third or fourth ballot, the fight would be between Taft and Willkie. It was predicted that the Willkie

⁵⁰Dillon, op. cit., pp. 143-45.

⁵¹Arthur Krock, "Willkie's Forces Seek Strategists," New York Times, June 24, 1940, p. 1.

forces would withhold from sixty to seventy votes on the first ballot in order to show an increase on each ballot, to give the illusion of a boom going up.⁵²

In contrast to this picture of delegates and candidates maneuvering and dealing for support and favors was the image the convention presented to the public; outwardly, the convention atmosphere differed little from any of its predecessors. Samuel F. Pryor, Chairman of the Committee on Arrangements, started the festivities by placing a huge metal badge with the inscription "Official Mascot, Republican National Convention, Philadelphia, June 24" on a seventeen-year-old elephant in the city's zoo.⁵³ Elephants again made the headlines when a forty-two-year-old elephant named Tizzie died in the Philadelphia Zoo; Democratic papers declared they would look for further signs of impending Republican doom. Gannett imported three live elephants and marched them through the streets. Taft also displayed elephants, although his were of papier-mache. Gannett erected fifteen-foot pictures of himself, in color, and set up a small theater in his headquarters to show campaign movies. Taft also showed movies; however, both Taft and Gannett found few callers for their epics. All the campaign headquarters, except Gannett's, formally served callers free liquor, an old

⁵²James A. Hagerty, "Gains for Willkie," New York Times, June 24, 1940, p. 10.

⁵³New York Times, June 8, 1940, p. 16.

and trusted campaign technique. There were no peppy campaign songs; however, there were several slogans which aroused some interest: "Trust--in--Taft;" "Do It With Dewey;" "Gannett--America's Best Bet;" and "Fan With Van," which was imprinted on yellow fans.⁵⁴

During the month of June the Willkie movement had continued to "bleed" support from the other candidates in spite of the lack of delegate strength, the efforts of the "Stop-Willkie" forces, and the apparent isolationist trend. In the space of twenty-three days Willkie's popular vote had increased from 10 per cent to 29 per cent in the Gallup Poll's sampling of G.O.P. voters; the question as to whether this public support could be translated into delegate votes was uppermost in the minds of the candidates and their managers as the convention opened.

⁵⁴"Convention City," Time, 36:15-16, July 8, 1940.

CHAPTER VI

THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

The outward optimistic attitude of the delegates, manifested in the slogans, elephants, and other symbols of convention "madness," was only a partial representation of the delegates' actual feelings because the prevailing sentiment at the convention was that it was "the damnedest convention that ever was."¹ The 1940 Republican convention suffered from schizophrenia. The delegates, on the one hand, expressed great optimism and enthusiasm about the party's chances for 1940, an attitude apparent in the parades, parties, speeches, and other activities which characterized Philadelphia as the delegates and candidates prepared for the job at hand. The convention atmosphere was two-sided because the delegates also exhibited attitudes of anger, hatred, and frustration.

The attitude of frustration resulted partially from the general feeling among the delegates that unless the right man and platform were chosen, the party would again face defeat at the hands of the Democrats. Frustration also developed over F.D.R.'s third term decision; he had not announced his candidacy, nor had he promoted a successor. This, coupled with the chaotic international situation, led many

¹"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:10, July 8, 1940.

Republican leaders to the same conclusion which had been previously reported by the political pollsters--that F.D.R, if he should choose to run in 1940, could secure the Democratic nomination. The G.O.P. leaders did not relish the prospect of facing the President for a third time, especially during a period of international crisis.

The fact that the President's popularity was still high and that the war in Europe had aroused deep feelings of anxiety throughout the nation were certainly not conducive to any feelings of optimism on the part of the delegates. Both of the front running candidates, Dewey and Taft, had expressed near or outright isolationist foreign policy stands; and since one of the two was expected to gain the nomination, the 1940 campaign would presumably be fought on the basis of Republican isolationism versus Democratic internationalism. Having the isolationist tag hung around their necks was something the delegates did not at all relish.

Throughout the convention activities this split personality would manifest itself time and time again. Outwardly, the atmosphere and proceedings appeared to be those of a normal convention; however, behind the scenes the Willkie candidacy slowly overpowered the unbossed delegates; the fear and frustration of meeting Roosevelt during the crisis persuaded the delegates to contribute to what has been called one of the greatest upsets in American political history.

I. THE FIRST DAY

The convention was called to order at 11:43 A.M. on June 24, 1940, by National Committee Chairman Hamilton. During the afternoon session the convention machinery was established and in the evening Governor Stassen delivered the keynote address. ~~The early session moved with precision; selected delegates with prepared motions were recognized by the chairman, and all moves were unanimously approved. During this business-like session the galleries were quiet.~~²

While these procedural activities were being carried out, the candidates and their managers vied with one another for delegate support. William Allen White reported that twenty-one Congressmen from the Northwest had met and denounced Willkie for his reciprocal trade views; however, White added that the movement would not mean much because it was the first Republican convention in forty years in which the leaders had lost control. He revealed that the revolt against the bosses was manifest-- Pew reportedly would lose fourteen delegate votes from his delegation, and Landon and Martin would face some difficulty keeping their delegates in line. White also stated that a poll of the delegates revealed that seventy per cent favored aid to the Allies, but that the platform committee feared the proposition and had adopted a meaningless, straddling plank on the

²New York Times, June 25, 1940, p. 16.

important issue.³

It was also reported that forty Republican Representatives and some Senators had started a "block-Willkie" movement to halt his growing boom and that supporters of the other candidates had joined in the move. If the group succeeded in stopping Willkie, Dewey reportedly would profit because he would receive delegate support from sources heretofore not for him. Senator McNary declared that the Western States would not support Willkie and predicted that when the balloting began, his boom would decline as quickly as it had risen.⁴

Willkie and his political strategists did not take any action on the blocking attempts, preferring to evaluate the effect of the attack, but continued to gather support. The candidate told reporters that he had made gains in the Southwest and that he would get seventeen Pennsylvania votes. He also announced that Governor Carr of Colorado would deliver one of his seconding speeches and would be a floor leader. In addition, it was reported that some Willkie supporters had attempted to get Gannett to withdraw from the race to give Willkie additional anti-Dewey votes and that Willkie had gained support in the New Jersey and Massachusetts delegations.⁵

³William Allen White, "Republicans Act 'Like Democrats'," New York Times, June 25, 1940, p. 16.

⁴James A. Hagerty, "Convention Opens," New York Times, June 25, 1940, pp. 1,16.

⁵Ibid., p. 16.

During this first day, Dewey's managers declared that their candidate would receive 400 votes on the first ballot and more on the second. Vandenberg, Willkie, and Taft made no predictions, although Taft's vote was figured to be from 275 to 300.⁶

At 10:00 P.M. Stassen delivered the keynote address in which he drew a parallel between the Roosevelt administration and the pre-war leadership in England and France and indicated there was a necessity of real and not paper preparedness for national defense. He denounced the New Deal as ineffective in its attempt to revive industry and reduce unemployment, declaring that a big stick was needed in Washington, not a big noise. Concerning the Knox-Stimson appointments, Stassen remarked that by going to the Republican party for these men Roosevelt had confessed his failure in preparing the nation for defense. Stassen received a standing ovation when he declared that no one who believed in Communism, Fascism, or Nazism should be permitted on the government payroll.⁷ Stassen defined the foreign policy straddle of the platform by declaring that the plank was pro-peace, but not pro-Hitler, and indicated that the foreign policy plank advocated all possible aid to the Allies, short of war.⁸ To nip an appeasement charge in the bud,

⁶Ibid., pp. 1,16.

⁷Ibid., p. 1.

⁸Barnes, op. cit., p. 181.

Stassen declared that the Republican party wanted an adequate air force, anti-aircraft defense, tanks and anti-tank weapons, ample navy and costal defenses, and bases strategically located in the hemisphere.⁹

Before the address John Cowles and Raymond Clapper had worked diligently to obtain Stassen's support for the Willkie cause, but the Minnesota Governor had refused to talk to the candidate until after he had delivered the keynote address. At 1:00 A.M., on June 25, the Cowles brothers, Stassen, and Willkie met to discuss the situation. Stassen indicated that he would support Willkie if he could be his floor manager, to insure that no mistakes would be made. No other deal was made, although Stassen did state that he might be around for a return favor; Willkie replied that he would be glad to help him.¹⁰

C. Nelson Sparks, Gannett's campaign manager, later charged that T. W. Lamont had purchased Stassen's support through John Cowles; Cowles issued a strong denial of the charge.¹¹ Stassen declared that he had joined the Willkie camp because of the candidate's strong foreign policy stand and his strong press support.¹²

⁹"GOP Convention Aligns Party for Its Most Vital Campaign," Newsweek, 16:28, July 1, 1940.

¹⁰Barnes, op. cit., p. 182.

¹¹Ibid., p. 184.

¹²Dillon, op. cit., pp. 147-48.

Aside from the keynote address, there were few significant events occurring during the first day. Outwardly, the convention conducted merely routine business; behind the scenes there was little change in the over-all activity as the supporters of the various candidates attempted to build up delegate strength for their men and to destroy that committed or leaning toward his rivals. This activity would continue into the second day of the convention, intensifying as the Willkie boom grew in strength.

II. THE SECOND DAY

On the second day of the convention the delegates heard an address by former President Herbert Hoover, an address which earned him the cheers of the delegates and galleries and revived talk of his candidacy. Behind the scenes the managers continued to plan and plot as the flood of telegrams and letters demanding Willkie's nomination started to pile up and as it became more and more apparent that the convention was unbossed.

Early in the day the platform committee re-opened the drafting of the foreign policy plank, and the conflict between the isolationist and internationalist wings of the party continued. It was reported that the committee, led by the group opposing any interventionist declaration, rewrote the plank to assert that the G.O.P. stood for Americanism, preparedness, and peace and that the Democrats represented unpreparedness and

tactics leading to war.¹³ This report appeared to be in disagreement with Stassen's comment in his keynote address concerning the character of the plank; there was a great deal of confusion over the nature of the party's foreign policy stand.

The most significant event of the day was Hoover's address. The delegates and galleries rose and cheered the ex-president as he entered the auditorium and again as he was introduced by Joseph Martin, Jr., the Convention Chairman. In his address Hoover covered a number of points concerning both domestic and foreign policy. In his discussion of the former he declared that for the first time in 150 years the United States had suffered a decrease in national income and wealth and that one-third of the nation's people were still frozen to poverty. He stressed the issue that the national debt had long since passed the danger point and attacked the New Deal's currency policies; however, he received the greatest reaction from the audience on the subjects of the third term and foreign policy. Hoover advocated that the United States should give all possible aid to the nations fighting for freedom, providing the United States did not become involved in the fighting. Concerning the reciprocal trade issue, he declared that such treaties would not be feasible in a world where nations needed to become self-sufficient in order to survive.

¹³James A. Hagerty, "Hoover Challenge," New York Times, June 26, 1940, p. 1.

Hoover declared that the third term attempt not only violated American tradition, but also the principle of restraint on the centralization of power in this nation, and he delivered a challenge to the delegates by expressing his willingness to again meet Roosevelt in a battle of ballots. Hoover was given an ovation at the conclusion of his address, and it appeared that he had made his bid for the nomination; however, no one knew just how strong his support was at that time.¹⁴

It was reported that Hoover's address had given new hope to his supporters and that a boom for his candidacy had started. The growth of the Hoover boom reportedly had caused the other candidates in the race a good deal of worry; however, the Dewey camp indicated that the "lack of enthusiasm" for Hoover had greatly increased Dewey's chances for the nomination because it was felt in many quarters that Hoover preferred Taft to Dewey. Dewey's managers also revealed that they would throw their full strength into the first two ballots instead of attempting to show a gradual increase on each ballot.¹⁵ There was a difference of opinion between the reporters covering the convention and the Dewey campaign managers, for each side tended to see the popular reaction to Hoover's address in a different light.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 1,16.

¹⁵ James A. Hagerty, "Hoover Challenge," New York Times, June 26, 1940, p. 16.

The most persistent rumor during the second day was that Dewey and Taft would join forces to stop the Willkie boom, but it was also reported that the merger would be ineffective as long as Dewey insisted on gaining the nomination for the presidency or nothing. In addition, Dewey declared to the press that he could not find where Willkie had made any inroads on his pledged delegates; however, several New York delegates revealed that they had received telegrams from financial leaders indicating that the G.O.P. could expect ample campaign funds if Willkie were the nominee and nothing if Dewey won the nomination.¹⁶

Perhaps the most interesting behind the scenes news of the second day was revealed in Vandenberg's press conference. He declared that a large segment of the delegates were "shopping around" in an attempt to learn the stands of the various candidates on problems relating to foreign affairs. Vandenberg also related that his situation had improved within the preceding twenty-four hours, but he declined to offer a prediction of his strength.¹⁷ The "shopping around" report seemingly verified earlier reports that the convention was unbossed and unruled; in such a situation nothing could be certain. It was toward this group of undecided, unbossed delegates that the Willkie

¹⁶ Charles W. Hurd, "Candidates View Hoover as Threat," New York Times, June 26, 1940, p. 18.

¹⁷ Ibid.

supporters directed their efforts.

Willkie told reporters that he had seen more than 600 of the 1000 delegates and had gained considerable support from these personal contacts. He declared that Senator Bridges had told him that if he could not get the nomination, he would rather see Willkie get it than anyone else.¹⁸ Willkie also stated that he had favored the reciprocal trade treaties since their inception and that he had made public statements to that effect; however, he indicated to the newsmen that the victories in Europe had created a new world and conditions never before faced by the world and that the treaties were no longer an important issue--the United States had to deal with live problems, not dead ones. He repeated that he had not changed his position on the treaties.¹⁹

The Willkie boom, aside from picking up delegate support, continued to attract prominent politicians. Besides those previously indicated--Pryor, Simpson, Barton, Vanderbilt, Carr, Baldwin, Stassen, and Marvin--Chairman Hamilton, who was not supposed to support any candidate, joined the movement.²⁰ In order to familiarize the delegates with the candidate and his views, these politicians, Willkie's floor leaders and strategy planners, brought up twelve delegates at a time to meet and

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹New York Times, June 26, 1940, p. 18.

²⁰Dillon, op. cit., p. 147.

discuss issues with the candidate.²¹ He answered questions straightforwardly; for example, he stated during one of these conversations that although he had fought the Tennessee Valley Authority, he, if elected, would not attempt to tear it down.²² Those delegates who were shopping around for a candidate to support found in Willkie a man who was not afraid to state his opinions. Willkie's strategists not only attempted to reach the delegates through personal contact with the candidate, but they also launched an over-powering propaganda campaign to "assist" the undecided delegates in making up their minds.

During the first two days the delegates were cornered by strangers who demanded that they vote for Willkie; were sent hometown newspapers which carried advertisements and editorials favoring Willkie's candidacy; were subjected to the gallery chants of "We Want Willkie;" and were deluged with telegrams from wives, friends, pastors, banks, and interested citizens calling for them to support Willkie.²³ The petitions, telegrams, postal cards, and letters were addressed to the delegates personally; however, the entire procedure of obtaining, sorting, and delivering the endorsements was administered by Willkie's supporters.²⁴

²¹Ibid., p. 149.

²²Barnes, op. cit., p. 180.

²³"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:12, July 8, 1940.

²⁴Barnes, op. cit., pp. 178, 185.

The delegates, both those who had made up their minds and those who were still undecided, were subjected to the propanganda barrage. The advertising men working for Willkie used their skills to sell Willkie to the delegates.

III. THE THIRD DAY

The agenda for the third day contained two major events of the convention: the presentation of the platform and the nominating speeches. The platform had been uppermost in the minds of many delegates because of the confusion over the structure of the foreign policy plank and the fight between the isolationists and internationalists on the committee drafting the plank. The nominating speeches, demonstrations, and seconding speeches were likewise awaited with anticipation; for their reception by the delegates would indicate, to some degree, the comparative strengths of the candidates.

While the delegates and the nation awaited these two major events, the candidates and their strategists moved to maintain their holds on the committed delegates and to capture the doubtful votes. Throughout the day, various delegations held caucuses to determine stands, analyze events, and plan strategy. All through the day the flood of telegrams and letters advocating Willkie's nomination continued to pour into Philadelphia to be delivered to the delegates concerned. In addition, there were many rumors circulating throughout the

auditorium that new efforts were being made to halt the Willkie boom and that Hoover would spearhead such a move. Feeding the rumors was the fact that Taft, Vandenberg, Bricker, and James had each visited Hoover; but none of the individuals mentioned offered any other reason for the meeting other than it had been a social call. Another anti-Willkie force at work was Frank Gannett, who declared in a press conference that the convention should nominate a Republican for the presidency.²⁵

It was also reported that no negotiations had been held for a Dewey-Taft deal because both candidates believed they possessed an excellent chance to capture the nomination. The report also revealed that neither candidate could "deliver" enough delegates to carry out a deal.²⁶

The talk of deals and counter-deals was not the only manifestation of the growing pressure building up at the convention. The anger and criticism which greeted the first important item of business of the day, the presentation of the platform, stimulated a great deal of discussion as to the "proper" candidate to run on the 1940 Republican Platform.

The Republican Platform

The platform was received with little applause and much

²⁵Lawrence E. Davies, "Candidates Gird for Final Battle," New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 1. [*Italics mine.*]

²⁶James A. Hagerty, "A Night of Speeches," New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 4.

criticism. The party leaders felt that in order to achieve victory in the November election the platform had to indicate accurately the party's position on the issues of the day. There were, however, two factors which made this task impossible: the immense popularity of the New Deal and the tense international situation. The committee had to decide which, if any, of the New Deal measures the G.O.P. should favor retaining and which to condemn. It was to be a very difficult task.

The Resolutions Committee had used as the basis for the platform the 35,000-word report by Dr. Glenn Frank, and had met in the North Garden of the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel a week before the convention began to put the platform into final form for presentation to the delegates. They had, in addition to preparing an acceptable platform, the toughest problem faced by the party in twenty-four years--the drafting of the foreign policy plank.²⁷ In attempting to work out the plank, the committee went into fourteen-hour sessions; however, the task of attempting to satisfy the isolationist wing of the party without offending those who favored aid to the Allies was an impossible one.²⁸

There were three courses of action open to the committee

²⁷"Campaigns: The Story of Wendell Willkie," Time, 36:18, June 24, 1940.

²⁸"The Trumpets Blow," Time, 36:17, July 1, 1940.

in formulating the difficult plank. In the first place, they could denounce the President as a warmonger and go into the 1940 campaign entrenched in the isolationist camp; however, this position would have embarrassed those members of the party who had endorsed the administration's foreign policy, either wholly or partially. The second course of action was to support Roosevelt's position--all measures, short of war, to assist the Allies and all measures to promote national defense; however, by taking this position the party would have to repudiate support from the isolationists and would have to forget that a large measure of the responsibility for the weak state of the national defense system rested with certain isolationist Republican Congressmen who had opposed administration defense measures before the international situation had become critical. The last course of action was a compromise stand; however, this position would satisfy no one and would alienate all factions concerned.²⁹

The platform as a whole, and the foreign policy plank in particular, was received better by the delegates than by the press. Perhaps the delegates realized that the nominee which they would select on the following day would utilize only those planks which he considered useful or desirable in his campaign. The delegates, being politically wise, perhaps thought that it

²⁹Charles Malcolmson, "Rites for the GOP," The Nation, 150:748, June 22, 1940.

would not be good politics to criticize publicly all or part of the platform when it was presented to the assembled delegates. Another possible explanation for the delegates' calm reaction could have been a desire to get the platform accepted, so that the nomination procedure could be started; the speeches and the balloting were probably far more interesting to the delegates than the re-opening of the fight between the isolationist and internationalist factions of the party or of the arguments for and against the New Deal domestic policies. Had these arguments been voiced, perhaps the party would not have been subjected to the abuse which they were to receive. It would be difficult to assess the damage, if any, this criticism would have on the party's image among the electorate.³⁰

Time reported that the platform presented a foreign policy based on a "somersaulting weasel,"³¹ and Newsweek told its readers that Landon had lost his fight to prevent the party from adopting an inelastic keep-out-of-war plank. Concerning the platform as a whole, the magazine stated that "seldom has a political platform been so watered down with vague generalities and evasions."³² The Nation declared, "There are more

³⁰See APPENDIX C for Summarization of Platform.

³¹"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:12, July 8, 1940.

³²"Voters' Drafting of Willkie Like Shot in the Arm to U.S.," Newsweek, 16:15, July 8, 1940.

half-truths, juggled figures, and stacked cards in this report than we can attempt to set straight in this editorial."³³ Life stated that the platform rehashed all the 1936 criticisms of the New Deal, then supported almost all the things the New Deal had done, promising vaguely to do them better. The foreign policy plank, according to Life, was neither isolationist or interventionist, nor halfway between, but both at the same time.³⁴

Stefan Lorant reported that the G.O.P. had adopted a platform which an eminent historian, not named, had called "a masterpiece of equivocation, evasion, ambiguity and generalization," with a straddling foreign policy plank pledging the country to "Americanism, preparedness and peace," and promising the democratic victims of aggression "such aids as shall not be in violation of international law or inconsistent with the requirements of our own national defense."³⁵

Donald Bruce Johnson explained the poor reception of the platform in terms of the following three observations: first, the platform did not represent the true picture of G.O.P. opinion throughout the party; second, the American public realized that the campaign would be waged over much less broad

³³"Frank but Not Candid," The Nation, 150:326, March 9, 1940.

³⁴"Life on Newsfronts," Life, 9:20, July 8, 1940.

³⁵Stefan Lorant, The Presidency: A Pictorial History of Presidential Elections from Washington to Truman, p. 623.

principles than the management of Roosevelt's reform programs; and third, the Republican party did not appear to be cognizant of the changing political significance of the European war and the growing importance of foreign affairs policies.³⁶

Another explanation concerning the formation of the foreign policy plank was reported by Newsweek. According to this theory, Roosevelt had sanctioned the use of American flyers to pilot planes to Halifax; had outlined a plan to draft the nation's youth; had sounded out friendly Congressmen on the possibility of declaring war on Germany and Italy; and had named Stimson and Knox, two avowed interventionists, to the Cabinet--all measures designed to force the Republicans to draft a platform too isolationist for the country to swallow.³⁷

The most comprehensive analysis of the platform was that of a New York Times editorial of June 27; it was the only true analysis, showing both the assets and liabilities of the platform. The editorial stated that although the current international situation was moving too rapidly for anyone to reasonably expect an explicit and forthright statement of foreign policy from either political party, the country had a right to expect a less politically minded approach to the

³⁶ Donald Bruce Johnson, The Republican Party and Wendell Willkie, p. 43.

³⁷ "G O P Convention Aligns Party for Its Most Vital Campaign," Newsweek, 16:27, July 1, 1940.

problem than the declaration that the Republican party stood for Americanism, preparedness, and peace and that the Democratic party had to bear full responsibility for the country's unpreparedness and for the consequent danger of involvement in war. The editorial declared that the argument did not stand examination, that the G.O.P. was not entitled to claim for itself superior virtue in preparedness in light of the fact that a majority of its spokesmen in the Senate had opposed measures to provide 6,000 new planes for the Army, an increase in the battleship strength of the Navy, and the acquisition by both services of strategic war materials. The paper stated that the party could not call itself the "peace party" when the record showed that its representatives for twenty years opposed a system of collective security, the only institution that could have saved the peace of the modern world. Concerning the aid to the Allies statement, the editorial expressed agreement in principle, but indicated that it was regrettable that the platform had not made the distinction between democratic and totalitarian belligerents clear, and that no mention was made of Britain's heroic stand or of the fact that our future security rested in her seapower. Also stressed in the editorial was the fact that the domestic sections of the platform had not escaped the effort of the platform committee to conciliate every section and avoid or treat with ambiguousness the questions on which opinion within the party was divided.

The Time's summation of the platform indicated that the document was more vigorous, sound, and outspoken than there seemed reason to hope for, that it made a true and telling indictment of many of the New Deal domestic policies--the President's power to manipulate currency, the repeal of the Thomas Inflation Amendment and the Silver Purchase Act, the reform in the relief program, the revision in the Securities Act, the reduction of government competition--that the agriculture plank was vague, and that the plank on the tariff satisfied G.O.P. die-hards at the least sacrifice of common sense, leaving the candidate free to follow an enlightened policy. The editorial closed with the statement that the party, under a forthright leader standing on the platform, could not fairly be accused of lacking a program.³⁸

As the editorial pointed out, there were several outstanding features of the platform; however, it would have been difficult to convince a majority of the press or the nation of this "enlightened" view. Democrats ridiculed the ambiguousness of the platform; Republican conservatives denounced the acceptance of the New Deal reform programs; and Republican liberals condemned the foreign policy plank. The delegates, popular acceptance, or rejection, of their platform; with the

³⁸"The Republican Platform," a New York Times Editorial, June 27, 1940, p. 22.

type of candidate needed to carry the party's program to the people; and with the confusion and furor surrounding the party's foreign policy stand. These concerns were temporarily set aside as the convention readied itself for the main event, the nomination of the candidate.

The Nominations Begin

The last order of business on the third day was the placing of Dewey, Gannett, Taft, and Willkie's names in nomination. The nominating and seconding speeches and the demonstrations which followed reflected, to a degree, each candidate's popularity with the delegates and galleries.

John Lord O'Brian entered Dewey's name in nomination, but the demonstration which followed was disappointing to his supporters. In his speech O'Brian traced Dewey's career as a racket-buster and recounted his vote-getting ability, but he and the candidate's managers had been caught flat-footed in arrangements for the demonstration. They had not expected Dewey's name to be placed in nomination so early, and many of his supporters had not reached the auditorium.³⁹ The lack of bands in the hall detracted from the usual color of the demonstration; however, there was a great deal of shouting and cheering, and standards from at least twelve states joined in

³⁹James A. Hagerty, "A Night of Speeches," New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 1.

the parade.⁴⁰

Gannett's name was placed in nomination by Representative James W. Wadsworth of New York, who characterized his candidate as a successful businessman and a victor in a fight with the New Deal. Gannett's demonstration was hampered by the lack of any considerable number of delegates, and the spectators who attempted to demonstrate were not permitted on the floor.⁴¹

Grove Patterson, editor of The Toledo Blade, delivered Taft's nominating speech, in which he stated that the critical international situation demanded a candidate who possessed the equipment for leadership and that Taft's ability, education, training, and experience qualified him for the nomination. The demonstration which followed was better organized than the previous two, but the lack of bands again appeared to take some of the enthusiasm out of the parade.⁴² On signal the delegates participating in the demonstration jumped to their feet with placards, balloons, and standards; and a cheering section began shouting "We Want Taft." Instead of allowing the "pandemonium" die down gradually, Taft's managers cut it off,

⁴⁰Charles W. Hurd, "Candidates' Nominations Cheered in Lively Night Session," New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 2.

⁴¹James A. Hagerty, "A Night of Speeches," New York Times, June 27, 1940, pp. 1,4.

⁴²Ibid., p. 4.

a move which was very effective.⁴³

Willkie's name was put in nomination by Representative Charles Halleck of Indiana, who departed from the traditional rules of nominating speeches to make a fighting address in which he virtually dared the convention to break precedent and nominate Willkie.⁴⁴ The reaction to the speech demonstrated a difference of opinion over Willkie's candidacy, for there was booing from the floor and cheering from the galleries.⁴⁵

Halleck began the speech with the following statement:

If anyone were to ask me what job in this convention I'd like best to have I would choose the job I've got right now, I'd say I want to place in nomination before this great independent body the name of the next President of the United States, Wendell Lewis Willkie.⁴⁶

In the speech Halleck declared that Willkie was a man who understood business, labor, and agriculture and that he would never make a deal to sell one of them out. To emphasize this point Halleck stated that "...it will be better to have a public utility President than a President who has no public utility."⁴⁷

⁴³Sidney M. Shalett, "Delegates Get Their Inning as Nominating Oratory and Demonstrations Begin," New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 3.

⁴⁴Charles W. Hurd, "Candidates' Nominations Cheered in Lively Night Session," New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 2.

⁴⁵"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:13, July 8, 1940.

⁴⁶Charles A. Halleck, "Wendell Willkie--A Man Big Enough to Be President," Vital Speeches of the Day, Vol VI, July 15, 1940, pp. 586-87.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 587.

He put forth Willkie as the man to fight the totalitarian threat, to preserve the competitive system, to free the country from the depression, and to build the greatest defense system in the world. Halleck declared that Willkie could win and that all America would back him.⁴⁸

Before the delivery of the speech Halleck had wavered, and several of Willkie's managers were not sure that he would go through with it; Halleck wanted no part of the project if Willkie's candidacy proved to be unpopular. He had made no arrangements for the Indiana delegation to lead off the demonstration, the customary procedure for the candidate's home state.⁴⁹ The Willkie demonstration did get started, although fewer placards and standards were in evidence compared to Taft's or Dewey's demonstrations; and the galleries joined in with loud choruses of "We Want Willkie."⁵⁰ The demonstration was also marked by several fights over control of state standards. Mayor Marvin and several other Willkie men in the New York delegation fought five Dewey men for control of the state's standard; and in the Virginia delegation the state's standard first went up, then down. The demonstration lasted

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 588-89.

⁴⁹Dillon, op. cit., p. 159.

⁵⁰Sidney M. Shalett, "Delegates Get Their Inning as Nominating Oratory and Demonstrations Begin," New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 3.

for twenty minutes and ended when the police moved in to break up the fights.⁵¹

The seconding speeches for Willkie's nomination were made by Representative Bruce Barton of New York, Governor Ralph Carr of Colorado, Governor Raymond Baldwin of Connecticut, and Anne Stuart of Minnesota. The galleries and the delegates were quiet, and it appeared to many observers that Taft, on the basis of his demonstration, had captured the nomination.⁵²

After the session Colonel R. B. Creager, a member of the Texas delegation and a Taft floor leader, declared that the Committee on Arrangements had packed the galleries with Willkie supporters. Investigations disclosed that the committee headed by Samuel Pryor had issued thousands of special admission tickets, which were good for the June 26 session only. Creager claimed that Pryor had issued the tickets; however, the latter could not be reached for comment at the time.⁵³ As the time for balloting approached, the campaigning had become more intense; the pressure was building.

IV. THE FOURTH DAY

On the fourth day of the convention the delegates accom-

⁵¹"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:13, July 8, 1940.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³New York Times, June 27, 1940, p. 3.

plished their major duty, the nomination of the party's 1940 standard bearer. Through the first three ballots Willkie trailed Dewey and Taft, and through the next three ballots the situation was reversed as the appeal of the Willkie candidacy continued to grow and win converts from the delegates; on the sixth ballot the appeal snowballed and gave Willkie the nomination.

Early on the fourth day Iowa's MacNider was placed in nomination by Verne Marshall, editor of The Cedar Rapids Gazette; Michigan's Vandenberg by Representative Roy O. Woodruff; New Hampshire's Bridges by Representative Foster Stearns; Oregon's McNary by William A Ehwall; Pennsylvania's James by Senator James J. Davis; and South Dakota's Bushfield by Gladys Pyle, the first woman to deliver a nominating speech.⁵⁴ The convention adjourned at 2:50 P.M., to reconvene at 4:30 P.M.⁵⁵

At 4:50 P.M. the fight began as Alabama cast seven votes for Dewey and six for Taft. The political experts felt assured they knew the eventual outcome of the first ballot, and they were fairly confident of the second. They reasoned that Dewey would receive approximately 377 votes on the first ballot, with Taft picking up about 250 and Willkie getting about 100. On the

⁵⁴Charles W. Hurd, "Crucial Test for Presidential Candidates Began in Balloting at Night Session," New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 3.

⁵⁵"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:13, July 8, 1940.

second ballot, it was reasoned, Dewey would slip a little; Taft would increase his vote to 300, and Willkie would get up to 150. The experts, in their predictions, believed that after the second ballot, it would be anyone's battle.⁵⁶ The first two ballots did proceed according to "plan;" however, the experts soon realized that they had over-estimated Dewey's and Taft's strength and had under-estimated Willkie's.

On the first ballot Dewey received 360 votes, trailed by Taft with 189, Willkie with 105, Vandenberg with 76, James with 74, Martin with 44, Gannett with 35, MacNider with 34, Hoover with 17, and McNary with 13. The Taft men were shocked at the results; the galleries were delighted, and they cheered every Willkie vote.⁵⁷ In the balloting Willkie had received votes from twenty-four states, including all of Connecticut's sixteen, nine from Indiana, and eight from New York.⁵⁸

On the second Ballot Dewey dropped to 338; Taft gained to 203, and Willkie increased to 171. Willkie had picked up a few votes from the Pennsylvania delegation and had votes scattered in twenty-six delegations, including nine votes from Maine, eight from Massachusetts, and thirteen from Missouri. Of the other candidates, only Hoover showed an increase.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁵⁸New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 4.

Vandenberg dropped to 73, Gannett to 30, James to 66, McNary to 10, and Martin to 26; MacNider held on to this 34, and Hoover gained to 21.⁵⁹ The convention adjourned at 6:50 P.M., to reconvene at 8:30 P.M.⁶⁰

During the recess floor managers worked to strengthen their lines and to persuade favorite son supporters and others to swith their votes. States held caucuses in hideaways all about the auditorium. It was reported that, despite appeals from Willkie and Taft men, Kansas had resolved to support Dewey on the third ballot and that Pennsylvania had decided to stay with James. The Willkie forces reportedly had made a great many converts within the New York delegation during the recess; however, Taft appeared to be the candidate to beat.⁶¹

On the third ballot Willkie picked up steadily all along the line. New Hampshire's delegation was released by Bridges, and six delegates went over to Willkie; Massachusetts was released by Martin with the same results--twenty-eight voted for Willkie, and the galleries went wild. New York split, and twenty-seven delegates joined the Willkie forces; fifteen Pennsylvania delegates left James and took the same route.⁶²

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:14, July 8, 1940.

⁶¹Turner Catledge, "Republicans Nominate Wendell Willkie for the Presidency on the 6th Ballot," New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 5.

⁶²Dillon, op. cit., p. 161.

On the ballot Willkie received votes from thirty-four states and picked up, in addition to those mentioned above, Arizona's six, Delaware's six, and ten from Maryland. The results showed Dewey with 315, Willkie with 259, Taft with 212, Vandenberg with 72, James with 59, Hoover with 32, MacNider with 28, Gannett with 11, and McNary with 10.⁶³

The fourth ballot was considered to be crucial because it would mark the release of a portion of Dewey's support and it would test Willkie's and Taft's second-choice strength. On the ballot Taft picked up twenty-seven Illinois votes, while Willkie received votes from thirty-six states, including thirty-five from New York, twenty-three from New Jersey, and fourteen from Maryland. The results showed that both Taft and Willkie had gained at Dewey's expense. Willkie led the balloting with 306, followed by Taft with 254, Dewey with 250, Vandenberg with 61, James with 56, Hoover with 31, MacNider with 26, McNary with 8, and Gannett with 4--the favorite son support continued to break down.⁶⁴

The fifth ballot was adjudged to be significant in that it would indicate willkie's ability to hold his own and win. The tension was high; and there was a great deal of pressuring, with floor managers collaring delegates and appealing to their

⁶³New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 4.

⁶⁴Ibid.

sense of reason.⁶⁵ C. Nelson Sparks, Gannett's campaign manager, revealed later that between the fourth and fifth ballots Willkie turned down two offers of support from Taft men, one in exchange for a cabinet post and the other for a agreement on an individual to run in the number two spot on the ticket.⁶⁶ On this ballot Dewey and the remaining favorite son candidates lost heavily to Taft and Willkie, who both gained 123 votes. The results showed Willkie maintaining his lead with 429 votes, followed by Taft with 377, James with 59, Dewey with 57, Vandenberg with 49, Hoover with 20, McNary with 8, MacNider with 3, and Gannett with 1. In the balloting Taft picked up thirteen votes from Iowa, ten from New York, eighteen from Oklahoma, seven from South Dakota, all of Kentucky's twenty-two, all of Louisiana's twelve, and all of Washington's sixteen. Willkie, possessing votes from thirty-nine states, received all of Kansas' eighteen, all of Maine's thirteen, seventeen from Illinois, twenty from Indiana, nine from Oregon, nine from South Carolina, and seventy-five from New York.⁶⁷ The switch of forty additional votes to Willkie from New York was a blow to Taft's chances.⁶⁸ After the balloting, many

⁶⁵"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:14, July 8, 1940.

⁶⁶Barnes, op. cit., p. 184.

⁶⁷New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 4.

⁶⁸"Voters' Drafting of Willkie Like Shot in the Arm to U.S.," Newsweek, 16:13, July 8, 1940.

political experts expressed the belief that if Joseph Pew had released the fifty-one James' votes to Taft to offset the New York votes, the Willkie boom could have been halted;⁶⁹ however, Pew did not switch, and the boom continued.

During the fifth ballot a rumor that Dewey was coming to the convention hall to withdraw in favor of Taft spread through the auditorium, causing some delegates to refrain from switching to Taft and Willkie. The rumor changed as the sixth ballot began, revealing that Dewey would not appear in person, but would telephone his announcement.⁷⁰ These rumors represented only part of the political maneuvering which took place between the fifth and sixth ballots. Governor Bricker tried to arrange a recess in order to stem the Willkie boom, but Chairman Martin announced that since no majority had been attained, the sixth ballot would be taken.⁷¹ (According to one source, Willkie had asked one thing of Martin, and that was if the tide was going for him, he would not recess; Martin promised and kept his word.)⁷²

Before the sixth ballot was taken, Vandenberg's campaign manager, Howard C. Lawrence, announced the release of the

⁶⁹Lorant, op. cit., p. 626.

⁷⁰Charles W. Hurd, "Crucial Test for Presidential Candidates Began in Balloting at Night Session," New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 3.

⁷¹Lorant, op. cit., p. 626.

⁷²Johnson, op. cit., N., p. 98. [Source withheld.]

Michigan delegation.⁷³ The delegation went into caucus; and Stassen went to Leo E. Anderson, the leader of the California delegation, to have that state poll their delegation to give Michigan time to complete the caucus. Hamilton and Pryor moved continuously from the floor to the platform to inform Stassen as to who was weakening and who might switch.⁷⁴ During this interlude Hamilton was shocked at Willkie's promising the Michigan professionals they could choose the Federal Judgeships in their state in exchange for their support.⁷⁵

As the sixth ballot began, it appeared that Willkie had run out his spurt; he was barely holding his own. He was a few votes ahead when the ballot reached Michigan; Lawrence announced that a poll of the delegation had been completed and that the state cast one vote for Hoover, two for Taft, and thirty-five for Willkie. The Michigan vote put Willkie within sixteen of the goal; it was now up to Pennsylvania, but the state passed.⁷⁶ Minutes later, at 1:01 A.M., Washington's vote gave Willkie the nomination. At that time ex-Senator David A. Reed of Pennsylvania seized the microphone and shouted that the state's seventy-two votes were cast for Willkie, but

⁷³"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:14, July 8, 1940.

⁷⁴Dillon, op. cit., p. 164.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 166.

⁷⁶Turner Catledge, "Republicans Nominate Wendell Willkie for the Presidency on the 6th Ballot," New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 5.

the statement came too late; Willkie had already gone over the top and Bricker was already mounting the platform to move that the nomination be made unanimous.⁷⁷ The vote of the sixth ballot was never officially totaled because so many states shifted at once to Willkie; however, the unofficial totals were as follows: Willkie 659; Taft 312; Hoover 9; Dewey 8; MacNider 3; and Gannett, Martin, and James 1 each.⁷⁸ The vote was made unanimous at 998 because two delegates were absent from the hall,⁷⁹ and the announcement of the nomination was greeted with a "mighty roar" from the galleries and the floor. The convention hall was quiet during the losers' congratulatory speeches and remained so as the galleries and delegates filed out at the end of the session.⁸⁰

V. THE FIFTH DAY

During the anticlimactic fifth day the convention chose Senator McNary for the second spot on the ticket, a choice which was both hailed and criticized. After the balloting, Willkie broke with tradition by appearing before the assembled delegates to make a statement.

⁷⁷"The Sun Also Rises," Time, 36:14, July 8, 1940.

⁷⁸New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 4.

⁷⁹Turner Catledge, "Republicans Nominate Wendell Willkie for the Presidency on the 6th Ballot," New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 1.

⁸⁰Sidney M. Shalett, "Ballot Shifts Kept Convention Tense," New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 2.

Before the delegates met to nominate Willkie's running mate, the candidate held a press conference with nearly 300 newspaper and magazine correspondents and editors at the Warwick. During the course of the interview Willkie stated that he would resign his position with Commonwealth and Southern; that he believed the major issues of the campaign would be national unity, rehabilitation of the nation's economic system, and buildup of the defense system; that he would accept the nomination and would make a hard fight for election; that he would go to the White House to confer with Roosevelt; that he would stand on the 1940 Republican party platform; that he favored the contributions limitations set down in the Hatch Act; that he would not choose his running mate, but that the convention would do it; that there was no basis for the belief that he was an interventionist; and that he had first thought of campaigning for the presidency on May 11, when he accepted the invitation to speak before Republican leaders in Minnesota.⁸¹ Willkie appeared to be a candidate who would "bare his soul" before the press; he provided his questioners with direct answers to their inquiries.

When the delegates met to choose the vice-presidential candidate, there appeared to be little doubt as to whom the delegates wanted for the position; for they nominated Oregon's

⁸¹James A. Hagerty, "Willkie Approves Platform, Opposes Big Campaign Gifts," New York Times, June 29, 1940, pp. 1,3.

McNary on the first ballot. It was reported that he had declined to seek the nomination at first, but had later stated that he would accept if the convention wanted him. In the balloting McNary received 890 votes to 108 for Dewey Short of Missouri, who, after the results were announced, moved to make the vote unanimous; McNary had been drafted.⁸²

McNary, the Senate Minority Leader, was a supporter of public power, a westerner, a life-long Republican, and a seasoned politician; and many party leaders felt that there was no better man in party to help Willkie meet the problems he would encounter in Washington.⁸³ This opinion of McNary as Willkie's running mate was not unanimous. Many Republicans pointed out that the Senator had been anti-Willkie during the fight for the presidential nomination; that he was pro-public power, while Willkie had been the chief spokesman against public power; that McNary had voted against the repeal of the arms embargo, while Willkie had declared himself in favor of aid to the Allies; and that McNary had been a consistent and vigorous advocate of "high protection," while Willkie had supported the reciprocal trade treaties. A New York Times editorial recounted the feelings of those who opposed McNary because of such inconsistencies on the ticket by declaring

⁸²Turner Catledge, "Senator Drafted," New York Times, June 29, 1940, p. 1.

⁸³"Good Soldier," Time, 36:16, July 8, 1940.

that the best that could be said about the situation was that the office of vice-president was of comparatively little importance in policy determination.⁸⁴

After the convention had chosen McNary, the delegates and spectators waited to see if their newly selected champion would break tradition and appear before them; they were not disappointed. Willkie's entrance triggered a "deafening shout" and wild cheering, and each assertion in his statement brought about another ovation.⁸⁵ Adding to the color and excitement of the occasion was the introduction of what was to become Willkie's campaign song. It was written by Ray Ghent and Eleanor and Donald J. Smith, and the music was from Walt Disney's "Snow White:"

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, its back to work we go,
With Wendell Willkie leading us
The jobs will grow.
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho,
We've all been feeling low,
But Willkie's hand will save the land,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, its back to work we go,
With Willkie's plan the New Deal sham
Will have to go.
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho
The fact we want to know;
Wyn has no fear, he'll make things clear,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.

⁸⁴"Mr. McNary--A Poor Choice," a New York Times Editorial, June 29, 1940, p. 14.

⁸⁵Sidney M. Shalett, "Willkie Breaks Party Tradition by Personal Appearance Like Roosevelt's in '32," New York Times, June 29, 1940, p. 3.

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, its back to work we go,
 With confidence restored again
 Defense will grow.
 Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho,
 We've all been worried so,
 But Willkie's fight will us unite,
 Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.

Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, its back to work we go,
 The people's voice expressed their choice,
 The vote will show.
 Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho,
 We want the world to know
 That Wendell Willkie is the man
 We want. Heigh-ho! ⁸⁶

In his statement before the delegates Willkie declared that he had not come to discuss principles, but to thank the delegates and to express his appreciation. He stated that democracy was facing its crucial test and that the United States was the last untouched foothold of freedom in the world; he pledged to wage a crusading, aggressive, and fighting campaign to bring unity to America--to bring unity to labor and capital, to the worker and the farmer, and to all classes--in support of the great cause of the preservation of freedom. In calling on the delegates to join in the crusade, Willkie made an amateur's mistake, the first of many he would make before the campaign's conclusion in November; he stated, "And so, you Republicans, I call upon you to join me, help me. The cause is great. We must win. We cannot fail if we stand together in one united fight."⁸⁷ It was a thoughtless remark

⁸⁶New York Times, June 29, 1940, p. 4.

⁸⁷New York Times, June 29, 1940, p. 3. [*Italics mine.*]

and aroused the old doubts.⁸⁸ While the doubters were left to ponder the psychological implications of the remark, Republicans, Democrats, and the world were expressing their reactions to the nomination and seeking to explain its cause.

VI. THE COMMENTS AND THE EXPLANATIONS

The comments on Willkie's victory and the explanations concerning its cause reflected the magnitude of the political upset. Both were given freely as the nation and the world came to realize what had transpired.

The comments issued by the Republicans clearly, and quite naturally, pointed out that Willkie's campaign would prove to be a good one and would put the party back into control of the nation. Dewey declared that Willkie would make "one hell of a good campaign." Taft's comments took on a more scholarly tone as he foresaw the Willkie victory restoring government based on reason, common sense, and business principles. Hoover, quite optimistically, declared that Willkie would be elected just like that--a snap of his fingers.⁸⁹ Landon applauded the nomination, stressing the importance of Willkie's foreign policy stand on aid to the Allies.⁹⁰

⁸⁸Dillon, op. cit., p. 173.

⁸⁹"Voters' Drafting of Willkie Like Shot in the Arm to U.S.," Newsweek, 16:17, July 8, 1940.

⁹⁰New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 3.

Vandenberg stated that the nominee had captured the imagination of the American people and that he would put his shoulder to the wheel to work for Willkie's election. Gannett stated simply that the convention had selected Willkie and that he would work for him. Bridges remarked that the delegates had made an admirable choice and appealed to all members of the party to get together behind their candidate.⁹¹

The Democratic party leadership regarded the nomination as beneficial to their chances to win the election. Roosevelt's only public statement on the Willkie victory was that he would be glad to see Willkie if the latter felt inclined to come to the White House to discuss international relations; however, Farley and Ickes revealed more specific reactions. Farley declared that the nomination greatly clarified the issues before the nation--which would control the nation: the historic American processes or the new and somewhat foreign methods of concentrated control? Ickes declared that Roosevelt would be nominated, giving the people the choice between a man with experience in public affairs, possessing strength and training in international relations, and a man without experience except as a clever lawyer and successful public utilities holding company representative.⁹²

⁹¹Lawrence E. Davies, "Fight for Willkie Pledged by Losers," New York Times, June 29, 1940, p. 3.

⁹²New York Times, June 29, 1940, pp. 1,3.

Ickes was not so positive about the outcome of the election in his diary, for in it he wrote, "Nothing so extraordinary has ever happened in American politics."⁹³ In his analysis of the candidate's chances, Ickes recorded that Willkie was an attractive, colorful, and utterly unscrupulous character and that it would not be easy to defeat him, especially with Senator McNary on the ticket.⁹⁴

On the humorous side, Henry L. Mencken saw the Philadelphia events as representative of a miracle: "At one time I actually saw an angel in the gallery reserved for Philadelphia street railway curve-greasers. To be sure, the angel had on a palm beach suit, but nevertheless it was clearly an angel."⁹⁵ Damon Runyon declared, "We are the fellow who did not discover Willkie."⁹⁶

The reaction across the sea reflected the political position of each country. The Italian New Agency stated, "The fact that Willkie isn't a professional politician augments the probability of a Republican victory at the coming elections."⁹⁷ The Frankfurter Zeitung pictured Willkie as a

⁹³Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Vol. III., The Lowering Clouds, 1939-1941, p. 221.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Barnes, op. cit., p. 174.

⁹⁶"Willkie in Print," Time, 36:53, July 8, 1940.

⁹⁷"Voters' Drafting of Willkie Like Shot in the Arm to U.S.," Newsweek, 16:18, July 8, 1940.

dynamic personality who could successfully oppose Roosevelt and his appalling domestic and foreign policy.⁹⁸ The Hamburger Fremdenblatt reported that Willkie was not a professional politician, but a businessmen; the paper also concluded that because the Republicans chose the latter type of candidate, it seemed to indicate that the electorate was fed up with party slogans and shibboleths.⁹⁹ Reuters, the British news agency, declared that the news of the nomination brought pleasure to the beleaguered island, especially in light of all the isolationist sentiment at the convention. It was also reported that British newspapers ran headlines such as "Aid Britain Man to Run for Presidency" and "Allies Supporter to Fight for United States Presidency."¹⁰⁰

Not all of the comments were of a light nature, nor were they all congratulatory or optimistic. After the convention, the nation's political analysts and writers sought to explain the nomination to their readers and to one another. They attempted to evaluate the event and pinpoint the cause or reason which enabled Willkie, the utilities executive, to capture the Republican nomination.

The New York Times declared that the Republicans had

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹New York Times, June 29, 1940, p. 4.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

put up the best candidate at their command, a man who stood head and shoulders above his rivals for the party's favor. As for the cause of the "miracle," the newspaper reported that the talk of "utility money" making the show of public opinion and influencing the delegates was quietly dismissed as nonsense by both the public and the delegates. The editorial stated that the nomination had obviously sprung from the spontaneous wave of public sentiment, that as the seriousness of the war increased and as its implications regarding a threat to the United States grew, popular sentiment developed from virtually nothing to amazing proportions. The announced candidates, the Times stated, attempted to follow public opinion instead of lead it, advocating an ostrich-like isolation policy, while Willkie declared that Britain and France constituted America's first line of defense. The delegates knew that the flood of letters and telegrams and the shouts of the galleries was not part of a manufactured demonstration, but the spontaneous outburst of the feelings of the rank and file.¹⁰¹

Arthur Krock also attributed the nomination to the spontaneous public demand. He stated that democracy had worked at a time when triumphant war machines had been erected on its ruins in nearly all the rest of the world. Krock labeled the nomination a "miracle" because it had been accomplished in the

¹⁰¹"Political Miracle," an Editorial in the New York Times, June 30, 1940, IV, p. 8.

face of powerful obstacles: Willkie had never held public office and had conducted no primary campaign; he had been identified as an utilities executive and a director of a Wall Street bank; and he had to defeat two strong professional organizations possessing impressive commitments. Against these obstacles and every political device his opponents could bring to bear, Willkie rose to victory on the back of a wave of public support, manifested in the action of the galleries--which only reflected a vast national gallery--and a deluge of telegrams, letters, and calls. There was no kingmaker involved in the Willkie nomination.¹⁰²

Jonathan Mitchell, writing in The New Republic, also argued that the verifiable petitions signed by four and one-half million voters, plus the telegrams, contributed significantly to the Willkie victory; however, he reported that they had not been the result of spontaneous support for the candidate, but of a carefully planned political maneuver. Mitchell reported that the Associated Willkie Clubs and the Willkie Mailing Committee had initiated the petitions, collected them, and had insured that they were delivered to the appropriate delegates and that the entire processing had been administered through an office in Philadelphia. Mitchell also indicated that support from a group of politically-oriented businessmen

¹⁰²Arthur Krock, "Nomination of Willkie Like a Revolution Here," New York Times, June 30, 1940, IV, p. 3.

and from several Southern delegations contributed to Willkie's successful bid for the nomination.¹⁰³

Robert Bendiner, writing in The Nation, attributed the nomination to the Republican's attempt to make up for the lack of a sound political program. He asserted that the confused G.O.P. platform--supporting national defense, but not the New Deal's administration of the defense programs; collective bargaining, but with a toned-down Wagner Act; and relief, but not the New Deal's "graft-ridden" programs--and the isolationist foreign policy stands of Dewey, Taft, and Vandenberg forced the Republican party leaders into an impossible situation: they had been caught between their hostility toward the candidate, and their mistaken confidence in their ability to stop him, and the strength of his appeal and the swiftness of the Willkie drive.¹⁰⁴

Raymond Moley, writing in Newsweek, stated in his analysis of the nomination that it had not been the gallery-inspired third ballot switches, the popular enthusiasm for Willkie, nor the illusion that the candidate was a great natural and could survive even serious political mistakes which had effected the phenomenal event. According to Moley,

¹⁰³Jonathan Mitchell, "How They Won with Willkie," The New Republic, 103:48, July 8, 1940.

¹⁰⁴Robert Bendiner, "Grand Old Paradox," The Nation, 151:6, July 6, 1940.

a partial explanation was that the Republican party had realized that they could not have won with any of the other candidates. He declared that the vote switching had been gradual, accomplished by delegates whose reason told them that the peculiar circumstances of 1940 demanded a new kind of candidate. The flood of petitions and telegrams served to indicate the surge of public opinion; but, according to Moley's analysis, the newspapers, magazines, and radio broadcasts did more to educate the delegates of the vastness of the Willkie appeal and materially influenced their reasonable selection of the nominee.¹⁰⁵

Denis Brogan also believed that the nomination had not been the result of a spontaneous political movement or of Willkie's advanced position on aid to the Allies, but that it had resulted from the realization by the voters and, slowly and reluctantly, by the delegates that it was essential to have a candidate who was positive about something.¹⁰⁶

J. C. Furnas saw in the Willkie nomination a revolt against the old-line politicians, a revolt representative of the idea that amateur spontaneity could lick professional efficiency every time. The people had been responsible for the

¹⁰⁵Raymond Moley, "Perspective: A Clear Call," Newsweek, 16:56, July 8, 1940.

¹⁰⁶Denis W. Brogan, "The American Election," The Political Quarterly, Vol. XI, No. 4, p. 332, October-November, 1940.

Willkie boom and the resulting nomination, not the influence of money, business, or political organization.¹⁰⁷

Luther A. Huston, writing in The Living Age, also came to the conclusion that the convention had not been bossed by the political powers within the party, but by the voices from the gallery and from the floor. He pictured the nomination as being more representative of pure democracy than any other in a political generation.¹⁰⁸

In an editorial, The New Republic attempted to refute the "official" theory concerning the nomination: that the plain people had asserted themselves over the will of the machine politicians. This theory, according to the magazine, was erroneous because the nomination had been one of the most skillful professional publicity jobs the country had ever seen. Russell Davenport, the ex-managing editor of Fortune; Robert L. Johnson, the publisher of Promenade, a founder of Time, and a promotional expert; Fred Smith, a publicity expert from the firm of Selvage and Smith; Harry M. Shakleford, the Advertising manager of the Johns-Manville Corporation; Steve Hannagen, a publicity expert; and Ned Stevenson and Associates, counselors on radio relations, had all been instrumental in presenting

¹⁰⁷J. C. Furnas, "Who Wants Willkie?" The Saturday Evening Post, 213:12, November 2, 1940.

¹⁰⁸Luther A. Huston, "Political Parties Choose Generals," The Living Age, 359:20, September, 1940.

Willkie to the delegates. In the performance of their task, according to the magazine, they suppressed the picture of Willkie the New Yorker, utilities executive, and Wall Street lawyer and built up the picture of a small-town boy from Indiana.¹⁰⁹

Wendell Willkie had come to the Republican convention with a large public following, riding the crest of a boom; but his candidacy had not been taken seriously by many professional politicians of the party because he had few delegate votes and no political organization. He had, at best, only a slight chance of capturing the nomination, and that chance was contingent upon a deadlocked power struggle between Dewey and Taft. In addition, there were several other dark horse candidates in a much better position to gain strength in a deadlocked convention because they possessed both delegate votes and political organizations; however, it was Willkie who emerged as the Republican nominee, and the accomplishment of that feat represents one of the greatest stories in American political history. The opinions as to the prime cause of the phenomenal event differ widely; the question remains: how was Willkie able to overcome the obstacles to his nomination and become the Republican standard bearer?

¹⁰⁹"Who Wanted Willkie?" The New Republic, 103:105, July 22, 1940.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

The explanations which have been advanced since the Willkie nomination attempt to affix its cause on certain events occurring during the Spring of 1940; however, the authors of these theories have glossed over essential factors in their general sweep of the subject. Willkie's nomination did not result from the spontaneous surge of public opinion; the banding together of the nation's businessmen; the support of the Southern delegations; the attempt to make up for a paradoxical platform; the grassroots revolt against the professional politicians; the reactions of the galleries; the flood of telegrams, letters, telephone calls, and postal cards; nor the result of a professional publicity job. Each of these proposed explanations represents only a part of the total picture; collectively they still represent only a partial explanation. The authors of these explanations have neglected the most important factor--the attitude of the individual delegate and his ultimate decision.

As the convention opened the main topic of conversation was Willkie's spectacular dark horse challenge. His boom had contributed to the uncertainties pervading the convention because he had risen in the polls from nowhere to the second position in party popularity, and he had obtained the support

of the larger metropolitan areas and the business and financial interests of the Eastern Seaboard. In addition, Willkie's supporters had publicized the fact that the boom had continued to spread throughout the nation at an ever-increasing rate.¹ His managers proclaimed that the impetus behind the boom was the man himself, and the reporters covering the pre-convention Republican campaigns concurred that a large measure of the candidate's popularity could be attributed to his personal campaign appearances and his unappeasable stands as a foe of the New Deal domestic policy. Willkie's chance for the nomination depended on a deadlocked convention; however, the great question in everyone's mind was whether he could translate the tremendous surge of public opinion into delegate votes; this was the key to the nomination.

It is the contention of the study that the European war triggered a reaction among the rank and file of the party which resulted in a switch in their support from Dewey to Willkie; the latter's nomination resulted from the delegates' realization that such a switch had occurred and that the party needed a vote-getter of Willkie's caliber and popular appeal.

I. WILLKIE AND THE RANK AND FILE

An integral factor in Willkie's nomination was the great

¹Turner Catledge, "Willkie's Rise Puts G.O.P. in a Dilemma," New York Times, June 16, 1940, IV, p. 6.

amount of popular support granted to the candidate. Since it was this support which finally persuaded the delegates to switch to Willkie, it is essential to subject the formation of this rank and file support to careful analysis.

The Republican party's defeat in 1936 resulted in a shake-up of the G.O.P. organization. Under the guidance of Chairman Hamilton, the Republican leadership rebuilt the party structure and were successful in staging a political comeback in the Congressional elections of 1938. In these contests the Democratic party lost ground in thirty-six of the forty-six states they had carried in 1936; in twenty-seven of the states the G.O.P. gains amounted to a five per cent increase or more. The Republicans captured eleven Senate seats, 169 House seats, eighteen governorships, and control of both state houses in nineteen states. The public opinion polls published during the Spring of 1939 predicted that the G.O.P. would capture the White house in 1940, although they reflected that the vote would be close. The Republican party was given New England in the polls, while the Democratic party was granted the South and the West. As the popular support for the opposition party grew, the members of the party became satiated with the desire to win in 1940. This prayer for a winning ticket grew in intensity as one went down the scale in the party.²

²Ibid.

This desire, most prevalent among the rank and file, stimulated the search for "a man on a white horse," a vote-getter who would free the nation from Roosevelt and the New Deal. The first beneficiary of this attitude was Dewey, who, because of his vigorous prosecution of the rackets in New York City, led in the public opinion polls of G.O.P. voters from January, 1939, to Late June, 1940. In February, 1939, the Gallup Poll showed that he led other Republicans in party popularity, obtaining 27 per cent of the vote to Vandenberg's 21 per cent (his nearest rival); however, 50 per cent of the G.O.P. voters indicated that they were undecided at that time. As a direct result of further crime-busting successes, Dewey's percentage had, by March, increased to 50 per cent of the Republican party popularity vote to 15 per cent for Vandenberg and 13 per cent for Taft. In the August polls Dewey still led all comers with 45 per cent, with Vandenberg increasing to 25 per cent and Taft to 14 per cent; but 44 per cent of G.O.P. voters remained undecided as to their choice for the party's 1940 standard bearer. Up to this point in the race for the nomination, the central issue had been the New Deal's domestic failures; however, in September the European war began, and its effect on the American political scene was far-reaching.

The first apparent effect of the war was to be seen in the public opinion polls. Taft had announced his candidacy in August, and his percentage in the popularity poll should have

been affected as a result of the increased publicity; however, the war news overshadowed his entrance and held his popularity index down. The war caused more serious repercussions within the party. In early October Taft declared that the G.O.P. was bound to become the peace party in 1940; and Representative Hamilton Fish of New York, an isolationist, announced that he would enter the race if the candidates continued to "soft-pedal" the importance of remaining neutral.

The war also affected the Republican race by cutting down Dewey's popularity and by elevating Vandenberg's and Taft's. By October, Dewey's popularity had dropped to 39 per cent, while Taft's had risen to 17 per cent and Vandenberg's to 27 per cent; the undecided vote had dipped to 37 per cent. It may be noted that whenever Dewey's vote dropped during the period from January, 1939, to May, 1940, Vandenberg's rose correspondingly and Taft's remained virtually constant. This trend appeared to indicate that the rank and file, when deserting Dewey, preferred Vandenberg to Taft. During May and June of 1940, when Dewey's percentage again decreased, it was Willkie, not Vandenberg, who was the recipient of the switched support, while Taft's and Vandenberg's vote remained unchanged. The rank and file had decided to throw support behind a more experienced candidate immediately after the start of the war; however, after Vandenberg had been soundly defeated by Dewey in the primaries, he lost his place as the second choice of

the rank and file. When the international situation deteriorated during the Spring of 1940, it was Willkie, not Vandenberg, who benefited from the desertion from the Dewey camp.

A partial explanation for Dewey's loss of support following the outbreak of war could be attributed to the fact that many G.O.P. leaders reportedly opposed his candidacy because they believed that his youth and inexperience would detract votes from the party in light of the tense international crisis. The outbreak of war also affected the undecided vote; for in August, 1939, the percentage had been 44 per cent, but the October poll indicated that it had fallen to 37 per cent. The war had forced many of the rank and file to make up their minds; this fact, plus the desertion of a considerable amount of Dewey's support, increased Taft's and Vandenberg's popularity.

The war also had repercussions within the Democratic party. In November, 1936, 62.5 per cent of the electorate approved of the President; however, by December of 1938 this popularity index had fallen to 55.5 per cent. In the aftermath of the Republican Congressional victories of 1938 Roosevelt's popularity again began to rise, 58 per cent in January, 1939, to 63.5 per cent by March. From this point, F.D.R.'s popularity again took a nose-dive, falling to 58.8 per cent by May to 56.6 per cent by August; however, the out-

break of the war in Europe shattered this downward trend. By November, 1939, Roosevelt's popularity had risen to 62.7 per cent. The inroads which the G.O.P. political orators had made into the President's popularity during the period March to August of 1939 had been offset by the Roosevelt surge following the declaration of war; however, all was not well within the ranks of the Democratic party. The party was in a state of confusion throughout 1939 because the President had refused to reveal his plans for 1940. His silence on the third term decision continued into 1940, and the Democratic presidential aspirants were effectively blocked from entering the race for the Democratic nomination.

The war also changed the political situation between the parties by producing mass insecurity and the desire "not to change horses in mid-stream," thus elevating the Democratic party to the position of first choice among the nation's electorate. In November, the polls indicated that 54 per cent of the electorate had indicated a preference for a Democratic victory in 1940; in April of 1939 the polls had reported that 52 per cent preferred a Republican victory.

Another extremely important effect of the war was the manner in which it had affected public opinion on the third term issue. F.D.R. had artfully dodged the issue throughout 1939, and certain sources in the administration had reported that Roosevelt would lose his power to conduct policy were he

to make any announcement relative to the third term decision. While the nation waited for his answer, the polls showed that sentiment favoring a third term was on the increase. In March, 1939, only 31 per cent of the nation's voters favored a third term; by May it had increased to 33 per cent. In August the Gallup Poll reported that 52 per cent of young Democratic voters had expressed themselves in support of the third term; however, the poll also indicated that only 48 per cent of all Democratic voters held such an opinion. A survey of all voters published during August revealed that 40 per cent of the nation's electorate favored a third term, representing an increase of seven per cent in three months. This increase in the pro-third term sentiment occurred at a time when Roosevelt's popularity was dropping from 63.5 per cent in March to 56.6 per cent in August. It was apparent that as the Republican campaign against the New Deal's domestic policy gained support from the nation's voters, F.D.R.'s popularity dropped; and the rank and file Democrats began to look on the President as the man to save the party in 1940. The pro-third term sentiment increase resulted from the increased Democratic support. Another Gallup Poll conducted during this pre-war period indicated that 48 per cent of all voters thought F.D.R. would attempt to secure a third term, and 45 per cent believed that he would be successful; however, in September, after the outbreak of war, the poll showed that 48 per cent of the voters

approved of a third term--an increase of eight per cent after the war had begun. By November, after the initial shock of the war had passed, the pro-third term sentiment dropped down to 43 per cent; however, the Gallup Poll reported that four out of every five Democrats favored the third term.

These changes in the political situation following the outbreak of war did not remain in force--the war continued to produce changes. After the initial impact following the declaration of war--October through December, 1939--the nation's political scene underwent another series of alterations.

In the Republican race the undecided vote moved from 37 per cent in January, 1940, to 36 per cent in February to 40 per cent in March, representative of a trend which seemed to indicate that some reservations were held by the party members as the war news filled the headlines. Dewey's popularity increased from 39 per cent in October to 60 per cent in January; however, after reaching this percentage, his vote again started to decrease, falling to 56 per cent in February to 53 per cent in March. During these first three months of 1940, Taft's popularity remained rather constant, although his popularity had dropped during the last months of 1939.

Vandenberg dropped from 27 per cent in October to 16 per cent in January to 19 per cent in March--statistics which seemed to indicate that the pro-Vandenberg trend of September-October had been halted after the initial shock of the war's beginning

wore off. The impact of the war cut into Dewey's popularity and elevated Taft's and Vandenberg's; however, after this initial reaction, the situation was back as it had been in August, except that Dewey was stronger and Vandenberg was weaker. Almost immediately Dewey began to lose strength; however, Vandenberg's popularity increase during these first months of 1940 indicated that he was not receiving the cast off Dewey support to the degree which had characterized the earlier trend. The war and the realization of the situation within the Democratic party stimulated a segment of the rank and file to again survey the field of candidates for a new vote-getter to run under the new political conditions.

In the Democratic party the aftermath showed no such drastic reversion back to the pre-war situation; the trend set into motion after the outbreak of the war continued to develop. In January the polls reported that 78 per cent of the Democratic voters preferred F.D.R. in 1940, and in February they reported that 64 per cent of the nation's electorate approved of the President. The pro-third term sentiment had been 43 per cent in November; however, by February the vote had increased to 46 per cent. There was a reversion in this sentiment, for the vote favoring the third term had dropped from 48 per cent in September to 43 per cent in November. The trend did not continue; the percentage again began to rise. An interesting development almost unnoticed was that the 1940

increase in the pro-third term sentiment accompanied a corresponding rise in the President's popularity. The earlier growth of this sentiment had been attributed to the G.O.P. attacks; the new increase resulted from the international crisis. The February Gallup Poll also indicated that 52 per cent of all voters thought Roosevelt would attempt to secure a third term and that 60 per cent believed that he would be successful. By March the polls showed that the pro-third term sentiment had increased to 47 per cent and that 55 per cent of the electorate favored a Democratic victory in 1940. The President was firmly in command of his party, the party favored to win the election. F.D.R. refused to withdraw his name from the eleven primary contests in which his supporters had entered his name. His silence effectively halted the booms of the potential Democratic candidates and prevented the Republicans from having a distinct target upon which to draw a bead.

The changes in the political situation following September, 1939, as well as those occurring during the first months of 1940, did take away a measure of the optimistic attitude which had pervaded the G.O.P., but the rank and file would not, nor could not, be counted out of the race. The Gallup Poll showed that even though the Democrats held a 55 per cent to 45 per cent edge in national popularity, in some states, possessing sufficient electoral votes to sway the

election, the vote had been calculated to be extremely close. The G.O.P. went into the primary contests knowing that the fortunes of politics could change at any time. The rank and file, though with reduced enthusiasm and support, continued to back Dewey's candidacy, believing that in him they had their best bet to win in November. In the primaries Taft avoided a direct confrontation with Dewey; however, Vandenberg and Gannett met the front runner head-on and were effectively eliminated from serious contention and consideration by the rank and file. As a result of his primary successes and his Western campaign tour, Dewey's popularity among the rank and file again increased. In the mid-May Gallup Poll Dewey received 62 per cent, compared to Taft's 14 per cent and Vandenberg's 13 per cent; however, a new figure had, by this time, entered the race. Willkie had scored less than 1 per cent in the March polls, but had increased to 3 per cent by April and 5 per cent by Mid-May. The Willkie boom had started among the rank and file.

During the pre-primary and primary campaigns Dewey, Gannett, and Taft had concentrated on domestic issues when all the nation had expressed concern over the tense international situation. Taft had declared that there existed no immediate danger to the United States if Britain and France fell to the Nazi army and had warned that Roosevelt would become an all-powerful leader in such a situation. This neglect of

foreign affairs would come back to haunt these candidates.

After the primaries Dewey held a commanding lead; in addition, the undecided vote had dropped to 32 per cent by May, indicating that more of the rank and file had found in Dewey a vote-getter with which to defeat the Democrats. This situation was soon to change, for by late May Dewey's popularity among the rank and file had fallen to 56 per cent, while Willkie's had risen to 10 per cent. Vandenberg's and Taft's percentages remained virtually unchanged. Willkie appeared to be moving at a very rapid pace, detaching votes from Dewey and grabbing off the remaining undecided votes. This change represented one of the dramatic repercussions evolving out of a change in the course of the European war.

The conduct of the war from September, 1939, to April, 1940, has been labeled as the period of the "phony war" because only an occasional skirmish took place, both on land and on sea. The change in the war situation occurred on the day of the Illinois primary, ironically the date of one of Dewey's great primary victories---victories which had boosted his popularity from 53 per cent to 62 per cent and which placed the rank and file in his pocket as the champion vote-getter. On that date Germany invaded Norway and Denmark; later, in early May, the Nazi war machine roared into the Lowlands. The German offensive caused another round of changes in the United States political situation.

In the Democratic party the trend which had placed Roosevelt in the position of accepting the nomination or of naming his successor continued to develop after the German invasion. Before the escalation of the war, 47 per cent of the electorate favored a third term; after the invasion 57 per cent expressed the desire to have F.D.R. continue in office. In addition, 91 per cent of the Democrats and 8 per cent of the Republicans favored a third term. This change in public opinion was significant because the April primary results had indicated that the President would have a difficult time in a third term attempt. The anti-third term vote given Garner plus the Republican vote in their primaries showed a near even split in public sentiment over the third term. The April Gallup Poll also indicated that if the election were held at that time, its results would be close; the poll reported that in seven states the split between the two parties was 51 per cent to 49 per cent.

In the Republican party the end of the "phony war" caused Dewey to lose the support of the rank and file, just as he had following the outbreak of the war in 1939. The defection from the Dewey camp was not the result of the activity or influence of the "Stop-Dewey" movement because this group had attempted to stop the Dewey boom through their contacts with state party leaders and delegates, not the rank and file. Their attack on Dewey's youth, lack of larger

governmental experience, and inconsistent foreign policy stands did not affect the candidate's standing in the polls, The defection was not caused by the arguments of the party conservatives because their philosophy was not accepted by the rank and file in their desire for a vote-getter. When Vandenberg's chances were eclipsed by Dewey in the primaries, he demonstrated to the rank and file that he was not the vote-getter for which they had been seeking; therefore, they apparently discarded any thoughts of supporting the conservatism of Vandenberg or Taft in favor of a potential vote-getter.

Vandenberg stated that he had found amazing concern throughout the rank and file over the new development in the war; the press reported that Vandenberg's utter neutrality stand no longer had its appeal.³ In Taft's campaign, local Republican leaders informed the candidate that there was overwhelming sympathy for the Allied cause, a further indication that the isolationist stands were not popular. In addition, the Gallup Poll revealed that a majority of the electorate favored aid to the Allies. Taft did not heed the advice and continued his conservative, near isolationist, stand and concentrated on domestic issues. He further hurt his chances to gather the support of the rank and file by declaring that he opposed aid to the Allies on the grounds that it would be cowardly for the nation to send aid without sending men; he

³Ibid.

did not move in the popularity polls.

By mid-June, Dewey had dropped from 56 per cent to 52 per cent, while Willkie's popularity had increased from 10 per cent to 17 per cent during the same period. Taft's popularity also dropped, falling from the 16 per cent held in mid-May to 13 per cent; Vandenberg maintained his 12 per cent. It was apparent that Willkie was receiving the support of those members of the rank and file who were either undecided or who had supported Taft and Dewey. The final Gallup poll, released on June 21, revealed that Dewey's vote had dropped to 47 per cent, a decrease of five percentage points in nine days. During the same period, Willkie's vote rose to 29 per cent, an increase of 12 per cent. Taft and Vandenberg lost heavily in these nine days: Taft dropped from 13 per cent to 8 per cent, and Vandenberg fell from 12 per cent to 8 per cent. The strength of the Willkie boom had certainly manifested itself during the closing stages of the pre-convention campaigns; the Indianan had somehow captured the imagination and support of the rank and file of the Republican party.

Willkie's meteoric rise in the public opinion polls resulted from two factors: first, the change in the course of the war put him in the position of possessing the soundest Republican foreign policy stand; and second, the formation of agencies for the distribution of his program to the rank and file. Prior to the Nazi invasion of April-May, 1940, Willkie

had achieved a measure of recognition as a critic of the New Deal domestic policy; however, he possessed no organization to promote his candidacy, for he was not even a declared candidate. Willkie's condemnation of the Roosevelt administration's failure to solve the nation's economic problems attracted the interest of a young New York lawyer, Oren Root, Jr., who decided to examine the possibility of running Willkie for the presidency. On April 11, 1940, Root announced that he had mailed out nearly 1,000 "declarations" to individuals throughout the country to sample the public support for his "candidate;" and by April 15, he was able to report that he had received orders for 20,000 "declarations." Late in April Root opened a campaign headquarters in New York from which pamphlets, petitions, and buttons were sent to interested parties from coast to coast. By the end of April Root declared that 200,000 Americans had signed the "declarations" expressing support for Willkie; the boom was on, without the candidate.

When Davenport, the Cowles, Luce, and the Reids joined the boom, Willkie's program reached millions of people through the newspaper media; in addition, the formation of Willkie-For-President clubs brought the candidate's economic and political philosophies to still more people. By his own admission, he became a candidate late in May when he accepted an invitation to meet with Governor Stassen and other Republican leaders in Minnesota. It was during this period that the American

political system was attempting to recover from the impact of the Nazi invasion; Willkie began to gather support as his ideas became publicized in an intense propaganda campaign. Willkie Clubs and Willkie-For-President clubs sprang up all over the nation, and by June it was reported that the latter organizations numbered nearly 500 and were growing at a rate of twelve new clubs per day. It was also reported that the clubs had distributed 350,000 campaign buttons and 150,000 copies of pamphlets explaining the candidate's program and that an estimated four and one-half million persons had signed the "declarations" calling for Willkie's nomination. The electorate, especially the rank and file Republicans, were being given the word.

Basically, Willkie's appeal rested with his "liberal-conservative" political philosophy: he supported Roosevelt's foreign policy, including aid to the Allies, and he condemned the New Deal domestic policy. He explained this rather contradictory program by declaring that the country would be endangered by offering the electorate a choice between two half-rotten apples in November: one supporting the correct domestic policy and the wrong foreign policy, while the other represented the opposite. Instead of taking the Taft stand against aid to the Allies, a stand to which Dewey had become committed during the primaries and a stand to which Vandenberg had devoted years to defending, Willkie stated that Britain

and France constituted America's first line of defense and that aid to the Allies was the most effective way to keep the nation out of the war. While the other Republican candidates concentrated on domestic issues during May and June, Willkie was declaring that the war represented a threat to the United States foreign trade unless the country protected its European markets by aiding the Allies. The public opinion polls indicated that Willkie's message was reaching the Republican rank and file; however, he was still far behind the front runners.

The flood of petitions coming into the Willkie headquarters and the incredible growth of the clubs indicated that millions of the Republican rank and file had found their vote-getter; however, Dewey still led in delegate strength, followed closely by Taft. As the center of attention focused on Philadelphia, it was apparent that opinions within the party were split. The delegates, possessing the responsibility for the nomination, would vote according to the commitments of the primary victories and promises of support given to Dewey, Taft, and others. On the other hand, the rank and file had chosen another candidate; but, unfortunately for Willkie, they would have no vote in the convention. They could only attempt to influence the delegates to their way of thinking; for in order for Willkie to win, the delegates had to be persuaded that Willkie was the only candidate the Republicans could name

who had a chance to defeat Roosevelt or his chosen successor during the international crisis. Others also recognized the strength and appeal of the Willkie candidacy and sought to deflate the build up of popular sentiment for Willkie by emphasizing that he possessed no organization or delegate strength, that he had too many political liabilities, and that he could not possibly win either the nomination or election.

II. THE STOP-WILLKIE GROUP

Under normal circumstances Willkie probably would not have been nominated because he would have been stopped by the methods of the professionals who opposed his candidacy; however, under the peculiar circumstances of 1940, their usual methods had little effect on the boom. Just as the "Stop-Dewey" movement failed to dissuade the rank and file from Dewey when the latter's popularity was at its height, so then did the professionals fail to halt the delegates from switching to Willkie. The methods they employed were an appeal to partisanship, emphasizing Willkie's conversion to Republicanism; an attempt to block his candidacy by matching his appeal against Dewey's personality and prior vote-getting ability; an effort to overcome the Willkie tide with Taft, stressing his strong Republican background and firmness of conviction; and, finally, an effort to construct an old-fashioned combination of the type which had been used in the past to weed out political intruders

or other individuals not wanted by the professionals.⁴ The Willkie forces countered the appeal to partisanship by emphasizing the character and importance of some of the Willkie converts, notably Governors Baldwin and Stassen; they effectively blocked the combination--the group of twenty-one Congressmen from the Northwest who issued the statement that they would not attempt re-election were Willkie nominated--with the recruitment of Governor Carr of Colorado and other important Western Republican leaders. The whisper campaigns against Willkie's business connections, utilities affiliations, and Wall Street influence were partially nullified by Willkie's personal conversations with the delegates and his public declarations that he was proud of his business associations. His supporters concentrated the issue by stating that a businessman's sense and ability were needed to right the nation's economy, to run the government on the profit side. All these attempts to block Willkie's chances failed because the delegates would not stand for it; they demonstrated their independence by thinking for themselves. They had always stood for it in the past; the situation was unique.⁵

Throughout the convention period there were rumors that the "Stop-Willkie" forces planned to block his candidacy with

⁴Arthur Krock, "Willkie Credited for Own Victory," New York Times, June 28, 1940, p. 1.

⁵Ibid., p. 6.

a Taft-Dewey combination; however, it was also reported that each front runner believed himself to be in a position to gain the nomination on his own and would not accept the second spot on the ticket and that the combination could not be effected because neither could deliver his support to the other.

The growth of Willkie's pre-convention boom represented an expression of the rank and file's enthusiastic support, support which had not yet been translated into delegate votes. After the "Stop-Willkie" movement failed in its attempt to keep the boom confined to the rank and file, Willkie's message was able to reach the unbossed delegates.

III. THE WILLKIE APPEAL AND THE DELEGATES

The explanation of the cause of the delegates' switches to Willkie during the balloting rests on the premise that the political situation which existed after the Nazi invasion of the Lowlands created a body of delegates who were susceptible to the persuasive appeal of the rank and file and the Willkie campaign forces. As a result of their combined arguments the delegates slowly realized that Willkie was the best candidate they could nominate.

The Susceptibility of the Delegates: Before the Convention.

As active members in the G.O.P., the delegates felt the same desire for a winning ticket as did the rank and file; however, the change in the course of the war did not have the same

dramatic repercussions among the delegates because they did not, and could not, switch as rapidly as the rank and file. Commitments placing support behind other candidates prevented the delegates from joining the popular movement for Willkie, even if they had so desired. It was easier to leave the Dewey camp and to sign a Willkie petition or join a Willkie club than it was to go back on promises of pledged support based on primary victories, favorite son considerations, or promises of jobs or favors.

The Nazi invasion and the resulting confusion within the Republican party during the Spring of 1940 produced attitudes of anger, frustration, and anxiety within the party structure. The immediate effect of the outbreak of the war in September, 1939, was a reversal of the nation's public opinion as to which party should lead the nation. Even with this change in public opinion, it was believed that the election would be close and that the G.O.P. still had a chance with a strong candidate, a vote-getter. The flare-up in the Spring of 1940 dealt this optimistic sentiment a severe blow because it assured the nomination of Roosevelt, or his carbon copy choice, and placed the Democratic party in excellent position to continue the New Deal administration. To win, the Republicans needed a strong candidate and program; in order to have even a slight chance, they had to put up the strongest candidate at their disposal. The question as to the identity

of this candidate and as to the problems involved in candidate switching contributed to the frustrated state of the delegates.

Public opinion polls had indicated that an isolationist candidate and program could have a difficult time gaining public support during the tense international situation because a majority of the nations' voters had shown sympathy for the Allies and favored the granting of aid to assist them in their fight. This prevailing opinion only added to the difficult decision-making task of those delegates who were pledged to support candidates who had taken near or outright isolationist stands on foreign policy issues.

The strong position held by the President and the Democratic party also contributed to the breakdown of G.O.P. optimism. By the time the delegates assembled in Philadelphia, the polls had indicated that Roosevelt was the overwhelming choice of the rank and file Democrats, that the Democratic party held a commanding 54 per cent to 46 per cent lead over the Republicans in national popularity, that a majority of the nation's electorate expected F.D.R. to seek a third term and be successful in the attempt, and that the opposition to the third term had melted away with the deterioration of the international situation. By late June, Roosevelt, whose name had been entered in eleven primary contests, had amassed over 700 pledged delegate votes, nearly 200 more than the needed majority. It was obvious that the President could either secure the nomination

for himself or could dictate his successor. In either event, the Republicans were sure to face a candidate defending the New Deal, advocating a strong internationalist foreign policy, and running under the banner of the majority party.

The Stimson-Knox appointments, coming as they did just before the opening of the Republican convention, deepened the anxiety of the delegates. Roosevelt's maneuver triggered a revival of isolationist sympathies as G.O.P. leaders read the two Republicans out of the party and as the platform subcommittee composing the foreign policy plank set about putting the party firmly in the isolationist camp with an anti-internationalist program. The increase in conservatism was figured to hinder Willkie's chances for the nomination since he was generally considered the most internationally-minded G.O.P. candidate; but after the initial impact of the isolationist revival, the Willkie boom regained its losses and continued to grow. The final Gallup Poll, published on the same day as the appointment announcement, showed that Dewey had dropped to 47 per cent, while Willkie had advanced to 29 per cent, demonstrative of the fact that Willkie's support among the rank and file had continued to increase. The great question facing the delegates during this wave of isolationist sentiment was whether an isolationist candidate and program could defeat Roosevelt or his duplicate during an international crisis. The question had to be resolved, and there was not much time in which to

accomplish it.

The Susceptibility of the Delegates: At the Convention.

The delegates were to get no relief from the frustration surrounding their decision when the convention opened. During the pre-balloting days, event after event combined to make the decision all the more difficult to make. During the first days of the convention, the reporters indicated that the delegates were unruled and unbossed, that they appeared to be shopping around for a candidate and a program. It was during this period that Dewey liberalized his foreign policy stand by declaring that he favored sending surplus materiel to the Allies and that he favored the Stimson-Knox appointments, positions which were near reversals of his earlier stands.

While Dewey's new stands were being evaluated by the roaming delegates, events were taking shape which were to confound further the delegates' decision-making efforts. From the opening of their convention headquarters, Taft and Dewey supporters confidently issued statements of their candidates' pledged and promised delegate strength, with Dewey's forces predicting 400 to 450 votes, and Taft's 300. These attempts to effect a bandwagoning movement to elicit support from favorite son and unpledged delegates represented another factor which the delegates had to consider. Further problems resulted from the internal struggle between the isolationist and internationalist factions of the party; for, on one hand, it had

been reported that the platform subcommittee construction the foreign policy plank was leaning toward the isolationist viewpoint after the Stimson-Knox appointments, and, on the other hand, Governor Stassen's keynote address called for support to the Allies and supported the appointments. This basic ideological difference of opinion threatened to split the party wide open at a time when unity was absolutely essential for victory at the polls. The delegates would have to take into account these two philosophies and choose the candidate and program most likely to be accepted by the American people.

The pressure began to mount during the second and third days of the convention. The "Stop-Willkie" forces issued statements and presented arguments explaining why, in their opinions, Willkie could not defeat the Democrats at the polls; off-setting this persuasion, Willkie's newly established campaign committee and the amateur organizations attempted to demonstrate why, in their opinions, Willkie was the only Republican candidate who could win. Willkie's forces and the candidate himself made a concerted effort to reach all the delegates, even those who were pledged to support the others in the race for the nomination. By the second day Willkie had had personal interviews with 600 delegates, during which he presented his views on both foreign and domestic issues and answered questions and challenges on his stands. His men

cornered delegates on the streets, on the convention floor, and in the hotels and sought to obtain their support with a variety of arguments, nearly all of which were based on the strength of the Willkie boom spreading throughout the nation. They emphasized Willkie's rising percentage in the public opinion polls, the efforts of the 50,000 volunteer workers in the hundreds of clubs and the conversion of Governors Stassen and Baldwin and other Republican leaders to the Willkie cause. Further evidence of Willkie's popularity was presented to the delegates by using the "sales promotional" technique of the testimonial, supplying the delegates with solicited and unsolicited letters, telegrams, postal cards, newspapers, and telephone calls from their local areas calling for Willkie's nomination. This double-edged campaign of explaining the candidate's stand on the issues and of emphasizing the strength and magnitude of his popular support to effect a bandwagon-type swing to Willkie did not immediately convert large numbers of delegates; the results of the campaign would be seen in the actual balloting, with the gradual defection from favorite son delegations and Dewey-held delegate votes. After the first ballot, delegates began to exercise their independence and join the Willkie bandwagon. This switching was so gradual that it probably caused the professionals to under-estimate the strength of the Willkie appeal; by the time they realized what was happening, it was too late.

On the first ballot Willkie trailed Dewey by 255 votes and Taft by eighty-four; but, he had received votes from twenty-four delegations, including Connecticut's sixteen, nine from Indiana, and eight from New York. On the second ballot Willkie picked up nine from Maine, eight from Massachusetts, and thirteen from Missouri and had votes in twenty-six delegations; however, he trailed Dewey by 167 votes and Taft by thirty-two. The third ballot results gave Willkie six from New Hampshire, twenty-eight from Massachusetts, twenty-seven from New York, fifteen from Pennsylvania, six from Arizona, six from Delaware, and ten from Maryland; Willkie had votes from thirty-four delegations. On this ballot Willkie trailed Dewey by fifty-six votes and led Taft by forty-seven. The fourth ballot saw Taft pick up twenty-seven votes from Illinois and Willkie pull in thirty-five from New York, twenty-three from New Jersey, and fourteen from Maryland; however, the results were about the same as on the third. Willkie, possessing votes from thirty-six delegations, led Dewey by fifty-six votes and Taft by forty-eight. After the fourth ballot Dewey's support faded as the delegates began to line up behind Taft and Willkie; the fifth ballot demonstrated the effectiveness of the Willkie campaign strategy. On this ballot Willkie obtained support from thirty-nine delegations and led Dewey by 372 votes and Taft by fifty-two; Willkie needed only seventy-two votes to win. The anti-Willkie forces' attempt to recess the convention to arrange

a deal had failed, but Taft was not out of the race by any means. The sixth ballot results were never made official because after the Michigan caucus gave Willkie thirty-five votes, state after state joined the bandwagon and Governor Bricker moved that the nomination be made unanimous; the finger had been removed from the dike, thus releasing an ever-increasing amount of support for the candidate who had staged an amazing political upset.

Willkie's nomination resulted from a combination of events beginning with the dramatic change in the course of the European war and concluding with the conversion of the delegates to the Willkie cause. The rank and file Republicans demanded a new, exciting, and colorful candidate to bring "order out of chaos," to return the country to the influence of the G.O.P. philosophy. Before the Nazi invasion of April-May, 1940, Dewey was the candidate selected by these grass-roots Republicans because he had successfully met the requirements believed essential for victory. The end of the "phony war" necessitated a re-assessment of the criteria for the selection of the 1940 nominee; and under the new circumstances, many members of the rank and file came to the conclusion that Dewey's isolationist tendencies represented a handicap to the party's chances, rather than an asset. The search for a candidate to meet the new criteria, a candidate who opposed the New Deal domestic program and who possessed a sound foreign

policy stand, led many of the rank and file to the liberal-conservatism of Wendell Willkie.

Willkie's liberalism manifested itself in his rather vocal support of much of the New Deal's reform legislation and his endorsement of the President's policy of aid to the Allies as the nation's first line of defense against totalitarianism. These liberal stands did not make Willkie a spokesman for American liberalism, for in his political philosophy existed a belief in the laissez-faire approach to the relationship of government to business, of government to the individual. Willkie opposed government regulation of business and of a citizen's total life; he condemned the administration's severe taxation and vast spending programs, declaring that they had the effect of restricting America's industrial capacity. This liberal-conservatism attracted the rank and file because it represented a logical and reasonable approach to the problems facing the nation in the Spring of 1940; such an approach was needed to attract the independent vote, needed to capture the White House.

The conversion of the rank and file was only one step in the nomination of Wendell Willkie; for the nomination rested not with the rank and file, but with the delegates to the convention. The defection of this Republican body to the Willkie cause resulted from frustration over the state of the international situation, the fear of facing Roosevelt during a

crisis, and the indecision resulting from the change in the requirements of a winning candidate. The Willkie strategy of exposing the delegates to his program and of demonstrating the strength of the Willkie appeal among the rank and file effected the gradual defection from the dynamic Dewey and the tactical Taft, promulgating a race to get on the Willkie bandwagon.

After the nomination, a check of delegates from five states made by The Editorial Research Reports indicated that fifty per cent of the delegates switched to Willkie because of personal conversations with the candidate, while twenty per cent indicated that they had been swayed by discussions with fellow delegates.⁶ The delegates had come to the convention with confused, but open, minds. Exposure to Willkie's philosophy and popular appeal forced the delegates to recognize the fact that the peculiar circumstances of 1940 called for the nomination of a special type of candidate, a candidate who could generate popular enthusiasm. Only the conversion of the remainder of the nation's electorate separated the Republican party from regaining the reins of the national government.

⁶Barnes, op. cit., pp. 185-86.

EPILOGUE

Willkie's political philosophy of liberal-conservatism had spawned a great new movement among the rank and file of the Republican party. Enthusiastic amateurs began to take an increased interest in politics, and the Willkie crusade was born. The crusade was brought before the delegates at the convention, and the latter were swept up in the whirlwind. Enthusiasm drowned out common sense; amateurism replaced sound politics. The philosophy was to be presented to the American people as it had been to the delegates; amateurism had triumphed over professionalism at the convention, and it would do so again when introduced to the electorate. Willkie swallowed his own line, as it were, and became a crusader.

There were two factors which led Willkie to make this decision. The first was his victory over the party's professional politicians in securing the nomination. Willkie was cognizant of the power generated by the combination of his political stands and the intense enthusiasm of his supporters, the power of persuasion which had compelled the delegates to jump on his bandwagon. To Willkie this combination signified an untapped source of political strength to which he had the only key. His political philosophy in the hands of these zealots would sweep the entire nation, and all the people would see the logic and the reason of his ideas and would join his crusade.

The second factor which led Willkie to his decision was the national popularity which he had achieved immediately after his nomination. Time reported that at this critical point in the campaign Willkie had 47.1 per cent of the popular vote, and a Democrat other than Roosevelt had only 25.9 per cent.¹ After Roosevelt had been nominated by the Democratic party, Willkie led the President in six of the nine geographic sections of the country. In the South Atlantic States F.D.R. led 66.5 per cent to 16.4 per cent; in the East South Central States he led 64.8 per cent to 11.1 per cent; and in the West South Central States he led Willkie 62.8 per cent to 15.9 per cent. In the Mountain States Willkie led Roosevelt 45.1 per cent to 39.3 per cent; in the East North Central States he led 45.1 per cent to 38.8 per cent; in New England he led 47.2 per cent to 40.6 per cent; on the Pacific Coast he led 51.1 per cent to 37.0 per cent; in the Middle Atlantic States he led by an even greater margin of 52.6 per cent to 35.9 per cent; and in the West North Central States Willkie led the President 57.6 per cent to 33.1 per cent.³

The Gallup Poll indicated that as of July, 1940, if the election were to be held in August, Willkie would win with a majority in the electoral college, although he would lose to

¹"Polls," Time, 36:12, August 5, 1940.

²Ibid.

Roosevelt in the popular vote.³

Willkie's decision to embark upon a crusade to save the country from what he considered the evils of the New Deal was the fatal error of the 1940 Republican campaign. It was ironic that the very instrument which had given Willkie the nomination would also prove to be the political millstone around the neck of the candidate of his party. Willkie was a loner; he had drive and determination, but not the understanding of practical politics. He believed that the professional politicians were tainted individuals who had lost the confidence of the American people. Willkie's attempt to reform the party and to change its policies and aims during the campaign caused the party leaders to lose confidence in the candidate and contributed to the lack of unity within the party.⁴

Willkie was also suspicious of the Republican party political organization, the backbone of the party. He allowed his contempt for the party professionals to deprive his crusade of the knowledge and experience of the modern political organization.⁵

Willkie had been built up as a potential candidate by those who had been inspired by his liberal-conservatism. He

³"Willkie in the Gallup Poll," The New Republic, 103:204, August 12, 1940.

⁴Dillon, op. cit., p. 224.

⁵Henry O. Evjen, "The Willkie Campaign: An Unfortunate Chapter in Republican Leadership," The Journal of Politics, Volume 14, p. 245, 1953.

had come to the convention with little delegate strength and had been considered only a possible dark horse candidate in the event of a deadlocked convention. From this low point he emerged as the leader of his party. In achieving this position he had not relied on a large initial amount of pledged support, and he had not formed a political organization to promote his candidacy until after the convention had convened. Willkie's candidacy had been opposed by the professionals, a factor which all but killed his chances for the nomination; however, his amateur supporters had aroused public enthusiasm over the candidate's policies and programs. The Willkie crusade grew and overwhelmed the professionals at the convention. It was at this point that Willkie decided that he did not need the party, the organization, nor the professionals; he needed only the party's name and votes. In his address to the convention following the nomination Willkie declared that he hoped that "you Republicans" would help him achieve victory in the November election.

Once he had made the decision to initiate a crusade to preserve the American way of life, Willkie became a messiah, not an effective political campaigner. He believed that the American people would flock to him and that he would again emerge victorious. As he carried the crusade to the people, large crowds came to hear what he had to say. During the campaign he declared, "If I can just keep the minds of American

citizens open so they will listen to argument, keep their minds free so they won't be slaves to political bosses or to prejudice, to vague argument or to bunk, I shall be satisfied."⁶

The conditions which had prevailed at the Philadelphia convention, the defeatist attitude and the frustration over the choice of a candidate and program, were no longer present. Willkie continued to draw crowds, but they would not listen-- he had become a dead whale.

The professionals see the signs in the dice,
the signs in the cards and clouds,
Over their drinks they curse at the candidate,
a renegade enemy whose sudden cause
Was rammed down their throats; he is wrecking
their only chance.

The Dream of Business is a failing image.
Among the predictions, statistics, in the crowds,
The explosive seeds of defeat. Their deadliest fears
Run damp in their bones. More than torches by night,
More than pennons, candy, and speechmaking,
A campaign is slavery, they say,
The tiring slavery: to plan, to counsel, to control.
Above all: to carry out.

Willkie shows courage. Willkie will shout.
Forthright, alone, he speaks his mind.
But the party needed another kind--
A man who will accept support.
No benefit here of party or plan.
Joe Martin sacrificed himself, wanting a giant to fight
a giant.

--He's not a giant!
He draws his crowd.
Dead whales on flatcars draw their crowds.
Nobody votes for a dead whale.⁷

⁶"Boos and Tumult Muffle the Real Issues as Campaign Enters Its Final Month," Life, 9:23, October 14, 1940.

⁷Muriel Rukeyser, One Life, pp. 125-26.

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APPENDIX

A. SELECTION OF THE DELEGATES

STATE Demo:1094 Rep:1000	PRIMARIES		CONVENTION		COMMITTEE	
	Demo	Rep	Demo	Rep	Demo	Rep
	492	448	534	532	68	20
Alabama	22			13		
Arizona				6	6	
Arkansas					18	12
California	44	44				
Colorado			12	12		
Connecticut			16	16		
Deleware			6	6		
Florida	14			12		
Georgia				14	24	
Idaho			8	8		
Illinois	50	50	8	8		
Indiana			28	28		
Iowa			22	22		
Kansas			18	18		
Kentucky			22	22		
Louisiana				12	20	
Maine			10	13		
Maryland			16	16		
Massachusetts	34	34				
Michigan			38	38		
Minnesota			22	22		
Mississippi			18	11		
Missouri			30	30		
Montana			8	8		
Nevada			6	6		
New Hampshire	8	8				
New Jersey	32	32				
New Mexico			6	6		
New York	86	84	8			8
North Carolina			26	23		
North Dakota			8	8		
Ohio	52	52				
Oklahoma			22	22		
Oregon	10	10				
Pennsylvania	72	72				
Rhode Island			8	8		
South Carolina			16	10		
South Dakota	8	8				

Tennessee			22	18
Texas			46	26
Utah			8	8
Vermont			6	9
Virginia			22	18
Washington			16	16
West Virginia	16	16		
Wisconsin	24	24		
Wyoming			6	6
Alaska			6	3
District of Columbia	6			3
Hawaii			6	3
Puerto Rico			6	2
Philippines			-	2
Canal Zone			6	-
Virgin Islands			2	-

¹"2,094 Delegates to Go to Big Conventions; State Sessions Will Elect the Most of Them," New York Times, April 3, 1940, p. 9.

B. ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE FIRST-BALLOT VOTES

Alabama: 13 votes -- 10 claimed for Taft, 7 for Dewey.
 Arizona: 6 votes -- Doubtful. Dewey and Gannett claimed support.
 Arkansas: 12 votes -- All claimed for Taft, though Dewey expected some.
 California: 44 votes -- 18 claimed for Dewey (opponents concede only 9); 20 claimed for Taft (regarded as too high). Hoover had influence on a majority of the delegates.
 Connecticut: 16 votes -- Baldwin had the favorite son votes.
 Colorado: 12 votes -- 4 claimed for Dewey, but a solid delegation was figured to follow Governor Carr: uncommitted delegation.
 Delaware: 6 votes -- All claimed by Taft; 3 claimed for Dewey.
 Florida: 12 votes -- To be determined by state convention.
 Georgia: 14 votes -- All claimed for Taft, although some Dewey support.
 Idaho: 8 votes -- All for Dewey by instruction.
 Illinois: 58 votes -- 50 to 52 claimed for Dewey as a result of primary victory; opposition limits Dewey to 40.
 Indiana: 28 votes -- 16 to 18 claimed for Dewey; opposition estimated 16 for Taft, 6 for Dewey, 2 for Vandenberg, 2 for Willkie, and 2 uncertain.
 Iowa: 22 votes -- MacNider had favorite son vote on first ballot.
 Kansas: 18 votes -- Senator Capper had favorite son vote on first ballot.
 Kentucky: 22 votes -- Over 16 claimed for Dewey; 16 claimed for Taft; Dewey's opposition gives him no more than 4; state convention instructed the delegate-at-large to vote for Dewey.
 Louisiana: 12 votes -- Probably 10 for Taft and 2 for Dewey.
 Maine: 13 votes -- Probably be solid for Bridges on the first ballot; 1 claimed for Dewey.
 Maryland: 16 votes -- Probably all for Dewey on the first ballot as a result of his primary victory.
 Massachusetts: 34 votes -- Saltonstall or Martin predicted to receive favorite son vote; Dewey claimed 2, and opponents give him none.
 Michigan: 38 votes -- All for Vandenberg on first ballot.
 Minnesota: 22 votes -- Vote divided, with Dewey, Taft, Willkie, and Vandenberg receiving votes on the first ballot.
 Mississippi: 11 votes -- All for Taft, unless National Committeeman Perry Howard changes his mind.
 Missouri: 30 votes -- 8 to 15 votes estimated for Dewey, although some support for Taft and Willkie.
 Montana: 18 votes -- 7 to 8 for Dewey.
 Nebraska: 14 votes -- All to Dewey as a result of his primary victory.

Nevada: 6 votes -- Doubtful, with 3 claimed for Dewey.
 New Hampshire: 8 votes -- All for Bridges.
 New Jersey: 32 votes -- A maximum of 28 claimed for Dewey as a result of his primary victory; opponents concede no more than 15; Taft and Willkie support also in the state.
 New Mexico: 6 votes -- 4 claimed for Dewey.
 New York: 92 votes -- 70-75 claimed for Dewey; opponents give him below 60; impartial estimate of Dewey vote is 62 to 66; Gannett and Willkie have support in the state.
 North Carolina: 23 votes -- 12 claimed for Dewey, 18 for Taft; Dewey's opponents concede him 5.
 North Dakota: 8 votes -- All to MacNider on first ballot.
 Oklahoma: 22 votes -- State convention backed Dewey; 17 sure votes claimed by Dewey; opponents concede 10.
 Ohio: 52 votes -- All for Taft, with Bricker as second choice.
 Oregon: 10 votes -- All to McNary on the first ballot.
 Pennsylvania: 72 votes -- All to Governor James on the first ballot, making a bloc available for trading purposes; Dewey supporters hope to get 20-25 votes on the second ballot.
 Rhode Island: 8 votes -- 2 to 4 claimed for Dewey; opponents concede none; majority expected to follow the lead of Governor Vanderbilt.
 South Carolina: 10 votes -- State convention to decide.
 Tennessee: 18 votes -- Doubtful. 14 claimed for Dewey; over majority claimed for Taft; Dewey's opposition concede him no more than 4.
 Texas: 26 votes -- Doubtful or uncommitted. Hoover or Taft possibilities.
 Utah: 18 votes -- All for Dewey.
 Vermont: 9 votes -- Doubtful, probably uncommitted. Taft and Dewey hopeful; Bricker with some support in state.
 Virginia: 18 votes -- 14 claimed for Taft, 4 for Dewey; Dewey's opponents concede none.
 Washington: 16 votes -- 14 claimed for Dewey, with 2 unpledged; Dewey's opponents concede him no more than 8. May go for McNary on first ballot.
 West Virginia: 16 votes -- Taft claimed 15 and concede Dewey 1; Dewey claimed 4.
 Wisconsin: 24 votes -- All for Dewey as a result of mandatory primary.
 Wyoming: 6 votes -- 4 claimed for Dewey; opponents concede Dewey none; 4 votes for Dewey likely.
 Territories, Territorial possessions, and District of Columbia: 13 votes: Not known.²

²James A. Hagerty, "First-Vote Choice of Dewey Is Found Unlikely in Survey," New York Times, June 3, 1940, p. 1.

C. SUMMARIZATION OF THE 1940 REPUBLICAN PLATFORM¹

The platform began with the accusations that the New Deal had deliberately fanned the flames of class hatred; attempted to place the judiciary under executive domination; made impossible the normal friendly relations between employers and employees; spent billions of dollars, yet left the country unprepared to resist foreign attack; doubled the national debt and imposed taxes where they did the most harm; and imposed on the people a regimentation which deprived the individual of his freedom.

National Defense. The plank opened with the statement that the Republican party was firmly opposed to involving the United States in foreign wars and stressed the losses of the earlier World War. The plank then declared that the party stood for Americanism, preparedness, and peace and charged that the New Deal had to take full responsibility for the unprepared state of the nation and consequent danger of our involvement in war. The G.O.P. pledged to rebuild national defenses so that the United States could not only defend its own soil, but uphold the Monroe Doctrine as well. The plank stated that the party would, in the meantime, support the belated efforts of the New Deal to build up the defense system; however, the party would continue to condemn all Executive acts and proceedings

¹New York Times, June 27, 1940, pp. 1,5.

which might lead to war without the authorization of Congress. The plank also pledged the extension to all peoples fighting for liberty of such aid as would not be in violation of international law or inconsistent with the requirements of our own national defense.

Re-employment. This plank charged that the New Deal had failed to solve the problem of unemployment and pledged the Republican party to recreate opportunity for the nation's youth and to put the millions of unemployed back to work in private industry, business, and agriculture. The plank also declared that the restriction holding back the wheels of individual enterprise would be eliminated.

Relief and Social Security. These planks called for the removal of waste, discrimination, and politics from the relief programs through administration by the States with Federal grants-in-aid on a fair and non-political basis. The party promised the extension of necessary old-age benefits on a pay-as-you-go basis to the extent that the revenues raised for that purpose would permit and favored the extension of the unemployment compensation to those groups and classes not presently included. The administration of the program, the plank advocated, should rest with the States.

Labor Relations. This plank opened with the statement that the Republican party had always protected the American worker and pledged the party to maintain labor's right of free

organization and collective bargaining. The plank also called for the amending of the National Labor Relations Act in fairness to employers and all groups of employees so as to provide the freedom for, and orderliness in, self-organization and collective bargaining.

Agriculture. In this rather lengthy plank the G.O.P. promised to effect permanent and temporary government policies to establish and maintain an equitable balance between labor, industry, and agriculture by expanding industrial and business activity, eliminating unemployment, and lowering production costs--thereby creating increased consumer buying power for agricultural products. Until the balance was reached the party would continue to support benefit payments based on a soil conservation program administered, as far as possible, by the farmers themselves. The plank pledged to support incentive payments to encourage production, a cooperative system of adequate farm credit supervised by an independent government agency, a system of government re-financing of the heavy Federal farm debt load through an agency segregated from commodity credit, a national land use program for Federal acquisition of nonproductive farm lands, tariff protection for farm products, an orderly development of reclamation and irrigation projects, and stabilization of agricultural income through intelligent management of accumulated surpluses.

Tariff and Reciprocal Trade. This plank called for

tariff protection for agriculture, labor, and industry as being essential to the nation's standard of living and stated that the measure of protection would be determined by scientific methods with due regard to the interest of the consumer. The plank also condemned the manner in which the New Deal's reciprocal trade treaties were put into effect without adequate hearings, with undue haste, without proper consideration of the nation's domestic producers, and without Congressional approval. The Republicans declared that they would correct the stated defects.

Money and Jobs and Idle Money. In these planks the Republican party declared that the Congress should reclaim its constitutional powers over money and withdraw the President's arbitrary authority to manipulate the currency, that the Thomas Inflation Amendment of 1933 and the Silver Purchase Act of 1934 should be repealed, that it was possible to keep the securities market clean without paralyzing it, and that to get the billions of idle dollars and millions of idle men back to work and to promote national defense the Securities Act should be revised and the policies of the commission changed to encourage the flow of private capital into industry.

Taxation, Public Credit, and Public Spending. The platform condemned the New Deal tax structure and pledged the party to revise the tax system and remove those practices which had impeded recovery and apply policies which would stimulate enterprise. The plank added that the taxing power would not

be used as an instrument of punishment or to secure objectives not otherwise obtainable under existing law. The platform criticized the twenty-nine billion dollar increase in the national debt resulting from the New Deal's borrowing and promised to conserve the public credit for all essential purposes by levying taxation sufficient to cover all necessary civil expenditures, a substantial part of the defense cost, and the interest and retirement of the national debt. The plank on public spending condemned the New Deal's deficit spending policies and declared that private enterprise, if allowed to go to work, could rapidly increase the wealth, income, and standard of living of all the people.

Equal Rights, Negro, Un-American Activities, and Free Speech. In these related planks the Republican party pledged itself to support a Congressional amendment providing for equal rights for men and women; to work to give the Negro a square deal in the economic and political life of the nation and to promote legislation to curb mob violence; to get rid of "Fifth-columnists" who were appointed to positions of trust in the National Government by the New Deal; and to support the application of free press and free speech principles to the radio and to revoke licences only when, after public hearings, due cause for cancellation was shown.

Immigration, Veterans, Indians, and Hawaii. In These four planks the Republican party promised to enforce all laws

controlling immigration, in addition to recommending that all aliens who sought to change the American form of government by force and violence be deported; to support adequate compensation and care for veterans disabled in the service of the country, and for their widows, orphans, and dependents; and to effect an immediate and final settlement of all Indian claims between the government and the Indian citizenship of the nation. The platform declared that Hawaii was entitled to the fullest measure of home rule and to equality with the States in the rights of her citizens and in the application of the nation's laws.

Government and Business, Monopoly, and Government Competition. In these three related planks the platform pledged the party to regulate business only so as to protect the consumer, employee, and investor and without restricting the production of more and better goods at low prices; to enforce anti-trust legislation without prejudice of discrimination and without the use or threatened use of criminal indictments to obtain through consent decrees objectives not contemplated by law; and to reduce to the minimum Federal competition with business, continuing only those enterprises whose maintenance is clearly in the public interest.

Small Business, Stock and Commodity Exchanges, and Insurance. The Republican platform condemned the New Deal's policy of interference and arbitrary regulation of business and promised to encourage the small businessman by removing unnec-

essary bureaucratic regulations and interference. The platform also stated that the party favored regulation of stock and commodity exchanges, but that they should be accorded the fullest measure of self-control consistent with the discharge of their public trust and the prevention of abuse. The insurance plank condemned the New Deal for its attempt to destroy the confidence of the people in private insurance companies and declared that the regulation of insurance should continue to fall to the states.

Government Reorganization and the Third Term. The platform pledged the G.O.P. to extend the merit system to all non-policy-forming positions, to enact legislation to standardize and simplify quasi-judicial and administrative agencies, and to insure that the balance of powers principle guide the policies affecting the organization and operation of our form of government. The platform also declared that the Republican party, to insure against the overthrow of the American form of government, favored an amendment to the Constitution providing that no person could serve more than two terms as President.

The platform closed with the statement that the nominee, by accepting the nomination, was honor bound to be true to the principles and program set down in the platform.