

LOOKING AT WASHINGTON

by Hugo S. Sims, Washington Correspondent

1944 Campaign Underway. F. D. R. And Willkie Again? Prophecies Are Premature.

The presidential campaign of 1944 is already engaging the attention of practical politicians, and, despite our preoccupation with war, evidence accumulates that the battle for the presidency has commenced.

In appraising the political situation in this country, nearly twenty months in advance of the election date, everything hinges on the war situation. What the voters will do in November, 1944, will depend, to a large extent, upon whether the United States is still engaged in a bitter battle with the Axis powers.

The majority of military experts and high-ranking officials take it for granted that the nation will be at war with Japan, even if we have successfully concluded our struggle against Germany and Italy in Europe. The majority of them, perhaps, believe that our war in Europe will, if we are lucky, be just over and the defeat of Japan will be in the future.

Under these circumstances, it is taken for granted that the Democrats will renominate President Roosevelt for a fourth term. Already party leaders have openly declared for his reelection, some of them have discussed the matter with the President and one labor organization has come out for his re-election.

The President, it may be safely assumed, will make no early statement as to a fourth term. In fact, he is not expected to be more than a receptive candidate for the nomination, although Democratic leaders take it for granted that he will respond to the call if the national emergency continues.

Following the elections of last November, which resulted in considerable Republican gains, there developed in Congress a spirit of insurgency against the President's leadership. The attitude developed beyond reason however, and recently there has been, in the opinion of this writer, a strong reaction in favor of the President.

Some alert opponents of the Chief Executive have recognized this trend and are now insisting that criticism of the President should be limited to essentials and based upon fundamental principles rather than in the captious, critical and carping attitude of the recent past.

The Republican Party strongly stimulated by the results of last year's election, now exhibits through its leadership a confidence that in 1944 the people will turn to the G. O. P. again. Naturally, one of the first necessities is to determine upon a candidate who will make a run against the President, if he comes up for a fourth term.

There is talk of Governor Bricker, Governor Stassen and Wendell Willkie and while no observer can do more than guess who has the inside track, it is our opinion that Mr.

Willkie is making progress toward another nomination by the Republican Party.

The defeated candidate of 1940 has been active since the election, making speeches plainly designed to strengthen himself with certain elements. Willkie's demand for a second front and his appearance as counsel for a communist in New York have done him no harm with labor and the so-called radical fringe. His outspoken criticism of the anti-British section of the population and his repeated emphasis upon Negro rights is calculated to do the same thing for him among the voters of this race.

The political leaders of both parties are keeping their eyes open for possible schisms in their ranks. The threat of division lies before both parties. Repeated rumors of dissatisfaction upon the part of Southern Democrats is based upon something more than fancy, and the nomination of an internationalist by the Republicans will give the Isolationist group something to think about.

After the last World War there was a strong nationalist and isolationist reaction in the United States. This sentiment may be potent in the election next year but the present prospect is that the course of the war will probably postpone this reaction. Even if the fighting is over, the business of peace-making will be underway. The nature and consequences of the peace established will hardly be apparent by the day of election.

There is the possibility that if the President runs and the Republicans nominate Willkie or some other man of pronounced international views, the Isolationists of the country will revolt. It is just as likely that the Democrats, in the event that the President is not renominated, will not be able to find a candidate acceptable to its more or less loosely-knit majority.

Again the probability exists that both parties will nominate a candidate of the reactionary type in which event, there will undoubtedly arise a third party to carry the liberal banner.

At this time, however, regardless of how we look at the forthcoming presidential election, the figure of President Roosevelt dominates the presidential scene. While he is subjected to much criticism, there can be little doubt of his tremendous personal popularity, of his ability to drag out millions of voters who would not otherwise cast their ballot.

The President continues to be something of a phenomenon in American political history, as his third term in office evidences, and until he declares himself, or events reveal his relationship to the coming election, most political prophecies and attempts to size up the situation are

premature.

War Secrecy Necessary. Leaders Know The Facts. Must Plan For Future.

The wars in which the United States is now engaged have been variously described as wars of production, of mobilization and of transportation, but what the people of this country should definitely understand is that they are wars of fighting.

The mobilization of men, the production of materials and the transportation of both across the oceans of the world represent preliminary steps in the bloody clash of battle. The successful accomplishment of mobilization, production and transportation is essential if our sailors and soldiers are to have a fair chance against their powerful enemies.

Those of us who are on the home front are apt to become confused with the verbal battles which rage around the rationing of foods, the allocation of manpower, the hours of labor and the profits of industry. These questions are insignificant compared with the dangers faced by our fighting men now on the fronts, and to be faced by thousands of others who will come into contact with the enemy.

It is impossible for the writer to determine the number of men to be drafted into our armies, the quantity of beans that should be taken from civilian consumption for the use of our fighting men and our Allies, the number of tanks, guns or planes that should be constructed for the use of our forces, or to estimate the available shipping that will be ready for the transportation of men and materials later in 1943 or 1944.

We doubt if the average American has sufficient information to pass on these questions. They must be left to the decision of military and naval officers, trained for the purpose of protecting this nation in the event of war and their decisions should be upheld.

While we have great respect for Congress, we doubt if a committee is fitted to pass on these questions, which, if they come up for congressional action, will be subject to the pressure which results from mass emotions and the various interests affected.

There is certainly no reason to believe that General Marshall, Admiral King, and the President, together with their aides and advisers, have guessed at the needs of the nation in order to win the war.

The program advanced by our military leaders has been subjected to careful study and represents the considered judgment of the best available experts of the nation. They must allow for certain contingencies and be prepared to meet unexpected disaster, as well as to take advantage of fortunate opportunities that may be presented during the course of the war.

It is utterly impossible for our leaders to take the people of this country into their full confidence and to release the details of our military preparations. Obviously, it would be of tremendous value to the Axis to discover how many planes, guns, ships and tanks we expected to have in the fighting zones by August. Our enemies would like to know the exact extent of our ship losses to U-boats and the amount of transportation that is becoming available to the service of supply.

The Axis would be delighted to believe that the people of this country have lost confidence in their leaders and that the considered judgment of expert military and naval men is being disregarded. Nothing would be more pleasing to Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito.

Because the writer does not know these facts, and because the newspapers and radios do not proclaim them, does not mean that responsible officials are not fully cognizant of the complete war picture, that they do not have a good idea of the strength of our enemies or that they do not have a well-developed plan to utilize the forces and power of this country to secure victory.

Participation In AAA Program Gains In '42

More North Carolina farmers took part in the 1942 farm program of the Agricultural Adjustment Agency than in any previous program, according to figures supplied by H. A. Patten, State AAA executive assistant at State College.

Records at the State AAA Office, he said, show that of 240,404 farm operators in the State last year, 228,240 participated in the AAA program. A total of 213,045 farmers participated in the 1941 program.

Payments to North Carolina farmers for carrying out approved soil-building practices and crop adjustment measures amounted to \$12,600,-

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883 under the 1942 program, as compared with more than \$14,000,000 in the previous year.

"Reductions in total 1942 program payments were due to automatic elimination of parity payments because of increased market prices, and changes made in the program to meet wartime conditions," Patten said. "This total payment is made up of maximum payments which may be earned on any farm cooperating in

the program."

Use of ground limestone as a soil-building material last year amounted to 479,826 tons, 329,926 tons of which were obtained through the AAA as a grant-of-aid material in lieu of conservation payments. Application of phosphate materials amounted to 41,843 tons last year as compared with 24,478 tons under the 1941 program.

Patten said that in a canvass now being conducted in every county of

the State, 208,047 farmers already have indicated their intention to participate in the 1943 program.

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