

Prespectives By Yardley

Jonathan Yardley

(This is the fifth in a series of nine articles which will attempt to present a reasonably objective view of the leading aspirants for the presidency in the forthcoming election. The purpose of these articles is to inform, not to sway. If the author's opinions should sneak in, the reader is asked to remember that he is only mortal.)

(Further expositions on these men may be found in Eric Sevareid's excellent collection Candidates 1960, published by Basic Books, from which the author has gleaned some of the facts contained in the series.)

Stuart Symington

An Ounce Of Defense Is Worth . . .



JONATHAN YARDLEY



STUART SYMINGTON

Stuart Symington is a highly successful businessman, a liberal, and a Democrat. If these facets of his make-up do not seem to jibe they are only exterior indications of the life of a man who has gone from one surprise to the next.

Symington was born in the summer of 1901 on the campus of Amherst College, where his father taught Romance Languages. A quiet man, William Stuart Symington was fired from the college because he became involved in an imbroglio with a janitor who had been faithful in supplying heat to the buildings during the frigid Massachusetts winters. The college seemed to feel it needed the janitor more. The family then moved to Baltimore, via law training in New York for the senior member, and soon became spasmodically prosperous while Dr. Symington followed the pursuit of county judge.

Stuart enlisted in the army in 1917 but never got overseas. He was mustered out at the age of 18 as a second lieutenant. In 1919 Symington entered Yale by virtue of a loan and promptly became a popular, successful student who managed, somehow, to afford to become a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon.

In 1921 Symington attended a Washington Charity Ball and met beautiful, young, rich Evelyn Wadsworth, daughter of Senator James Wadsworth. They fell in love and were married at Washington in 1924. Since their marriage the charming Mrs. Symington has been at one time a concert singer who received Hollywood offers, and at all times a helpful, untiring mate to an inexhaustible man.

Upon his graduation from Yale (he did not actually receive a diploma, since he had a mathematics deficiency) Symington entered a plant of the T. H.

Symington Co., manufacturers of railroad equipment, and worked as a manual laborer. He took correspondence courses and mastered engineering and metallurgy. He rapidly rose to the presidency of the clay products plant and then, thanks to a half million dollar loan from rich uncles, bought out the Colonial Radio Corporation; he managed to acquire for Colonial the Sears, Roebuck contract, which is credited by Edward P. Morgan as pulling the company through the depression.

From Colonial, Symington moved to Rustless Iron & Steel, which he rescued from financial dependency; in 1933, he was lured to St. Louis to doctor the ailing Emerson Electric Manufacturing Company. In the course of this association he solved an intense labor difficulty with a Communist-led union and proved himself a friend of labor in general.

At the end of World War II Symington was called to Washington by President Harry Truman to head the Surplus Property Administration. The job was trying and difficult, since there was great confusion in the capital and much surplus to be disposed of. He remained in the job for six months, and did not distinguish himself. Feeling in Washington seemed to be that he had made the most out of an impossible job.

In 1946 Symington entered the really decisive phase of his career. He was made Assistant Secretary of War for Air. He immediately pressed full strength for a separate Air Force, expressing time and again his belief that air power would be the best and the only defense in the future. In 1947 the Department of the Air Force was created and Symington was made its head. Many people give him practically sole credit for the formation of the United States Air Force as we know it today — whether this is true or not, his influence was one of great and fruitful power.

As Secretary of the Air Force Symington became known for what his critics felt to be a "preventive war" desire. They felt he had itchy fingers and might push the panic button because he abhorred such lack of qualification the need for a strong American defense. Symington later said that he had and has no desire to wage preventive war on any scale, but prefers to have a strong defense which would eliminate the possibility of war.

Among the planks which Symington strove for in his Air Force capacity were: increased budget spending to allow the Air Force to increase what he felt was a drastically inadequate defense system; full and complete cooperation between the branches of the service which would result in severe cuts in what was obviously a plethora of wasted money; unrelenting efforts to keep ahead of the Soviets. In 1950 he resigned because of defense cuts which he felt were unduly severe. Some think that had these cuts not been made the entire Korean action might have been avoided.

Although Truman and Symington disagreed on many points, the former respected the drive and organizational ability of his fellow Missourian and asked him in 1950 to remain in Washington as head of the National Securities Resources Board. He proved an amazingly able financial advisor. When he came into conflict with Charles E. Wilson, head of the office of Defense Mobilization, he decided to get out, but was quickly made head of the scandal-ridden Reconstruction Finance Corporation. He went to work immediately and cleaned out the evil, while raising the good. He fired a friend of the President's, though, and retired in 1952.

Almost as soon as he got home he was approached by friends to run for the Senate seat long held by Republican James Kem. Deciding to do so, he campaigned against almost insurmountable odds and won by a margin of over 150,000. In 1953 he went to the United States Senate, never before having served his people in an elective office. He was green, and he knew it.

While in the Senate Symington, like many other candidates for the 1960 nominations, came into close contact with the ebullient Joe McCarthy. He sat on the McCarthy Committee and was highly indignant about the manner in which the investigations were conducted—he sympathized with the purpose but not with the concept of one man investigating teams. He was most disturbed by the Senator's attacks upon the Armed Services, but was bewildered by his methods and legislatively incapable of battling him.

Within the Senate he is known as a forceful liberal Democrat with a mania for defense. He has been largely unsuccessful in gaining the defense improvements he feels are so necessary, but he has made a great mark upon the nation's conscience with his incredible knowledge of military matters. It has appeared, in a number of instances, that he knows more about defense problems and intelligence than anyone in the Department of Defense, which has been at times, needless to say, most embarrassing for the Administration and its underlings.

Although Symington was never considered a presidential candidate in 1956, polls taken by leading magazines and surveys have shown him to be one of the three leaders for the nomination this summer. Adlai E. Stevenson and John F. Kennedy being the other two. At present he is making an obvious move to get the nomination and has been going forward with considerable success. He is popular in the South, with labor, with business, and within the elite of his own party.

The two most striking aspects of Symington's personality are his organizational ability and his preoccupation with defense. His business past shows only too clearly that he is more than capable of expedient organization and action, and his record in the Senate and in Truman's administration makes it clear that he is concerned with and aware of the problems of national defense. It is highly possible that he is more fully aware of the military problems facing the nation than any of the other candidates.

Symington is a handsome, tactful man who has managed to transport himself between strata of society with ease and grace. He has an attractive wife and two married sons with equally attractive families. In many ways he is the perfect candidate, from the professional politician's point of view, because he has no black marks on his record which cannot easily be overcome. If he is nominated by the party, however, it will be as the result of a deadlock, probably between Stevenson and Kennedy, and this would weaken his chances of achieving victory.

Reader's Repository

To the editor:

DON'T SIGN A BLANK CHECK

On Tuesday the students of the University of North Carolina will have the opportunity to adopt or reject four constitutional amendments concerning the Judiciary Branch of Student Government. I would urge that the voters look closely at these amendments before making their decision.

While the first and third of these proposals would place an added burden on the Attorney General's staff, I nevertheless favor the random selection of jurors and believe that the defense should have the right to summon witnesses and obtain evidence. However, I can in no way endorse the second amendment, due to the undignified and nebulous designation of an "active" defense counsel. At the present time, the counsel for defense enjoys the same inquisitorial privileges as council members; therefore, I feel that clarification is needed of the "active" counsel.

Due to the necessary brevity of this letter, I would like to concern myself with the fourth of these amendments. The passage of which would empower the Legislature to set up districts in which council members would be elected. I feel that this proposal is ridiculous and quite incongruous with the allusions made to "rights" and "Anglo-Saxon heritage" which color the wherewithal of this bill. It seems to me that the structure of our democracy is built on separation of powers. The right of a legislature to have complete freedom in determining "some form of geographical apportionment" seems quite incongruous with our governmental structure. The wording of this amendment typifies the cloudy nature of its proposal.

Do we want our council members elected from districts? I think not. The men and women who form our judiciary determine the punishment for Honor Code and Campus Code violations. I should hope that the University would be afforded the services of the most capable students on these councils. Whether the most qualified persons be dormitory, fraternity, or sorority residents, I firmly believe they should be allowed to hold a council seat. I have been told that there would be "able" people in each district. I don't want an "able" person considering my suspension or probation. I want the most mature, the most capable, and the most qualified. It takes little imagination to realize that some dormitories have more, talented residents than others — just as some fraternities and sororities do.

In addition to the political emphasis that the council elections might assume, it would certainly be unfortunate to sacrifice our councils on the altar of mediocrity by the setting up of unknown judiciary districts. It is critical that these amendments be considered carefully, in order that a radical legislature not be given a "blank check" for the basic alteration of our judiciary.

George Grayson
Men's Honor Council

Editor:

Re your January 9 editorial: "Sterling Hayden is our brother. We reach out to him — in his loneliness and our guilt. We reach out to hold his hand in the middle of the American night."

Really Mr. Young, holding hands with a grown man in the dark is hardly something a reputable young editor should be doing.

Guiltily yours,
Publicus

"Never Mind The Fine Print. Now, Over Here—"



Editor's Corner

(Continued From Page 1)

This is a growing campus with a shrinking Honor System. It is shrinking because those who live under it are ignorant of that for which it proclaims to stand. Each of us must live under the system and be responsible to it; yet, there are those who will deny our right to participate. And without participation, a system such as ours will crumble in a heap. Participation breeds knowledge, and knowledge breeds understanding. Without all of these, the secretive aura which surrounds judicial proceedings becomes in reality the exclusive property of a few.

The amendments before you today will create understanding, knowledge and participation. They will remove the Honor System from the few and return it to the rightful owners, the many. Attending this University is a privilege. Living under its laws is an obligation. Yet, if we can't participate in these decisions, we shouldn't be forced to live under them.

There are many who will tell you it is better to keep the Honor System under the control of those who now have it, the interested ones. What kind of interest is shown on the part of individuals when an entire fraternity pledge class is marched up to the Student Government offices to sign up for the Jury?

Don't listen to those who praise the system as it is and call for the status quo. The plain truth of the matter is that the status quo just isn't good enough.

Vote yes, vote yes, vote yes, vote yes. Vote yes on each measure and give the Honor System back to the students.

Letters

Mr. Nichols:

In your letter which appeared in Saturday's edition of the DTH, you stated that a "judicial body should be composed of the most qualified students . . ." Do you seriously contend that the election of the most qualified individuals is best accomplished by forcing candidates for judicial positions to campaign on a near-campus-wide basis? How many candidates for these important positions are given an opportunity to discuss their qualifications with the voting public?

I would say that there are a very few who are able to contact more than a negligible number of potential voters. How many voters on this campus are sufficiently familiar with the candidates for Honor Council and Student Council to cast intelligent ballots?

Should the proposed amendments pass, candidates for judicial positions will have considerably smaller areas in which to campaign; however, in all probability, a judicial district would be comprised of about a thousand students who would elect several of their own number to each of the appropriate judicial councils. A district of this size will assure qualified candidates and also will give these candidates an opportunity to contact a much larger percentage of the voters.

The Student Legislature presently has the power to enact legislation to provide for judicial districts; however, should this amendment pass, the principle of a geographically apportioned campus judiciary will be inserted and therefore preserved in the Student Constitution.

I also urge the student body to consider the proposed amendment carefully, and upon doing so I feel confident that it will vote "yes" in today's referendum.

Hank Patterson

By Kelly

Editor: I just want to say I wish them smart letters in the student legislature would quit trying to make the honor council give more rights to people who get brought up before it. Everybody knows that anyone who's called up by the honor council is guilty anyway — this new bill will just fix things to their kin git out of being punished. The communists in the student legislature ought to be got rid of for trying to undermine our honor code.

John D. Whuppe

P. S. Vote against them honor council reforms. They ain't democratic.

Second Prize In Essay Contest

James W. Roberts

WHAT IS WRONG WITH AMERICA

It seems to me that what is wrong with America is the well-meant nambly-pamblyism, seen everywhere in public life, that tries to slide over all life's conflicts. This exaggerated fear of offending any identifiable group or institution, of being in any way "controversial", has come to dominate the media of mass communications on which we must now depend so heavily for our image of ourselves and our information about the world. We used to laugh at Hollywood for this sort of terror of saying something controversial, but it doesn't seem so harmless and funny now that television has become such an important factor in the national consciousness. An example of what I mean is something almost all of us have experienced: the way they turn the camera at a football game away from the field when there is an injury or a scuffle between the players. Somebody, you see, has decided that the public must be spared such distressing sights. The good-guys must not merely win, but must look like a bunch of Jack Armstrongs doing it. The most ridiculous example of this is the farce of television wrestling. Pray do not think, however, that this process of substituting fantasy for the sharpness of reality is confined to such exercises of low comic idiocy as the latter. The same thing is at work when the powers that be decide the public can't tolerate honest competition on the quiz program, but must instead be presented with a fairy tale in which

its own supposed self-image wins the prize.

The debasement of some of the public amusements would be unimportant, were it not that the principle on which they are debased unfortunately extends into all areas of public life, with the result that, at a time when the traditional values of our society need serious and open examination, it is almost impossible to get this in the mass communications media. It is corrupting to public life and private morals when it is held that the unfiltered truth is too distasteful to be generally broadcast, that reality must be made palatable, together with the companion notion that there are no real, irreducible differences between ourselves as members of a plural society. There are, in fact, such differences. And reality is quite often unpleasant. And anyone who pretends otherwise and tries to spoon-feed us with a lot of intellectual pabulum that slurs over real differences and blunts reality is depriving us of a part of our birthright, the right as moral free agents to base the crucial decisions of our lives on full, fair, and honest evidence.

What one can do is to refuse to passively tolerate it. One should not spare ridicule, and at every opportunity must insist that the only acceptable standard in the public arena is unmitigated truth. If enough of us follow this rule we will have a very real effect on the public processes, for we should remember that those responsible for the present state of affairs are at root frightened people, not aggressively determined ones. I am aware that it is highly unoriginal to say that the solution to what ails us is to purify our own selves, but I can see no other answer.

Happy New Year

- 1. The nation is at war.
- 2. The nation is losing the war badly.
- 3. The nation must exert a vastly greater effort

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