

The Opposition Looks for Leaders

BY OLIVER MCKEE, JR.

Republicans, venturing out of their political dug-outs since the air mail affair, begin thinking seriously of 1936

TIME: June, 1936. Place: a Mid-Western city. Guest artists: the mayor of the city, Will Rogers for his wisecracks, press agents and tooters for favorite sons, and orators chosen for their ability to make the eagle scream—not the Blue species—and to hit the key of 100 per cent Americanism. Object: selection of a Republican candidate for President of the United States. Though the actors and their parts have yet to be assigned, the drama, in its scenes and setting is easily envisaged. You can't kill a party that polled 16,000,000 votes in 1932. Almost as certainly as that the sun will set tomorrow, G.O.P. delegates and alternates, a thousand or more men and women, with their retainers, camp-followers, job-hunters, and so on, in less than two years, will troop into their convention city, to pick their candidates and write a platform, sending their salesmen immediately into the field thereafter to persuade the voters of America, through all the arts of political cajolery and ballyhoo, to give Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Dealers the gate.

The American people choose few but second-rate men for their Presidents, James Bryce tells us in his *American Commonwealth*, and other students of

our politics are in substantial agreement with him. Good times and the full dinner pail have carried the G.O.P. to victory more than once since the Civil War under a standard-bearer whom no amount of press-agenting could translate into a Lincoln. Assuming that Franklin D. Roosevelt is the Democratic candidate in 1936, that economic improvement continues, and that a public notoriously fickle in its loyalties does not withdraw the favor which Mr. Roosevelt has enjoyed to so extraordinary a degree, Republicans face a tough job two years hence. A second-rater may have served their purposes in more than one past campaign, but if present signs are read aright, he will not turn the trick in 1936. For leadership is the big problem. We find no commanding figures in the ranks of the G.O.P., no leader, as yet, who stands out as a worthy foe for Franklin D. Roosevelt in a bid for the votes of Main Street and those of the "plain people."

II

Presidential elections are won and lost on issues of the moment. Candidates must be picked to fit the popular psychology and mood of the hour. It was the vote against the depression that

sent Herbert C. Hoover back to Palo Alto, and Mr. Roosevelt from 1932 down to the present has cut his cloth to fit the liberalism of the times, directing, in response to a popular demand, the changes in the social order, badly creaking under the impact of the hurricane which descended on the country in 1929. In mid-1934 the trend of popular psychology in 1936 is any man's guess. If the patient has a relapse, if there is no shrinking in the army of the idle, the political pendulum may move farther to the Left. If conditions continue to improve, and if the regimentation and control policies of the New Deal prove irritating enough to create a backfire against its political philosophy, in retrospect the Lexington resolves of 1934, presented to Congress as a protest of the Massachusetts townsfolk against the expansion of Federal bureaucracy and alleged violations of liberty, may prove as significant, historically, as the revolt of the forebears of these same townsmen on the eve of the American Revolution. Again, too, if a reaction against the New Deal develops during the next two years, we have no means of telling exactly where the bed of the main stream of revolt will lie. Focal points of irritation may be taxes, the NRA, the AAA, or the "insolence of office" displayed by the rapidly expanding Federal bureaucracy. The Republican aspirant who strikes the correct popular key, the leader who catches the ear of the people on the issue which at the moment agitates in the public mind, may steal a march on other candidates for the nomination—provided of course his candidacy measures up to geographical specifications. Then, too, something will depend on the extent of the swing back to the Right, if the political cycle moves in that direction. A full swing to the

Right will favor the selection of a Republican conservative of the Calvin Coolidge type. If the swing reaches only the half-way mark, nomination of a middle-of-the-road man will be in order—one who does not propose to discard the New Deal, hook, line and sinker.

Republican shock troops have emerged from their dug-outs during the past few months, as the zero hour for the congressional campaigns of 1934 approaches. During Mr. Roosevelt's honeymoon, a few G.O.P. skirmishers occupied the front lines, but the party leaders as a whole acquiesced in most of the requests of the Administration for emergency legislation. The cancellation of the air mail contracts was the signal for raids in force on the enemy lines, and the G.O.P. raiders threw a real scare into the Administration by revealing some weak points in its defenses. Detached observers in Washington see in the cancellation of the air mail contracts, and the spanking administered to Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, the first major blunder of the Roosevelt Administration, a blunder all the more conspicuous because up to that time, Mr. Roosevelt had been hitting par on practically every hole. Cancellation of the air mail contracts, and the loss of life among the gallant army flyers gave the Administration anything but a good press, and what is more, from the Republican vantage point, it created in the public mind the impression that after all Mr. Roosevelt was not infallible, and that because of this striking so high-handedly against commercial aviation other industries had good reason to fear the New Deal controls.

The Brain Trust inquiry by the Bulwinkle committee, following the charges of Dr. William A. Wirt, the Hoosier schoolmaster, gave the G.O.P.

another opening. The inquiry itself was a fiasco, an opera bouffe performance that gave the capital some of its best laughs of the year. Behind the façade of burlesque, the investigation had a real significance, in disclosing for the first time that a popular mistrust existed as to the purposes and final objectives of the Administration and its Brain Trust. A counter attack sent the New Deal's heaviest artillery into action, to assure the public that the changes taking place in the social order are merely the normal process of evolution, not revolution. But no final answer has been given to the questions implied in the Wirt inquiry, and during the late spring the Republicans have become bolder, striking at the Roosevelt policies over a wide front. In brief, as we enter the summer of 1934, Mr. Roosevelt and his policies face a real challenge. How serious that challenge is, only time can tell.

III

Though no one speaks as yet with the accent of ecumenical authority for the 16,000,000 Republicans who voted for Herbert C. Hoover in November, 1932, this is not because the Republican opposition has been silent. Far from it. There are many voices in its chorus, pitched in varying keys. Republican governors are almost as scarce as hen's teeth, and in House and Senate the G.O.P. is represented by only a fraction of its former strength. Yet many Republicans even now are known to have their eye on the 1936 Presidential nomination. On the list are at least half-a-dozen who measure up, in political ability and administrative experience, with the average of the men nominated for the Presidency during the past half century by either party.

Let us turn for a moment to those Re-

publicans who during the party's exile in the wilderness, have essayed the rôle of guide and mentor. The list logically begins with Ogden Mills of New York, Hoover's Secretary of the Treasury, a man whose abilities even the Frankfurter Brain Trust boys from the Harvard Law School will concede. An aggressive fighter, able executive, a demon for work, Mr. Mills, both in the House, where he was a member of the Ways and Means Committee, and in the Treasury, proved himself one of the most capable public servants of our day. He was the number one assistant in Hoover's fight against the disintegrating forces of the depression, and contributed much to the strategy of that campaign. Since the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mills has been one of the most outspoken of his critics, laying down his heaviest fires on the Roosevelt monetary policies. If sound money is the big issue two years hence, Mills, as the man who has most pointedly challenged the Roosevelt monetary policies, will have strong support for the Presidential nomination. But hard-boiled political realists will see two obstacles to his nomination, either of which alone would probably be formidable enough to keep him from it. First, he is too closely identified with the Hoover policies—many regard him as the heir-apparent of the Hooverites—to make him acceptable to the large number of Republicans who are insisting on a complete new deal for the G.O.P. Second, as a man of vast inherited wealth, he is too close to big business and finance to satisfy those who want a standard-bearer without a Wall Street tag. For the "money power" is still anathema to Main Street, and Republican chiefs, in picking their standard-bearer, must bear in mind the popular prejudices of the

hour. These are big handicaps which Mills faces, and the realist must reckon with them. Realities of the same kind have more than once in the past stood in the way of the nomination by both major parties of their ablest men.

IV

The Senate offers three possibilities for the Republican Presidential nomination, with one or two others, under certain conditions, conceded an outside chance. The first of the three is Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan. Of all those who have figured in the 1936 discussions up to date, the Michigan Senator seems to have the most elements of political availability. He has refrained from making any frontal assault on the New Deal, adroitly placing his bets on both horses. He has tendered enough support to the New Deal to keep himself *persona grata* to its friends, without allying himself with La Follette, Cutting, Johnson and Norris. His status as a regular Republican is unchallenged. Geographically Vandenberg hails from the proper part of the country. It would be better if Ohio had sent him to the Senate, but Michigan is good enough. An easy mixer, with a sense of humor, not the least bit high-hat, invariably cheerful, with a touch of the philosophical in his make-up, Vandenberg has many of the qualities that brought the greatest prize in American politics to McKinley and Harding. If he is the choice of the party, it will mean that Republican leaders do not intend, at least in 1936, to make rejection of the New Deal their big issue. Vandenberg faces one danger. He is too patently an aspirant for the 1936 nomination, whatever it may be worth. The early bird often fails to get the worm. A case in point was Leonard Wood in 1920.

In Charles L. McNary of Oregon, Senate Republicans have a leader who may have strong backing in the next convention. Fulminations against the Roosevelt policies he has been quite content to leave to others; like Vandenberg, he has been sparing in his criticism of the New Deal. McNary seldom makes a speech, and even more rarely does he go after an opponent on the floor, hammer and tongs. He is essentially a coördinator, a smoother, a conciliator. He has the knack of getting along well with both Western progressives and Eastern conservatives. His popularity with the Democrats has helped the Republicans in many a tight hole. Though he looks like a boy, he was sixty in June. As an Oregonian, he speaks the language of the agrarian West, and if the G.O.P. is to stage a come-back, it must regain some of the territory lost in the West. As the co-author of the McNary-Haugen Bill, McNary is known to millions as a friend of the farmers. Born on a farm—no mean political asset when publicity men begin their pre-convention ballyhoo—McNary goes back to his Sabine retreat out West when Congress adjourns. Like Vandenberg, he is believed to have a fairly good-sized White House bee in his bonnet. The lightning will have to strike somewhere, and McNary appears to be within its range.

Pennsylvania, in the person of its senior Senator, David A. Reed, presents a far more forceful figure than either McNary or Vandenberg, and a greater intellect. No Republican Senator has attacked the New Deal more sharply, or challenged more boldly the implications of the social and political philosophy on which it is based. Reed has placed all his bets on one horse. Given a free hand, he would make mighty little of the New

Deal permanent. Able constitutional lawyer, a man of courage and positive convictions, Reed is not rated a good politician. Men respect him, but he lacks the magnetism and qualities of personal leadership that have stood President Roosevelt in such good stead. And Reed faces the same handicap under which Ogden Mills labors. Closely identified with the Mellon interests in Pennsylvania, Reed seems too vulnerable to the "money power" cry to make him a likely choice of the next convention. Then, too, there is a certain hauteur and pride, if not arrogance, of intellect in Reed that further militates against his prospects.

Notwithstanding his knight errantry, his magnificent isolation, and his proneness to destructive criticism, rather than constructive suggestion, William E. Borah of Idaho, were he ten or fifteen years younger, would have strong backing as a man who could appeal to the West and liberal elements in the party. At sixty-nine Borah is too old to be considered for the nomination, even if conservative Republicans were willing to take a man of his type. Arthur Capper of Kansas hails from the Corn Belt, and is a safe middle-of-the-road man, trusted both by the conservative East and the radical West. L. J. Dickinson of Iowa, in the heart of the Corn Belt, a sharp critic of the Roosevelt policies, and 1928 keynoter, is another Republican high in the party's councils. Bull Mooser Hiram Johnson of California is still listed as a Republican, but having received the blessing of F. D. in his contest for reelection in California, the G.O.P. could hardly choose him.

v

Republicans in the House offer at least two men whose availability ranks high in discussions of 1936—Bertrand

H. Snell, minority leader, and James W. Wadsworth of New York. During the years of Republican ascendancy just prior to the depression the House was ruled by a triumvirate consisting of Nicholas Longworth, speaker, John G. Tilson, floor leader, and Snell, chairman of the Rules Committee. Snell alone remains in the House. Longworth is dead, and Tilson has retired into private life, after being beaten by Snell for the post of minority leader. Snell is rated as one of the ablest practical politicians in either party. With the material at his command, he has done a good job as minority leader. With Western Republicans he is fairly popular, perhaps because he comes from an agricultural area in up-State New York. A thorough-going partisan, Snell shocked the pious when he hailed the action of the House in overriding the veto of the Independent Offices Bill, as a deserved spanking of the President, and more recently he has condemned the New Deal as a failure, joining with those who want to shelve it. A graduate of Amherst—as is Speaker Rainey—the New Yorker is quick on the offense, a "tough guy" in his ability to take punishment, and in spite of the roughness of his exterior is well liked by most of his fellow Republicans. Old-fashioned Republicanism is his creed, and if the G.O.P. wants to wage the next campaign with conservatism the issue, it could do worse than take Snell. As a rugged party man, bred and born to a partisan environment, Snell is akin to Jack Garner of Texas, once leader of the House Democrats. Though ancient enemies on the floor, the two men are close personal friends.

Wadsworth is no less available than Snell, if the trend favors a man of his conservative type. An up-State New Yorker, whose father served in Con-

gress and wore the blue in the Civil War, Wadsworth, as a youngster, became speaker of the New York assembly, and then served two terms in the United States Senate. As a Senator he was conspicuous for his courage, and his ability as a legislator. Few of his colleagues could handle an appropriation bill, or other piece of legislation on the floor as well as he. Wadsworth became recognized as one of the real leaders on the Republican side, and the veteran Henry Cabot Lodge, majority leader, used him as one of his principal lieutenants. Wadsworth, ahead of his time, took a definite stand against Prohibition, so he was beaten in 1926, as Republican dries insisted on his scalp. Now the G.O.P. has caught up to Wadsworth in the matter of Prohibition. In terms of 1936 the New Yorker has three assets; first, he was never identified with the Hoover Administration, and does not share in the heritage of its troubles; second, he has a certain courage and forthrightness conspicuously lacking in so many of the Old Guard's political hacks. Third, as a landed proprietor, he has a recognized community of interest with the farmers of the West, and though a man of means he is not identified, in the popular mind, in any close way with the money power of Wall Street. Wadsworth, however, labors under certain handicaps. He has made some enemies, notably because of his attacks on Republican dries, during the days when Prohibition was a great destroyer. Second, as a product of St. Marks and Yale, there is a certain amount of the high-hat in his make-up, and some members of Congress feel that his wife, the daughter of John Hay, is not enough of a glad-hander. Third, as a new member, in spite of his clear-cut challenge to the New Deal, as carrying

the death warrant to American individualism, and personal liberty, he has failed to make much of an impression on the House or to have attracted public attention outside.

VI

Outside Congress there are other Republicans who are helping to stir the broth. Those who demand a repudiation of Old Guard leadership have rallied behind such men as Theodore Roosevelt, whose work in reorganizing the G.O.P. in the Empire State is commanding wide attention, Chase Mellen, Jr., Hanford MacNider of Iowa, Trubee Davison and several others. Fiorello LaGuardia, mayor of New York, may be worth watching, if the G.O.P. decides to move to the Left. In Massachusetts, former Governor Alvin Fuller, a powerful vote-getter, might later be projected into the national picture, and in New Hampshire Governor Winant is believed to have his eye on the White House. If the Republicans, who once drafted Charles Evans Hughes from the Supreme Court, decide again to go there for their candidate, their choice undoubtedly would be Harlan Fisk Stone, appointed by Coolidge in 1925. Meanwhile, Justice Stone's New Deal decisions will be watched closely. If the decisions of the Court reveal Stone as a champion and friend of the New Deal, the G.O.P. could hardly consider him an available candidate in the event that its leaders decide to make the permanency of the New Deal the major issue of the next Presidential campaign. Out in Chicago, Frank Knox, publisher of the *News*, is regarded as a man of great weight in councils of the party.

At this writing, no successor has been chosen for Everett Sanders, chairman

of the Republican National Committee. Though the chairman may have some influence, the forces which shape the policies of a political party are far beyond a single individual's power to control. Today there are two main contests within the Republican party. The first is that between the Old Guard and the younger liberals and progressives, who insist on new blood and the complete rejection of Old Guard leadership and the control by big business and the financial interests that the name Old Guard connotes. The second contest is between those who want the party to make an aggressive fight against the New Deal and the regimentation and social control that it implies, and those who want to accept those elements of the New Deal that have demonstrated their value and usefulness by the pragmatic test. These contests necessarily overlap at many points, and not until 1936 when candidates are picked and platforms written will be known definitely the results of the battles now under way for control of the Republican party and its policies.

The senatorial and congressional committees this year, both financially and otherwise, will work independently of the national committee in trying to elect Republican senators and representatives. Senator Daniel Hastings of Delaware heads the Senate group. Closely associated with the Du Pont ruling dynasty, Hastings is a stout little man of much energy and a good if not a brilliant party worker. The House committee is headed by two young Harvard men, Chester Bolton of Ohio, and Robert Bacon of New York, son of the former Secretary of State and Ambassador to France. Neither the senatorial nor the congressional group is concerned directly with the formulation of na-

tional policies. They are chiefly interested in increasing Republican representation in House and Senate, picking the issues, both local and national, that seem best calculated to bring this about. The congressional campaigns will have a real importance in clearing out the weeds, and disclosing the issues which offer a promise for effective capitalization in the Presidential contest two years hence.

No discussion of Republican prospects can omit mention of the name of Herbert C. Hoover, still the titular leader of the G.O.P. Mr. Hoover, his friends in Washington have said, has no thought of seeking for himself the nomination in 1936. Mr. Hoover, nevertheless, must remain in the background of the picture. Only a sharp reversal in public opinion, a shift to the Right, almost a revulsion against the New Deal and its alphabetocracy could rehabilitate Mr. Hoover, and bring about a situation in which party leaders would turn to him as the man most likely to lead the G.O.P. out of the wilderness. The closest parallel is that of Grover Cleveland, who left the Presidency after his first term under a cloud of criticism and popular disfavor not unlike that which marked the Hoover exit from the White House. Yet Cleveland lived not only to see the fickle tide of public favor again turn in his direction, but to receive another nomination and to serve a second term in the White House. But Cleveland did not face a Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Mr. Hoover, most observers agree, will not figure in the money two years from now.

VII

If we can find no outstanding figure in the Republican party, our survey is far from showing that the G.O.P. is

completely bankrupt. To go no farther afield than Congress, the small Republican membership in House and Senate will not suffer in comparison with an equal number of Democrats picked at random. The majority party in Congress, with a few exceptions like Wagner of New York, has contributed little enough to the New Deal, the architects for which are mainly Brain Trust members, and certain Cabinet officers, notably two former Republicans, Ickes and Wallace. In the States, traditional nursery for Presidential timber, new Republicans may come to the fore in this year's elections. The victory of a Republican governor in a pivotal State now controlled by the Democrats, or the unseating of a Democratic senator in a spectacular upset, would forthwith add another star to a firmament that now has few shining lights. In their search for Presidential timber, G.O.P. strategists will closely watch the State elections this year, and if a likely man appears, no time will be lost in building him up as one who may later be able to take the measure of Mr. Roosevelt. Lincoln was a comparative unknown when chosen to lead the Republican party, and so was Wilson, when the Democrats took as their standard-bearer the governor of New Jersey who had been president of Princeton.

If the cycle of politics runs a normal course, the Roosevelt sweep will probably be strong enough to keep the Democrats in control of the National

Administration through the 1936 election, if not longer. If F. D. turns in even an average performance, if he escapes too many major blunders, and if economic conditions continue to mend, the Republican candidate in 1936 will enter the lists as an under-dog—as much of an under-dog as James M. Cox in 1920, and John W. Davis in 1924. The Democrats stand to benefit politically from the economic recovery of the country, just as Mr. Hoover was blamed for the depression.

As the opposition party, charged with the duty of audit and control, the Republicans have a real responsibility. But they need new ideas, a programme attuned to the spirit and temper of the age. No political party can rehabilitate itself by turning back the hands of the clock of progress. As the G.O.P. comes to life again, as its captains become articulate, the contest now under way for control of the party and its policies, assumes a large importance. Upon the outcome of that contest depends not only the effectiveness of the G.O.P. challenge to the New Deal, but the alternative which will be offered to the voters of America in place of the regimentation of American life by a steadily expanding Federal bureaucracy. The Republican party never stood in greater need of real leaders, men of vision, who are progressive enough to keep up with the times, and sane enough to conserve the things of permanent value in the heritage of the past.



Submarine Marvels

BY RODGER L. SIMONS

Those who worry about depletion of our natural resources on land may be comforted at the possibilities in water

WHEN world powers scramble for gold wherewith to balance budgets and stabilize currency systems, when embargoes are declared against the exportation of the yellow metal and laws are invoked to forestall its hoarding by hyper-cautious citizens, it is a bit of a jolt to discover in the 1933 Edition of the Smithsonian Institution's *Physical Tables* that there is enough gold in sea water to provide every one of the earth's two billion inhabitants with a fortune of \$24,000 at prevailing rates.

A cubic mile of ordinary "ocean" holds from twenty-three to 1,200 tons of gold. Tons, mind you, not ounces or even pounds, but tons! The quantity varies between the lesser amount in surface and coastal waters to the greater figure in the depths of the high seas. With gold worth at least \$500,000 a ton, these appalling statistics mean that at the smaller percentage there is eleven and a half million dollars' worth of gold in every cubic mile of sea water, while at the richer equivalent the briny deep has a gold content of six hundred million dollars to the cubic mile! Of course, if all this gold could be extracted from the sea and diverted into channels of commerce it would bring about an inter-

national financial and political collapse by contrast with which all previous and recent upheavals have been mere school-boy outings. But so costly is the process of gold recovery that no such holocaust is remotely conceivable.

Like most questions involving gold, this problem of its occurrence in and extraction from sea water has long charmed scientific and pseudo-scientific investigators. Though earlier men had dabbled with it, one of the first to make accurate determinations of the gold content of ocean water was a San Franciscan named Luther Wagoner, who at the beginning of this century busied himself from the rope-strewn deck of the little steamer *Albatross* in dredging up sea water and bottom sludge off the shores of his native California. He discovered minute amounts of both gold and silver in the proportion of twenty to one, not the more familiar Bryanesque ratio of sixteen to one, and was followed a few years later by H. S. Blackmore, who had been especially eager to canvass the feasibility of gold extraction. Blackmore's rather conclusive answer lay in the discovery that after spending four or five thousand dollars over a period of several years he obtained about five dollars' worth of gold and silver.