

450 delegates, and that his highest point—on his own strength—will be under 500 instead of over 650. This means that he will not get even a majority, much less the necessary two-thirds of the 1,099 delegates, without outside help, and that the nomination will be decided by trading. McAdoo's weakening has increased the chances for Ralston, a man who can in no way be affected by any Washington scandal. So the Democrats see no need of repentance.

It is far different with the Republican party. It has been discredited as a party, since the charges lie against men whom it put into office and while they were in office. It cannot wholly escape responsibility for them by any possible means. And, perhaps unjustly in some cases, they are already condemned for all practical political purposes.

There are few Republican leaders here who do not admit that unless this situation can be changed a defeat is assured. It is generally agreed, also, that the thing that must be done is somehow to reduce the party responsibility. But here all agreement ends. There is a wide difference as to how drastic a clean-up is needed, how much can be trusted to reaction from Democratic exaggerations, how to go about the reforms. There is no leadership forcing united action—or even united inaction. In fact, there is a strong possibility that the confusion and quarrel may finally cause another fight inside the party somewhat like that which followed the Ballinger scandals and brought on the Bull Moose bolt in 1912.

### *Hang Together—or Separately*

IN the meantime the most striking thing about the party is its lack of coherence. It has made practically no defense either of the men or the policies under attack. No single leader has publicly stated any new standards which might win public support and to which the party could be made to conform. Chairman Adams of the National Committee takes one course and defends Daugherty; Senators Lodge, Borah, and Pepper, agreed for once, demand that he be ousted. The Progressives sit back and throw bricks with strict impartiality at both parties. There is no visible support of the President on the floor of either house; Senators and Representatives reply to the attacks weakly, if at all, and they permit to go almost unchallenged case after case of outrageous unfairness, such as the attempt to drag Mr. Coolidge into the McLean mess, which even Democratic papers resented.

Yet reports reaching here from all parts of the country agree that the one

strength the Republicans have is the President. All indications are that he still holds the full trust of the Nation; indeed, that he has even grown stronger through his calmness and stability in the midst of the uproar here. The frantic attempts of the Democrats to make some muck stick to him show that they realize this. The reports indicate, also, that part of the faith in Coolidge is confidence that he will presently do something drastic, and that it will be good to look upon. But there seems to be a beginning of impatience.

The party, however, shows no inclination to avail itself of this one advantage, as the Congressional debates prove. This is not merely from a panicky inability to decide what to do. The fact is that many of the leaders do not like Coolidge; would willingly see his Administration break down, perhaps even at the cost of the election. There has been some whispering even among his nominal supporters about other possible candidates in case developments should indicate a chance to win, though it has so far been merely talk. Of course, if defeat is foregone, these men will gladly have Coolidge take the beating, so that he will be out of their way next time.

These men are chiefly of the old organization, professional politicians; the Progressives do not want Coolidge either, but for different reasons. And the "regulars" have their own plans for the future of the party, together with long-established rules for meeting trouble. Their first principle is to keep control, next to stand by their associates till they get singed, to make a last-ditch fight on every point, against every charge, to throw out a scapegoat only as a last forlorn hope, and finally to lose an election rather than their control. There is much political experience and wisdom behind these rules. The regulars rather expect to lose this year.

"The trouble with Coolidge is that he won't fight," one of them explained to me. "He's weak. And scared. He sits all huddled up and won't defend his men. His strength is only a tradition which may be exploded at any moment. The only thing we can do is to hold the party together the best we can, and hope for better luck next time." He went on to defend Daugherty, using the case to prove Coolidge's weakness.

On the other hand, there is a considerable faction among the leaders who are hoping for—it cannot yet be said that most of them are demanding—a house-cleaning which shall be drastic, complete, and convincing. Senator Borah voiced this attitude in his speech on Daugherty, though he goes further than most would. But he was supported in his demand that

the President get rid of the Attorney-General by Lodge and Pepper, and they can fairly be counted in this group. Mostly they are less routine in their political thought than the first group.

"There is only one possible hope for the party," one of these leaders told me. "That is to show the country conclusively that the infection in the party was local and not constitutional, and that the old crowd of politically minded men has been definitely divorced from control or even important influence. We are organizing a definite movement to make the party show that this is true, but that movement is still in the formative stage, and not yet ready for open action."

"The reasons for a change in party control are convincing, except to the men whose thought centers in organization. The party has suffered enough for the sake of keeping the old crowd in power. They were wholly responsible for the defeat in 1912 and largely to blame in 1916. Then, when the mistakes of the Democrats and no merit of the Republicans once more put them in power, they give us this abominable exhibition. They have got to go—or the party will."

"It is not merely a matter of crime, for I do not believe there has been nearly so much crime as is charged. It is the state of mind that has been shown; the belief that anything was all right if you could get away with it, instead of that a public official should always be above the possibility of suspicion. There have been so many unfit appointments, so much waste, so little efficiency! A man does not have to be a criminal to be unfit to govern; yet that is the only standard these men set up. They have shown that they are unfit; they lose elections and discredit both the party and the Government. Now they are willing to lose another election; and I believe that a Democratic victory this fall would be a National calamity—for the sake of their machine. Our one chance is to clean them out utterly."

This man, too, had his criticisms of the President, though they differ completely from those already quoted, except in demanding more leadership. Others in the group agree.

"The President has no policy that I can see except to be calm," one such leader said. "This cannot last long, if we are to win or even to clean up the party. It is valuable for a while, however, since the disgraceful riots in the Capitol have put a premium on calmness just now. But it is a fictitious value, and before it wears off he must have something else to offer."

"I do not believe, myself, that he has yet fully seen the situation. He is in a difficult position, anyhow, and he cannot

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be in as close touch with opinion as we outside the White House are. He sees the Government running smoothly so far as official reports show, he knows perfectly that many of the loudest charges are utterly untrue, and he naturally does not want to act on anything till clear proof is given him. When it comes, of course he acts promptly, effectively, and justly. But I do not think he has yet seen either the actual weakness of the Administration due to unfitness and political-mindedness, or the effect this is having on the country.

"Then, too, he has been prevented from a general cleaning up and from surrounding himself with the men he would pick by his obligation to continue the Harding Cabinet. Every one approved when he announced that he would do that, and we can't decently blame him now. He cannot move those men just because of personal disagreements or because they are a burden to him; he cannot remove them unless he has full proof of their unfitness, and he has had mighty little *proof* of any kind given him. Most of them are patriotic and able men in their way; and he is not the kind of a man to throw any of them out because of mere noise. He has not yet been shown that there is any general discredit attached to the party.

"But he will see all these things shortly. Then we will get action."

### *The Cheerful Progressives*

THE third Republican faction is that of the Progressives, about the only really happy men in Washington these days, since no oil or muck has yet fallen upon them. Their objections to the President and the party are on matters of policy, a demand for more radicalism. Thus they show no particular interest in the moral reform movement, which is based on principles rather than policies, and supported by men of many different opinions.

Many Progressives are estimating the chances of a third party movement. La Follette's refusal to support Johnson in the Dakotas is evidence of his desire to keep the radical vote in his own hands, in case a chance should come to use it. The general opinion, however, is that if a third party should be started it would not develop any great strength, because of the difficulty and cost of building an organization in the few months before election.

"If they do start, though, they'll raise the roof," a campaign manager remarked. "They would probably carry six or eight States in the Northwest—no more. They'd get them all away from us. But that would be enough so that

the chances are no one would have a majority of electors, and the House of Representatives would elect. It would be the present House, mind you. You can do your own guessing as to what would happen."

### *And Now the President*

THE President, all by himself, can fairly be called a fourth faction. He is the most important one. On the evidence, it seems clear that, so far, he is simply being an able President rather than a party leader. He has been politician enough to make his nomination almost certain, but he has not gone beyond that. He remains calm, dignified, a shining contrast to the Democratic howlers; he has handled the scandals fearlessly and done what could be done to assure level justice, but he has been merely an executive. The disorganization of the party shows that he has issued no political orders, and certainly has made no attempt to enforce discipline.

This is true even on other National issues. He has been Harding's heir, no more, carrying out a trusteeship quietly and effectively, but with an almost complete restraint of his own personality. His position on the bonus and taxation, which are the big issues raised so far, have been inherited as surely as has the Cabinet full of Mr. Harding's personal friends. The issues may, and almost certainly do, represent his own personal opinions, but they are none the less legacies.

The result is that many men here are coming to agree to a large extent with the attack made on the President by Senator Johnson in Chicago recently. That speech so well states this feeling that it is worth repeating.

"I am in a position of combating a mythical person who was created by a section of the press of this country," the Senator said. "The real Calvin Coolidge, who sits secluded in the White House, has done nothing to show the leadership, either of the Nation or of his party, that we have a right to expect from a President. The records demonstrate that the real candidate opposed to me has failed to take the leadership on a single domestic or foreign policy affecting this country."

Reference has been made to the belief that Mr. Coolidge is worried, if not scared. There is every evidence that neither is true. He certainly does not either look or act scared. Recent stories from his intimates tell of conduct that is not at all that of a frightened man, or even a nervous one. His discussions with callers and the reporters show no signs of it. And, if there is any virtue in the

common beliefs about physiognomy, he was not made to be scared easily. He has the hooked nose of a hawk and "the jaw to back it up." Moreover, he has pale-blue eyes, which in gun-fighting regions are a recognized warning to the wise to be kind to their owner. My own impression is that the scare story is honestly come by, however, for men of that type seldom look dangerous—often they seem almost timid—till they get into action. Their forbearance is usually long, and always deceiving.

### *It Rests with Coolidge*

THE opinion of most observers in Washington, then, is that the coming campaign and the future of the Republican party are entirely in the hands of Mr. Coolidge, and that he still has time to save both if it is in him. They believe that if he is to do either he must become a leader in his own right, instead of being spokesman for Harding's ghost. The more idealistic men believe, too, that his leadership must make clear the reform, and the extent of the reform, within the party.

But it is evident that if in doing this he alienates enough of the old organization he will merely insure defeat in another way. And, since a defeated candidate is of small value to either the party or the country, his real political problem is both tremendous and delicate. He must both as a statesman and a politician achieve all needed reform with as little damage as possible to the organization and the feelings of its leaders. He is entitled to move slowly.

He has already given convincing evidence that he is an able President. No one now doubts that he will enforce the law, give good administration, correct evils as soon as they are made plain, and keep cool. His advisers say that the country will be pleased with the quality of the men he has in mind for certain appointments not yet announced. But unless Washington information is entirely wrong as to the extent to which the Republican party has been discredited, this will not be enough.

Whatever is done, the President must do it. The organization men cannot carry through their plans unless he supports them; equally the men who wish drastic reform will be helpless without his backing.

So the political world, with a suspicion in its mind that he has not yet begun to fight, but may start any day, is waiting with deep anxiety. His course, when he does open fire, will probably determine the result of the election and will almost certainly fix the standards of morality in American politics for years to come.