

## The University of Chicago Round Table

### ARE THE CANDIDATES FACING THE ISSUES?

A Radio Discussion by MORTIMER ADLER  
MARQUIS CHILDS and I. F. STONE

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*Around the Round Table . . . .*

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MARQUIS CHILDS, United Features Syndicate columnist, is a native of Iowa and was, for many years, associated with the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. He was granted his A.B. degree from the University of Wisconsin and his A.M. degree from the University of Iowa. He was with the United Press in 1923 and from 1925 to 1926, when he joined the staff of the *Post-Dispatch*. Until recently he was with the Washington Bureau of the *Post-Dispatch*. He is the author of *Sweden—the Middle Way* (1936); *They Hate Roosevelt* (1936); *Washington Calling* (1937); *This Is Democracy* (1938); *Toward a Dynamic America* (with William T. Stone); *This Is Your*

*War* (1942); and *I Write from Washington* (1942).

I. F. STONE has been a newspaperman since his student days at the University of Pennsylvania. He has done reporting on the *Haddonfield Public Press*, the *Camden Courier Post*, and the *Philadelphia Enquirer* and served as an editorial writer on both the *Philadelphia Enquirer* and the *Washington Post* before he became an associate editor of the *Nation* in 1938. Since 1940 he has been the Washington correspondent of the *Nation* and, since 1941, of *PM*. Mr. Stone is the author of *The Court Disposes* (1937) and *Business as Usual: The First Year of Defense* (1941), as well as a contributor to numerous magazines including the *New Republic*, *Current History*, and the *American Mercury*.

### **ARE THE CANDIDATES FACING THE ISSUES?**

MR. ADLER: There is no question that Willkie's stand on current issues was courageous. Why do you suppose Willkie could be as courageous as he was in the recent articles that he wrote?<sup>1</sup>

MR. CHILDS: Mr. Willkie was not a candidate. He could afford the luxury of stating the truth as he saw it.

MR. ADLER: Is that your opinion, too, Stone?

MR. STONE: He did not win the Republican nomination because he had the courage to state the issues clearly and because he had the courage to go out to Wisconsin—the heart of isolationist America—to put the issue of world peace squarely before the people.

MR. ADLER: Was Willkie, in 1940, as courageous as he was before the Republican Convention in 1944?

MR. CHILDS: It is very important this year to remember what happened four years ago. It is very important to us in this campaign. Both candidates in that 1940 campaign—Franklin Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie—knew, I believe, that war was coming and that war was inevitable. Yet toward the end of that campaign they got to outpromising each other on the question of peace. You will perhaps recall that Roosevelt in his Boston speech, toward the end of the campaign, said that he would not take our boys into a foreign war. Willkie, toward the end of his campaign, in his Baltimore speech, said, as I recall it, that if Roosevelt were reelected, the boys

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<sup>1</sup>See the articles by Wendell L. Willkie in the September 16,

would be on the transports by April.

MR. ADLER: Is there any parallel, do you find, in this campaign?

MR. CHILDS: I think that there is, and that is why it is so important to remember this business of outpromising. Governor Dewey has suggested that if he is elected, he will bring the boys home earlier and end demobilization earlier than his opponent. Now, if both candidates should get to promising that kind of a thing . . . .

MR. ADLER: That would be as disastrous as the promise to keep us out of war.

MR. CHILDS: . . . . it would leave the country just as unprepared for carrying out a just and durable peace. It would be exactly as disastrous as the promise to keep us out of war.

MR. STONE: It is interesting to recall that Willkie regretted that he had tried to outpromise Roosevelt on peace in 1940.

MR. CHILDS: I think that he did, Stone. As a very great American, he took a completely nonpartisan position helping Roosevelt after 1940.

MR. ADLER: Gentlemen, the question that this ROUND TABLE is going to discuss is whether the candidates are facing the issues.

You gentlemen are reporters; you have been following the campaign. You just made a tour of the West, Childs; and you come from the East, Stone. I would like to know, as simply as you can give it to the ROUND TABLE audience, whether the candidates are facing the issues.

MR. CHILDS: No. They are not facing the basic issues; they are ignoring them, I believe.

MR. ADLER: How about it, Stone?

MR. STONE: I agree with Childs. They are not facing the issues.

MR. ADLER: That is a simple agreement, but it seems to me that we have to go much further than that. You are reporters. I am interested in political philosophy and, more than that, very much interested in the theory of democracy.

As I understand the democratic process, the public debate of

public issues lies at its heart. If the candidates for the high office of President are not facing the issues, how does the democratic process really succeed? Shouldn't we ask two further questions? Why don't they face the issues, if they don't? And shouldn't they face the issues?

MR. STONE: We must remember that the democratic process, first of all, depends upon the people and not upon leadership and that, while it is very easy to criticize the politicians for not facing the issue, it is also important to ask ourselves whether the people are facing the issues.

MR. CHILDS: But I feel very strongly that most politicians are far too cowardly, just as Willkie said in that splendid article in which he spoke the truth so frankly. They could speak to the issues much more than they have in the past and much more than they do.

MR. ADLER: Let me support Stone's side for a moment to see if I can balance this. Willkie, in that article to which we have referred, spoke out for a limitation or even a surrender of our national sovereignty as a condition for making a good peace. That is going way beyond the Dumbarton Oaks Plan; it is going beyond anything that Dewey or Roosevelt has spoken for.

Do you think that a candidate for President at this time, with public sentiment as it is, could speak that way?

MR. CHILDS: It is possible, yes. I do not think that he needs to advocate the overthrow of American sovereignty. There you get into a purely false issue, it seems to me.

MR. STONE: It is easy for you to say that, but if you remember what happened to Willkie, what happened to Wallace, or what happened to Woodrow Wilson, you can see that the President has good reason for being fearful of placing this issue of sovereignty too clearly and too squarely before the people.

MR. CHILDS: There have been times in this country when issues have been squarely faced in political campaigns.

MR. ADLER: Such as?

MR. CHILDS: Such as the Lincoln-Douglas debates, when this country was divided on one great issue. Two men—two candidates for the Senate—debated it up and down the land.

MR. ADLER: How about that?

MR. STONE: Even in the presidential campaign of 1860, the issue was not slavery but the preservation of the Union.<sup>2</sup>

MR. ADLER: That is a good issue, though. But wasn't it debated?

MR. STONE: But the house divided could not be preserved on that basis, half-slave and half-free, so in a sense the issue was dodged by placing it on the basis of preservation of the Union.

MR. CHILDS: Then you get a very unhappy parallel, it seems to me, in the 1920 campaign—the Harding-Cox campaign—when most people in this country were ready for some kind of world organization, and, yet, Harding talked on every side of the issue.<sup>3</sup>

MR. ADLER: I gather, Childs, from all your remarks, that you feel that in general our political candidates—the men who are running for high and important public offices—do not attempt to do what the democratic process really demands—namely, to campaign on a clear and outspoken debate on leading issues of the day.

I gather from you, Stone, that you think that it is not quite possible to do that.

MR. STONE: I would like to think that it were possible to do it, but I am afraid that it is not, at the moment.

MR. ADLER: Why not?

MR. STONE: The President's job of political leadership has two aspects. One is to educate, to help the people to understand the basic issues. But the other is to achieve that minimum of agreement among a majority of our people that will make united action possible. It is very difficult to carry out both those functions at once.

MR. ADLER: That does not apply to Dewey, though, does it?

MR. CHILDS: No. As we were mentioning earlier in our discussion, I think that Governor Dewey could go, and in certain instances has gone, on the aggressive and has put President Roosevelt on the spot, as it were.

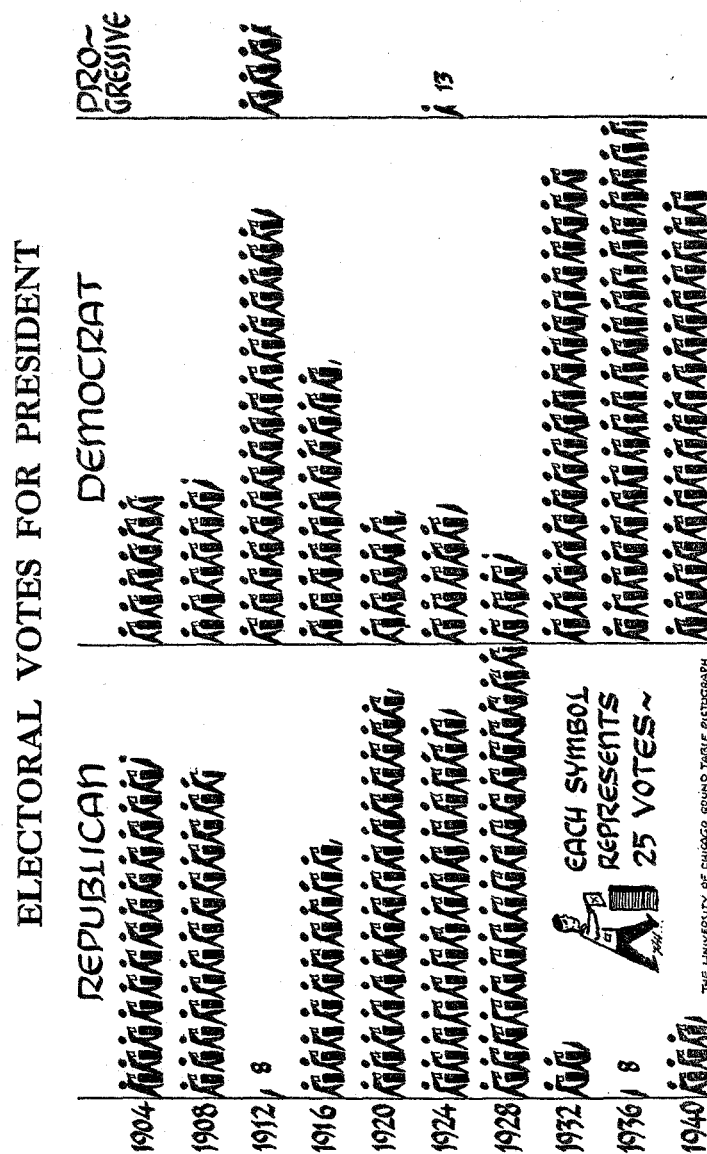
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<sup>2</sup> Consult Carl Sandburg, *The War Years* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1939) and *Storm over the Land* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1942), and Margaret Leech, *Reveille in Washington* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1941) for discussions of the 1858 senatorial and 1860 presidential campaigns.

<sup>3</sup> See Samuel Hopkins Adams, *The Incredible Era* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939), for materials on the election of 1920 and the Harding administration.

MR. STONE: Dewey could, if he were the candidate of a differently constituted party, take the offensive on the issues. He could, for example, accuse the President of not facing the sovereignty issue squarely—of not facing the fact that some limitation of sovereignty is a necessary part of any international agreement. He could take the offensive there. But he could only do so by losing the isolationist support in the Middle West and in the Republican party itself.

MR. ADLER: But, as I understand it, you spoke of Willkie's losing and sacrificing his chance for the Republican nomination by speaking out so plainly during the period of the pre-convention campaign. Why is it that before the nominating conventions the candidates for nomi-



nation can speak so much more plainly than the candidates after the conventions for the office itself? Why does that change take place?

MR. STONE: In our two-party system, these basic issues are more often fought out within each party rather than between them. So that before the nominating convention you have a candidate like Governor Bricker on the isolationist side and a candidate like Governor Dewey somewhat on the internationalist side—not as much so as Willkie, but still definitely internationalist. The two of them fight it out in the convention. Then, after the convention is over, you find the two men on the same ticket—one for President, one for Vice-President.

MR. CHILDS: The plain fact is, isn't it, that the two big parties are just two big circus tents that include in them practically every range of political opinion? This makes it almost impossible for any short, clear-cut facing of the issues?

MR. ADLER: That, by the way, is the position taken, as I understand, by Charles Beard, one of our foremost American historians. Beard's understanding of the slow, steady progress of political change in this country is that it happens as the result of the fact that the two major parties, who change office from time to time, do not really radically disagree on fundamental issues . . . .

MR. CHILDS: And that they cannot disagree on fundamental issues.

MR. ADLER: ..and that they cannot disagree. If they did, or, that is, if under the two-party system there were a radical divergence, that would call for radical social changes at each election, which we do not have in this country. We have slow and steady progress, when one group comes out of office, another group goes into office, with not very different policies. Is that your position in general?

MR. CHILDS: That is essentially true. Professor Beard seems to think that is desirable, and I also think that it is more or less desirable.

MR. STONE: The issues are also blurred, I believe, because each candidate reaches out for marginal elements. He is certain of the support of certain large groups. The election may, therefore, depend upon marginal groups. The issues tend to become blurred as he reaches out for their support.

MR. ADLER: Let us see if we can document this, gentlemen, by actually examining the issues in this campaign as you observe them. Let us divide the field up into three large groups of questions. Let us see if we can find, in your opinion, what issues are not being squarely

faced. Let us see if there is any real issue being faced by the two candidates. Then, finally, let us see if there are any bogey or bogus issues being raised.

MR. CHILDS: That is a very sound way of approaching it.

MR. STONE: There are two big issues in the campaign—peace and jobs. Neither issue is being faced squarely by either candidate.

MR. ADLER: Let us take the first one of those—namely, the question of foreign policy.

Before we go further and say whether the candidates are facing the issue there, I would like to know, for my own information, whether you think, as you listened to the speeches and followed their campaigns, the two candidates agree substantially on the general line of our foreign policy after this war.

MR. CHILDS: There is a broad, basic agreement in the desire for some sort of world security organization; there is even an agreement on the basic framework. Both Governor Dewey and President Roosevelt have approved the work of the Dumbarton Oaks Conference.

MR. ADLER: You would say that, too, Stone, wouldn't you?

MR. STONE: In that very fact may lie the great danger. Childs made a good point in bringing up the 1920 election. In the 1920 election, too, there was a large area of agreement between Cox and Harding. While Harding was against the League, he was for an association of the nations.

MR. CHILDS: But also, at one point, he was against the League; he was against any kind of organization.

MR. ADLER: He was not very clear what he was for or against.

MR. CHILDS: He was on every side of the question.

MR. STONE: Yet he had Republicans who were good League of Nations' men supporting him.

MR. CHILDS: I do not think that that parallel quite holds this time.

MR. ADLER: Underlying this apparent agreement that you both seem to feel exists, what are the issues on the questions of foreign policy which are being neglected by both candidates?



MR. CHILDS: The most important one of all is that of the powers which our delegate to the world security organization shall have. You are getting already now this process of reservation, of hedging, of saying that our delegate will not have the same powers.

MR. ADLER: Senator Ball has pointed this out, hasn't he?

MR. CHILDS: Senator Ball has taken, it seems to me, a very courageous stand. This young senator from Minnesota has called on both the candidates to say how they stand on three phases of this question, the last and most important one dealing with how far our delegate to the world security organization can go.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Senator Joseph H. Ball (Republican from Minnesota) on October II, 1944, asked the major presidential candidates three questions regarding the Dumbarton Oaks proposal for an international security organization. He said that he did not demand a personal reply but asked that either or both the candidates give answers in the remaining time before election, so specific that the voters would be guided in their decisions.

As he framed the questions to elicit responses to what he considers the most important points, they are:

“Will you support the earliest possible formation of the United Nations security organization and United States entry therein, before any final peace settlements are made either in Europe or Asia?”

“Will you oppose any reservations to United States entry into such United Nations organization, which would weaken the power of the organization to act to maintain peace and stop aggression?”

“Should the vote of the United States representative on the United Nations Security Council commit an agreed-upon quota of our military forces to action ordered by the council to maintain peace without requiring further Congressional approval?”

In each instance, Senator Ball said that he hoped for an unqualified affirmative and the nominee's reasons for such an answer.

“Time is short,” he went on to say, “and I urge all Americans who want our country to do its full share to prevent a recurrence of world war to insist upon clear, unequivocal answers to these questions, from Presidential and Congressional nominees. Safe, easy generalities on this issue are not enough, when 17,000,000 American boys are facing death because of the failure of governments, our own included, to

MR. ADLER: Wouldn't you say that there is another question here on the method of ratification—the question of whether or not a two-thirds' vote of the Senate should be required for the ratification of treaties? Isn't that involved in foreign policy, too?

MR. STONE: Very intimately. There are two questions there. One is whether Congress will be willing to delegate part of its war-making powers to the American representative in whatever form of world order we set up; and the second is whether we shall go on allowing a minority of one-third of the Senate to veto international agreements.

MR. ADLER: And treaties.

MR. CHILDS: And we have not heard a word from either candidate on either one of those subjects.

MR. STONE: Right.

MR. ADLER: Those seem to me to be two very important issues which have been neglected in this campaign so far.

MR. CHILDS: They have not been talked about at all.

MR. ADLER: Of course, I understand that both candidates are going to make declarations on foreign policy this coming week, in speeches. Maybe if they listen to this ROUND TABLE, they will do something about it.

You also raised the question of jobs for all, Stone. I gather that that raises the more general question of our domestic economic policy. Do you think both candidates are in substantial agreement on that?

MR. STONE: In a sense, both candidates are agreed on pious wishes rather than on policies. Both are for international cooperation for peace, and both are agreed on full employment. But upon the

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solve this great problem after World War I.  
 “Isolationists, nationalists, American imperialists and others who give lip service to the principle of world organization but sabotage every effort to make it effective will either answer in the negative or so qualify their answers as to make them meaningless” (see the *New York Times*, October 13, 1944).

question of how to achieve full employment, neither has anything concrete to offer.

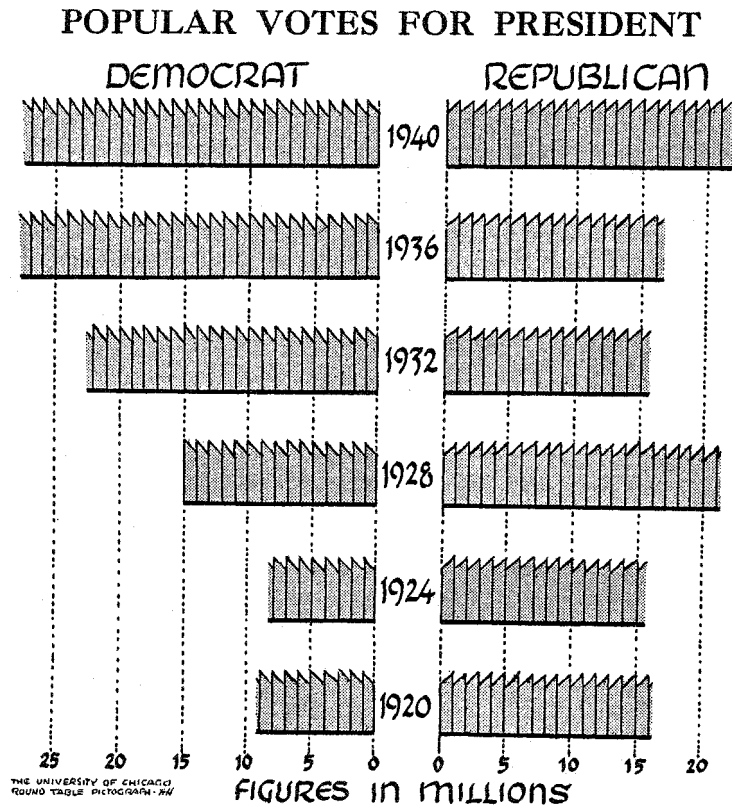
MR. CHILDS: There you get an interesting commentary on your point, Stone. You spoke about how impossible it is for a candidate to talk on the issues.

Governor Dewey went out to Los Angeles, and he spoke to ninety thousand people in that big coliseum with a big spectacle and a big show. I found, when I was out there just recently, that a lot of Republicans who heard him were very much disappointed. He gave a rather sober, intelligent discussion of social security and the need to expand it. What they had wanted was simply to see the New Deal fed to the lions.

MR. STONE: The mere expansion of social security is not enough to achieve full employment. In the case of both peace and jobs we come across a very serious stumbling block—in the first case, the word “sovereignty” and in the second case the term “private enterprise,” which are both sacred terms—sacred cows—of American thinking.

MR. ADLER: Shibboleths.

MR. STONE: Shibboleths. To attack them is to open yourself up to a broadside from the press. Yet, both sovereignty and private enterprise have to be limited, to some extent, if we are to achieve a successful solution to these problems.



MR. CHILDS: But, at the same time, on this matter of social security, Dewey has taken the aggressive. He went so far as to blanket in twenty million new people under the system.

MR. STONE: Childs, do you think that the New Deal would be at all opposed to extending social security to domestic servants?

MR. CHILDS: I do not know; I have not heard from the candidate on that.

MR. ADLER: Are there any other aspects of our future economic problems that neither candidate has adequately discussed?

MR. CHILDS: They have not really talked about reconversion. You have had it up before Congress in a vague sort of way.

MR. STONE: Nor the disposal of war plants.

MR. CHILDS: Nor rationing and price control. There you get another smear word. You get “bureaucracy” and “bureaucrats” discussed, instead of talking about whether or not it is necessary to continue controls for some time after the war.

MR. ADLER: You gentlemen are answering my question. You are naming issues that are not being faced. How about Negro rights? How about the whole question of minority rights in this country? Are the candidates facing that issue?

MR. STONE: Not very clearly.

MR. CHILDS: Willkie called the turn on that in his second article when he said that we are getting evasion and a kind of double-talk on it. Pious wishes—I think that Stone used the term “pious wishes” —covers that, too.<sup>5</sup>

MR. ADLER: Would you say that whether we shall have compulsory military training, or not, after this war, should be an issue in this campaign and one that the candidates should face? Has it been discussed publicly so far?

MR. STONE: It is certainly a basic issue. It would be very good to have it discussed. People need to have their minds cleared up on it.

MR. CHILDS: That is the point which I made before. It seems to me that the people in this country are probably ready to accept some form of universal military training or universal training, and yet both candidates have avoided talking about it at all.

MR. ADLER: I must say that it seems to me that Childs has the better of the argument now. Here he has a case where, it seems to me, as he points out, the candidates need not fear the public sentiment. The candidates are not merely trying to reach, they are lagging behind public sentiment on this question. Stone, will you tell us why, in this case, the candidates could not speak out plainly on the issue?

MR. STONE: The opposition candidate, I believe, can speak out more plainly than the President on these issues.

MR. ADLER: Why?

MR. STONE: If the President is reelected, he has the job of getting

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<sup>5</sup> Wendell L. Willkie, “Citizens of Negro Blood,” *Collier's*, October 7, 1944.

a treaty through Congress. He needs the support of the southern Democrats. He cannot go too far on the Negro issue without antagonizing them. He has a whole series of things to consider,

MR. CHILDS: Governor Dewey, if he is elected, will also need the support, in a sense, of the southern Democrats. He will not have a majority of the Senate as it works out, will he? So, I do not think that he is in a better position really than President Roosevelt. Of course, he will have the advantage of coming in with a new patronage power.

MR. ADLER: I gather that you gentlemen, although you do not quite agree as to how far these candidates could or should go in discussing these issues, do agree that there are a number of very important issues, both in foreign affairs and in, domestic policy, that the candidates have not adequately discussed for the electorate.

MR. CHILDS: There are issues which we are not hearing about at all. I would like to go back again to that parallel of the 1940 campaign. I had the feeling then that people were eager and that they really wanted to hear somebody speak out the truth. But nobody did.

MR. ADLER: There is one issue which has really been discussed—whether or not it is a real issue—and that is the issue of the old men versus the young men; the tried versus the energetic; the trained versus the untrained.

MR. CHILDS: In a sense, it is an issue, although it is not a real issue. It is an issue in the sense that we usually decide our political issues, as I think Stone said earlier, by personalities, by men, and by how they look, and by how they act, rather than by intellectual political issues.

MR. STONE: In normal times I think that the newcomers would have the advantage. People would think a change would be good. At this time, however, a lot of people will vote against a newcomer, because they are fearful of a change in the middle of a great war. On that hunch and on that feeling, they will vote for continuation of the present administration.

MR. CHILDS: Yet Dewey has his slogan, "It's time for a change." He talks about the tired, cynical old men. In a sense, that is an issue.

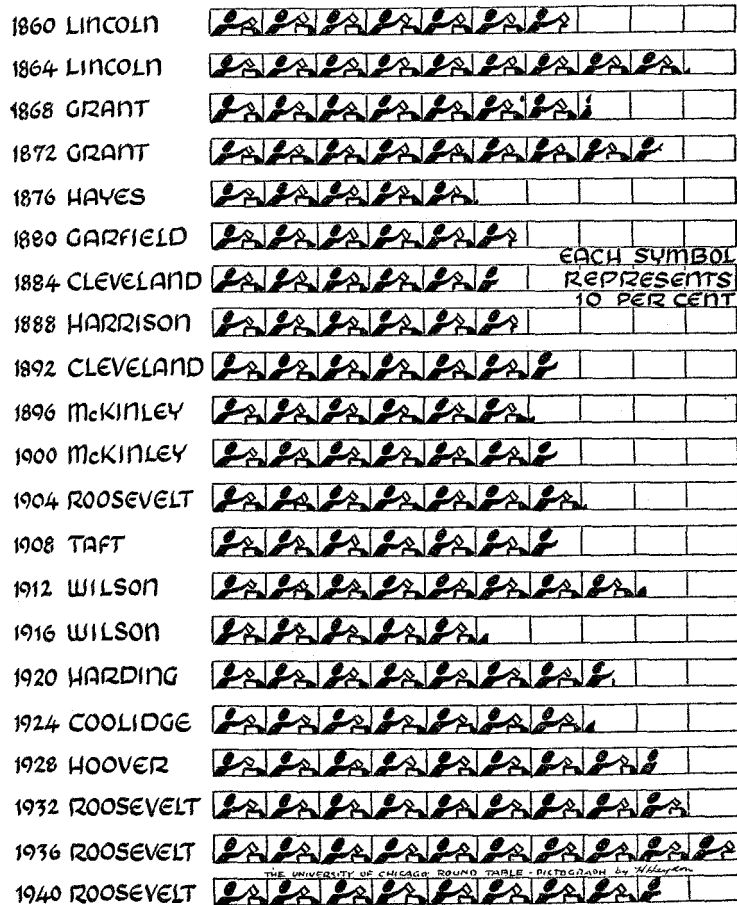
MR. STONE: And Roosevelt has Lincoln's slogan, "Don't change horses while crossing a stream."

MR. ADLER: Do I understand that the question of the fourth term is also involved, or is the fourth term not an issue this time, as the third

term was an issue in 1940?

## THE PRESIDENTIAL VOTE SINCE 1860

Percentage of Electoral Votes Received  
by the Winners



Source: *United States News*, July 28, 1944

MR. CHILDS: It is not nearly so pronouncedly an issue as it was four years ago. The third term, after all, broke the precedent of the two-term tradition. This time, it is merely a continuation. Of course, the opposition is using it very hard and, I think, to a certain extent, very effectively—continuing one party so long in office.

MR. STONE: If the war were not on, the fourth term would be an impossibility.

MR. CHILDS: That is, of course, obvious. We could not have had a third term, do you think, if you had not had the threat of the war?

MR. STONE: I do not think so.

MR. ADLER: This question that you are now discussing seems to me to be largely a question of personnel, not a question of policy.

MR. CHILDS: Personality, exactly! That is what it is.

MR. ADLER: So that it is a question not of a real difference of opinion between the Democratic and the Republican candidates as to what the major principles of the next four years in our political life are to be but of who can carry those principles out most effectively. It is a question, not of policy, but of administration.

MR. CHILDS: That is right. It is the question of the capacity of the two individuals.

MR. ADLER: Do you think that that issue has been argued?

MR. STONE: That is the way in which Dewey chooses to put the issue. He has accepted.

MR. ADLER: Is it a fair way to put the issue?

MR. STONE: Since 1936, the Republican party has accepted the basic objectives of the New Deal. Dewey recognizes that they are unassailable; that they are popular; that they are here to stay. Therefore, he puts the issue in terms of administration.

MR. CHILDS: That is quite true, of course, but I do think capacity is certainly a very relevant topic of discussion in the campaign. That is, it is a question of whether, with the crowd that has been in so long, we can get the kind of administrative changes that are obviously necessary or whether we can bring in a whole new crowd and gain by that. A lot of people, I believe, are going to vote on just that one thing.

MR. STONE: The strongest part of that issue arises from the question of the conduct of the war. In the 1864 war that was an issue; today it is not, because the war is being conducted successfully. The fact that it is being conducted successfully will weigh very largely in people's minds on the question of experience.

MR. CHILDS: It is our good luck this time that the conduct of the war is not an issue.

MR. STONE: Whatever it is, it is a fact.



MR. ADLER: Let us turn, for a moment, to some of the questionable issues—some of the bogeys that have been raised. I would certainly hesitate to call Fala a red herring.

MR. CHILDS: Fala is a piece of stage property—a piece of campaign property—that I do not think has very much to do with the things that are going to happen in the next four years.

MR. STONE: However, since the President mentioned Fala, Governor Dewey seems to have lost his head and been barking up the wrong tree.

MR. ADLER: One of the things that Governor Dewey has barked loudest about in the last few weeks has been communism. In his Charleston speech he charged the President with being supported by the Communists and, in turn, of supporting their cause. Is that a bogus issue, or is that a real one?

MR. STONE: Even Dewey has not dared to say explicitly that the President was supporting the Communist cause. He just tried to imply it. It is no more true that the President is a Communist because he has Browder's support than it is true that Dewey is a Fascist because he has Gerald L. K. Smith's support today.

MR. CHILDS: It is just as irrelevant as Fala, then.

MR. ADLER: Is Sidney Hillman just as irrelevant as Fala?

MR. CHILDS: Irrelevant in a sense, but the whole strategy of the Political Action Committee is at issue, in a way, in this campaign, as to whether it was a wise move or not a wise move.

MR. STONE: The PAC is very relevant here and relevant to our whole discussion. Adler, you are a political philosopher. Perhaps you can explain to me the subtle difference. Why is it that if wealthy men get together to pool millions of dollars against Roosevelt, with perfect propriety, it is considered somehow wrong for ordinary working people to contribute their dollars and dimes for Roosevelt?

MR. CHILDS: But look, after all, they got together in the Liberty League in 1936, which was one of the disasters for the Republican party in that campaign. I have heard the PAC described as a left-wing Liberty League. It has some of the disadvantages of the Liberty League.

MR. ADLER: As I understand Childs's point, he is not saying that they do not have the right to do so. He is saying that it is bad strategy.

MR. CHILDS: From the strategy of those who want to reelect President Roosevelt, that is the question.

MR. STONE: From the standpoint of our discussion, the attempt to awaken greater public interest in these issues, greater public discussion of them, greater participation in politics, the organization of workers as a political force is a very good move. It helps to energize the whole democratic process in our country.

MR. ADLER: I am glad to hear you say that, because it seems to me that you are moving over to where Childs and I were standing a little while ago. You are now saying that you think that real issues can be debated. You are now saying that educating the public—anything that draws larger and larger masses of the people into a real discussion of the issues—is good and should be done.

MR. STONE: The more discussion, the healthier our democracy is.

MR. CHILDS: Let us not forget that the Conservative party in Britain has gone about twice as far in this whole matter of social planning—and, of course, social planning the opposition sometimes likes to call communism, which, of course, is again a red herring and a bogey—through Lord Woolton’s report, toward planning a secure future than any party or any candidate in this country has gone.<sup>6</sup>

MR. STONE: There, again, in “communism” we have another one of the bogey words—like “bureaucracy,” “sovereignty”—which prevent clear thinking on basic economic and political issues.

MR. CHILDS: They are scare words as much as smear words. They seem to scare the candidates.

MR. ADLER: Would you say the same thing about such words as “capitalism,” “free enterprise,” “private property?” Are these scare words?

MR. STONE: Those are “sacred-cow” words.

MR. ADLER: Really! That is, both candidates have said that

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<sup>6</sup> See *Time*, October 9, 1944, “Inevitability of Gradualness,” page 34, for a report of the announcement of Lord Woolton’s social security plan.

they are for the American system of free enterprise.

MR. CHILDS: They are shibboleths which the candidates feel somehow that they have to defer to and that they have to bow to?

MR. ADLER: Where is there a real difference? I am interested in being informed by you gentlemen on this point. They both are for free enterprise, and if everybody has a sense that there is some real difference between Roosevelt and Dewey with respect to our general economic policy, what is that difference?

MR. CHILDS: The difference is with respect to the degree of control which would be exercised by the Republican party in power or the Democratic party in power.

MR. STONE: The difference, as judged by the voter, will be on the basis of their record and their backing.

MR. CHILDS: The difference in what they say, too, don't you think? Don't you believe that speeches make any difference in a campaign?

MR. STONE: I do not think that speeches make much difference. Most people are too shrewd to pay too much attention to them.

MR. CHILDS: That is as much as to say that you do not believe that the discussion of issues makes much difference.

MR. STONE: The discussion of issues could make a great deal of difference; but the discussion of shibboleths—things that are not issues—makes very little difference.

MR. ADLER: Not only could but should.

MR. STONE: Could and should. But the discussion of shibboleths, scare words, and sacred-cow words do not add to anybody's understanding and are pretty much ignored by the public.

MR. CHILDS: That is true. But, Stone, you are coming around to agree with us that it would be desirable if they did talk about the issues but that they do not.

MR. STONE: I merely tried to stress the point that the people of this country have to think hard about these issues if they want their leaders to have the courage to talk about them.

MR. CHILDS: In other words, we will rule out Fala, Earl Browder, and Gerald L. K. Smith as completely irrelevant. Is that correct?

MR. ADLER: They are three bedfellows, but I am sorry for Fala's being in the company of either Browder or Gerald L. K. Smith.

I gather, gentlemen, as I understand your observations and your opinions drawn from them, that, on the main question of whether the candidates are facing the central issues in this campaign, you both say that they are not. You documented that by saying that they were not facing the issues in our foreign policy, of the power our delegates should have in the council of the United Nations, or on the question of how the Senate, or Congress in general, should ratify foreign agreements and treaties. You say that they agree on foreign policy with this proviso.

You also say that in domestic economic policy, there is a general agreement, but not a real discussion of the actual questions involved in the economic processes of the next four years.

You have said that the candidates have not faced the question of Negro rights or compulsory military training. You have pointed out that the one real issue which they have argued is the argument of personnel—the young versus the old; the tried versus the energetic. In addition, you pointed out that charges of communism are irrelevant in this campaign.

I am happy, however, to have you both say that you think it would be better for our democratic process if the candidates faced the issues more squarely and educated the public as well as solicited their votes.

*The ROUND TABLE, oldest educational program continuously on the air, is broadcast entirely without script, although participants meet in advance, prepare a topical outline, and exchange data and views. The opinion of each speaker is his own and in no way involves the responsibility of either the University of Chicago or the National Broadcasting Company. The supplementary information in this transcript has been developed by staff research and is not to be considered as representing the opinions of the ROUND TABLE speakers.*

### **What Do You Think?**

1. Summarize what, in your opinion, are the great issues in the 1944 presidential campaign. Do you think that the domestic or foreign-policy issues are the more important? To what extent do you think that the coming election will be a mandate of the people on policy?

2. Are the candidates meeting and discussing the issues that you believe important? Is it as necessary for the President, who has a record of twelve years in office, to discuss issues now as for the opposition to do so? What advantages does the opposition have?
3. Review the history of political parties in the United States and discuss the successes and failures of the two-party system as it has operated in the past. What is the role of a third party in American elections? Would you favor a multi-party system?
4. Ascertain how your state has voted at each of the presidential elections since World War I. Can the results be reasonably attributed to a relationship between the predominant interests of the people and the issues of each campaign?
5. Do you agree or disagree with the speakers that the two major parties today agree on basic principles? Discuss in light of the history of American political parties. If you disagree with the speakers, outline the different policies for which the Republican and Democratic parties stand.
6. What are the special difficulties of the occurrence of an election in wartime? Do you think that the military situation during the next few weeks will influence the results? Is there a danger that the election will be one on war issues and that no decision will be made on peace policy? Discuss.
7. What is the underlying political philosophy behind political parties in a democracy? Should loyal membership in a political party have the importance that is given to it in American political attitudes? Are the major issues of policy in this country settled outside the framework of parties? Discuss.

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*See the recent issues of Vital Speeches and Current History for the texts of the various campaign speeches.*



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