Truman Victory Is Found To Contain Four Elements

New Deal Ideas, Truman's Faith in Them, Clifford's Tactics, Labor Held Responsible

By JAMES RESTON

The elements of President Truman's remarkable victory, it is generally agreed, were these:


2. The faith of President Truman in these ideas and his courage in basing his campaign on them.

3. The political tactics of Clark Clifford which won the admiration of the electorate, if not of Mr. Truman's other associates in Washington.

4. The organization of a labor movement, which acquired strength from the middle and the right by shielding the support of the ideological left.

There are many observers who believe there were other important and even decisive factors—the arid personality of Governor Dewey, the attempt of the New York Governor to sit on the fence while keeping the picket lines of car workers posted, etc.—but these four considerations, combined with the nation's unparallel economic prosperity, are generally credited with having won for Mr. Truman the most dramatic electoral victory since Wilson defeated Hughes in 1916.

Truman Held Impersonal

Mr. Truman has probably never been so impersonal as with the structure of the New Freedom philosophy among the electorate as he is this morning. Last week, despite his great show of confidence and his defiance of all his detractors, he was scarcely as confident in private as he was in public during the campaign. When his campaign train rolled into Chicago a week ago last Monday evening, he died a little. And his chances in moderate and even disparaging terms:

"Mr. Dewey will fight anyway," he said to one of his Illinois colleagues; and that was about the measure of his faith.

Nevertheless, such as it was, his faith was greater than that of almost any other member of his official party with the possible exception of his handsome young secretary of political tactics, Clark Clifford.

He apparently decided that, even if he lost, he would lose running on the New Deal, assure its future—and his own—in a world which was clearly going to the Left. And in the end that philosophy evidently paid off.

"More Prices, and Places to Live" was the main burden of his argument. Everywhere he went he emphasized in hopenote terms the issues popularized by his predecessors: controls for "the interests"; more, cheaper food; more, easier mortgagability; and even privileges for labor; benefits for the farmers; conservation of the resources of the nation; medical security; and equality for all citizens before the law.

Many times in the forty-months since the death of Franklin Roosevelt, Mr. Truman had fought dubiously and even waveringly supporter of many of the New Deal measures of the past, but in identifying himself in the end with these issues, he gained a response which was greater than anybody in his campaign to landslide.

Clifford Backed This Strategy

Almost alone among the White House advisers, Clark Clifford supported this strategy. He described the President's campaign problems in these terms:

When the Democratic convention met in Philadelphia last July, he recalled, the President was abandoned by all except his most intimate supporters. The liberal wing of the party had left him: the States' Rights Democrats of the South were in rebellion; the Democratic party's organization, accustomed to using the branding-iron on labor, was dispirited and even hopeless.

"At that time," Mr. Clifford observed, "we were on our own 20-yard line. We had to be bold. If we had to handicap ourselves in moderate terms, we might have reached midfield when the gun went off, so we had to throw long passes—anything to stir up labor, and to get the mass of the voters in the Middle West, New England and the East—especially the workingmen, particularly the use of blunt instruments to win the racial and religious groups of the cities—meet considerable opposition by the middle men of his party. The Chicago speech—comparing Mr. Dewey and the Republican with the totalitarian movements of Italy, Germany and Japan—was much more violent in its condemnation of a draft than when it was finally delivered, but even then it did not win the support of all Mr. Truman's colleagues.

Nevertheless, the tactic worked better than its contrivers dreamed, and the wily Mr. Dewey, under the influence of the campaign are not likely to remain as a model of morality, though the Republicans' objective of persuading the electorate to something important was afoot.

Labor did "get out the vote," as the President had pleaded with it to do. The Democrats' broad campaign to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and defeat the return to power of the "influential minorities" was pictured as a symbol of reaction.

What the effect of this campaign will be remains in serious doubt. By his tactics, Mr. Truman has opened up some old party wounds, but he has closed some for his own advantage; he has at the same time won the admiration and even the allegiance not only of many members of his own party but of many of the most powerful members of the opposition.

Men like Senator Arthur Van denberg, for example, whose support the President will have to have to implement the foreign and domestic programs he has outlined, are fully as much disposed to go with the program as if not for his tactics, and at least for a time, he is expected to will the support of the first Congress convenes early in the New Year.