Who Really Elected Truman?

By SAMUEL LUBELL

What caused the "greatest upset in American history"? Has the United States become "normally Democratic"? Swinging around the country, this reporter rang doorbells in fifteen key areas and got his answers straight from the voters.
dying, removed the roadblock to a successful assault upon the staunchest Republican citadels.

Whether victory might have gone to Dewey had he slugged it out, issue for issue, will be debated endlessly. This much is clear: Dewey's 'high-level' talks on 'unity' bear no relation to the way the vote broke. In contrast, Truman's efforts seem tailored to the returns and constitute one middle-class, one working-class effort for unity, as a tribute to Democratic Chairman J. Howard McGrath, to whom Truman owes more than Roosevelt did to Farley.

In Roosevelt, the "common people" saw their benefactor. Truman hesitated just the right pitch in the matter of issues. He had fighting, folksy tones to appeal to the Roosevelt elements—labor, organized as well as organized; the foreign-born and their first and second generation offspring; also Negroes and Catholics. Helping him was something Dewey sorely lacked—enemies to dramatize his political convictions. Although Henry Wallace cost the Democrats New York and Maryland, he appears to have helped elect Truman. So do the Dixicrats.

The election has been dismissed as a vote for prevailing prosperity—that plus popular anger against high living costs, inadequate housing and the Taft-Hartley Law. With the Democrats controlling Congress and the presidency, Republicans now take comfort in the belief that they will profit from the voters' wrath in 1962. But the 1948 vote resulted from factors which have been remaking our political life for at least a generation—birth rates, economic status, racial groups, the rise of Government as an employer, the development of middle class with underdog memories. In terms of these forces, the Republicans appear, to me, weaker today than during Roosevelt's dazzling victories.

The Post sent me out to do an original kind of survey. My instructions were: "Find out where the vote broke. Report your findings as impartially as if reporting a football game.*"

The 29,000 votes Wallace polled in Illinois—his best showing—disappointed his supporters. "Dewey by 60,000" was the forecast for Massachusetts. But Truman's astonishing plurality topped 240,000, for a larger popular vote than Roosevelt ever got. Why?

Clumsily, the Republican state legislature put on the ballot proposals to legalize birth control and to crack down on trade-union. Two no issues could have more effectively aroused the Democratic vote, concentrated among working-class elements of Irish, Italian, French-Canadian and Polish descent, all predominantly Catholic. One observer told me, "The church did a job on the women, while the unions got out the men."

The impact of this drive was particularly pronounced in historic Charlestown, where congested hillside streets surround Bunker Hill Monument. In 1940 Roosevelt carried Charlestown by nearly four to one. Truman did better than six to one. Men in their seventies and eighties, who hadn't voted for years, came out to cast "a vote that still alive."Many had to be helped to the polls by daughters or granddaughters who had their own grievances—higher prices.

As surprising as Truman's showing was Charlestown's Republican vote—the lowest in nearly twenty years. Local issues seem mainly responsible. In contrast, the supposedly disintegrating Democrats were never more united locally. By arranging Maurice Tobin's appointment as Secretary of Labor, Howard McGrath averted a bitter primary fight between Tobin and Paul Dever for the gubernatorial nomination. Another assist to Democratic unity was that little matter of a pardon for Mayor James M. Curley, jailed for mail fraud. In past campaigns, Curley often did a "family-entrance" business with Republicans. This time, one restaurant owner confided: "I was all set to vote for Dewey when the boss (meaning Curley) called me in and said, 'Dever.'"

But if local GOP follies hurt Dewey—as they did throughout the country—his own speeches frightened some conservative voters. A ropermaker in the Charlestown Navy Yard, three years short of thirty, voted for Dewey: "I was all set to vote for Dewey when the boss (meaning Curley) called me in and said, 'Dever.'"

On my 1940 visit, Galvin felt "probably no section in the country gained more under the New Deal than Charlestown." The last eight years brought more benefits. Frame houses built in the days of Edward Everett are being reshingled. More conspicuous are new baby carriages. In 1940 there were fewer babies, and they often were wheeled in borrowed carriages. As many as seventy persons a day then passed through Galvin's door seeking favors, but if local GOP follies hurt Dewey—as they did throughout the country—his own speeches frightened some conservative voters. A ropermaker in the Charlestown Navy Yard, three years short of thirty, voted for Dewey: "I was all set to vote for Dewey when the boss (meaning Curley) called me in and said, 'Dever.'"

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Galvin himself now is commissioner of markets, a $5500 post securely upholstered with civil service. An autographed picture of Maurice Tobin hangs on his living-room wall. Both Galvin’s climb and these are generally looking for better jobs.

Galvin’s story is a regular toppled the “Yankee Republican” vote locally. The New Deal brought a lift for the poor. Under Truman and postwar prosperity, the whole Irish middle class feels strengthened.

Strategists have assumed that people become Republican when they ascend to higher incomes. One Boston election surprise was the suburb of Arlington, with $10,000 and $20,000 homes, going Democratic for the first time. Arlington has been drawing the more successful Irish families from Boston. One resident explained, “I own a nice house, have a new car and am much better off than my parents were. I’ve been a Democrat all my life. Why change?”

The heavier Truman pluralities among Italo-Americans also merit attention. Precincts which went two or three to one for Roosevelt plumped for Truman six to one. This happened through the nation. Some Italo-Americans resented Roosevelt’s “stab-in-the-back” criticism of Mussolini for attacking France. During this campaign, Boston’s Italian wards were saturated with leaflets telling how Truman “saved Italy from communism.”

In Springfield, an Italo-American was elected to Congress for the first time. State Senator Mike Lopresti estimates that the Italian vote jumped 10 per cent since 1944. One veteran I met at a hod carriers’ victory celebration had a brother and sister who were first voters, with six more still to come of age. He kept talking of the “labor party’s great victory.” Had the unions, not the Democrats, won? He shook his head. “The Democrats are the labor party. We workers are the Democrats.”

BUFFALO

Republican leaders hoped Polish-Americans would swing to them in resentment against Roosevelt’s alleged “betrayal” of Poland. The heads of the two strongest Polish-American societies supported Dewey. But, if Roosevelt’s pluralities were thinned, Polish wards in Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh and Chicago remained Democratic three to one.

What happened can be seen in Buffalo, where the Poles gave Truman nearly a fourth of his total city vote. Centering around Broadway and Fillmore, the Polish-Americans still maintain a community of their own, with its own Polish-language newspaper. Of the newspaper’s twenty-two linotype operators, one voted for Dewey. Many of these printers had set type for stories accusing Roosevelt of “selling out.”

Poland, but what really rankled them was the Taft-Hartley Act, which the Typographical Union fought.

“The Poles voted for their pocketbooks, not for Poland,” declared tavern-keeper John Kryzinski, a Democratic ward leader.

The years of full employment have nourished a growing middle class here. The Polish community in Buffalo and surrounding Erie County is raising $1,000,000, matching $1,000,000 of public funds, to build the first Polish hospital in New York State. To young Polish-Americans studying medicine, the new hospital promises greater opportunities.

When the Democrats ran Buffalo, Polish-Americans held five top posts, as commissioners of health, parks, buildings, licenses and as city treasurer. In 1946 fell to Truman.

ST. LOUIS

Of the many upsets which snowballed into the “Truman miracle,” the most sensational has hardly been noted—the movement of voters of German descent out of the Republican fold. It occurred not only in Missouri, but in Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa—to mention only areas I visited.

South St. Louis long has been regarded as an unfailing source of good beer and equally copious draughts of Republican votes. Even in the face of Roosevelt victories, it returned Walter C. Ploeser to Congress four times. In 1948, Republicans expected a greater triumph. Instead, Ploeser was defeated. Precincts which Dewey carried against Roosevelt in 1944 fell to Truman.

Typifying this shift were two precincts back of Broadway, along Bates Street. When erected fifty years ago, most of the well-kept houses cost from $1800 to $3000. In today’s market they bring $5000, even $7500. The owner of one row of houses, a Republican, reeled off the occupations of his tenants—brewery worker, carpenter, steam-fitter, painter. “They all carry union cards around here,” he said. “That’s what beat us.” As we talked, the tenant in the house alongside came out with his wife. They got into their car and drove off without a “good evening” to their landlord.
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about St. Louis is that many German-American families of modest means appear to have been deterred from voting Democrat in past elections by some mental block, now lifted. In one family, the wife turned Democrat with the depression because of "everything Roosevelt did for the people," a husband, war uncompromisingly Republican. At first, he gave no specific reason, then explained, "Why did Roosevelt get us into war?"

A Republican gave me a résumé of German-American voting history. He proudly related how the "damned Dutch" saved St. Louis for the North in the Civil War, becoming Republicans. They were confirmed in their political faith when Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, took us into World War I. In 1928, Al Smith drew many Catholic votes. In 1932, the Taft-Hartley Act provoked otherwise conservative unionists.

Truman is the first recent Democratic President whose foreign policy stirs no conflicts among Americans of German descent. The Marshall Plan, considered helpful to Germany, is popular even among former isolationists. One estimate given me was that St. Louisans spend $30,000 of aid monthly to relatives by every family. Typically, the Republicans helped the 1948 drift to the Democrats. The unions with the heaviest Germanic memberships are mainly old-line craft unions which have had closed shops for more than a generation. The Taft-Hartley Act provoked otherwise conservative unionists.

STETTIN, WISCONSIN

More dramatic was the German-American shift in rural areas. Milwaukee, long Stetthi, swung fully. Over in the sheriff's office last October. The day after elections he stamped into the store, exclaiming, "There's something wrong with this burg."

Catholic turnout. In 1946 the Catholic Church denounced the DFL as a communist front. This year the College of Our Lady, a Catholic college, endorsed the Democratic ticket.

Truman did better than Roosevelt in St. Paul. That labor was not primarily responsible is indicated by his vote in such labor strongholds as Duluth and Minneapolis. St. Paul's unusual showing can be traced to a record, or near-record, of Humphrey. One of his last votes was against the Marshall Plan. Returning home this fall, Knutson sensed the shift of public sentiment and announced his conversion to the Marshall Plan. Fears that the Republicans intended to tax farm cooperatives also contributed to the rout of Knutson—and Dewey.

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DETROIT

Nowhere was there greater enthusiasm for either candidate, which makes the firmness with which the Roosevelt vote held. In several of the large automobile and representative auto-worker precincts around Chrysler's East Jefferson plant, Roosevelt's 1944 majority ran twelve to one. When I visited the UAW's Chrysler local 7, the large majority of the "leftist" officials in charge was only too evident. The bulletin board bristled with photographs of police clubbing strikers and of tear-gas riotings. A near-by district office displayed all pictures on this same bulletin board record annual out-ings and sporting events. A near-by street every day was cordoned off. On the nearest houses, the "leftist" leaders were gone —ousted in the fight against communism which Walter Reuther led. The heads of the new officers is the slogan: "UAW Americanism for Us."

Steady employment undoubtedly has contributed to this "settling down." Over the last three presidential elections, the district has grown from around 30,000 to 70,000. In 1940 gleams with fluorescent light, a sign that the middle class —three banks over the last three presidential elections, the 28th Precinct, alongside, the Republican precincts in each time about three to two. The 28th Precinct, alongside, the Republicans have won as consistently by better than two to one. The precinct is predominantly machine-made, though the Re-

Harlem, new york city

Wallace did make some headway among Negroes. His best showing was in Harlem, where he ran about 9,000 votes behind Dewey's 34,000, Truman polled 108,000. Wallace's success in Harlem were almost all pictures on this same bulletin board record annual out-ings and sporting events. A near-by street every day was cordoned off. On the nearest houses, the "leftist" leaders were gone —ousted in the fight against communism which Walter Reuther led.

Cleveland

Ohio was Truman's closest victory —by 7107 votes. Here Republicans la-

Philadelphia

Philadelphia Republicans made perhaps the best showing in the city. Although Dewey's total vote fell below forecasts, this was the only city where Dewey gained in every precinct. Roosevelt's 1944 plurality of 150,000 was cut to 6737, enabling the GOP to

Chicago

Here, a score of years ago, the fortuitously rural 40th Ward was de-

Los Angeles

Striking evidence of how Truman may have been swept into the presi-
dency by local congressional battles can be found in the 66th Assembly Dis-

What would you have done?

During the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, natives caught in possession of firearms were tortured or put to death. Japanese patrols roamed the countryside, checking for firearms hidden in houses or on the person of travelers. One day when my brother and I, accompanied by our dog Tigre, were returning to our town from another village, we caught sight of a Japanese "pistol patrol" coming toward us across a broad field. It was a desperate situation, because I had a pistol tucked at my waist inside my shirt, for protection against highwaymen. I could not concealer pistol in the bare, grassless rice field; there wasn't time to bury it. Turning back would invite suspicion and pursuit. And I knew that the pistol would not escape the inevitable "frisking" by the Japs. Can you guess how I got rid of my weapon?

Slipping off my light sweater, I hastily wrapped the pistol in it, fas-
tened the bundle with a cord, and tied the cord around the dog's middle. Relieving the dog, I told my brother to join me in howls of simulated laughter. Poor Tigre, yelping with dismay at the strange thing which kept bumping his legs, went tearing past the Japs, heading for home. The Japs just grinned at this silly joke of a couple of yokels, and when we got home we found Tigre . . . and the gun.

Benjamin De Mesa.
Public opinion failed to bring home the bacon as it had done in recent off-year elections when fat local jobs were at stake.

"We got some pamphlets on the Taft-Hartley Law, but threw them into the furnace," confided one Republican leader. "The telephone kept ringing as we talked, and he would stop to tell someone, "No contract gets cleared at the state house unless we okay it."" Reeling on, he explained the machine's strategy. "We tell the ward leader, 'Forget who's running for President—you're the candidate. Get out the vote or you're not re-elected ward leader.'"

PITTSBURGH

The great Republican mistake, I believe, was to assume there was a "natural pendulum swing" which had won them control of Congress in 1946 and which would carry them the rest of the way into the White House. In 1940, in every city I surveyed, Roosevelt's vote broke at the same level, between forty-five and sixty-dollar rentals, or the equivalent of FHA-value homes. Below this economic line, Roosevelt scored overwhelming pluralities, above it he invariably lost.

The 1946 congressional elections were free of this economic voting. But in 1948 the economic line Roosevelt drew across the face of American politics reasserted itself. A ward-by-ward check of Pittsburgh, for example, reveals a virtually identical economic voting as we talked, and he would stop to tell someone, "No contract gets cleared at the state house unless we okay it." Rambling on, he explained the machine's strategy. "We tell the ward leader, 'Forget who's running for President—you're the candidate. Get out the vote or you're not re-elected ward leader.'"

Significantly, most urban areas where Truman bettered Roosevelt's popular vote were Catholic. The higher birth rates of which Italian, Czech, Irish and Polish families had twenty-five years ago have been hatching out. In one East Pittsburgh precinct with 450 votes, Ward Leader James Duffy picked out forty-eight new voters, all of them Democrats.

Overall, I found that in city after city through the Roosevelt years, the former "minorities" became the new majority. This indicates what has become of the GOP pendulum. That pendulum reflected the normally Republican majority which evoked from the Civil War. With each successive election the proportion of the population to whom 1860 has any political meaning dwindles. The Republican problem becomes increasingly one of finding a new political vehicle of a design to attract new passangers.

From the Republican viewpoint, perhaps the harshest fact the 1948 returns reveal is how many ordinarily conservative persons feared a Republican victory. Is this because the processes of inflation, government infiltration and global political action have already gone so far that people feel our whole social structure rests upon government supports?

Whatever the reason, the doctrine of too little government seems to have become as frightening as that of too much government. Unless the Republicans can develop their own concept of the positive role that government is supposed to play in American life, they will have to resign themselves, in the judgment of this reporter, to a minority status, with their best hope for victory lying in a Democratic equivalent of the Bull Moose split. Dewey, in fact, came close to becoming a minority President, as Wilson was in 1912.

Whether the Democrats can hold together is still the crucial question. Can they cement their new farmer allies with their older labor following? If Wallace and the Dixiecrats are welcomed back, the great Republican mistake, I believe, was to assume there was a "natural pendulum swing" which had won them control of Congress in 1946 and which would carry them the rest of the way into the White House

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"I think I know now what you want, madame—it doesn't exist."
DATE WITH DEATH

(Continued from Page 35)
evident she did not waste her charm on her own sex, and more apparent as she turned to a woman Jonas did not see until he was in her room. She was sitting primly on a stiff sofa against the inner wall, white-haired and pink-cheeked, dressed in her Sunday best, with innocent dark-blue eyes, as mild and happy-looking as a small sweet-tempered child at a birthday party.

"Hello, there, Miss Oliver," Philippa said. "How on earth did you get here?"

"I walked," Miss Olive said.

"My granddaughter, Elizabeth Darrell, Doctor Smith," Professor Darrell said.

"Now let's have a drink. Where's Wetherby? Wetherby?" He glared around at the doorway.

"And this, Miss Oliphant, Jennifer, Doctor Smith," Elizabeth said.

Jenny put her hand, small, tense and very cold, in Jonas'. "How do you do, Doctor Smith?"

"And Miss Oliphant, Doctor Smith," Elizabeth said.

"It's a great pleasure to meet you and welcome you to Annapolis, Doctor Smith," Miss Oliphant said happily.

"My father had a great friend who was a Doctor Smith, but I don't expect you're any connection of his. He lived in New Orleans. I don't recall his first name, but he

"Jennifer!"

Jonas released Miss Oliphant's clump, soft little hand with a start and turned around. Professor Darrell was standing over the section of the morning paper that had slid off the love seat, glaring at it as if it were a coiled snake.

"Jennifer, haven't I told you —

"That wasn't Jenny, grandfather. That was me. Jenny's warm, beautiful voice, that stirred the roots of Jonas Smith's spinal column, also slightly staggered him with its calm disregard for palpable truth. "I left that there, dear. Not Jenny.

"It doesn't make any difference any-

"Professor Darrell bent down and picked the paper up. "It's the way they fold the damned things these days. Won't stay together five minutes. Where's Wetherby with those tabloids. Won't stay together five minutes."

"And this is my sister, Jennifer, Doctor Smith."

"Didn't Doctor Smith want you in the position? You said you were going to apply for it. I'm very sure you said it to me right here in this room, Elizabeth. I was sitting where Miss Van Holt is.

"Oh, Miss Olive, please! That was before —

"Before you saw he was so young and handsome, dear?" Philippa Van Holt raised her eyebrows, uncrossed one shapely leg and crossed it with the other. "And unmarried? I should think that would be the chief reason —

"I'd be delighted to have Miss Darrell for my assistant," Jonas said. He grinned cheerfully over at her. "I think it's a wonderful idea. If your grandfather can spare you."

"If she wants a job, she can have it, and I don't see it's anybody's business but her own."

"It's all set, then," Jonas grinned at Elizabeth again. "Tomorrow at nine, Miss Darrell."

"You know she was one of the best nurse's aides. Doctor French signaled her out for —

"Miss Olive, please be quiet!"

"Oh, let her go on, Elizabeth," Philippa Van Holt said. It seemed to Jonas to be little short of refined malice. "I think it's fascinating, and if Doctor Smith's going to hire her, he certainly has a right to know your qualifications, if any."

Elizabeth Darrell had got to her feet. She was looking past Philippa Van Holt through the long window behind her into the court. The scarlet was gone from her face. Jonas saw her lips part a little, the pulse throbb quicken in her throat. Philippa Van Holt turned her head to look too.

"Oh, middishpman," she said indifferently. She brightened at once. "Or is it Tom? Most middishpman are so young, but I adore Tom."

Jonas took out his pipe and began to fill it carefully. Middishpman? Tom Darrell was a middishpman, yet he had worn the uniform of a commissioned