

ROOSEVELT AND THE HIGHER POLITICS

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No previous President half way through his term ever won such an overwhelming popular endorsement as Mr. Roosevelt received on Tuesday. . . The President's personality dominated the whole campaign. It was as if he were present at every polling place. . . Candidates stood or fell according to their attitude toward him. The result was astounding. It reversed all the political traditions and rules regarding the party in power at the time of a mid-term congressional election. . . The whole constituted an individual triumph for the President such as never came to any of his predecessors, whether in peace time or in war.

THE above statement is an excerpt from an editorial in the *New York Times*, published two days after the November election. Its tenor is not unique, however, for its counterpart appeared in any number of newspapers both at home and abroad. Since President Roosevelt is so incontestably what the people want at this moment—the symbol of a nation's hope—it may be profitable to examine the nature of his leadership, to answer our own question as whether he is a politician or a statesman or a happy blend of both.

Such a study calls first for a definition of those perennial political phenomena—the politician and the statesman. Huey Long of Louisiana, James Farley of New York, and James Watson of Indiana are unhesitatingly classed as politicians; Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln are just as immediately placed as statesmen, and this cannot be entirely because the latter group has passed from the scene. We know, however, that John Randolph of Roanoke was not alone in his day in opposing Jefferson for the reason that he was “just another politician who lived up to none of his professions”. And Washington while alive was referred to as the “step-father” of his country as well as the father; the *Independent Gazetteer* for October 5, 1787, published an article in which the idea is expressed that “To talk of the Wisdom of the Great Commander and the Great Philosopher is to talk nonsense, for Washington was a fool from nature and Franklin was a fool from age”. Lincoln was even more savagely attacked; one line from a speech by Douglas will serve as an illustration. I refer to the Havana speech in which Douglas called Lincoln “a liar, a coward, a wretch, and a sneak”.

The *Oxford Dictionary* throws but little light on the question as to the exact nature of each of these political phenomena. Its first definition is: "Politician—a politic person; chiefly in a sinister sense, a shrewd schemer; a crafty plotter or intriguer". It then quotes a dozen pertinent passages from literature to buttress, or illuminate further, the initial statement. From Macaulay's essay on Hallam is quoted the sentence: "A politician, where factions run high, is interested not for the whole people, but for his own section of it." As for the statesman, this greatest of dictionaries has this perfunctory definition of him: "One who takes a leading part in the affairs of a state or body politic, one who is skilled in the management of public affairs".

But there are plenty of other definitions from less authoritative quarters. For example: "A politician thinks of the next election; a statesman of the next generation". "The statesman wishes to steer, while the politician is satisfied to drift". "A politician looks for the success of his party; a statesman for the success of his country". Former-Governor Phil LaFollette believes that "a statesman will compromise on details, and a politician will compromise on anything". Charles Beard has said that "A statesman is one who divines the long future, foresees the place of his class and nation in it, labours intelligently to prepare his countrymen for their fate, combines courage with discretion, takes risks, has good luck, exercises caution where it is necessary, and goes off the stage with a reasonable degree of respectability". John Middleton Murry writes that "A statesman must possess an extraordinary degree of disinterestedness—not merely ethical, but intellectual also. . . And he will not easily be produced. The raw material of which he will be made is the disinterested politician. . . The creative democratic leader is he who gives form and point and focus to the unconscious will of his followers. He expresses not their expressions, but themselves".

The distinction that I myself make between these two classes of public servants is that politicians are primarily concerned with private purposes, and statesmen with public ones. The former "do a little service for a lot of people on a lot of little subjects," while the latter try "to do a big service out there in the void". That is, the politician devotes ninety per cent. or more of his time and thought toward getting Tom, Mary, and Bill a job or an exemption from some governmental rule that is about to oppress them; but the statesman, though he must give a varying amount of his time to the individual constituent's demands, attempts, nevertheless, to centre his best thought on an employment program

that will provide work generally, or on humanizing the official government so that the individual's needs in the great society will be satisfied; and he does this as a matter of public duty rather than as a special favour. The statesman is disinterested, in the sense that he strives to serve the entire electorate rather than a fraction of it. And he knows that only by serving the whole group can he permanently serve himself. He is an architect of an organic social order. And he must be both a dramatic artist and a practical student of human nature in politics; for this more perfect vision is useless unless he can compellingly bring the ideal he has before him to the attention of a people that will not feed on pale theory.

The politician, on the other hand, is the prototype of the unregenerate male. He is "the common man to an uncommon degree"—the man untroubled by Puritan ideals, independent notions, pioneer instincts, tendencies toward reflection or asceticism. He believes, above all else, in the *status quo*, and that "you can't change human nature". His life is based on these two assumptions; and his good humor is based on his vast tolerance for the ways, foibles, and weaknesses of man. He is an Aaron Burr rather than a John Quincy Adams; his strength is based on man's imperfections. He seldom becomes a person of high national repute, because he does not develop outstanding qualities of leadership of the sort a man needs if he is to lead a people out of a wilderness. To put it in a nut-shell, he is perfectly capable of keeping men going in Egypt, but he will never cross any Red Seas or reach any Promised Lands. The statesman, however, not only thinks about a promised land and envisages it, but tries the nearly impossible tasks of endeavoring to describe it to the people and, then, of taking definite steps to reach it.

These and other criteria are naturally being applied now to our President. He has been most emphatically placed at the top of both ranks, as politician or statesman, during his entire political rise, and is now being judged with double emphasis, in the heyday of his power. Al Smith has called him a "John F. Curry in kid gloves"; on the other hand, Barron Collier in his much quoted words says: "As right as Roosevelt—following where he leads with unwavering faith and courageous action, will bring nearer the 'To-morrow' in which are centred the hopes of all of the United States".

I

Naturally, there is an element of truth in both of these statements, for a statesman in a democracy must also be a successful politician lest all of his good works die a-borning, because his leadership depends on his ability to persuade a controlling number of voters to follow him. Roosevelt first revealed his political astuteness on a national scale in the rough give-and-take of party strategy, by capturing the presidential nomination of his party in a year when nomination meant the election. His emissaries button-holed "key people" and delegates in all the states and territories, even in the same practical fashion that Harry Daugherty used in rounding up delegates for Senator Harding. If the methods were identical, it indicates that both of the presidential candidates were served by realistic campaign-managers. According to the applause of the galleries, Al Smith was the people's choice in 1932; but for some reason, unknown to this writer, Al and his friends had neglected the practical task of lining up the delegates before they reached Chicago; maybe it was overconfidence.

What the Roosevelt managers failed to do before the Convention, they finished doing on the Convention floor or in hotel bedrooms; they secured the 90 votes pledged to Cactus Jack Garner. The nomination came to Roosevelt on the 4th ballot. This story is brief and simple; but had Roosevelt and his friends neglected the realistic politics of this presidential primary, there would be no need for writing this article to-day.

II

Then there is Roosevelt's policy in the matter of patronage. Jobs are the backbone of a party organization, and organization is equally indispensable to military forces, foot-ball teams, or political parties. Roosevelt knows this as well as any Tammany district leader; he understands that "political rewards" and public survival are directly related. (But he differs from the *genus politicum* in that he not only holds that public office is a public trust, but he adds to that challenging ideal of public service, that "private office is a public trust" as well). The important secretaryships of the Treasury, State, Navy, and War Departments went to William Woodin, Cordell Hull, Claude Swanson, and George Dern, for reasons that have little to do with the personal qualifications of these men for the posts to which they were appointed. But after having made these appointments for political expediency, Roosevelt

revealed his higher and unique wisdom by creating a super-cabinet or brain-trust, admission to which depends upon *Phi Beta Kappa* keys, professional recognition, and intrinsic personal worth: for he is the first among the People's Choices to understand that certain problems of government, finance, housing, or agriculture are most likely to be solved if handled by trained specialists in these and other technical fields. Generally speaking, these appointments go to the best qualified individuals the President knows, or knows of. To cite one instance that will speak for many: Professor J. Ralston Hayden, who is the outstanding authority on the Philippines, was asked if he would change his politics (he is a Republican); when he said he would not, he was just as unhesitatingly appointed to the post of Vice-Governor of the Philippines as if he had said he would be henceforth and forever a Democrat.

However, in spite of the President's publicly expressed attitude on the merit system, and the fact that the Democratic party came into power in 1933 pledged to a 25 per cent. reduction in the federal budget, which certain observers thought would be made possible largely through the dropping of unnecessary employees, there are now more federal office-holders than there were when he took office. The Democratic party had been denied not only the luscious plums but the ordinary crab apples of federal patronage for twelve long years; and the temptation was doubly great, because jobs outside of the public service were not to be found in adequate number. The Administration made a gesture at least toward economy through providing pay cuts, payless vacations and lay-offs; when Roosevelt took office in March, 1933, there were 566,986 persons on the civilian payroll of the federal government, and at the end of August, 1933, there were 488,624 such employees. However, one year from the time that the Democrats came into power there were 623,599 employees on the federal government payroll. This, according to the 52nd Annual Report of the National Civil Service Reform League, included "a score of new agencies—(that)—have employed without regard to the civil service law nearly 60,000 persons at an annual cost of over \$75,000,000". The largest of these new agencies is the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, "with almost 300 offices and 17,361 employees".¹ This and certain other New Deal agencies provide "a politician's happy hunting

1. See Schmeckebier, Lawrence F., *New Federal Organization*, p. 3 and *passim*. This newly published volume includes descriptions of all organizations created by Act of Congress or by executives' order between March 4, 1933, and July 1, 1934.

ground", to use the descriptive phrase of the Civil Service Reform League.¹

This does not mean, however, that all of these newly created positions are used as cogs in a political machine. Some of them are; others are not. Those places that are significant enough, generally speaking, to engage the attention of the President are almost invariably given to the persons best qualified to hold them. And other administrative heads (Frances Perkins in particular) are unwilling to use their appointments for spoils purposes, but attempt, rather, to make them on a merit basis. Under the circumstances of the moment, Roosevelt might well say with Lord Clive of India, "When I consider my opportunities, I am amazed at my moderation".

Farley, however, takes what opportunities he can, even as Plunkett (another New Yorker) did before him. His plan is to give the appointments to those that are loyal to the Democratic party and sympathetic toward the Roosevelt programme. But there are fifty times as many of these individuals as there are available jobs, and the F. R. B. C. (For-Roosevelt-Before-Chicago) men hold a preferred place in the competition. Of course, all appointed must be qualified; and the biggest factor in qualifying is loyalty, save in such certain stellar positions as I have mentioned. And the local party leaders are the authentic authority when it comes to the loyalty test.

III

Roosevelt revealed another facet of his political astuteness in his address at Green Bay, Wisconsin, on August 9th. He said there:

I am glad to be in a state from which I have greatly drawn in setting up the permanent and temporary agencies of government.

Your two Senators, both old friends of mine, and many others, have worked with me in maintaining excellent co-operation between the executive and legislative branches of the government. I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to them.

1. The following excerpt from a letter dated August 15, 1934, to the President and from the National Civil Service Reform League is in point:

"You may recall that on August 9, 1933, you wrote the League: 'The merit system in civil service is in no danger at my hands; but on the contrary, I hope that it will be extended and improved during my term as President.'

"While it is appreciated that your sympathy with the purposes of the civil service law has been traditional, it has become increasingly apparent that during the past year the merit system has been neither extended nor improved. While it is true that in the established departments of the federal government no overt attacks upon it have been made, appointments for fitness, proved through competitive examinations, have been strictly confined to those departments. All of the scores of new agencies created since March, 1933, with aggregate staffs now numbering nearly 90,000, have been excepted, in whole or in part, from the civil service law and rules. Although in the regular departments the competitive system still governs, in all but two or three of the new bureaus positions are openly distributed on a partisan basis, with political recommendations as a prerequisite."

The President, in paying this telling tribute both to Senator Robert LaFollette, who is a leader of the newly formed Progressive Party, and to Senator Ryan Duffy of the Democratic Party, showed courage and wisdom. One of the most powerful Democratic politicians of Wisconsin (Charles Broughton, Democratic National Committeeman) had intended to become a candidate for the Senate. He called at the White House, talked to the President, and returned to his home in Sheboygan. A few days later he issued a statement in which he declared that he positively would not be a candidate for any office. The knowing public took this to mean that President Roosevelt had refused to endorse the candidacy of Broughton. In the latter part of June the President indicated that he not only would refrain from making partisan speeches himself, but that he forbade his aides to do so. But as August approached, the Progressives were hopeful. Their aims were, in large part, the objectives of the New Deal. The state Democrats in Wisconsin are not different essentially from the state Democrats in Pennsylvania, or in any other state where they have been out of office for forty years. They felt entitled to the President's support because they had carried the state for him in 1932, and wouldn't he need them in 1934 and 1936? He would. To the members of this vested interest—the Democratic Party Organization—their leader could no more recommend LaFollette, the Progressive, to the public than could the President of Macy's advise his customers to buy their furniture at Gimbel Brothers. To this political gentry the question is not, "Where can one buy the best furniture?" or "Is LaFollette a more valuable public servant than anyone in the Democratic ranks"; but the President of Macy's is working for Macy's, and the Democratic President of the United States is working for the Democrats.

But the President happens to be more than a Democrat. He is the leader of a people, not a mere party. He is, above all, interested in progressive legislation—the higher politics, and he recognizes Senator LaFollette as a fellow worker in the quest for social and economic justice. For Roosevelt to sacrifice LaFollette for a lesser man in Wisconsin might help to defeat his own social policies. Besides, Senator LaFollette is so popular in Wisconsin that he might have proved the strongest contender for public office notwithstanding the support his opponents received. In short, the President did a popular thing when he praised LaFollette, and he did it so in the stride of his speech, and with such finesse, that even the Democratic politicians could not audibly protest. Roosevelt has their support, and he has it on his own terms, without losing the co-operation of Senator LaFollette or the general public.

IV

Theoretically, and sometimes actually, a government is judged by what it does for the people—the services that it performs. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the test of the government is in the excellence of its performance. Often, however, the generality of citizens cannot distinguish cause from effect, and may lay to the government's credit a favorable turn in the weather, or rebuke sitting officials for a drought. In normal times all that the lone citizen can do is estimate general results: he tends to vote for the party in power when things are going along well, and against the sitting officials when things are going badly. It follows that in prosperous times the government may receive credit where none is due, and in a depression the most perfect office-holder may fall before adverse votes. As it happens, the Roosevelt Administration has been both handicapped and helped by the depression. The unusual public need has provided the reason for the spending of more public monies than the Federal Government has ever expended heretofore in peace times. Whether the New Deal has cost \$505,000,000, as Secretary of Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., announced in August, or \$7,000,000,000 as argued by National Chairman, Henry P. Fletcher, depends upon definition; in any case, the public debt between March 4, 1933 and June 30, 1934 increased \$6,000,000,000. If these and other billions have been put into circulation by the Roosevelt administration, and they have, the political effect is likely to be favorable to the Democratic party. If the government's unprecedented spending has enabled millions of people to work who were without work when Roosevelt took office, some of these people are going to remember this fact on election day. Jobs are the backbone of a party organization, and 4,000,000 jobs may be the foundation of a government.

But the government is doing more than providing jobs for the unemployed; it is distributing a billion dollars among the farmers, and because of either an unusual coincidence or deliberate planning, a disproportionate amount of these millions was sent out in the September-October pre-election period. One need not have been a cynic to have asked, "What will the November harvest be"?—nor a logician to have answered, "Votes for the New Deal". I will not recount the other millions spent or lent under the auspices of P. W. A., R. F. C., etc.; nor shall I try to prove, as did Congressman Hamilton Fish, that federal funds distributed in Maine prior to the election this year amounted to nearly \$350 for each registered Democrat. I think it hazardous to say at this time how many

millions are expended for political effect, and how many exclusively for public need. I submit that billions may be spent with an eye single to public need, and yet create a favorable political effect. Will Rogers used the happiest figure of speech I know when he said, "As powerful as a Democrat with a Treasury behind him!" The spending under the New Deal Administration has been so widespread, so many millions of citizens have been tangibly helped individually, that a substantial part of the present popularity of Roosevelt and the Democratic Party is the result of this fact. Later, when the danger is less imminent, and the costs are more apparent, the public mind may change; but I see no reason to believe that the technique and the tactics of the versatile Mr. Roosevelt will not already have changed before that time.

V

The basic fact that Roosevelt is providing the country and Congress with leadership is fortunate and significant, and shows both the skill of a politician and the vision of a statesman. It must be remembered that the executive is only one of three fundamental branches of the federal government. There is the legislature to be dealt with—a co-ordinate branch—composed of 96 ambassadors (Senators) and 435 delegates (Congressmen). Historically and politically, the national legislature was created to safeguard the liberty of the people from a too-powerful executive, for the memory of the tyrant English king was still fresh in the minds of the Founding Fathers. But the course of events is seldom changed by unsound theories, even when they have been built into a fundamental law. The paper constitution of checks and balances, if followed literally, would bring the government to a standstill. If the leadership in Congress is not provided for within the four corners of the Constitution because of its inherent structure, then it must be imposed from without; the beautiful theory that the President of the United States should be the agent of Congress fell early before this inexorable fact. One great function of our party system is to gather together the loose threads of control and to weld them into a responsible unity of power. And this is what has always happened under all of our great Presidents, for they were also great party leaders—Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt to-day. Either a President is the Master of Congress, or he is nothing that matters to the people the day he leaves office.

However, many observers have said that this leadership of Roosevelt's is unclear; that he is a man of ever new enthusiasms, and that he would like to be all things to all men. His attitude toward the N. R. A., and the A. A. A., the budget, silver, Labour and Capital are cited. He first reassures Labour and next he reassures Capital. But Roosevelt's problem is not only to consider his own plan or objectives (which may or may not be clear, for to some problems no answers have yet been found), but, as I have already said, to endeavor to know the mind of Congress and public opinion generally. As for what he can do at the present time, it is probably more to the point for him to act in harmony with the effective majority in Congress than to hold rigidly to a fixed position even though a true one, but to hold it in solitary grandeur. This fact is a possible cause for a questioning rather than a dogmatic leadership.

The test of a leader is obviously his ability to lead: (there is an old political maxim that a President is only as strong as his control of Congress). Franklin Roosevelt has amply demonstrated his right to the title of leader—just as his predecessor revealed himself to be a great engineer. However, and in spite of the fact that at the end of the seventy-third Congress competent observers have declared that the President is not only the Chief Executive but also three-fourths of Congress, Congress having lent him more power than it has ever before given to a President in peace times, yet the fundamental fact remains that whether the Chief Executive can lead at all is conditioned by the attitude and response of the members of the legislative branch. These members have a mandate that issues from the same source as the President's, and the Senators have power for an even longer period than that given to the President. They cannot be commanded; they may be persuasively asked. This is the crux of a central problem in presidential politics, as I have shown, and the success of Roosevelt's leadership depends on the efficacy of his personal approach and his intelligence in knowing the congressional mind and the wishes of its constituents. Therefore, when the President's leadership seems unclear, one must remember that though it may be unclear compared with the findings of some philosopher safely out of high office, it cannot be called unclear when compared with the state of either the congressional or the public mind. The one thing that the people clearly demanded was action, and Roosevelt has certainly provided that.

It is then, too, wise to remember that our country is divided not only into states, but into 435 congressional districts, a majority

of which must be kept in the President's ranks if his leadership is to continue. These districts differ widely; some are metropolitan and urban, others are rural. Some contain a preponderant number of foreign-born or their children, others are peopled almost entirely with native stock. There is a black belt, and there are areas where English is rarely spoken. The Roman Catholics outnumber the Protestants in many districts, and the differences in *mores*, traditions, and cultures are great. These 435 districts form twelve rather distinct sections. The importance of the basic interests—agriculture, manufacturing, and mining—vary in these areas, and the political activity of the people in a given section is likely to be correlated with the dominant economic power found there. (In the lower south, for example, Cotton is King, and the Congressmen from this district never forget this fact when they vote at Washington. And so it is with their colleagues who represent the grain-growers, manufacturers, or mining interests). Organization counts for much in politics, but the basic producers receive great consideration just because the livelihood of a controlling number of people is directly or indirectly dependent on them. However, there is now no section that controls a majority of congressional votes, neither is there an economic interest that does. Agriculture did until recently, but its influence in national politics is diminishing. Therefore any realistic national leader hoping for power must, as Holcombe says, present an issue that will appeal to a combination of sectional interests. This means compromise, and this is why a realistic party platform must be loaded with compromises in order to win. There is not one public mind, but there are many public opinions. For, not only because of our varied economic activities, but because of our nature culturally and ethnically, America is heterogeneous, not homogeneous. There has been no clearly defined issue in the recent past of the sort that there was during the war. There is no single recovery plan that will be equally valuable to all groups. This fact incontestably complicates the leader's problem in the United States. But according to the recent election the one real issue in the congressional campaign was the recovery programme of President Roosevelt. The public was, for the first time since Roosevelt took power, given the opportunity to say whether or not the New Deal plan was to be carried on to completion or to be modified. Now that the opinion of the people has become unmistakably manifest, and the President has found that they are emphatically behind him, his leadership will be strengthened and clarified; opposing forces will be weakened, and the President will sharpen his objectives and more directly pursue a central plan.

VI

President Roosevelt is unique in that he, more than any public official before him, has made millions of private citizens "government conscious" who never before gave more than a casual thought to government. His leadership marks the birth of something new—a political awareness among the people generally. In his March 3rd address at the American university, he pointed out what, in his opinion, was "one of the most salient features... in out American life" of his first year in the Presidency. "I speak of the amazing and universal increase in the intelligent interest which the people of the United States are taking in the whole subject of government". The overwhelming nation-wide landslide on November 8th, in favour of President Roosevelt and his New Deal candidates, indicates among other things that the great electorate warmly appreciates a political leader who talks to them about governmental plans between campaign times. The President broke a precedent when he did this; the voters broke another extending back to the Civil War, when they returned his party to power in an off-year election by such increased majorities. This supports the idea that higher politics are the kind that win in times of adversity.

For the President, of course, must share the credit for this new civic interest with the urgency of the times in which we live. The people are inclined to follow the old biblical injunction, "In times of prosperity, rejoice; in times of adversity, consider". But in spite of this natural tendency for the people in a period like this to be concerned about their government, much credit does belong to the personality of the President. His vitality and buoyant smile are the same to all classes. The warmth of his voice over the radio is infectious. He is using it on all sorts of occasions the year round. And each time this friendly voice goes through the ether, new courage and new hope are born at the hearths of millions of families.

But there is something more!—there is developing a dawning spirit of social responsibility in government. The advent of the Great Depression and the dramatic leadership of Franklin Roosevelt has destroyed even lip-service to the Jeffersonian doctrine that that government is best that governs least. In its place is the general conviction that the best government is the one that most helpfully serves the people. Roosevelt has done more than have a thousand lectures and sermons, in the way of turning the citizen's attention toward his government. The citizen's view is re-oriented; he is looking for social action on the part of the government, rather

than an individual favour from a politician. It may be true, however, that to insure the favorable action of the official government in a given case, the special services of an individual politician will prove helpful. And the time and effort that Roosevelt and his lieutenants devote to educating the people generally concerning the New Deal programme is not given for any remote civic ideal. If the Roosevelt programme is designed to provide a better life for working people, it will be increasingly attacked by the wealthier groups in the country. Sooner or later the issue will be roughly joined between those who have and those who have not. In this event, Roosevelt's support will be the common man, and unless the common man is better informed concerning his own interest than he has ever been in the past, he will not stand by the President. He will be beguiled by the *Chicago Tribune* and other newspapers that hark back to the "sound and tried principles of Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln". Both for the sake of creating an alert citizenry, and for making a success of his plan, the President must continue to carry his message to the people, not once but very often—so often that they can understand, and cannot forget. Otherwise the common people's numerical superiority will be again vanquished by the superior wealth, organization, and intelligence of the rich and well-born.

VII

Roosevelt's capacity for growth is one of the characteristics that indicate a capacity for statesmanship. A lesser person is finished at the age of fifty, and particularly a person who has been paralyzed in the prime of life. But Roosevelt's will and spirit, *plus* the temper of men and the external circumstances in which he has lived, have forged a new and greater man out of a charming country gentleman of the standard variety. Roosevelt took power at a time when the old order revealed colossal short-comings and extravagant maladjustments that made a fundamental change altogether necessary. There was need for a leader with "not only a disposition to preserve but also the ability to improve". Roosevelt has, step by step, advanced with the changing times. His flexible nature has enabled him to appreciate the essentials of the old order that should be safe-guarded, and the promise of a new society that might be striven for. His long first-hand political experience in the state legislature, as an assistant-secretary of the Navy, and as Governor of New York, has given him a realistic conception of human nature in politics. He knows what to expect;

he knows the motives that move men, whether the men be members of the Senate, Congress, or merely the garden variety of voters. There is no substitute for this knowledge—a statesman has to have it—and in addition the President has that flair for dealing with people that marks him as an eminently practical leader, and not merely a theorist. This is partly because he naturally likes people, likes to be with them, and thrives in the spotlight. And above all, he understands the importance of salesmanship in politics. He knows that he must educate his masters, the voters, and that to commend a programme of government to the people it must be dramatized by a personality. The Roosevelt personality, the smile, the warm speaking voice, saying to millions of listeners over the radio “My friends,” his easy manner and cordial greeting to the newspaper men, his personal conferences with leaders in industry and other fields, all combine to personify the New Deal. He is the Henry Clay rather than the Abraham Lincoln of the present hour; the Gladstone rather than the Disraeli. He is that, and something more. He has the two high qualities of leadership mentioned by Lord Bryce in his famous chapter seventy-six on Leadership in a Democracy. These qualities are “initiative” and “the power to comprehend exactly the forces that affect the mind of the people and to discern what they desire and will support”. In a measure he has also “that higher kind of wisdom which looks all around and looks forward too”.

Roosevelt is, then, a politician, even as Lincoln was before him; he is an expert in the art of governing, and, as Lippmann has remarked, “this is one of the most difficult of the arts which men practise”. About his statesmanship I can not speak finally: it is still a matter for conjecture only. Time is needed to vindicate it. But Roosevelt’s vision, his conception of an American society for our 125,000,000 or more, wherein each one will be able to achieve “the security of the home, the security of livelihood, and the security of social insurance”, and the steps that have been and are being taken to realize these objectives, are noteworthy. They are a move away from the *status quo*, and the ability to be the leader in such a move suggests the identifying mark of a statesman.

Roosevelt compromises; but were he unwilling or unable to compromise, his influence in the America of 1935 would be less rather than more. He understood this fact when he selected his cabinet, a cabinet that gives the United States as nearly a coalition government as we can attain under our presidential form. He does not have any fully developed philosophy or system or plan, and neither does the country. Countries go through moods, just

as people do, and the mood of the United States to-day is one of cynicism, confusion, and hopeful waiting. The people are willing to experiment, but they are not yet ready to throw caution to the winds. Roosevelt and his actions typify this mood. He is the national sounding-board; his sensitiveness to the temper of the people is not unlike that of a great artist to form and colour. He is endowed with a congenital awareness of the country's mood, and is feeling his way, even as the generality of Americans are. His tactics thus far have so suited the wishes and needs of the electorate that the Democratic party won seats on an unprecedented scale, rather than lost them, in the congressional election following his own election. For the first time in many years the pendulum did not swing. If this is not public approval, than there is no such thing outside of written tracts or in the dreams of disappointed candidates.

Later the people may decide that this is not a depression that engulfs us, but the end of an economic and possibly a political system. If the depression does not blow over, they may want a strong leader with a plan of his own. And a strong leader will have a plan of his own. But when (and if) this time comes, the voters will have passed through experimentation to conviction. They will be ready to rush headlong after a dogmatic leader who will brook no questions—one with great force of will and a Catonian strength. In this event, freedom of discussion will be abandoned. The people will be weary of it. They will want to be told. They will sacrifice Democracy, and that means that they will enthrone Violence, whether its outward form be fascism or communism. The prospect is not pleasant; I do not expect to see it come, but these are strenuous times we are living in, and if a moderate leader like Roosevelt with his coalition government and his facility to conciliate and harmonize fail, this is the alternative.