

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE 1948 CAMPAIGN

BY

WILLIAM J. BRAY

Special Assistant to John R. Steelman in the White House, 1947-49; assistant on the 1948 presidential campaign train; Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury, 1949-52; Assistant Chairman, Democratic National Committee, 1952; and Assistant Postmaster General, 1952.

The Harry S. Truman Library
Independence, Missouri
November 1966

NOTICE

This is a transcript of a tape-recorded interview conducted for the Harry S. Truman Library. A draft of this transcript was edited by the interviewee but only minor emendations were made; therefore, the reader should remember that this is essentially a transcript of the spoken, rather than the written word.

RESTRICTIONS

This oral history transcript may be read, quoted from, cited, and reproduced for purposes of research. It may not be published in full except by permission of the Harry S. Truman Library.'

[1]

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE 1948 CAMPAIGN by William J. Bray

At the start of the campaign in 1948 a group of President Truman's friends were concerned about the need for campaign funds. The Democratic National Committee was in very bad shape financially and since the public opinion polls and newspapers generally predicted a landslide election for the Republicans, immediate money was not forthcoming to the Committee. This group of friends, headed by Louis Johnson and consisting of Monroe Johnson, Martin Coffy, Ed Pauley, George Killion, Bob Butler, Fred Morrison, and several others, made an appointment in the last part of August, 1948, to discuss the bleak situation with the President. This group was concerned because they felt the President had been somewhat isolated from his friends by his staff and they wanted to be reassured that the President would be agreeable to meeting different individuals and groups wishing to shake hands, and that they would

[2]

be able to place before him their ideas upon certain matters. The President assured the group he would cooperate with them in every way that would help to continue the present Administration in office. This group came away from the meeting filled with enthusiasm and went out to do a difficult task with success. With this important phase over, the campaign plans began in full swing.

We started out on the first campaign trip with our first stop for a speech scheduled at Rock Island, Illinois, at 5:45 in the morning. While we were on the way to Chicago we were informed that the Chicago political powers wanted a conference with the President. We endeavored to have it postponed because we would not arrive in the Chicago railroad yards until about two o'clock in the morning. To have the President get up for a conference at that hour, with a speech scheduled for a few hours later, seemed like a terrific imposition. However the President overruled us and said he would be glad to see the delegation. They boarded the train and conferred with the President for about forty minutes about the political

[3]

situation in Chicago and downstate Illinois. After they left the train we proceeded to Rock Island.

We arrived there at about 5:35 in the morning and to our amazement about four thousand people were waiting to hear Mr. Truman. It was just barely daybreak. The President talked for ten minutes and was well received. I was standing with him on the back platform as the train pulled out and I remarked that it was a good beginning. He asked why. I said: "Well, those people had to get up maybe at 4:30 in the morning to be here and if such a crowd is willing to come out to hear you it looks like a good omen because maybe in spite of the polls there are a lot of people who have not made up their minds and are willing to listen, and that's all we can hope for."

We proceeded into Iowa and at every stop from Davenport to Des Moines there were tremendous crowds, apparently due to the fine organizing of Jake More. The President was very pleased with the enthusiastic reception to his speeches. Leaving the train at Dexter, Iowa, we went to a big outdoor area where

[4]

more than a hundred thousand people were expected. They were arriving by plane, train, bus and car, and it was quite a sight to see this mass of humanity assemble to hear the President's first major speech on the farm situation. It was boiling hot; the temperature was between 110 and 115 degrees. After he spoke the President stepped down from the platform to demonstrate that he could still plow a straight furrow. This was a pleasant surprise to the crowd.

Finally we returned to our train and continued stopping at other towns in Iowa so the President could make more speeches. We were still amazed at the large crowds assembled at the railroad stations.

By this time certain problems had arisen which we had to find ways to deal with. One was the tremendous amount of flowers we were receiving. We made arrangements to find out about

veterans hospitals in towns we were going to visit and to send the flowers to these hospitals. We sent them to the local hospital if there was no veterans hospital in the area.

Another problem which developed was that people

[5]

introducing the President tended to make little speeches which consumed time and delayed the train's departure, making us late at the next stop. It became a practice to inform the leading citizen who was to introduce the President that all he could say was "I am happy," or "I am proud to present to you the President of the United States, and the next President of the United States."

I recall that on the train I addressed Miss Truman as "Miss Truman." Mrs. Truman called me over and said: "After this, I want you to call her 'Margaret.'" This illustrates the kind manner of the First Lady. Other instances of her friendly manner occurred frequently throughout the trip.

From Iowa we went through Missouri and then on to Denver, Colorado. When the President was informed that a veterans hospital was near-by he insisted on visiting it to see some of the improvements that had been made, despite the fact that this visit delayed us since we were running very close to our established schedule.

[6]

The President would never make a political speech on Sunday. He would bring his family out onto the platform, however, and say "hello," but he would tell the people that he didn't believe in making political speeches on Sunday. This did not satisfy these people, of course, but there was nothing else that could be done.

As we traveled the President would introduce his family to the crowds. This made the crowds very happy. When they chanted "We want Margaret" the President was very pleased. Mrs. Truman and Margaret certainly stole the hearts of the people as we went along.

The President was scheduled to make a major speech in the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, and at Provo, Utah, where we stopped during the afternoon of September 21st, the President recognized a familiar face in the crowd. It was his old friend, the barber from Battery "D". Mr. Truman waved to him to come aboard the train and then he suggested that this old friend ride the train to Salt Lake City. He told the President that he had gotten married just the day

[7]

before so the President invited his wife along and advised me to bring them back to his private car when the train started to move. The President visited with them and introduced them to his family. After they had spent a reasonable length of time with him we tried, in a nice way, to have them move forward to one of the other cars on the train so the work at hand could be transacted. The couple showed no inclination to leave. We went about our business until Margaret suggested we not disturb them since the barber was an old friend, etc. When the President's daughter spoke, of course, we complied. Not only did the barber not leave the President all the way to Salt Lake City but he also rode in the car to the hotel (and we tried to reserve every seat in the car for

leading local citizens) and then he went up with the President to his room and stayed there. This made it impossible for the President to review his speech with his aides or to get anything to eat. Margaret finally came to assure me that if I would take charge of the situation she would never again interfere with the procedure we had outlined. Then

[8]

we succeeded in persuading the barber and his wife to leave for dinner and for the Tabernacle, where they could hear the President's speech. So after entertaining this friend for four hours the President was able to get to work. The speech for delivery that night in the Tabernacle required careful attention because it had to be shorn of anything that might bear on politics. The occasion was inspiring and everything worked out well.

Finally we reached the Pacific Coast and started to visit different cities in California. The crowds which gathered to hear the President continued to be enormous. Their size was beyond the expectations of those of us on the train.

At each station we would pick up a delegation of the most prominent people of the particular community and these people would ride the train to the next stop. They were sufficiently important to visit with the President if he had time to do so. This posed another problem for us.

This is what we would do: after the train left one station I would find out how much time we had

[9]

before arriving at the next stop. If the time between stops was one hour, for example, I would tell the President and he would say "Give me twenty minutes." He would go in to lie down and sleep for twenty minutes -- he had the capacity to go to sleep almost immediately. After twenty minutes I would rap on his door. He would say "Okay," and then come back to the dining part of his private car. Once he was ready we would usher in the people who had boarded the train at the last stop. Having interviewed them all we knew which ones wanted only to shake hands and which ones had some special message for the President. These latter people we kept at the end of the line. In this way the line would not get held up, and the President would have the chance to converse with these people during the few minutes remaining before the train stopped for another speech.

In the course of interviewing these people I would ask them about the political situation in their respective communities, how strong his opposition

[10]

was, what the economic situation was in these communities, if the news media -- newspapers and television stations -- were favorable or unfavorable, how well they thought the national ticket would do in their districts and in their states, if they could suggest anything the President might say or do to improve his chances in that area, and if the turnout of people was as large or as enthusiastic as they anticipated.

After these visitors were ushered out the President would call over his aides to go over the remarks about to be made. These aides usually were Matt Connelly, Clark Clifford, George

Elsey, Charlie Ross, Jonathan Daniels, General Wallace Graham, Bill Bray, and anybody else along from Washington. Any other business to be discussed between the President and his aides would be done at this time. As the train was slowing down he would proceed to the rear of the car and get ready to step out onto the platform.

At the end of his speech it was customary for the important people of the community who could not ride the train to line up and cross the rear platform,

[11]

shaking hands with the President and presenting flowers or some local product. This procedure continued through the day, starting as early as six o'clock in the morning and concluding as late as ten o'clock in the evening.

Frequently a band at each station, in an effort to please the President, would strike up with "The Missouri Waltz" when the President's train pulled into the station. For understandable reasons they thought this was among his favorite songs (which it was), but it did not lend itself to adding pep to the occasion. We wanted some number that would create enthusiasm, so we suggested that the band play its high school song or the state song. These songs usually had a brisk marching tempo -- the type of music that we wanted.

Coming to Los Angeles we were visited by James Roosevelt, son of the former President. He was astonished by the tremendous crowds the President was attracting in Southern California. I can recall that he commented to me about the size of these crowds.

[12]

The President's visit to Los Angeles was very busy. There was the long drive through the city (often the President would drive through the larger cities) and speeches at fund-raising gatherings. The finances of the committee were getting pretty low. And of course there were the usual speeches at public events.

Senator Carl Hayden joined us for the trip through Arizona. In Phoenix we drew a larger crowd than Mr. Dewey, who had been there before us. Clinton Anderson joined us for the trip across New Mexico. He had resigned as Secretary of Agriculture to run for the Senate. Sam Rayburn, joined us at El Paso and continued on the train into Texas. We were scheduled to be in Uvalde, Texas, early on Sunday morning where the President would meet with Vice-President John Nance Garner. Mr. Truman and Mr. Garner had not seen one another since Mr. Garner left Washington.

The President was up when the train arrived in Uvalde at 5:30 in the morning. As the train was coming to a stop we could see the former Vice-President

[13]

walking along the tracks on his way to the President's private car. It was a very happy reunion.

After a short visit the President sent word for Mr. Rayburn to join them. The Speaker was a little hesitant about doing so because he had not seen Mr. Garner since a coolness developed between

them about the third term for Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1940. Rayburn had backed Roosevelt; Garner had opposed a third term. Everything was very friendly, however, when the Speaker joined them in the rear car.

We left the train and drove to Mr. Garner's home where he had planned a breakfast with Mrs. Garner and many of the citizens of Uvalde. During this occasion the President drew Mr. Garner aside and presented him with a gift package of two bottles of very good bourbon. Mr. Garner was very pleased with the gift. "This is something I'm going to save until you are elected," he said, "but come on, Harry, and let's you and I go strike a blow for liberty."

Driving back through Uvalde the Vice-President

[14]

showed the President the low-cost housing project he had built. Mr. Garner had been against government spending for housing projects. He felt that private financing could do the job and he was very happy to show the President the results of his personal undertaking along this line.

From Uvalde the train took us to San Antonio. Since it was Sunday the President had been advised that he should attend church services that morning. He was inclined to agree until he learned that the minister at the leading Baptist church in San Antonio was quite evangelistic and had been critical of the President. Once he learned this he said he would not attend. Finally, however, he agreed to attend a small Baptist church if the Secret Service could find one and if no fanfare was made about his presence. The Secret Service located such a church and without any prior announcement the President attended. This was very surprising but very pleasing to the young minister and his congregation. Other members of the President's party attended the churches of their choice.

[15]

At a civic dinner that evening the President and the Speaker, as well as other people who attended, were very impressed with the invocation given by Archbishop Lucey of the San Antonio diocese. Some people felt this was the most inspiring prayer they had ever heard. Speaker Rayburn, a hard-shell Baptist, took it for his text in presenting the President to the large group of more than five hundred people. The President also used the text of this prayer in his remarks. This prayer caused so much comment that the Archbishop's law firm, which consisted of the leading Presbyterians in San Antonio, had it printed and circulated widely.

From this point it seemed that we were continually going "up." We were getting good crowds despite the newspaper reports that Mr. Dewey was a 10-to-1 bet to win the election.

As we continued across the Texas prairie to Austin, Temple, and Waco, the crowds seemed to grow and the people seemed very pleased with what the President was telling them. But at this point a very serious matter developed. We received word

[16]

that Walter Bedell Smith, our Ambassador to Moscow, and several members of the State Department, wanted to rendezvous with the train so they could confer with the President. This

matter had to be handled with entire secrecy. Arrangements were made for the General and his party to join the President's train at Dallas.

We were scheduled to visit Fort Worth before going on to Dallas. Upon arriving at Fort Worth, Amon Carter, Sr., put on a great show for the President. Because of the rivalry between Fort Worth and Dallas we wanted to present as big a welcome for the President as possible. Carter rode with us to the Dallas line and he must have had forty motorcycle policemen to serve as our escort. He had an array of other spectacular achievements to draw attention to our motorcade. The Dallas policemen were not as numerous when we arrived at the line dividing the two cities. We went directly to the ballpark where the President delivered a major speech. Not until about 1:30 in the morning was the President able to get back to his train.

[17]

By the time our train had traveled northward into Sam Rayburn's congressional district word had "leaked" of General Smith's presence. The President issued a statement about the purpose of the General's visit. Smith gave the President an account of the talks among the "Big Four" foreign ministers which had been broken off by the Soviets a day or two before. An impasse had developed between the Soviets and the Western powers over the Russian blockade of Berlin. The Russians refused to end the blockade and the Westerners refused to be deterred by it. Smith said the situation was serious.

We arrived in Bonham, Texas, the Speaker's home town, where the President delivered a major address at the ballpark. After the speech there was an impromptu reception at the Speaker's home. For miles and miles the roads leading to Rayburn's home were crowded with cars full of people who wanted to shake hands with the President, Mrs. Truman, and Margaret. It must have been one o'clock in the morning before the President was able to get

[18]

away from this reception and return to the train.

Another of the many interesting developments on this trip was the desire of many masons to have their certificates of membership in the Masonic Order endorsed by the President. This, of course, he was happy to do. But the number of requests became so great that we had to insist that people leave the certificates with us and we would return them by mail after the President found time to sign them. Usually the first order of business after the train left a town was to place these certificates before the President for his signature.

The morning after the speech and reception in Bonham we traveled through other towns in the Speaker's district and then into Oklahoma. The trip through Oklahoma was terrific. Crowds seemed to swell in size from one town to the next. At Marietta we picked up some of the leading citizens and top political figures in the state. They rode with us to Oklahoma City. The crowds greeting the President on the way to Oklahoma City were so enthusiastic that the train was two hours late in arriving at

[19]

Oklahoma City. The President hurried into a car that the Secret Service drove as fast as possible to the ball park. A major speech was scheduled for broadcasting on the radio. The radio time had already been purchased and certainly we didn't want to pay for it and not have the President use it. The radio announcer was due to state the arrival of the President at the very moment when the sirens could be heard and the President's car entered the ballpark. People along the route from the train to the ballpark were wondering why the President's car had gone so fast that the President couldn't wave to anybody. Fortunately Mrs. Truman and Margaret, in another car, drove slowly along the same route which helped to make up for the loss the people felt because they hardly saw their President. It was announced that the President would return to his train along the same route. After his speech he did so, and the situation was rectified.

The railroad had kindly attached a club car to our train -- the largest club car I had ever seen. At each stop on the way to Oklahoma City a sizeable

[20]

delegation would board the train to ride to the next stop. These delegations were composed of people of wealth and influence in their different communities. Before reaching the stops where they would leave the train the President would leave his private car and join these people in the club car. The President would shake hands with each member of these delegations and speak informally to them about the campaign. Since these were people we hoped would become interested in donating funds to the campaign we were very glad that the President made a "hit" with them. He was very effective because many donations were forthcoming after the President had left these groups to make his way to the end of the train. When we left Oklahoma this club car was detached from the train -- much to our sorrow. We had raised quite a sum of money in it, money that we certainly needed. We were able to get enough money to pay for the broadcast of the speech from Oklahoma City, for example, only an hour before it was scheduled for delivery.

The spirit and enthusiasm shown by the citizens

[21]

of Oklahoma was a real shot in the arm for the people in the President's party. Even though most of the newspapermen on the train didn't feel the President had much chance to win we thought he could do it.

After Oklahoma we spent a full day in Missouri and arrived at Mount Vernon, Illinois, in the early morning of the following day. We left the train for a motor caravan through the downstate region. The committee on arrangements wanted the President to visit some towns that did not have proper railroad facilities. This was a real hectic trip. The Governor of Illinois was a Republican and he chose not to provide us with police protection. The only help we got was from some of the county or local police. Because of the large crowds that came to see the President we had trouble holding to our itinerary.

The President was very much impressed with Paul Douglas, the candidate for U.S. Senator in Illinois. He was not too impressed with Adlai Stevenson, the candidate for governor. Douglas was like the President as a campaigner. He was out

[22]

fighting for every inch and in all his speeches he praised the President. Stevenson, on the other hand, had little to say about the President. Stevenson gave the impression that he wanted to be independent of Truman -- that he did not want to associate himself with the national end of the ticket.

During this trip the President seemed to depart from his prepared text more frequently. He seemed more persuasive when speaking extemporaneously. This caused people at every stop to shout "Give 'em hell, Harry." And to this remark the President would reply: "I'm not going to give 'em hell but just tell them the truth."

Governor Schricker joined us when we entered Indiana. He insisted that he should introduce the President at all stops in his state, and Schricker was not a man easily persuaded to change his mind. He wanted to make a speech. In some cases it seemed that he wanted to talk longer than the President. We didn't have time for such long introductions.

All of us thought the trip through Indiana

[23]

was successful. The same was true in Kentucky. After speaking in Louisville and receiving a tremendous reception, the President and his party started eastward across the state. All the Democratic leaders in Kentucky accompanied us. Although some of them were strongly opposed to others they all were united in support of the President.

We traveled through West Virginia late at night but nonetheless there were crowds at several places along the route. The President ordered the train to slow down so he could wave to these people. We arrived back in Washington at ten o'clock the following morning, October 2nd, 1948.

Mrs. Truman and Margaret Truman, on every day of this trip, were interviewed by local newspaper women and by editors of high school and college newspapers. These people would ride along to the next stop, which in some instances was a hundred miles away. They were anxious to ask about different things that might be happening as the train moved across the country, and Mrs. Truman and Margaret were always willing to answer their questions.

[24]

Arranging these interviews, however, did not make our job easier. The newspapermen riding the train for the whole trip put up quite a howl. They were being scooped on many inside stories. To equalize the situation different newspaper people riding the train for the entire trip were told what had transpired during these sessions with representatives of the local press. Once in a while these local correspondents would be on the train at mealtime and be invited to sit down and enjoy a meal.

When the First Lady and Margaret were not attending to these chores they would be busy dictating thank-you letters for the floral bouquets, candy, and other gifts they had received at different stops along the line.

The itinerary for this trip and for other trips during the campaign was put together from requests submitted by state chairmen, national committeemen, senators, congressmen, governors, and other influential leaders of the party. Sometimes a mayor of a city suggested that the President's presence in his

[25]

city would help the ticket, locally and statewide as well as nationally.

On this trip the President was accompanied by his personal staff. Included were:

Matthew Connelly, his appointments secretary, who helped interview different people who boarded the train in addition to performing his regular duties;

Charles Ross, press secretary, who dealt with the press each day, helped on speeches, and did other odd chores for the President;

Clark Clifford, the President's counsel, who assisted in correlating speech material and in other tasks;

William Bray, who assisted the President in his contacts with political people across the country and in many other matters relative to the campaign trip;

General Wallace Graham, the President's physician, who looked after the President's medical needs and the needs of his family. Fortunately there were no occasions on this trip when the Doctor's attention was required;

George Else, Clark Clifford's assistant, who helped in speech-writing;

Miss Rose Conway, confidential secretary to the President, who handled all matters relative to the President's personal business.

In addition to these people there were others like Jonathan Daniels of the *Raleigh News and*

[26]

Observer, and people like him who joined the train from time to time. Also there were representatives of the National Committee, such as Mrs. Charles Tillett, Vice Chairman of the National Committee, who would ride at intervals. Different labor leaders joined us from time to time, such as George Harrison and Joseph Keenan, both working closely with the National Committee in Mr. Truman's behalf.

President Truman's constant reminder about the "do-nothing 80th Congress" had a tremendous effect on the people he talked to during this trip. This was proven by the results in November.

Perhaps the best way to describe the atmosphere on the campaign train during this trip is to use the characterization of a newspaperman who rode with us. On the Dewey train, he said, the

newspapermen played bridge and drank martinis and manhattans. On the Truman train they played poker and drank scotch and bourbon.

The next trip started on 10 October, 1948, at 6 p.m. We were to travel through six states; West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and

[27]

Minnesota. The trip was to be made by train and we were to travel approximately 3,556 miles.

Our first stop was the following morning, 11 October, when we arrived at Cincinnati, Ohio, at seven in the morning. The President was met by a large delegation which was headed by Governor Frank J. Lausche, who was later to become a United States Senator from Ohio. Following an enthusiastic reception at the station the President's party proceeded by automobile to the Netherlands-Plaza Hotel. Even at that early hour in the morning the streets were lined with people who cheered the President enthusiastically as he drove by. Arriving at the hotel the President went immediately to a large auditorium where a well-attended breakfast was held in his honor. Following his talk, which was broadcast over several radio stations in that area, the party returned to the station to board the train and continue the trip through other parts of Ohio. Candidates for both national and state office accompanied the President.

Leaving Cincinnati we proceeded to Hamilton,

[28]

Ohio, where the President made a rear platform speech. From Hamilton we went to Dayton, where a delegation headed by James M. Cox, the Democratic nominee for the Presidency in 1920, met the President. By motor car the President proceeded to Memorial Hall where he made a major broadcast. Then we returned to the train and at 12:15 moved on to our next stop, which was in Sidney, Ohio.

After Sidney the train stopped at Lima, Ottawa, Deshler, Fostoria, and the President made rear platform speeches in each of these towns. In each town he was received enthusiastically, and this enthusiasm was evident again on election night as the voting returns accumulated. We arrived at Akron at 6:30 in the evening and left the train to drive by automobile to the Mayflower Hotel. All along the route the President took to the hotel were people cheering and waving as he rode by. He made a major speech that night at nine o'clock which was given major coverage. We left Akron at midnight and headed toward Indiana.

The next morning at eight o'clock we were met

[29]

at Richmond, Indiana, by Governor Henry Schricker and a large delegation of candidates for national and state office in Indiana. From Richmond we went to Greenfield and Crawfordsville and then crossed into Illinois, arriving at Danville at one o'clock in the afternoon. Senator Scott Lucas was there to meet us with a delegation. Leaving Danville we stopped at Tolono and Decatur, and arrived in Springfield at 5:15. The President went to Lincoln's tomb where he placed a wreath. From there he went to the St. Nicholas Hotel to attend a big Democratic rally.

On leaving the hotel the President participated in a torchlight parade to the Armory. After his speech at the Armory we boarded the train and moved on to Spooner, Wisconsin, where we arrived at noon on Wednesday, October 13th.

From Spooner we went to Superior, Wisconsin, and after a rear platform speech the President crossed the Interstate Bridge to the Leif Ericson Park in Duluth, Minnesota, for a speech. Then we headed south for St. Paul, arriving there at 7:30 in the evening. A crowd filled the auditorium

[30]

in St. Paul to capacity to hear the President speak that night. We left St. Paul at midnight and arrived the next morning at Mankato, Minnesota.

From Mankato we travelled to Rochester and Winona, where the President spoke from the rear platform. In Winona he was introduced to the crowd by Hubert Humphrey, then a candidate for the Senate, who has since become Assistant Democratic leader of the United States Senate and Vice-Presidential candidate with Lyndon B. Johnson. After Winona we crossed into Wisconsin and stopped at Sparta, Madison, Waukesha, and Milwaukee, where we arrived at 7:05 in the evening. The President and his party drove to the ballpark where the President delivered a major speech. The stadium was filled to capacity. Two days before the ballpark was half empty when Governor Dewey delivered a speech -- an interesting contrast. After his speech the President went to the Pfister Hotel where he greeted and shook hands with more than two thousand people at a reception. We left Milwaukee at midnight and arrived in Hammond, Indiana, the next morning at nine.

[31]

From Hammond we went to North Judson, Logansport, and to Kokomo. At Kokomo a very interesting incident occurred. When the President finished speaking and people started to come over to the rear platform of the train to shake hands, he noticed in the crowd a boy wearing a sailor suit -- the uniform of the United States Navy. The President recognized him as a member of the crew of the *Williamsburg*, the Presidential yacht which was docked on the Potomac River in Washington. The President motioned to the boy to come up and shake hands, which the young man did. The President asked what he was doing in Kokomo. The young man said he was home to visit his parents and also to be inducted into the Masons. This made the President very happy because he was a Mason himself. He asked the young man when the induction would take place. The sailor said he planned to take the train which would follow the President's train and travel to a little town about eight miles from Indianapolis where the Masonic Lodge would induct him. The President invited the young man to ride the President's train to Indianapolis. He said he

[32]

would be glad to take the youngster along. The youngster said his father was going with him, so the President told him to get his father and get on the train, and he instructed us to bring the boy and his father back to the President's private car for a visit as soon as the train started to move.

During this visit the boy's father said it certainly would be nice of the President if he could attend his son's induction into the Masonic Order. The President replied by saying that there was nothing he would like to do better than to participate in the boy's induction but that he was

travelling on a tight schedule and arrangements had already been made that would occupy every minute of his visit that night to Indianapolis. When the visit concluded the boy and his father moved forward to the club car and the train moved on to Tipton, Indiana, where the President spoke from the rear platform.

As the train left Tipton the President called several of us back to his car for a conference. He informed us that after thinking things over he had

[33]

decided that after the ceremonies ended at Indianapolis that evening he would like to go out to this little town and attend the installation of the boy from the *Williamsburg* into the Masonic Order. We apprised the President that this would be impossible because of the tight schedule we were following, and also because the President had indicated that he wanted no publicity about this matter we advised him that the newspaper people travelling with the President would probably get the story and make much of it. The President was insistent. He said he was not interested in the details but to work it out and bring it about.

Moving the President from one section of the country to another is not a simple task. There are many factors involved because of the security precautions necessary for the President's protection in all places. Therefore, when the train arrived in Noblesville, Indiana, for another platform speech, several of the Secret Service men left the train to put into adoption a plan which had been drawn whereby the President could participate in these ceremonies.

[34]

We arrived in Indianapolis in late afternoon and proceeded to the Indiana Hotel. All along the route there were cheering crowds. At the Hotel a big reception was arranged for the President after which he proceeded to the Indianapolis Athletic Club where dinner was served and he made some brief remarks. At 8:30 the party left for the Indiana War Memorial where the President made a major speech. Following the speech the party returned in cars to the train. The car that the President was supposed to ride in at the head of the procession, however, was occupied by two members of his party and his personal Secret Service bodyguard, Henry Nicholson. The car containing the President and several Secret Service people proceeded to this little town where the President had indicated that he wished to be at the installation of the boy from the *Williamsburg*. Advance members of the Secret Service had already proceeded to this town to notify the local police and the Masonic officials of the President's expected attendance. They were pledged to secrecy. When the procession of cars which left

[35]

the Indiana War Memorial arrived back at the railroad station in Indianapolis the car which supposedly contained the President drew up to the rear of his private car and agent Nicholson walked back to inform everyone that "That will be all for this evening." He announced that the train would be leaving the station in about an hour and a half. The President was then in the Masonic Lodge in the community near Indianapolis. About an hour later the President returned to his railroad car, very much pleased that "maybe" he had made several people happy. Of course he had made many, many people happy, especially the boy and his father. It was not until two

days later that word "leaked out" about the President's detour and it did not make the press feel very happy that they had missed quite a scoop.

Leaving Indianapolis that night at midnight we proceeded through Ohio, arriving at Parkersburg, Clarksburg, Grafton, and Keyser. We finally arrived back in Washington at 4 p.m. on Saturday, October 16. The hard work and effort the President put in on this trip were to show in the voting returns on

[36]
election night.

The next trip was a rather short one to Pennsylvania. Stops were scheduled for Scranton, Wilkes Barre, Johnstown, and Pittsburgh. We left at midnight on Friday, October 22nd. The President was accompanied only by Matt Connelly, Charlie Ross, General Graham, and Bill Bray.

Arriving in Scranton the next morning at 8 a.m. the President left the train and proceeded by motor car through the streets of Scranton until he reached the John Mitchell Monument. John Mitchell, of course, was one of the great labor leaders of the past. After laying a wreath at this monument the President proceeded to the courthouse steps from which he made an address. Then a motorcade took us to Wilkes Barre, and from there we drove over to Kingston where we boarded the train for Johnstown.

We arrived in Johnstown about 5 p.m. and again the President left the train to proceed by motor car to the Stadium where he made a major address. Returning to the train we departed Johnstown for Pittsburgh, where we arrived about seven o'clock.

[37]
Leaving the train we drove to the hotel where the President rested for about half an hour. Then we joined a torchlight parade through the streets of Pittsburgh. Dave Lawrence, who was the mayor as well as the Democratic National Committeeman, had worked very hard and the results of his efforts could be seen in the tremendous turnout of the people along the drive to the Armory where the President made his major address. The crowds mobbed around his car and it was quite difficult for the Secret Service to keep the path cleared so the President could reach the Armory. After the speech we drove back to the railroad station where the President boarded his train. We left Pittsburgh at midnight on Saturday, October 23, and arrived back in Washington at 7:20 on Sunday morning.

Our final trip of the campaign started on Sunday, October 24, when we left Washington at 9:30 in the evening. This was the last leg as far as the campaign was concerned. At that time the newspapers, magazines, and radio commentators were predicting that Governor Dewey would win and that the odds

[38]
against reelection of President Truman were running anywhere from 10 to 1 on up. The newspapers were beginning to speculate on who would become members of Governor Dewey's cabinet. With all these things in mind, President Truman knew how necessary it was in the final

ten days of the campaign to get his message across to the people of the country. He was scheduled to make major addresses in seven states and in addition his train would cross another four.

Our first stop the next morning was at Gary, Indiana, where an enthusiastic crowd was at the station and the President made a speech from the rear platform. The President detrained at Gary to enter a car cavalcade which traveled through the city to the Memorial Auditorium where the President spoke. Leaving Gary we proceeded to Chicago, arriving at 2 p.m. We left the railroad station and proceeded to the hotel where the President appeared at several receptions planned in his honor. Also the Democratic women had arranged a large tea in honor of Mrs. Truman and Margaret.

[39]

Leaving the hotel at eight that evening the party entered automobiles and proceeded through the streets of Chicago for a parade that was to take them to the Chicago Stadium. The President was introduced by Mayor Martin Kennelly of Chicago and delivered a major speech which was carried by the radio networks. The crowds that lined the streets in Chicago were tremendous and the reception given to the President at the Stadium was reassuring to him. It seemed that the crowds were getting larger and more enthusiastic as he went along.

The next morning our first stop was at South Bend, Indiana, where the President spoke from a platform built adjacent to the train stop. From the size of the crowd one could almost assume that everybody in South Bend had turned out to hear him. From South Bend we went to Elkhart, where the President made a rear platform speech, and from there to Toledo. We left the train and proceeded in a parade to the Civic Auditorium. In all these speeches the President showed great confidence in his opinion that there was no doubt as to the outcome

[40]

of the election on November 4th.

Leaving Toledo we proceed to Sandusky, Elmira, and on into Cleveland. At all these stops large delegations would board the train to ride to the next station. During the trip these people would be brought back to shake hands with the President.

Arriving in Cleveland at 5 p.m. the President went to the hotel where he made short appearances and gave greetings at several large receptions set up for him. At 8:30 the party left the hotel for a parade to the Municipal Auditorium where the President spoke at 9 p.m. Again the size of the crowds and the enthusiasm at the Auditorium gave the President a great lift.

We left Cleveland at 10 p.m. that night and arrived in Albany, New York the next morning at 6 a.m. Despite a misty rain there were five thousand people at the station to greet him. They cheered enthusiastically as he made a fighting speech in behalf of his Administration.

We left Albany for Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and then proceeded to Springfield, and then to

[41]

Hartford, Connecticut, where the President left the train and drove through the city to a speakers' stand which had been erected in front of the *Hartford Times*. From Hartford we proceeded to Worcester, where a large delegation boarded the train to ride with us to Boston. We arrived in Boston at 4:35 that afternoon.

Since it was Navy Day the Mayor of Boston, James Michael Curley, had declared that the visit of the Commander-in-Chief would constitute the official Navy Day celebration and that the entire city of Boston would act as the official reception committee.

That evening in Boston an unusual event took place. Friends of Archbishop Cushing, the Catholic prelate of Boston, had indicated to friends of the President that the Archbishop would be glad to visit with the President if the President's schedule permitted. It was felt that the meeting would be held quietly and without any publicity. The President left his hotel for the Archbishop's residence at about 6:30 in the evening. To his surprise, upon

[42]

arrival at the gate, a large band was assembled and led a parade up to the Archbishop's residence. Every newspaperman in Boston was there. The Archbishop had built a stand from which the President could speak and also he had invited all the priests and seminarians to come to hear the President. The President made a short talk from this platform and was so moved by this wonderful reception that his talk, which was off-the-cuff, moved his audience very much. This reception, while nonpolitical, nevertheless had a tremendous political effect because of the affection in which the Archbishop was held by the citizens of Boston and of the State of Massachusetts.

Back at his hotel the President received several large delegations before leaving to make his speech. For that evening the committee responsible for arrangements had been unable to secure the largest auditorium in Boston so we had to be satisfied with Mechanics Hall, a smaller one. The crowds lining the streets between the hotel and Mechanics Hall gave him a wild and enthusiastic greeting as

[43]

he drove by. At the start of his speech he told the assembled gathering that, as A1 Smith used to say, it was nice to be home among great Democrats. This threw the whole audience into an uproar and it was about ten minutes later before the crowd would begin to subside. All this enthusiasm had a buoyed effect on the President and it was quite noticeable that his talks were being given with hard-hitting emphasis as he went along.

The next morning, Thursday, October 28, the party left Boston by automobile. On the way to Providence the President spoke at Quincy, Brockton, Taunton, and Fall River, and in all these towns the crowds gave him the same enthusiastic welcome that he had been receiving in the past. Mrs. Truman and Margaret did not accompany us on this trip because they were scheduled to appear at a breakfast given in their honor that morning by the city of Boston. They later went to Providence by train and met us there.

We arrived at Warren, Rhode Island, at the state line, at approximately ten o'clock, and were met by Governor Pastore and Senator J. Howard McGrath,

[44]

who was also Chairman of the National Democratic Committee. The congressmen and a large delegation was to accompany us into Providence. In the heart of the city, in front of City Hall, the President was introduced to a great gathering by Governor Pastore and delivered another major address.

For the ride through Connecticut we were joined by a large delegation of high officials. The President made rear platform speeches at New London, New Haven, Bridgeport, South Norwalk to large crowds. We then proceeded into New York City, arriving there at 4 p.m.

In a motorcade, we proceeded through the garment district with a brief stop at Union Square. Then we went to City Hall. From there we went to the Sarah Delano Roosevelt Park, then to the Democratic Club and finally back to the Biltmore Hotel where the President was staying. Great crowds had assembled along the route and the President made short talks where we stopped. At nine o'clock the President went to the Waldorf Astoria where he made a brief appearance and short talk at a dinner honoring

[45]

Senator Wagner. From there we went to Madison Square Garden where he spoke to an overflow crowd. Loudspeakers carried his speech to the crowds outside the Garden who were unable to get in.

The President drove to Yonkers the next day to make two speeches and then went to Harlem for two more and also received the Franklin D. Roosevelt Award of the Colored Presbyterian Churches of the United States. Later in the evening he spoke at the Lost Battalion Hall in Queens and the Academy of Music in Brooklyn. After these two hectic days we left New York that night at 11 p.m. The enthusiasm of the crowds certainly boosted our hopes for success on election day.

We were now on our way to St. Louis, Missouri. The President made short platform speeches in Ohio and Indiana and we arrived in St. Louis that evening at 8:15. A motorcade took the President to Kiel Auditorium for the final speech of the campaign. The route was crowded with enthusiastic supporters of the President and the auditorium was filled to overflowing. The President walked in to a great

[46]

ovation. His first words to that crowd were: "I've come home. I have a prepared speech -- here it is. But tonight I am going to discard it and speak to you of everything that is in my heart and soul in a way that you people know me." It took many minutes to quiet the crowd so he could continue.

He left St. Louis at 11:30 and arrived in Independence at 7:30 a.m. the next day, Sunday, October 31st. Here he was to stay until after the election returns had come in on Tuesday. The rest of the party went to Kansas City. Headquarters were set up in the Muehlebach Hotel. The

President was satisfied that he had done everything he could to convince the people that he had given them a good Administration -- one that entitled him to be returned to office. At that time, however, the press and radio commentators were predicting that Governor Dewey would win by a landslide. In the late evening of November 3rd the President gave orders that the party would leave Kansas City for Washington at 7:45 a.m. on November 4th. Not only would the train be carrying the current President of the United States but the next President of the United States for the coming four years.

August 1964
Washington, D. C.

[48]
INDEX

Akron, Ohio, 40
Albany, N. Y., 40
Anderson, Clinton P., 12
Austin, Texas, 15, 18

Battery D, 129th F.A., 6
Berlin blockade, 17
Bonham, Texas, 17
Bray, William J., 10, 25, 36
Bridgeport, Conn., 44
Brockton, Mass, 43
Butler, Robert, 1

Campaign, Presidential, 1948. *See* Presidential campaign, 1948
Carter, Amon, Sr., 16
Chicago Democratic party leaders, 2
Chicago, Ill., 2, 38, 39
Cincinnati, Ohio, 27
Clarksburg, W. Va., 35
Cleveland, Ohio, 40
Clifford, Clark, 10, 25
Coffey, Martin, 1
Connelly, Matthew J., 10, 25, 36
Conway, Rose A., 25
Cox, James M., 28
Crawfordsville, Ind., 29
Curley, James M., 41
Cushing, Archbishop Richard J., 41-42

Dallas, Texas, 16
Daniels, Jonathan, 10, 25

Danville, Ill., 29
Davenport, Ia., 3
Dayton, Ohio, 28
Decatur, Ill., 29
Democratic National Committee, 1, 26
Denver, Colo., 5
Des Moines, Ia., 3
Deshler, Ohio, 28

[49]
Dewey, Thomas E., 12, 15, 30, 37-38, 46
Dexter, Iowa., 3
Douglas, Paul H., 21-22
Duluth, Minn., 29

Elkhart, Ind., 39
El Paso, Texas, 12
Elmira, Ohio, 40
Else, George, 10, 25

Fall River, Mass., 43
Ft. Worth, Texas, 16
Fostoria, Ohio, 28
Franklin D. Roosevelt Award, 45

Garner, John N., 13-14
Gary, Ind., 38
Grafton, W. Va., 35
Graham, Brig. Gen. Wallace H., 10, 25, 36
Greenfield, Ind., 29

Hamilton, Ohio, 27-28
Hammond, Ind., 30-31
Harrison, George, 26
Hartford, Conn., 41
Hayden, Carl, 12
Humphrey, Hubert H., 30

Independence, Mo., 46
Indianapolis, Ind., 32, 33, 34, 35

John Mitchell Monument, Scranton, Pa., 36
Johnson, J. Monroe, 1
Johnson, Louis A., 1
Johnson, Lyndon B., 30
Johnstown, Pa., 36

Kansas City, Mo., 46
Keenan, Joseph B., 26
Kennelly, Martin H., 39
Keyser, W. Va., 35
Killion, George L., 1
Kingston, Pa., 36
Kokomo, Ind., 31

[50]

Lausche, Frank J. ,27
Lawrence, David L. ,37
Lima, Ohio, 28
Lincoln's Tomb, 29
Logansport, Ind., 31
Los Angeles, Calif., 11, 12
Louisville, Ky., 23
Lucas. Scott W., 29
Lucey, Archbishop Robert E., 15

Madison, Wis., 30
Mankato, Minn., 30
Marietta, Okla. , 18
Masonic Order, 18, 31'33
McGrath, J. Howard, 44
Milwaukee, Wisc., 30
"Missouri Waltz", 11
More, Jake, 3
Morrison, Fred W., 1
Mount Vernon, I11., 21

National Plowing Match, H.S.T.'s speech at, Sept. 18, 1948, 4
New Haven, Conn.,44
New London, Conn., 44
New York City, N. Y., 44-45
Nicholson, Henry J., 34, 35
Noblesville, Ind., 33
North Judson, Ind., 18-19

Oklahoma City, Okla., 18, 19
Ottawa, Ohio, 28

Parkersburg, W. Va., 35
Pastore, John, 44
Pauley, Edwin W., 1
Phoenix, Ariz., 12

Pittsburgh, Pa., 36-37

Pittsfield, Mass., 40

Presidential campaign, 1948:

atmosphere on Dewey and Truman campaign trains contrasted, 26

campaign funds for Democratic Party, 1, 20

California, Truman, H.S. trip through, 8

[51]

Presidential campaign, 1948 (continued)

campaign procedures, 8-11

campaign trip, final, Oct. 24-Nov. 1, 37-46

crowds, size of meeting HST campaign train, 8

crowds, size of and reception, HST final campaign trip, 39

farm situation, HST speech on, Sept. 18, 1948, 4

flowers, problems arising from gifts of during HST campaign, 4

Illinois downstate tour by HST, 21-22

local political leaders, interviews by W. J. Bray, 9-10

Masonic ceremony, HST attendance at during campaign trip, Oct. 15, 1948\$ 1-35

Midwest campaign trip, Oct. 6-9, 26-35

Pennsylvania trip, Oct. 22-24, 36-37

pre-election forecasts of election results, 37-38

press interviews during HST campaign trips, 23-24

procedures followed during, 20

staff, White House, members of on West Coast trip, Sept. 17-Oct. 2, 1948, 25

Stevenson, A. 1948 campaign in Illinois, HST reaction to, 21-22

Truman, 24525 campaign trip itineraries, planning

Truman, H.S., speech technique, 22

veterans hospital, Truman, H.S. visit to, 5

visitors to HST campaign train, 8-10

West Coast campaign trip, HST, Sept. 17-Oct. 2, 1-26

Providence, R. I., 43

Quincy, Mass., 43

Rayburn, Sam, 12, 13, 15

Richmond, Ind., 29

Rochester, Minn., 30

Rock Island, Ill., 2,3

Roosevelt, James, 11

Ross, Charles G., 10, 25, 36

St. Louis, Mo., 45, 46

St. Paul, Minn., 29-30

Salt Lake City, Utah, 6, 7

[52]

San Antonio, Texas, 14, 15
Sandusky, Ohio, 40
Schricker, Henry F., 22, 29
Scranton, Pa., 36
Secret Service, U.S., 14, 19, 33, 34, 37
Sidney, Ohio, 28
Smith, Walter B., 16, 17
South Bend, Ind., 39
South Norwalk, Conn., 44
Sparta, Wisc., 29
Spooner, Wisc., 29
Springfield, Ill., 29
Springfield, Mass., 40
Stevenson, Adlai E., 21-22
Superior, Wisc., 29

Taunton, Mass., 43
Temple, Texas, 15
Tipton, Ind., 32
Toledo, Ohio, 39, 40
Tolono, Ill., 29

Truman, Harry S.:

- Battery D, visit with friend from during 1948 campaign, 6-7
- Berlin blockade, conference with Ambassador B. Smith re, 17
- campaign fund donations for the Democratic Party, influence in securing, 20
- Chicago Democratic leaders, conference with, Sept. 18, 1948, 2-3
- Cushing, Archbishop Richard J. of Boston, meeting with, 41-42
- Douglas, Paul H., impression of in 1948, 21-22
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Award, receives, 45
- Garner, John, meeting with during 1948 campaign, 12, 13-14
- Masonic certificates, requests to endorse during 1948 campaign, 18
- political campaigning on Sundays, refused to engage in, 6
- San Antonio, Texas, attendance at church services in during 1948 campaign, 14
- speech technique in 1948 Presidential campaign, 22
- Stevenson, Adlai E., impression of in 1948, 21-22
- See also* Presidential campaign, 1948

[53]

Truman, Mrs. Harry S. (Bess Wallace Truman), 5, 6, 17, 19, 23, 24, 38, 43
Truman, Margaret, 5, 6, 7, 17, 19, 23, 24, 38, 43

Uvalde, Texas, 12, 13, 14

Veterans Administration hospitals, 4, 5

Waco, Texas, 15

Wagner, Robert F., 45
Warren, R. I., 43
Washington, D.C., 35, 37
Waukesha, Wisc., 30
Wilkes Barre, Pa., 36
Williamsburg, U.S.S., 31, 33
Winona, Minn., 30
Worcester, Mass., 41

Yonkers, N. Y., 45