

Young Men More and More Active in Politics

Will H. Hays, Republican National Chairman,
 Says Stern Duty of Taking Part in Public
 Life Confronts Youth of the Country



Congressman R. B. Sanford
 of Albany, N. Y.



Congressman Nicholas Longworth of
 Ohio, Col. Roosevelt's Son-in-Law.



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 Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York,
 Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

Breckinridge Long of St. Louis,
 Third Assistant Secretary of State.

By WILLIAM L. CHENERY.
 It is not strange that Will H. Hays is the prophet of youth in politics. Only a glance is needed to understand that predestination brought this to pass. Hays, of course, is not himself a boy. The Chairmanship of the Republican National Committee is not for them who have not more of tried wisdom than ever young genius owned. But Hays has the look and the spirit of youth. Thirty-nine years have not dimmed the freshness of his energies. Like others of the fortunate he has carried over the eagerness of boyhood into the time of harnessed maturity. He likes youth because he still savors of it. So he would bring to all the young the opportunity to share in the sovereignty of the nation.

The young man in politics, and the young woman too, for that matter, is a hobby with Hays. He does not regard it from a partisan point of view. From the public part of his mind, from that side of him which rises above parties and sects, the inspiration arises. Politics wants the disinterested force of youth, he argues, and likewise the young need to feel the discipline and the responsibility of party service. Now more than ever the Republican National Chairman believes this to be true. But he is not the Republican general when he voices this creed. For he thinks the nation, which is bigger than all its parts and parties, wants most of all this service. Nevertheless, in a crafty corner of his thinking, Hays is sure that when noses are counted he will find a generous share of the boys in his camp.

When the designated moment for the

interview arrived, the door of his office was flung open, and through it Hays rushed as full of zest as a boy just out of school. An interesting picture he presented as he strode about the room. The figure is that of a very young man. Slender to the point of thinness, it gives an impression of lithe force without any suggestion of physical weakness. The Republican Chairman is enough of a beginner in politics still to have a vigorous handshake, a possession which does not always persist in those who must meet many people. Hays has conspicuously retained the forceful cordiality of the Middle West.

Two years of the East have had their effects, but Indiana is not to be effaced. Despite that air of the metropolis which sartorial nicety suggests, Hays continues to be a son of the middle border, and he is probably proud of it. If the Republican National Chairman sat still and said nothing, he might be mistaken for a painter. The long, thin fingers, very white but strong, seem fashioned for craftsmanship. His eyes also suggest the artist. Something of the creative

dreamer is there. But the irregularity and the insistence of his nose preclude aesthetics. In that feature and in his voice, Indiana and practical politics come out.

Prologues do not exist for Hays. What he says is uttered quickly and personally, and without any reserve. The Middle Western sense of facile friendship is instantly established. But there is no hint of the mercenary amiability of the traditional political boss. Rather it is that the Indiana strategist is gifted with good humor. He is cordial because he learned that temper in Indiana. For the Middle West does still breed a hardy courtesy which is a rich asset to them born to it. It was in this brimming mood of friendly exuberance that Will Hays untethered his enthusiasm for youth in politics.

"As never before I believe young men are turning to politics," he said. "It is a natural aftermath of war. During the last few years millions who hitherto thought that they could do nothing for their country have given generously

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themselves, their time, their money. It has been a revelation.

"Men who faneied they had not time even to vote were willing and eager to desert their private business, in order to do the nation's work. An endless variety of service called them. There is no brighter picture in American history than that which depicts the record of those who, in the crisis, rushed to service. As with men so with women. From every home women, most of whom had never dreamed of work outside the family, poured forth. What opportunity offered, they performed. In so doing they caught a sense of the nation, which wanted something of them.

"But chiefly the young went out. The burden of war is ever the lot of the young to carry. Each in their own way, boys and girls, did what was asked of them. To be drawn out of the normal manner of living, to forsake work or school and the family and to go far afield because of national necessity, is an awakening event in any individual's life. I fancy that the lads who came together from every district of this land got a very personal realization of what the nation was to them. Previously it might have been an abstraction. Patriotism might have been something talked about by tiresome people on the Fourth of July and Memorial Day. But to the boy who came forward at the call of destiny, patriotism and country became real and personal.

"War was not merely the supreme adventure. Their thoughts were that the nation had the first right to their services. As they were organized into companies and regiments and armies

they learned a new loyalty. Private things dwindled. The national safety was the supreme thing. Millions of boys realized that the future of the nation was in their keeping. Those who had never thought of any of the serious things which make up America were suddenly brought face to face with reality. As they crossed the continent, as they crowded into ships to make the perilous journey overseas, as they worked and fought in France and as they rested they thought in unfamiliar ways of their country.

"It seems to me that the spirit which was awakened under the stimulation of the conflict will not be content to forget the service of that high season. Young men will not forget. The nation which had the supreme demand upon them in time of war still wants their service and they know it. And they know their country needs this service.

"I am not talking partisan politics. The patriotism of good civic service is of the same stuff as that which leads to triumph in war. The patriotism which inspired the willingness to yield all for country's sake is potent enough to move men to make the welfare of their country their own business during the prosaic times of peace.

"If the young men whose might made possible the final victory give a fraction of the interest to the problems of peace which they gave to the work of war, I have no fear for the future of this country. Assure me of the intelligent interest of these young people and I tell you that nothing can harm America.

"The habit of thinking of public needs, acquired during the war, will continue. It is a happy event. For never before have the problems which our nation is facing needed more of the interest by citizens which the young can contribute.

"If a political party does not stand for those things which will bear the severest scrutiny, it is not entitled to success and it will not endure. There should be in this country two political parties and both must be strong and virile. This is the greatest safeguard to our institutions. Let the two great political parties then make it their business to see which can develop the better plans for doing the greatest good to the greatest number and let the individual membership in these parties give that attention to the party's affairs which is due the instrument through which and only through which all individuals can apply their patriotism in actual participation in governmental affairs. Let the contest between political parties always be, and in these important days ahead let us make certain that the contest be to determine who best can serve, who most can give.

"I insist that we have not merely that patriotism, born of extremities, which burns in the souls of men only when their country is in danger, but the patriotism of good citizenship, at the fireside, the plow, the mart, in low places and in high places, in season and out of season. Let us have the patriotism which moves men to make their country's welfare their own business and in prosaic time of peace interest themselves continually in the practical politics of their community. Good government is possible in no other way.

"It is passing strange indeed that men must be urged to exercise the first privilege of a sovereign citizenship, the right to help govern themselves. Yet urged they must be, and it is because of this fact that most governmental evils develop. Government functions through individuals. These individuals are elected by the processes of practical politics, a sequence which cannot be avoided. We can have better government only if we interest ourselves in politics.

"This interest of youth in public matters is not, of course, an altogether new thing. Our country has constantly been enriched by the services of young men. Theodore Roosevelt occupied his peculiar place in the affections of the American people in part at least because his work was begun as a very young man. At the onset Roosevelt brought the splendid idealism of youth into political activity. Great as was his maturity, I feel that those early years of service, of idealistic



Senator Peter Gerry
 of Rhode Island.



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 Congressman Charles B. Ward
 of Sullivan County, New York.

service, gave his career a quality which will never be forgotten.

"There is an unconquerable courage in youth which politics needs. Young men and young women bring to public work an unselfishness, a willingness to take generous views, which is of infinite value at a time such as this.

"In the years gone by too many young men failed to avail themselves of the chance for public service. Business, industry, the professions absorbed the interest of too many. If we have had had government it has been because good men were apathetic.

"That cannot be in the future. The problems of government are too intricate, too far reaching for neglect. Young men who have fought and young women who nursed and labored and who, because of their sacrifices, made liberty safe, will not fail to avail themselves of the privilege which American citizenship offers.

"Above all things in politics I hope that in very large numbers young men and young women will interest themselves in political parties. If the citizens of the country interest themselves sufficiently in the politics of the nation, the

right principles will be practiced and able and conscientious candidates will be elected.

"Continually I plead for a patriotism in peace as well as war. There is no zone of twilight in politics or public affairs. Right is right, wrong is wrong, and the same strict standard of morals, equity and justice must obtain as in any private business or professional matter. When we get our politics entirely on this basis, when we live our patriotism daily, we will do a citizen's full duty, and not until then. I repeat I have no use for the individual who is either 'too busy' or 'too good' to help. He has no just complaint to make, whatever happens. He is riding on another's ticket. I have an abiding faith that there will be an awkward sense of civic duty as one of the by-products of this war. Hundreds of thousands of men and women, who had no inclination, and thought they had not time to take the slightest interest in their Government, have arisen in the most splendid spirit and unselfishly carried the burden of the war work.

"If some small part of the same interest in their country can be maintained, if some small part of the time they have

been giving is still given by them in thought and action to the business of their country, it will bring to the situation an impetus for untold good. Most earnestly I urge that this great new value, this tremendous national asset, which has lately been developed, shall not be lost. I urge that this army of men and women who have been the splendid war workers in every corner of the country now realize that they have a duty in peace as well as in war, that their country needs their continuing interest and that this continuing interest they owe to their country's welfare.

"I repeat and shall continually declare that what we need in this country is not 'less politics,' but more attention to politics. Politics is the science of government, and what we need is more attention to the science of government. We have fought in France to make certain everywhere that men should have the right to govern themselves, and here in this country, where we have that privilege, I insist that we exercise it now and always.

"It is with assurance that I look to the assumption by young people of their civic obligations in peace. However baffling the prospect may be, the strength, the energy, the good will, the idealism of youth is sufficient. The young men and women will keep safe the future of America!"

Many signs point to the truth of Will H. Hays's belief that young men in greater numbers are turning to politics. Not least indicative is the fact that the Government itself is playing so increasingly important a part in business and industry. Time was when to a considerable extent business and Government seemed to be divorced. Then was it that politics appeared to be dull and Government was uninspiring. With the war however, many of the best minds of industry, commerce and the professions were summoned to perform national work. That era has not ended. Still the nation's business has need of high capacities of competent citizens. The chance for able and upright men and women in Governmental service continues to be great, and it is not likely to grow less with time. Therefore it is probable that because of the more interesting work offered a better type of politician will be developed.



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