

# In the



# MERCURY'S

# OPINION

## ***The Pathway To a New Era***

THIS MONTH is an important one to *Mercury* writers and *Mercury* readers because it marks the end of the first phase of an effort to create what we have hoped can be a new and resolute *thinking* magazine for a new and resolute era in American life. This is the twenty-fifth issue of an undertaking founded in the firm belief that 1952 would see the end of a twenty-year cycle and the beginning of a new and different one.

In the years immediately following World War II America was tired. There was confusion and retreat. The government was in the hands of men of little vision. Those were the years that saw the loss of China and Czechoslovakia, the Hiss case,

and finally Korea. The election in 1948 went by default: Truman in winning received three million fewer votes than did Stevenson in losing by a landslide in 1952. We ourselves had little interest in the 1948 election: we were marking time in New Mexico, writing war memoirs, doing a few lectures and an occasional magazine piece.

By the fall of 1950 anybody who traveled over America — anybody who stood on lecture platforms and looked into the faces of thoughtful people — could feel the nation stirring. China, Czechoslovakia, Hiss, and Korea, these had been enough. The resolution of 1933 had spent itself, but a new resolution was building up. A new generation had come of age. The year 1952 would be a

pivotal year: something old would end in that year and something new would begin. Both politically and culturally the American cycle beginning in 1953 would be different from that which began in 1933. We wanted a part in ending the old and in defining the new: hence the new *Mercury*.

The twenty-four months since then have been difficult; but all efforts at creation are difficult. There has been the agonizing business of trying to find new writers and introducing them to the proper new readers. There were the long nights of trying to think and write on airplanes flying back from lecture engagements. Through it we have been sustained by a growing company of readers who have fought with us, suffered with us for our mistakes, and shared our several satisfactions.

Our chief satisfactions are these:

1. We provided more ammunition for the political campaign than any other magazine. Millions of reprints of our articles — many more than any other magazine — were bought and distributed by our readers.
2. We were the only American magazine in the politico-literary group which urged General Eisenhower to seek the Republican nomination, and which pointed out the opportunities awaiting him.
3. We now enjoy the largest news-

stand sale of any magazine in our field, and as we attract more new and forthright writers we expect also to attract more thoughtful readers than any magazine of this type has ever had. Thinking is a process not yet entirely forsaken in America.

For those who would like to reflect on how the election of Eisenhower came about, we recommend an examination of our own modest effort in the *Mercury* files.

**I**N OUR FIRST ISSUE, December, 1950, we had an article on James Forrestal, because he had been one of the frustrated men of the tired, irresolute era: he had wanted to do in 1946 what the nation would not be ready to do until 1952. We proposed this epitaph for Forrestal:

Here lies a patriot who also possessed vision. In a period of crisis for this nation, when mediocrity was enthroned in Washington, he stood forth as a first-rate mind, a dedicated spirit, an inspiring Renaissance man who understood the realities of the world in which he lived, and who, scorning opportunism, gave his energy, his mind, and his life.

In setting forth a credo for the new *Mercury*, we had this to say:

Now, perhaps even more than in the Twenties, is the time for those who value the human personality to attack those who would sacrifice it to Order and Security. . . . The new *Mercury* will be a hopeful magazine.

We believe that we will live to see the banner of freedom unfurled on a Ural mountain top. And we believe that young Americans, rejecting the vice of mass thinking, will, like Mr. Dos Passos, come to understand that "this country was not founded to furnish glamorous offices for politicians, or to produce goods and services, or handouts of easy money. This country was founded to make men free."

In that same issue there was an article by Max Eastman called "Can Truman Be Educated?" It said:

So long as President Truman can say, as he did recently, "The real trouble with the Russians is that they are suffering from a complex of fear and inferiority where we are concerned," America is without leadership in the most subtle and complex and implacable danger she has ever confronted.

All of those articles sold thousands of reprints; hundreds of newspapers quoted from them; and the new *Mercury* was born. That was just two years ago.

In March 1951 we published "The Tragedy of George Marshall," in which we said:

At a corner of one of the vast avenues in the Pentagon, erect in a high-backed chair, sits a tragic old man. He is George Catlett Marshall, General of the Armies, Secretary of Defense, former Secretary of State, adviser to Presidents, and, in the eyes of Harry Truman, the "greatest living American." He is a devoted old

warrior — patriotic, loyal, courageous; yet his life is a tragedy, both for himself and for the cause of mankind, because his unsound judgment has helped to lead this country from one disaster to another.

We didn't call General Marshall a traitor; we called him a patriot. We didn't attack him in anger; we considered him in sorrow. We didn't imply any treachery; we only lamented his capacity for being wrong. To us General Marshall personifies all the well-intentioned Americans who, through their misunderstanding of their world, have led us to tragedy.

BY MAY, 1951, the country had been jolted by a series of corruption disclosures. To match every uncovering of one of Truman's money-changers, there was a corresponding shock from civil life: the basketball fixes, the cheating at West Point, etc.

The President met these by comforting his mink-coated stenographer and her "fixing" husband through their "ordeal of political persecution," and by assuring his press conference that his fixers were "all honorable men."

It was then that we struck the President the hardest blow of his career. We published "Is Truman Honest?" and it became the most famous article to appear in the *Mercury* since "Hatrack." It sold more than two million reprints.

In this article we examined quite calmly some of the bigger lies among the Truman claims, and we closed with this warning:

But if this nation is to survive — or, indeed, be worthy of survival — its citizenry will have to reject the Truman definition of honor. For why should patriots continue to nourish a nation with their blood when the proper has become what you can get away with, when the expedient has become the honorable, when a lie believed has become truth?

That Truman's definitions have now been rejected, few would deny.

In September, 1951, the *Mercury's* featured article was "Eisenhower Will Run."

In October, 1951, the *Mercury* redoubled its efforts to inspire a spirit of revolt among young Americans. We published two articles: "How to Be a Republican and Enjoy It" and "A Call for Revolt on the Campus."

In the first we said:

What is patently the first need is for millions of *young* Americans to *want* to join the Republican Party. . . . However sad this party may be, it is the principal hope for a change. . . . Those of us who are opposed to the philosophy of the Achesons and the Hisses; those of us who are concerned as much with freedom as with material security; those of us who believe that life is essentially an individual responsibility; those of us who want the American heritage to continue to signify freedom as well as opportunity to be comfortable —

we must find a way to make ourselves effective in 1952. . . . I believe we can best accomplish our purpose by trying to build an effective, hopeful Republican Party.

In "A Call for Revolt on the Campus" we said:

This is an invitation to thoughtful students to join us in a revolt against the Democratic Party. This party has betrayed the round-eyed faith of American youth, and if we are to hope again the young man of 1951 must first understand the nature of the betrayal, then he must find a new cause worthy of his devotion. . . . Hope lies only in revolt.

Approximately seven million young Americans cast their first votes in the 1952 election. For the first time since the Republican Party won the support of the young Civil War veterans, more than half of the young people's vote was cast against the Democratic Party.

**I**N NOVEMBER, 1951, we published "Why a Southerner Should Vote Republican," an article which sold thousands of reprints in the South, and which was reproduced in full by scores of southern newspapers. It explained and justified the South's traditional devotion to the Democratic Party; acknowledged the South's great debt to the New Deal, and to Franklin Roosevelt; and pointed out why the time has come for a healthy Republican Party in the South.

The South today is in a position to relax as an equal, politically, economically, and culturally, with the rest of the nation; therefore the South must now assume more responsibility for the national welfare. . . . The way of hope for the thoughtful southerner today is to cut free from a Democratic Party which has been captured by his ideological enemies, and which, if unrestrained, will lead this nation into bankruptcy and totalitarianism.

The most hopeful area in America today is the South. For the finest element in *young* southern society is now moving to make the Republican Party an effective national party. The carpetbagger days, the days of one-partyism, are over in the South.

In December, 1951, we addressed an "Open Letter to General Eisenhower":

What this country needs, general, is a *great man*. Not a Leader in the totalitarian sense: Americans will never crowd under a balcony chanting "Doo-chay! Doo-chay!" But Americans do want a man they can be enthusiastic about. They want a big man; an honest man; a colorful man; an unselfish man who will move into the White House, drive out the chiseling little money-changers, and make most Americans proud of their President again. Americans also want to believe that they have a wise man for President — a man who can direct the safeguarding of the richest nation in all history, and who, within prudent bounds, can extend aid to other

worthy and aspiring people. . . . I think this, general: I think that most Americans regard you as their likeliest candidate for greatness. And I confess that as one American I am intrigued with your possibilities. It's possible, I believe, for you to be elected President; and it is possible for you to become the greatest President this country has had since Lincoln. . . . I say these are possibilities. I don't know that you have either the capacity — physical, mental or spiritual — or the desire to try to realize them. But they are possibilities that no man should regard lightly. And as one American with a sense of history, I'd like to see you, sir, try to realize them.

That letter was forwarded to General Eisenhower in Paris by many of our mutual friends. His reactions to it, being confidential, will have to wait on his biographers.

Our article, "What Eisenhower Has Learned in Europe," in January 1952, concluded with this paragraph:

There may still be doubts in America as to whether Eisenhower is a "liberal" or a "conservative." But judging from what he must have learned in Europe, it appears likely that he will now prefer the company and counsel of conservatives and that he will regard American "liberals" with distrust.

AT THAT TIME virtually the entire "liberal" press in America was plugging for Eisenhower. Their

“disillusionment” was to come much later.

That same month, it being the first month of 1952, we had an editorial, “This Is the Pivotal Year,” which was widely distributed and reproduced. It said:

This is the pivotal year. If the Democratic Party, now irretrievably committed to bigger government, can be beaten and thrown into retreat, then perhaps there is hope that Americans can once again discipline their government. There is hope for a return to liberalism—the liberalism which holds all power suspect, and which knows that when men seek security at the price of liberty they always lose both. But if there is another Democratic victory, or, worse, if there is an inconclusive or irresolute Republican victory, then all hope for liberalism can be abandoned in our time. . . .

In April, 1952, we published “Freedom’s Case Against Dean Acheson.” It was the calm, factual presentation of the career of another well-intentioned but tragically mistaken individual. It, too, sold more than a million reprints. The State Department tried to “answer” it through the press, but all our efforts to get a confrontation before any public body were futile.

We reviewed Acheson’s record from the day that he was first retained by the Soviet Union—all his statements in support of Soviet policy during the fateful postwar

year when America was confused—and we concluded with these words:

During the period of Acheson’s stewardship at the State Department, more than six hundred million human beings have been dragged into Soviet slavery. Soviet power has mushroomed until it now threatens the existence of freedom everywhere on earth. It therefore seems fair to ask this question: have the actions and attitudes of Dean Acheson aided the cause of freedom in its struggle against Soviet slavery, or have they impeded it? On November 4, 1952, the American people will have the opportunity to answer this question.

Certainly the judgment on Dean Acheson was loud and clear on Election Day.

In May we defended Eisenhower from the charges that he was not a *real* Republican, that he could never criticize the Truman government, and that he was the candidate of freaks and faddists. And in June we advanced a request which should not be forgotten: “We Must Open the Archives”:

If there is to be new hope among Americans in 1953 we must elect a President who, first of all, will open up the records. Some of the records, no doubt, have been altered or stolen, but the new President can begin by letting us examine what remains. Then, while the historians set down the facts, the new President can proceed, by truthfulness, to the restoration of public confidence in the government of the United States.

In June, 1951, after that sad performance at Abilene, we confess that we suffered a short spell of uneasiness. We feared that Eisenhower might lose either the nomination or the election by listening to those counsellors who insisted that he "say nothing."

If General Eisenhower, either as a candidate for the nomination or for the Presidency, begins to trim or equivocate, then he won't be for us and we won't be for him. . . . The winning tactic for 1952, we believe, will be for the Republican Party to stand clearly for constitutional government and let the chips fall.

In September we published "How Eisenhower Can Win," and in October James Burnham's "The Case Against Adlai Stevenson." Mr. Burnham's case was an intellectual case: he took Mr. Stevenson at his own word — that he was not "temperamentally, physically, or mentally" equipped to make the momentous decisions of the next four years.

THAT WAS the new *Mercury's* contribution, in its formative months, to ending an era which began in 1933, gaily and confidently, which at home accomplished much that was good, which abroad furnished leadership and resolution for the Second World War, but which, as always, finally petered out in vacillation, corruption, and decay.

The *Mercury's* objective now is to publish the able thinkers and writers

who can give direction to the new era. Under Eisenhower America will not travel backward into some comfortable known; the movement will be forward into the dangerous and undefined unknown. Therefore, the need now is for responsible intellectuals, for enlightened conservatives, who can point the way and rally the hopes of mankind.

Understanding and resolution, these are first needs of the new era, and we began our contribution in the November issue with "A Positive Proposal for Korea" by Senator Styles Bridges. This proposal represents an inspiring order of statesmanship: it cuts across partisan positions, calls for understanding and agreement, and summons the free world to new resolution.

In both the November and the current, December, issues, as well as in the forthcoming January issue, we are publishing essays by James Burnham, demolishing the old defeatist policy of containment and calling for a new and effective order of American political warfare aimed at liberation.

In this issue, too, there is an article explaining how the United Nations may be converted into a useful base for waging political warfare on armed Communism.

Since the essential need is for ideas from which can spring new resolution, then the *Mercury's* task in 1953 is to find and present the ideas to those Americans who are willing to think.

James Burnham

# CAN WASHINGTON CONDUCT POLITICAL WARFARE?

THREE FACTS are the only triangulation points by which a firm course of foreign policy can be charted in our time:

1. The world political system is in the midst of a transformation which goes beneath and beyond the limits of the national and colonial order that prevailed during the past several centuries.

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*Last month James Burnham argued in "The Primacy of Politics" that the containment program is based on two illusory assumptions: that Communism starts in the stomach and can be stopped by alleviating economic distress; and that if war does come, our superior military power will save us from the consequences of our political ineptitude. In this second of two articles taken from his forthcoming Containment or Liberation? (John Day), Mr. Burnham holds that the only alternative to unlimited nuclear warfare is an aggressive program of political warfare. Mr. Burnham's most recent book was The Coming Defeat of Communism.*

2. For the period of this transformation there is no clear line between war and peace. There are only different forms and stages of the continuous struggle for survival or dominance in the developing world system of the future.

3. The primary mode of the struggle is *political warfare*.

By "political warfare" I refer to methods of struggle other than those of formal military warfare, insofar as these methods are guided by a strategic objective.

Although they differ on its role, all military strategists agree that the advent of air power has added a "new dimension" to warfare's traditional land and sea. Outside of Communist circles, few military strategists or governmental leaders yet comprehend that another, a fourth dimension, more novel and decisive than the third, has simultaneously appeared. Air power alters the tactics and mechanics of war, but does