

## *The Revolt of the West*

NO MATTER WHAT the outcome of the election on November 3 it will have served an essential purpose of the democratic process. For the forces behind the candidacy of a critic of the prevailing liberal doctrines have been long a-building. Since the election of 1940 a considerable portion of the electorate has regarded itself as being partly disenfranchised; it has regularly had no chance to vote for a presidential candidate of whose political principles it thoroughly approved or, putting it another way around, who uncompromisingly represented its ideas of what American foreign and domestic policies should be. Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had made plain to many—both of his friends and foes—that he was likely to involve the United States in the European war, was opposed not by the anti-interventionist Senator Taft but by another internationalist, the author-to-be of a book called *One World*. Wholly devoted to the liberal dogma of collective security, both Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Willkie clearly saw the danger to civilization and to the United States of

Adolf Hitler, but neither was ever able to perceive the all too similar shadow cast by the Soviet Union. The American voter in 1940, in an election dominated by issues of foreign policy, was given no choice between moderation and extremism, between war and peace or between the goals of the American First Committee or the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. Both candidates piously promised to stay out of the war and both demanded measures that could only lead to American intervention.

In 1944 there could be no contrasting views in either domestic or foreign policies. Governor Dewey in the course of the campaign was given hitherto secret Pearl Harbor material from sources close to Admiral Kimmel that at the least threw some doubt on President Roosevelt's qualifications as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and at the most laid him open to the charge of inciting the Japanese attack. Mr. Dewey, understandably enough in the midst of a bitter war, chose

not to make an issue of the President's conduct. He also made none with regard to his major policies.

In 1948, following the "can't lose" techniques provided by regional polls, questionnaires and automatic calculators, Mr. Dewey presented not much more than a somewhat colorless alternative to Harry Truman. Mr. Truman, having played the piano for Marshal Stalin and signed his name at Potsdam, had slowly but resolutely come to see that the Soviet Union was unaccountably and belligerently not following the prescriptions written for it by American liberals, that it was having no part of the peace forces of the one post-war world. By the time the election came around both candidates could compete with one another mainly in their denunciations of Soviet wickedness and in their promises to provide a thriving domestic economy by way of both government and private enterprise. A choice between them was a matter of taste.

In 1952 the Republican party again, as in 1940, had the chance to nominate a conservative whose views ran counter to those of the Democrats. Robert Taft had spoken and voted against President Roosevelt's policies both domestic and foreign; he had opposed the Nuremberg trials, the great symbol of a post-war collaboration of the peace-loving victors, because he thought they were political trials, and he had led the Senate fight to prevent President Truman from putting striking railroad workers into the army because, he said, this would amount to forced labor. A man of principle and courage who had spent his life in politics, Taft was sidetracked and defeated by the same "liberal" forces in the Republican party that had prevented his nomination or that of anyone of similar views in 1940. Those who had supported Mr. Taft could vote in the 1952

election for an eminent and charismatic general whose candidacy had also been proposed, a few years before, by a Democratic president, but not for the man whose words and deeds had for long years separated him from the Democratic opposition and who presented an alternative policy on almost every important issue. The one aspect of Mr. Eisenhower's regime of grave, head-shaking concern to the liberals of both parties had to do with his Secretary of State. It was true that under Secretary Dulles no great blocks of territory were lost to communist imperialism, but Dulles' brinksmanship, his notion that communism might even be rolled back, set off the only serious, concerted and long-lived attacks on Eisenhower's foreign policy or indeed on his administration.

In 1960 Mr. Nixon, during his first debate with Mr. Kennedy, assured his television audience that both he and his opponent had the same purposes. There followed a discussion of the "image" of the United States, which Mr. Kennedy thought had suffered under the Eisenhower administration, a calumny which Mr. Nixon indignantly denied. But again it was not easy to separate what precisely the one candidate would do differently from the other and why. Both men committed themselves boldly to a defense of the free world: Mr. Nixon had spoken up heatedly to Premier Khrushchev and Mr. Kennedy would certainly do the same should he be given the opportunity.

The Republicans and the Democrats wooing the partly free market of the 1960 electorate were for the same things and said the same things. Everyone in the approved seats of power said the same things—the major columnists, the great foundations, the professors, and the former students of the professors in the Eastern universities who were now signing the checks for the coffers of both parties. They all re-

peated precisely and as a matter of course the same texts as the loftiest among the liberal writers.

Not unknown to them, but vastly underestimated and held in contempt and derision, were the exiles from the leading councils, exiles with a very different reading of recent history and with other ideas of how four or more freedoms could be preserved in the United States and possibly other countries as well. They had their intellectual roots in men the liberals had long since disposed of—in an international group of scholars and writers who had ploughed their own stubborn way against the liberal tide—Charles Beard, Ludwig von Mises, Wilhelm Roepke, Richard Weaver, a school of economics in the University of Chicago and a scattering of other colleges and universities, a few historians and political scientists, philosophers and literary men. And then along with these leading revóltes were thousands of college students who exercised their biological right to attack the fixed ideas of another generation that had led them or their elder brothers into a war and then into a twilight zone of never-ending hostilities. They formed clubs and discussion groups and, more articulate than their elders of a generation before, they founded papers and magazines and talked back to their professors except to the handful who despite the academic and social penalties were ready to act as their advisors.

What they believed in was the intellectual bankruptcy of the liberals who had been writing for students and one another for these many decades and who had finally come to occupy virtually all the places of power in a society of managers. They ran the Eastern press, the broadcasting systems, the major foundations and universities; their ideas dominated the decision making of both parties. It was a hierarchy concentrated in the East; its

chief opponents were the descendants of the old isolationists, of an individualistic tradition that has remained vigorous in the West and Middle West. But the division was far more philosophical than geographic; the East too had its Conservative Clubs, the West a full measure of interventionists.

The pendulum had begun slowly to swing back after Taft was defeated for the Republican nomination in 1952, but the liberals were too preoccupied with one another's ideas to note any change. When the Republicans met in the Cow Palace in 1964 the Eastern press was unable to offer any coherent account of what happened. One writer in the *New York Times* thought the situation resembled that in Lebanon, where offices are apportioned according to religion. The choice of the Catholic Mr. Miller as Goldwater's running mate, he thought, might be the beginning of a similar system in the United States. A usually sophisticated observer, he now seemed ready to believe that the Protestant Lyndon B. Johnson had been brought to the 1960 Democratic convention as Mr. Kennedy's running mate by a stork that chanced to be in the neighborhood. Grim articles were written on the migration of folding money from the East coast to the West and Middle West, on the bucolic fanaticism of Mr. Goldwater's supporters and their possible connection with "hate groups." The liberal press saw what ideologues easily see—a conspiracy—this one of the chronically disenchanting, of those who have been bypassed by the potent streams of contemporary thinking, of those who are no more than nostalgic for another and simpler time. The bad guys they had shot down over and over again had unaccountably won.

But in fact the revolt has other origins—it stemmed primarily from the abject failure of the liberals to fashion not only one world but any coherent view of society

that matches the realities. In their belief in such formulas as collective security, the punishment of aggression everywhere, in government action to secure racial equality, in government intervention to secure economic justice, the liberals have introduced a hodge podge of *ad hoc* measures that have produced the opposite of what they sought. For the promise of Soviet cooperation a third of a world was delivered to communism; for the illusion of racial equality to be enforced by the central government a painfully emerging harmony coming about through individual and voluntary acts of understanding and friendship has been replaced with a massive and growing group hostility based not on the qualities of the person but on his color. In the places of prices produced by supply and demand, of wages determined by productivity, appear a suffocating accumulation of unused farm products together with artificially high prices for what is consumed, and labor monopolies that enforce their demands for constantly higher wages at the expense of all the rest of the community.

The liberals, because they are ideologues, arrive at new stances only by way of bitter experience or political expediency. They have never understood the dynamics of Communism: they have lived in a love-hate ambivalence that makes their decisions whimsical and dangerous. Dean Acheson, who once left South Korea out of the list of the territories the United States intended to defend, now like a rejected lover regularly denounces the Soviet Union and all its works, and perches among the war hawks of his party. President Johnson, who in the spring of 1964 declared that he could understand Russian fear of Germany (although none other than Khrushchev had boasted that the Soviet Union could destroy the *Bundesrepublik* with five or six bombs), orders, with at least

one eye on the coming election, a heavy retaliatory attack on North Vietnam harbors without previously consulting either Congress or his allies. The late President Kennedy was of one mind when the invasion in the Bay of Pigs took place and of another when the rocket pads in Cuba were being built. In both instances he was forced to act: in the one case against the success of an invasion he had however reluctantly approved, in the other for the demolition of enemy bases that had become in the opinion of a small majority of his advisors an intolerable threat to the United States. The bases were destroyed, the Soviet technicians remained.

The liberals live continually in the hope that this time the Soviet Union will live up to their aspirations for it; it is an illusion they have cherished for fifty years as the Soviet zigs have followed the zags. Stalin at Yalta promised Roosevelt that Poland would have free elections; freedom of the press and of the ballot he told the President were well known principles and he accepted them as a matter of course. Roosevelt was delighted; he said the atmosphere on the gala occasion in the Yussupov palace, where forty-five toasts were drunk on the night of February 8th, 1945, to celebrate the success of the deliberations, was that of a family dinner. He and Harry Hopkins left the conference in the glow of the new day that had dawned; the first great victory for world cooperation had been won; peace was assured as far as the eye of man could see. Roosevelt was so convinced of Marshal Stalin's good will that he was impatient to meet with him alone without the burdensome presence of Winston Churchill, who now seemed to the liberals, who had loved him dearly, a reactionary and an obstacle to the all-important understanding with Stalin. The pattern does not change; Khrushchev's ceaseless efforts to split the Western alliance are re-

warded by President Johnson's repeating Russian propaganda about the military threat of one of our chief allies.

It was this endemic "Liberalism" that many Democrats and the Republican convention at San Francisco rejected. Goldwater has not been the leader of the revolt that rejected it but one of its products. How durable a product he is will be shown as he develops his case. He undoubtedly shares the main principles of its intellectual progenitors and he has shown courage and consistency in representing them. He wants a free market economy, decentralization of the increasing power exerted from Washington, a clearer, more consistent and firmer policy toward communist expansion; he seeks to strengthen the alliance of the anti-communist powers and he refused to attempt to be all things to all men when he voted against the racial equality measure. Not everything he has said would be considered sound doctrine by conservative thinkers who counsel moderation in the place of extremism, who believe that the job of military men is to carry out the decisions made by the responsible civilian authorities. But on the whole he presents for the first time in at least twenty-five years a clear choice to the American voter. If the two-party system is to continue to have meaning in a time when bloc voting

threatens to replace individual balloting this must come about by giving the voter such an alternative in the place of the spurious differences that Mr. Willkie attributed to campaign oratory. Mr. Goldwater, however great the other differences may be, has restored to the American electorate the same kind of choice that Abraham Lincoln made possible for them to make a hundred years ago. When the critical question was raised it had to be answered by principles not by expediency, regardless of whether or not they were popular at the moment. The Republican party under Goldwater at long last has attached itself to a set of principles, it has turned to the electorate for a decision on whether they are shared or rejected. As in the case of the free market of commodities the voter has been offered a labelled alternative instead of a non-choice determined by those who know what is politically stylish. The 1964 election has marked the return to a two party system: in the long run, because ideas eventually determine events, that can be far more important than who is President.

—E.D.

This editorial, written before the election, will appear after November 3.