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into line with the revolutionary tendency throughout the world.

Everywhere, except in England, where the national genius for compromise asserted itself in the shape of Baldwin, the governments that were in went out, and the governments that came in feverishly experimented with peoples' lives and incomes to try and find some way out of the crisis. On this wave of revolution, or revulsion, Franklin Roosevelt rose into power in 1932.

Roosevelt and Willkie are now appealing to their people on platforms which seem to be almost identical. Willkie will

effectively over the new political weapon of radio, will survive the campaign better than Grant survived his.

Crisis for the Democrats

For the Democratic Party this may well be a major crisis. Its destinies at present are bound up in the personality of Roosevelt. When his name was submitted to the nominating convention the other candidates quickly faded out. Woodrow Wilson won a second term during the last war with the slogan "He kept us out of the War." Then he took them into the war, tried to get them into the League of Nations, and bounced

One-Man Party

At the beginning of this year no one knew whether Wendell Willkie was a Democrat or a Republican. Al. Smith advocated him as a Presidential candidate in January. "I understand Willkie's a Democrat," he said. Later, Willkie said: "I think I am enrolled with the Republican party." Later he said: "Why should I catalogue myself under one of two labels when neither suits me?"

In 1924 he was delegate to the Democratic National Convention. In 1932 he contributed 150 dollars to Roosevelt's election campaign. In 1936 he voted for Landon. He said: "I won't be dropped into a mould."

His grandparents spelled their name "Willcke." They fled to America from Germany when the revolution of 1848 failed. In 1917 Wendell enlisted to have another go at German autocracy, but the Army accidentally changed his name from Lewis Wendell Willkie to Wendell Lewis Willkie. The change delayed him so long that he did not reach France until late in 1918.



WENDELL WILLKIE

give the Allies all help short of going to war. Roosevelt has been giving them all help possible short of going to war. If that becomes the main issue of a political campaign which has not yet become really serious, then there will be nothing for the American voter to work up partisan spirit about. Although the war issue might seem to be the great moral issue which could make Americans really excited, it does not appear that it will take a major place in the campaign, unless Roosevelt makes some misstep between now and the elections. Rather is it probable that Roosevelt's personality will be opposed by a Republican outcry against a third term.

As the story of the cartoon shows, the Democrats were quick to play Cassius to General Grant's Julius Caesar. The cry of "Caesarism" was raised, Grant was cartooned with a crown on his head, and Grant was defeated. If the American nation sticks closely by anything, it is the constitution and its determination to preserve the shape and theory of democracy.

It will be interesting to see if the Republicans raise against Roosevelt the catch-cry which the Democrats raised against Grant, and it will be interesting to see whether the personality of Roosevelt, projected so very much more

back from the wall of the Monroe doctrine-psychology of America, buttressed artfully by the political campaigning of the Republican Party. With the nation sick of war, and himself sick near to death, Wilson went tragically out of the picture.

On the other hand, Roosevelt's second term was already ending when he led the Democrat Party into the first year of this war. He is asking for a third term not because he has kept America out of the war, but in spite of the fact that he is taking every risk of precipitating war by helping one of the combatants at the expense of the other.

This might or might not have given him the support of his people. The Republicans have negated that possibility by coming out with the same proposal. Roosevelt will therefore have to rely on the fact that he is Roosevelt. He will have to hope that the American people will remember some advantage from the New Deal, however much Big Business nourishes the rancour caused by the defeats it suffered when Roosevelt set to work on it. And he will have to hope that there has been some new quality of inspiration about his administration that will persuade the people to elect him in spite of what his enemies may say about a Caesar asking for a crown.

JUDGES WERE DISAPPOINTED

One-Act and Radio Play Competitions

"GENERALLY speaking, the response to these competitions was disappointing, both numerically and artistically," said the judges in their comments on the recently concluded National Centennial one-act and radio play competitions.

Substantial prizes were offered, but no award was given for the £70 first prize for a one-act play, and no award for the £30 second prize for a radio play. Two second prizes were given for the one-act competition, and in the radio play competition the £100 prize money was divided among three competitors.

The winners were:

One-act Stage Competition:

1st Prize: No award (£70).

2nd prize (equal £30 each):

Miss M. Thomas, 21 Stanley Street, Claudelands, Hamilton, for her play, "IT IS—TO LIVE." Ian McLean, 346 The Terrace, Wellington, for his play, "STOP PRESS."

Radio Play Competition: 1st

Prize (equal, £33/6/8 each):

Miss Gladys Judd, 39 Braithwaite Street, Karori, Wellington, W.3, for her play "NOSTALGIA." Russell Reid, 221 The Terrace, Wellington, for his play "RAMSAY OF BURNTWOOD." Miss A. M. Green, 89 King's Crescent, Lower Hutt, Wellington, for her play, "HELL SHIP OF THE PACIFIC." 2nd Prize: No award (£30).

Judges' Comment

The judges stated:

Twenty-nine plays were received for the Stage Play Competition, and twenty-one for the Radio Play Competition. "STOP PRESS" and "IT IS—TO LIVE," while showing faults in technique and construction, both told a story logically and coherently. Many of the plays submitted lacked a basic idea, without which no playwright, however competent, can expect to be successful. A great number of the writers who submitted plays appeared to be actuated solely by the desire to write, rather than by any urgent desire to tell a story or exploit a theme. A number of the entries were not actually plays in the strict sense of the word—they were sketches, episodes, cameos, character studies. They lacked any form of conflict. A number of writers confused movement with action. A play in which nothing happens can have plenty of movement and still remain static. Action, on the other hand, springs primarily from dialogue, and has no necessary connection with the bodily movement of various characters on the

stage. A fault with many of the writers was their obvious lack of knowledge of the theatre.

As was only to be expected, a number of the plays submitted were based on historical episodes, but in most of these cases dramatic values were sacrificed by unnecessarily dragging in historical incidents. Many of the episodes did not lend themselves to dramatic treatment, and in cases where they did, the situation was not exploited to the full. There was in this Competition a refreshing absence of gangsters, high society, and detectives. There seemed to be a general attempt to write of simpler matters, and subjects which sprang from individual experience. This is all to the good, and shows a desire to write at first hand, instead of second or third. Dialogue was a hurdle to many competitors. An attempt to infuse their play with a "literary" quality made it sound stilted and unnatural, and characterisation consequently suffered. Reading the play aloud before submitting it would probably have corrected many of these faults.

Radio Plays

With the Radio plays the judges took a more optimistic view. With one or two exceptions the competitors had a good working knowledge of the main requirements of a radio play. The three prize-winning plays are all worthy of production—they have character, atmosphere, and a workmanlike technique. There was a general tendency among competitors to travel a well-worn path from the point of view of treatment—no daring experiments or new methods came to light. Many of the competitors were fully alive to the fact that radio, like the cinema, lends itself to a quick change of scene without losing anything of its effect. This competition, like the one-act play competition, showed a paucity of ideas—there was no story value in many of the plays. Hackneyed themes, impossible situations, and unnatural dialogue, cropped up again and again. Many competitors did not exploit radio technique to the full—they preferred to use the narrative past instead of the dramatic present in scenes that contained explanatory dialogue. There was a tendency to wordiness—a reluctance to get on with the story. The dialogue in a radio play must be cut to the bone to have any real effect.

Sound effects, too, formed a stumbling block for many writers. They must be used with caution—as a means to an end, and not as an end in themselves. Many competitors overwrote themselves—having reached their climax they were not content to end there. There was a definite lack of characterisation in most of the plays submitted, and characterisation is particularly necessary in a radio play where the voice is the only means of identification. The introduction of characters is important—they should be definitely established one by one. To open a scene with half-a-dozen people talking and none of them addressed by name, spells ruin to the best of stories. Many competitors preferred to describe each scene through an announcer, thus holding up the action of the play, rather than to paint the picture through a judicious use of dialogue.