

Health of Presidents Frequently Cause Of Concern To Politicians and Public

By **LYLE C. WILSON**
 United Press Correspondent
 Washington—(U.P.)—The health of presidents frequently has been a matter of political and public concern.



There were some slanders and inside-dope letters about Franklin D. Roosevelt's physical condition during the years of his presidency.

But, aside from such, there was a gentlemanly understanding all around that no political play would be made on FDR's colossal misfortune, polio. He was a cripple, but the lameness did not extend to his head. So his legs and his steel braces were largely ignored, especially by the news photographers who never took advantage of their chances to picture Mr. Roosevelt in strange and painful postures.

But the time came after two robust terms of office and well into a third when the wear of the White House began to crack Mr. Roosevelt's health. His colds or bouts with influenza began to last a bit longer, and, then, longer than that.

White House reporters noted the physical change. So did other regular visitors. Some of FDR's close political associates have written books since his death. In them the record is clear that the insiders knew in 1943-44 that Mr. Roosevelt was failing. That was a prime cause for their successful campaign to ditch Henry A. Wallace as a fourth-term running mate.

Falling Health Evident

The insiders didn't want to take the very real chance that Wallace would serve out Mr. Roosevelt's fourth term. So evident was the President's failing health and so widely was the fact known, that FDR, himself, determined on strategy to scotch the public fears.

He chose his New York City campaign appearance for as bright a piece of political strategy as even he could wish for. The day was awful—cold rain and gusts of wind. Around the big city Mr. Roosevelt moved in an open car. He was soaked and smiling. He did duck in at intervals to snatch dry clothing, perhaps a bolt of bourbon or some tea. But that didn't show much in the news stories or pictures.

What the voters saw and read showed a big and hearty man laughing at the snarling elements—a healthy man, if ever was. FDR was elected president for a fourth term a few days after that. And a few months later he was dead.

Pressure Building Up

There is real pressure building up for President Eisenhower to go again next year. Republican National Committee Chairman Leonard W. Hall simply says—he's my candidate. Other Ike-men repeat that in public or in private. And many of them will concede the Republicans are likely to take a 1956 lacing if Mr. Eisenhower does not run.

To be a satisfactory candidate,

Mr. Eisenhower must convince himself and convince the voters that his physical condition would permit another term without unreasonably endangering his life.

Right now the President is under doctor's orders to slow up a bit after apparently going a little too fast during the early phase of his convalescence. But that doesn't mean Mr. Eisenhower won't step back into normal routine eventually.

And perhaps, after awhile, the President and his advisers may be looking for a lucky rain-storm, as did FDR in 1944.

Suspect Held in Kidnaping of Tot

Los Angeles—(U.P.)—Police held a 20-year-old youth today on charges of kidnaping and molesting a three-year-old girl in the fifth such incident here within the past month.

The girl, Cynthia Hardacre, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hardacre, of the Baldwin Park area, was found unharmed in Elysian Park late last night several hours after the abduction from in front of her home touched off a search throughout southern California.

Robert Kracker, 20, who sheriff's deputies said had a record that included assault with intent to commit rape, sex perversion and burglary, was arrested as he returned alone to his home last night.

Detective Lt. Harry Hallas said Kracker admitted abducting the child on a "spur-of-the-moment impulse." He told investigators he drove around with the girl, parked for a while and then let her out of his car in Elysian park, about 20 miles from her home.

Deputies said Kracker had been visiting some friends who live next door to the girl shortly before her abduction.

The recent waves of kidnapings led Los Angeles authorities to issue a set of rules notifying parents of steps to protect their children.

The first incident occurred when two Girl Scouts were picked up by a man in a car. He dropped one of them off at her home but held the other for several hours before releasing her unharmed.

The same week, an eight-year-old girl was kidnaped and molested by a man who called for her at school.

A 12-year-old girl was kidnaped and forced to disrobe for photographs a week later.

Russian Leadership Struggle Under Way

London—(U.P.)—A London newspaper said today that Soviet Communist leader Nikita Khrushchev, former Premier Georgi Malenkov and an "unidentified group of ultra-extremists" are engaged in a three-way struggle for leadership in Russia.

Daily Mail diplomatic correspondent Walter Farr said the Soviet Union is heading for a new series of large scale purges that will see one or the other of the three factions emerge triumphant. Farr said Khrushchev is trying to pack the February congress of the Soviet Communist party with his own supporters to ensure that his views are adopted.



TRUDGING TO WORK—President Eisenhower walks from his cottage to Laurel Lodge at Camp David, Md., with Secy. of State John Foster Dulles for a National Security Council meeting. The President has been using the lodge for meetings with his Cabinet and top government officials.

Wheat Growers Favor Soil Bank Proposal

Pendleton—(U.P.)—The idea of a soil bank for cutting land out of production as a solution to surplus crops was approved Saturday by the Oregon Wheat Growers league.

A committee report convinced the league that the soil bank plan was a "practical measure" until production and demand were in better balance. The program should be applied to all field crops and provide adequate compensation to owners of diverted land, the report said.

Payments should be based on the productive history of the land, the report indicated, with either compulsory participation or payments high enough to insure voluntary cooperation.

Kenneth Fridley, Wasco, Ore., was elected president of the league at the final session of the group's three-day meeting here.

Raphael Raymond, Helix, was named first vice-president and Jack Smith, Condon, second vice-president.

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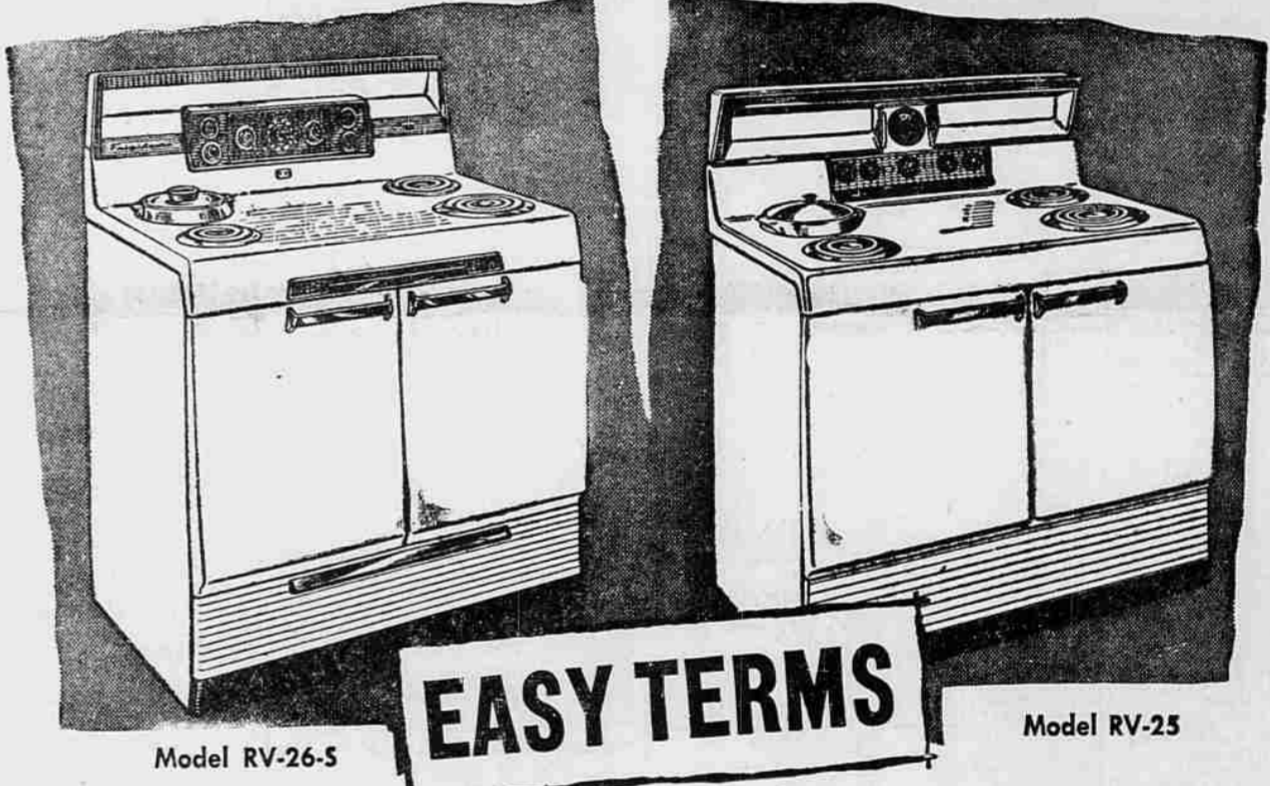
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