

Casual Remark by Ike in Panama Last July Jarred GOP

By LYLE C. WILSON
United Press Correspondent
Washington — (U.P.) — It was back there in July at the Panama conference that President Eisenhower told Senator H. R. Hiram that he didn't have much strength but just kept on going.



Lyle C. Wilson

It was merely a casual remark to a well-wisher, the sister of the late Jose Remon, a former president of Panama.

"You're looking fine," says she, or some such thing as that and back came Mr. Eisenhower with a comment about his physical condition which considerably jarred Republican Party strategists.

That casual remark and Mr. Eisenhower's hospitalization for surgery earlier this year have combined to renew the matter of his health as a prime issue in the 1956 presidential campaign. The President and his advisers evidently are aware of the political fact.

His televised and broadcast address Wednesday night from the White House properly can be described as the beginning of his personal appeal for reelection—a very important occasion. Mr. Eisenhower felt it was necessary to deal Wednesday night with the issue of his health before he could proceed to other discussion with the voters.

Says He Is Confident
This is what he said:
"Let me begin with a very personal matter. It is a personal kind of peace that I possess—granted to me by the mercy of the Almighty."

"It is this firm conviction: I am confident of my own physical strength to meet all the responsibilities of the presidency, today and in the years just ahead. If I were not so convinced, I would never have accepted renomination to this office."

"I hope this conviction—this peace of mind—may bring assurance to many others, as I stand ready to serve as your president for another four years, if this be your will."

Democratic strategy is not to challenge most of what Mr. Eisenhower told the voters Wednesday night about his health. Adlai E. Stevenson, Sen. Estes Kefauver and other top Democrats will hold—if pressed—that Mr. Eisenhower will be around four years hence duffing away at golf, as usual.

To Attack Nixon
Top Democratic campaigners will tell you they profoundly hope so. After all, who could seriously wish a man to drop dead? The word in Mr. Eisenhower's statement on which the Democrats have their finger is "responsibilities."

The Democrats hold that Mr. Eisenhower already is not much more than half a president.

"Part-time president" is the way the Democrats put it. And they regard as their clincher a repetition of the claim that Vice President Richard M. Nixon will be the big man in the Republican Party after election day if the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket wins.

A great many Democratic blue chips have been put down on the belief that millions of swing or independent voters will be voting against Nixon instead of for or against any other this year. The early Gallup polls seem not to support that belief, but only the election can make it official one way or the other.

Adlai Indicates Approach
Gov. Stevenson's approach to the Eisenhower health issue was indicated at this week's big Washington news conference.

Ed O'Brien of the St. Louis (Mo.) Globe-Democrat inquired what Stevenson meant when he said Mr. Eisenhower had shucked to others many of his important responsibilities partly by choice and partly by necessity.

"I was referring," Stevenson replied, "to what he said in his statement of last February that he was going to be a candidate again—that he would delegate many of his duties, many of the things that he had previously done, to others, to relieve his burdens."

This hard emphasis on his ability to do the work probably will compel Mr. Eisenhower to make a much more active campaign than he originally planned. Sufficient activity would be pretty good evidence that he could take it. FDR did just that in 1944 and the voters were convinced.

JAILED, THEN REWARDED
London — (U.P.) — James O'Brien, who was jailed for refusing to pay a \$4.25 bill at an Indian restaurant, has been awarded \$14 for unlawful imprisonment, court officials said today. O'Brien said he walked out of the restaurant without paying because his curry contained no onions.

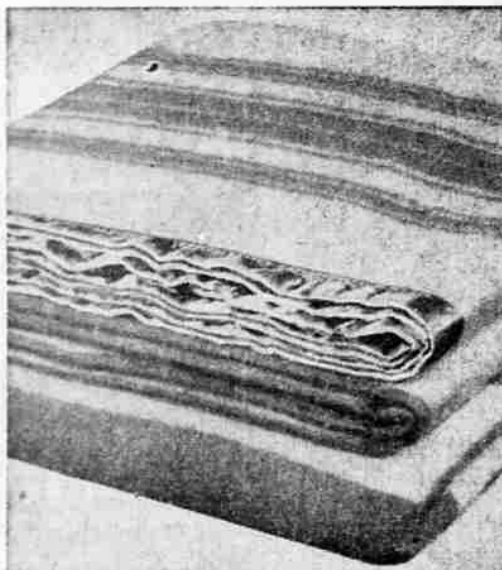
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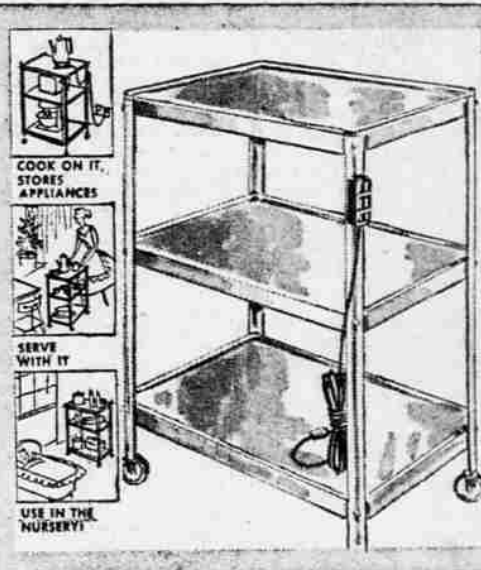


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